

# Arianna Ornaghi

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## Academic Positions

2019 - : British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Warwick, UK

2017 - 2019 : Research Fellow, University of Warwick, UK

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## Education

2012 - 2017 : Ph.D. Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

2009 - 2011 : M.Sc. Economics and Social Sciences, Bocconi University, Italy

2006 - 2009 : B.Sc. Economics and Social Sciences, Bocconi University, Italy

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## Research Interests

Political Economy; Applied Microeconomics; Text Analysis

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## Working Papers

**"Who Watches the Watchmen? Local News and Police Behavior in the United States."** Joint with Nicola Mastrorocco. **(Job Market Paper)**

*Winner of the European Economic Association Young Economist Award 2020.*

Are the police responsive to media coverage of crime? We answer the question by studying how a decline in news coverage of local crime, induced by the acquisitions of local TV stations by the Sinclair Broadcast Group, affects United States municipal police departments. In particular, we implement a triple differences-in-differences design that combines the staggered timing of acquisitions with cross-sectional variation in whether municipalities are covered by the news at baseline, a proxy for exposure to the shock. First, using a unique dataset that includes almost 300,000 newscasts, we show that stations that are acquired by Sinclair decrease their coverage of local crime. Second, we find that this matters for policing: after Sinclair enters a media market, covered municipalities experience 10% lower violent crime clearance rates relative to non-covered municipalities. Finally, we provide suggestive evidence that the effect is consistent with a decrease in the salience of crime in the public opinion.

**"Gender Attitudes in the Judiciary: Evidence from U.S. Circuit Courts."** Joint with Elliott Ash and Daniel L. Chen.

Do gender attitudes influence interactions with female judges in U.S. Circuit Courts? In this paper, we propose a novel judge-specific measure of gender attitudes based on use of gender-stereotyped language in the judge's authored opinions. Exploiting quasi-random assignment of judges to cases and conditioning on judges' characteristics, we validate the measure showing that slanted judges vote more conservatively in gender-related cases. Slant influences interactions with female colleagues: slanted judges are more likely to reverse lower-court decisions if the lower-court judge is a woman than a man, are less likely to assign opinions to female judges, and cite fewer female-authored opinions.

**"Subsidies and the Dynamics of Selection: Experimental Evidence from Indonesia's National Health Insurance."** Joint with Abhijit Banerjee, Amy Finkelstein, Rema Hanna, Ben Olken and Sudarno Sumarto.

*Revise & Resubmit at the American Economic Review.*

How can developing countries increase health insurance? We experimentally assessed three approaches that simple theory suggests could increase coverage and potentially reduce adverse selection: temporary price subsidies, registration assistance, and information. Temporary subsidies attracted lower-cost enrollees, in part by reducing strategic coverage timing. While subsidies were active, coverage increased more than eightfold, at no higher unit cost to the government; after subsidies ended, coverage remained twice as high, again at no higher cost. However, subsidies are not sufficient to achieve universal coverage: the most intensive intervention - a full one-year subsidy combined with registration assistance - resulted in only 30 percent enrollment.

**"Closing Time: The Local Amenity Effects of Prohibition."** Joint with Greg Howard.

*Revise & Resubmit at the Journal of Economic History.*

How do amenities affect local land values, production, and sorting? We study the question exploiting a large historical policy change: U.S. Alcohol Prohibition in the early 20th century. Comparing same-state early and late adopters of county dry laws in a difference-in-differences design, we find that early Prohibition adoption increased population and farm real estate values. Moreover, we find strong effects on farm productivity consistent with increased investment due to a land price channel. In equilibrium, the amenity change disproportionately attracted immigrants and African-Americans.

**"Civil Service Reforms: Evidence from U.S. Police Departments."**

Does reducing politicians' control over public employees' hiring and firing improve bureaucratic performance? I answer this question exploiting population-based mandates for U.S. municipal police department merit systems in a regression discontinuity design. Merit system mandates improve performance: crime rates are lower in departments operating under a merit system than in departments under a spoils system. Changes in resources or police officers' characteristics do not drive the effect, but I provide suggestive evidence that the limitations to politicians' ability to influence police officers are instead important.

## Teaching Experience

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2018 - 2020 : Undergraduate Dissertation Supervision, University of Warwick  
2019 : MSc Dissertation Supervision, University of Warwick  
2017 : Teaching Assistant for edX Data Analysis for Social Sciences, MIT  
2017 : Teaching Assistant for Graduate Political Economy, MIT  
2016 : Kauffman Teaching Certificate Program, MIT  
2015 : Teaching Assistant for Principles of Microeconomics, MIT  
2015 : Teaching Assistant for the JPAL Summer Executive Education Program, MIT

## Research Experience

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2013 - 2014 : Research Assistant to Ben Olken, MIT  
2012 : Field Research Assistant to Martina Bjorkman, Lucia Corno, Damien de Walque and Jakob Svensson, World Bank, Lesotho  
2012 : Research Assistant to Eliana La Ferrara, Bocconi University  
2012 : Research Assistant to Angelo Porta, Bocconi University

## Grants

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2019 - 2021 : Russel Sage Foundation Presidential Grant, with Elliott Ash and Daniel L. Chen (\$35,000)

2019 - 2022 : British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (£345,000)  
 2018 - 2021 : British Academy Small Research Grant, with Nicola Mastroiocco (£10,000)  
 2017 - 2019 : CAGE Research Fund Small Grant, with Greg Howard (£5,000)  
 2016 : Sokoloff Dissertation Fellowship, EHA (\$15,000)  
 2014 - 2015 : J-PAL Fellowship  
 2015 : Exploratory Travel and Data Grant, EHA  
 2015 - 2016 : George and Obie Shultz Fund  
 2013 - 2014 : James A. Berkovec Memorial Fund  
 2012 - 2013 : MIT Department of Economics Fellowship  
 2009 - 2010 : Bocconi Merit Awards

## **Presentations**

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2020 : UEA Textual Analysis Workshop, Economics of Crime Online Seminar, Economics of Discrimination & Disparities Online Seminar, Stockholm Workshop on Diversity and Inclusion, Nottingham Workshop on the Economics of Gender Norms, SoDa Labs Webinar Series, European Economic Association Congress, Zurich Econ & Data Science Reading Group, Deep Learning Trends and Classics Reading Group, NEWEPS  
 2019 : EMUEA Meetings, PSE Conflict Workshop, University of Glasgow  
 2018 : OWL Economic History Workshop, Warwick Economic History Workshop, Quebec Political Economy Conference, Royal Economic Society, Barcelona GSE Summer Forum, APSA Conference, EALE Annual Conference  
 2017 : Arizona State University School of Politics and Global Studies, Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance, IIES Stockholm University, Bank of Italy, University of British Columbia, IESE Business School  
 2016 : Economic History Association (poster session)

## **Academic Activities**

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2020 - : Co-organizer of the POLECONUK Webinar Series  
 2017 - : Organizer of the PEPE Research Days at the University of Warwick  
 Referee for *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Review: Insights*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Social Choice and Welfare*

## **References**

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Prof. Daron Acemoglu  
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Prof. Ben Olken  
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Prof. Mirko Draca  
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