

# BENJAMIN GOLDMAN

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## Education

### Harvard University

Ph.D. Economics, 2018 to 2024 (expected)

M.A. Economics, 2021

### Macalester College

B.A., Economics and Applied Math, *cum laude*, 2016

## Research Fields

Public Economics  
Labor Economics

## Teaching Fields

Public Economics  
Labor Economics  
Econometrics

## References

Raj Chetty  
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Jesse Shapiro  
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## Fellowships & Awards

Chae Family Economics Research Fund, Harvard Economics Department, 2023  
Linda G. Hammett Ory Fellow, Harvard Education School, 2022  
James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Scholar in Inequality, Harvard Kennedy School, 2021  
Excellence in Teaching Award, Derek Bok Center, 2020 and 2021  
Fellow, Spiegel Family Fund, 2020  
Warburg Prize, Harvard Economics Department, 2020  
Grant to Study Determinants of Life Expectancy (with Kaveh Danesh), NBER, 2017  
Robert L. Bunting Prize in Economics, Macalester College, 2016  
Best Undergraduate Paper, Minnesota Economics Association, 2014, 2015, and 2016  
Academic All-Conference (Football), Midwest Athletic Conference, 2016

## Teaching

Graduate Public Economics, Harvard, teaching fellow for Hunt Allcott, Raj Chetty, & Stefanie Stantcheva, 2020-2021  
Residential Tutor, Harvard, John Winthrop House, 2019-2024  
Intermediate Microeconomics, Macalester College, teaching assistant for Sarah West, 2014-2016  
Econometrics, Macalester College, teaching assistant for Raymond Robertson, 2015

## Research

Predoctoral Fellow for Raj Chetty, John Friedman, & Nathan Hendren, Stanford, 2016-2018  
Research Assistant, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 2015  
Research Assistant to Raymond Robertson, Macalester College, 2014

**Job Market Paper**      “Segregation and Marriage” (with Jamie Gracie and Sonya Porter)

Americans rarely marry outside of their race or class group. We distinguish between two possible explanations for this: a lack of exposure to other groups versus a preference to marry within group. We focus on white-Black marriage and marriages between individuals from families in the top and bottom quartiles of the parent income distribution. We begin by showing that people often marry near-neighbors of similar age who live close to their childhood neighborhood. We draw on this fact to develop an instrument for exposure to opposite-sex members of other groups based on sex ratios among nearby birth cohorts in childhood neighborhoods. Increased exposure to other class groups generates a substantial increase in interclass marriage, but exposure across race lines has no detectable impact on interracial marriage. We use these results to estimate a spatial model of the marriage market and quantify the impact of reducing segregation in general equilibrium. Our model suggests that most of the cross-commuting zone relationship between interclass marriage and segregation is due to the causal effect of segregation. Policies that reduce segregation will do little to increase rates of interracial marriage but can have large effects on interclass marriage, with important implications for income dynamics across generations.

**Working Papers**      “Can Individualized Student Supports Improve Economic Outcomes for Children in High Poverty Schools?” (with Jamie Gracie and Sonya Porter)

How can we improve outcomes for low-income students? We analyze the adult earnings impacts of the largest comprehensive student support program in the US. Communities in Schools (CIS) places a “navigator” in high-poverty schools who provides an integrated system of supports to students, including academic (e.g., tutoring), economic (e.g., access to food assistance, housing), and mentoring. In 2023, CIS worked with 1.8 million students in 3,750 schools. Using later-treated CIS schools as a control, we estimate that four years of exposure to CIS generates a \$1,500 (6% of control mean) increase in earnings at age 30. Effects are larger for students from low-income families and are driven by a reduction in non-employment and an increase in the probability of having a low-paying job. Each child exposed to four years of CIS is expected to pay an additional \$10,000 in taxes between ages 18-65, which compares favorably to the program cost. Our results are relevant for the growing community school movement and illuminate a possible path for improving economic mobility in low opportunity neighborhoods.

“Growing Class Gaps, Shrinking Race Gaps: Economic and Sociological Mechanisms Underlying Recent Trends in Intergenerational Mobility” (with Raj Chetty, Will Dobbie, Sonya Porter, and Crystal Yang)

We study the mechanisms underlying recent trends in economic opportunity using anonymized longitudinal data covering nearly the entire U.S. population. We first document a pattern of growing white class gaps and shrinking race gaps in intergenerational mobility. For white children born between 1978 and 1992, intergenerational mobility fell substantially, with improving outcomes for white children from high-income families and deteriorating outcomes for white children from low-income families (growing class gaps). Outcomes for Black children improved across all parental income levels in the same birth cohorts, leading to a declining Black-white earnings gap for children from low-income families (shrinking race gaps). These different trends by race and class are not explained by changes in observable family characteristics and occur even for children living in the same Census tracts, indicating that the different trends are driven by shocks that affect race and class groups differently in the same area. We then explore the forces underlying these race and class shocks, showing that county- and group-level changes in intergenerational mobility are closely linked to county- and group-level changes in parent employment rates. Quasi-experimental estimates based on children who move across counties show that spending an additional year of childhood in a

county where parent employment rates in one's race and class group are declining has negative effects on earnings in adulthood. These childhood exposure effects suggest that changes to parent employment rates impact child outcomes by changing the neighborhood environment, not through shared labor market shocks. Nearly all of the declining race gaps and expanding white class gaps in intergenerational mobility at the national level can be explained by the different changes in childhood environment across race and class groups, with low-income white parents experiencing the largest employment declines during the period we study.

“What Explains Temporal and Geographic Variation in the Early US Coronavirus Pandemic?”  
(with Hunt Allcott, Levi Boxell, Jacob Conway, Billy Ferguson, Matthew Gentzkow)

We provide new evidence on the drivers of the early US coronavirus pandemic. We combine an epidemiological model of disease transmission with quasi-random variation arising from the timing of stay-at-home-orders to estimate the causal roles of policy interventions and voluntary social distancing. We then relate the residual variation in disease transmission rates to observable features of cities. We estimate significant impacts of policy and social distancing responses, but we show that the magnitude of policy effects is modest, and most social distancing is driven by voluntary responses. Moreover, we show that neither policy nor rates of voluntary social distancing explain a meaningful share of geographic variation. The most important predictors of which cities were hardest hit by the pandemic are exogenous characteristics such as population and density.

#### **Publications**

Goldman, Benjamin, Thomas Klier, and Thomas Walstrum. "Within-industry agglomeration of occupations: Evidence from census microdata." *Journal of Regional Science* 59.5 (2019): 910-930.

#### **Papers in Progress**

“The Effect of the Minimum Wage on Low-Wage Workers” (with Harvey Barnhard and Sonya Porter)

“The Effect of Low-level Arrests on the Early-life Trajectory of Urban Youth” (with Jonathan Tebes)

“Leveraging Mixed Methods to Understand Economic and Sociological Mechanisms Underlying Recent Changes in Intergenerational Mobility” (with Raj Chetty and Stefanie DeLuca)

#### **Academic Service**

Referee for *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *Microeconomics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Journal of Urban Economics*

Organized the labor/public graduate workshop, Harvard, 2022