

Brittany Street

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Appointments

University of Missouri, Department of Economics, Assistant Professor, Fall 2020-present
University of Michigan, Criminal Justice Administrative Records System (CJARS),
Research Affiliate, Fall 2020-present; Postdoctoral Researcher, Fall 2019-Fall 2020

Education

Ph.D. Economics, Texas A&M University, Committee Chair - Mark Hoekstra, May 2019
B.S. Economics and Mathematics, *Summa Cum Laude*, Missouri State University, May 2014

Research Fields

Applied Microeconomics, Labor Economics, Crime, Criminal Justice System

Publications

Self-Employment as a Channel for Economic Self-Sufficiency and Criminal Disqualifications in the Pay Check Protection Program (with Keith Finlay and Michael Mueller-Smith) *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 2022

The Effect of Own-Gender Juries on Convictions (with Mark Hoekstra), *Journal of Law and Economics* 2021

The Effect of Investments in Physical Education on Student Health and Achievement (with Analisa Packham), *Economics of Education Review* 2019

Working Papers (available online and linked in title)

Children's Indirect Exposure to the U.S. Justice System: Evidence from Longitudinal Links between Survey and Administrative Data (with Keith Finlay and Michael Mueller-Smith) Resubmitted at *Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Children's indirect exposure to the justice system through biological parents or coresident adults is both a marker of their own vulnerability and a measure of the justice system's expansive reach in society. Estimating the size of this population has historically been hampered by inadequate data resources, including the inability to (1) observe non-incarceration events, (2) follow children throughout their childhood, and (3) measure adult non-biological parent cohabitants. To overcome these challenges, we leverage billions of restricted administrative and survey records linked with the Criminal Justice Administrative Records System, and find substantially larger exposure rates than previously reported: prison – 9% of children born between 1999–2005, felony conviction – 18%, and any criminal charge – 39%. Charge exposure rates exceed 60% for Black, American Indian, and low-income children. While broader definitions reach a more expansive population, strong and consistent negative correlations with childhood well-being suggest potential negative externalities reach further

than previously thought. Finally, we document substantial geographic variation in exposure, which we leverage in a movers design to estimate the effect of living in a high exposure county during childhood. We find that children moving into high exposure counties are more likely to experience post-move exposure events and exhibit significantly worse outcomes by age 26 on multiple dimensions (earnings, criminal activity, teen parenthood, mortality); those impacts are strongest for those who moved at earlier ages.

The Impact of Economic Opportunity on Criminal Behavior: Evidence from the Fracking Boom *Under Review*

Economic theory suggests crime should decrease as economic opportunities increase the returns to legal employment. However, there are well-documented cases where crime increases in response to areas becoming more prosperous. This paper addresses this puzzle by examining the effects on crime only for residents already living in the area prior to the economic boom. This approach isolates the effect of local economic opportunity from the effect of changing composition due to in-migration during these periods. To identify effects, I exploit within- and across-county variation in exposure to hydraulic fracturing activities in North Dakota using administrative individual-level data on residents, mineral lease records, and criminal charges. Results indicate that the start of economic expansion – as signaled by the signing of leases – leads to a 14 percent reduction in criminal cases filed. Effects continue once the fracking boom escalates during the more labor-intensive period. This is consistent with improved economic opportunity reducing crime.

Convictions, Incarceration, and Earnings in an Event Studies Framework (with Keith Finlay and Michael Mueller-Smith)

There is compelling evidence that convictions and incarceration have negative impacts on labor market outcomes. But research also shows that offenders have relatively low levels of human capital even before any contact with the justice system. Thus, accurately characterizing an offender's employment profile and the plausible impact of the justice system has been challenging due to this population's non-trivial involvement in both formal and informal sectors and the non-linear relationship between criminal justice involvement and economic outcomes (e.g. the first criminal record playing a critical role in life-long employment outcomes). We use high-quality longitudinal criminal justice records through CJARS integrated with extensive labor market data (IRS W-2s and ACS self-reported work) to examine the effect of criminal justice interactions on labor market outcomes in an event study framework. Employment and earnings are tracked in both formal administrative as well as self-reported employment status in survey responses, providing an opportunity to identify informality and its implications. In this research, we highlight the importance of periodicity of criminal justice events and the role of shifts to informal employment, particularly when using event studies and admin data.

The Vicious Circle of Blackouts and Revenue Collection in Developing Economies: Evidence from Ghana (with James Dzansi, Steve Puller, and Belinda Yebuah-Dwamena)

Access to reliable electricity is one of the largest barriers to economic growth in developing economies. Utilities suffer from the twin challenges of quasi-fiscal deficits and the need to implement rolling blackouts during periods with supply shortages. In this paper, we measure the negative feedback loop between bill payment and rolling blackouts that can create a "revenue trap" for electric utilities. Using household-level data on bill payment and power outages before and after a power crisis in Ghana, we estimate the impact of quasi-random exposure to power outages on subsequent bill payment. We exploit a unique feature of the power grid whereby customers in close proximity are exposed to different levels of blackouts because some are served by a feeder with critical infrastructure "down the line" and others are served by feeders that do not service essential infrastructure. We find that

households quasi-experimentally exposed to rolling blackouts accumulate larger unpaid balances relative to households on essential feeders. This is consistent with a negative feedback loop in which decreases in power reliability induce households to pay bills at lower rates and, thus, weaken the utility's financial viability.

Conferences (*scheduled)

- 2023:** CeMENT (mentee), TxECW (discussant)*, University of Texas*, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis*, London School of Economics*, U.S. Census Bureau*, Society of Labor Economists*
- 2022:** American University, Association for Public Policy & Management, England-Clark Public and Labor Workshop, Society of Labor Economists, IRP SRW Institute for Research on Poverty, Western Economic Association International Conference, 11th Annual Risky Behaviors Conference, NBER (Children's and Crime), American Law and Economics Association, University of Pennsylvania, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Harvard Opportunity Insight's Mobility Conference, Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology Research & Policy Conference, Rutgers University, American Society of Criminology, SEA Southern Economic Association, NBER Mobility Conference
- 2021:** University of Florida, Southern Economic Association, Association for Public Policy & Management (moved to 2022), Tulane University, West Virginia University, NBER Gender in the Economy, Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) SRW (participant), MEA-SOLE
- 2020:** AL CAPONE 11th Annual Conference (cancelled), SEA Southern Economic Association, Notre Dame University, NBER Gender in the Economy, ALEA American Law and Economics Association (cancelled), Purdue University (cancelled), MEA-SOLE (cancelled), Public Choice Conference (cancelled), Endogenous Rules, Risk, and Legal Institutions Workshop, AEA American Economic Association
- 2019:** SOLE Society of Labor Economists, APEE Association of Private Enterprise Education, TxECW Texas Economics of Crime Workshop (participant), AEA American Economic Association, Louisiana State University
- 2018:** APPAM Association for Public Policy & Management, SEA Southern Economic Association, STATA TX Empirical Microeconomics Conference
- 2017:** SEA Southern Economic Association, APPAM Association for Public Policy & Management (poster), WEAI Western Economic Association International, SAAER Symposium for Agricultural & Applied Economics Research

Instructor of Record

University of Missouri

Adv. Empirical Methods II, Topics in Policy Analysis (ECONOM 9447)

SP2021: 14 students, overall rating 4.83/5

SP2022: 8 students, overall rating 4.71/5

SP2023: 4 students

Intermediate Microeconomics (ECONOM 4351/7351)

SP2021: 85 students, overall rating 4.57/5

SP2022: 140 students, overall rating 4.47/5

SP2023: 101 students

Texas A&M University

Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON 323)

SP2018: 228 students, overall instructor rating 4.8/5

Grants, Contracts, and Awards

University of Michigan, “Children and the US Justice System,” 2022, \$21,00, PI

Missouri Attorney General’s Vehicle Stops Report Contract. 2021-2022 \$20,000, Co-PI

Missouri Attorney General’s Vehicle Stops Report Contract. 2020-2021 \$15,000, Co-PI

NBER’s Gender in the Economy Study, “The Determinants and Aftermath of Victimization in U.S. households and the Implications of Covid-19,” 2020-2021, \$19,930, PI

University of Michigan, “Mobility from Poverty Center and National Criminal Justice Data Expansion,” 2020, \$59,857, PI

Alumni Leaders Board Faculty Fellowship Award (2022)

Murray Faculty Fellowship (2021)

Best Graduate Instructor Award (2018)

Gail Frey Monson Memorial Scholarship (2018-2019)

Private Enterprise Research Center Graduate Fellow (2016-2018)

Summer Time Advancement in Research (STAR) Award (2017)

First place 4th-year graduate departmental presentations (2018)

First place 3rd-year graduate departmental presentations (2017)

Diversity Fellowship (2014-2017)

APPAM First Place Poster Presentation (2017)

SAAER Top Paper Award (2017)

Related Service

Referee: Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Labor Economics, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Health Economics, Economic Inquiry, Contemporary Economic Policy, Journal of Human Capital, Law and Social Inquiry, Resources policy, Industrial Relations, Canadian Journal of Economics, European Journal of Law and Economics, Journal of Law, Economics and Organization, Justice Quarterly

Student Advising: Brendan Cirillo (PhD committee member), Jorge Martinez (PhD committee member), Sungjin Lee (PhD committee member), Youngbin Lee (PhD committee member), Tabitha Juneau (PhD committee member), Savannah McAuley (MA research project), Emma Gould (MA research project), Dili Maduabum (undergraduate research project), Samantha Mackley (undergraduate research project)

Policy work: Vehicle Stops Report for the Attorney General of Missouri (2020, 2021, 2022)