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Graduate Administrator

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Office Contact Information

Industrial Relations Section

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Princeton, NJ 08544

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Princeton University, Expected Completion May 2023

DISSERTATION: “Essays on Local Labor Markets”

M.A. in Economics, Princeton University, 2018

B.A. in Economics with honors; B.A. in Mathematics (magna cum laude), Brown University, 2014

References

Professor Leah Boustan

Princeton University

(609) 258-7116

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Professor Ilyana Kuziemko

Princeton University

(609) 258-8276

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Professor Stephen Redding

Princeton University

(609) 258-4016

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Research Fields

Primary: Labor Economics, Urban Economics, Economic History

Secondary: International Trade

Job Market Paper

“The Effect of Deindustrialization on Local Economies: Evidence from New England Textile Towns”

This paper documents the persistence of a local labor demand shock from a key episode of deindustrialization in the US: the decline of the New England textile industry in the 1920s. Although spatial equilibrium models predict worker migration in response to a loss of local employment, New England towns that heavily depended on the textile industry in 1900 did not experience a significant decline in population compared to other towns. Individuals in these towns, especially those with a lower level of wealth, were less likely to out-migrate. Young and older residents were both likely to stay in town but otherwise responded differently to the industry decline. Adult workers switched to the agricultural sector and faced decreased occupational earnings. Young, school-going-aged residents decreased labor force participation and increased their educational attainment. Using a matched difference-in-differences design that exploits variation in timing and location of textile plant closures, I find that young individuals in plant closure towns increased their eighth-grade completion, but their labor market outcomes did not improve by 1940. My findings provide a rationale for two policy instruments for local recovery: migration assistance to the low and middle-class workforce, and place-based policies that aid the transition of workers to different industries or promote diversity in the local industrial base.

Working Papers

“Local Economic and Political Effects of Trade Deals: Evidence from NAFTA” (with Ilyana Kuziemko, Ebonya Washington and Gavin Wright) *Revise and Resubmit at American Economic Review*

Why have white, less educated voters left the Democratic Party over the past few decades? Scholars have proposed racial resentment, social issues, and deindustrialization as potential answers. We highlight the role played by the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In event-study analysis, we demonstrate that counties whose 1990 employment depended on industries vulnerable to NAFTA suffered large and persistent employment losses relative to other counties. These losses begin in the mid-1990s and are only modestly offset by transfer programs. While exposed counties historically voted Democratic, in the mid-1990s they turn away from the party of the president (Bill Clinton) who ushered in the agreement and by the 2000s are among the most Republican. Employing a variety of micro-data sources, including 1992-1994 respondent-level panel data, we show that protectionist views predict movement toward the GOP in the years that NAFTA is debated and implemented. This shift among protectionist respondents is larger for whites (especially men and those without a college degree) and those with conservative social views, suggesting an interactive effect whereby racial identity and social-issue positions mediate reactions to economic policies.

“Automation after the Assembly Line: Computerized Machine Tools, Employment and Productivity in the United States” (with Leah Boustan and David Clingsmith) *NBER Working Paper 30400*

Since the 1970s, computerized machine tools have been replacing semi-skilled manufacturing workers, contributing to factory automation. We build a novel measure of exposure to computer numerical control (CNC) based on initial variation in tool types across industries and differential shifts toward CNC technology by tool type over time. Industries more exposed to CNC increased capital investment and experienced higher labor productivity. Total employment rose, with gains for college-educated workers and abstract tasks compensating for losses of less-educated workers and routine tasks. Employment gains were strongest for unionized jobs. Workers in exposed industries returned to school and relevant degree programs expanded.

“The Economic Consequences of Trade Protection: Evidence from the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930”

This paper examines the effect increased tariffs had on regional economies after the passage of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930, which increased tariff rates on approximately one-third of all dutiable items. I construct a Bartik-style measure of the Average Tariff changes (ATC) for each local labor market, a measure of how exposed the labor market is to the tariff policy. By employing a continuous difference-in-differences strategy and controlling for the initial agricultural share, I find that the exposure to the tariff policy had a positive and significant effect on the labor force participation rate. While the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act was initially proposed to help the struggling agricultural sector, I show that the policy had no significant effect on the value of agricultural lands, the use of agricultural machinery, or labor force participation in rural labor markets. Instead, the increased labor force participation is concentrated in urban areas, increasing the urban-rural disparities.

Work in Progress

“Understanding Racial Disparities and Bias in Eviction” (with Carl Gershenson)

“Rise of the Southern Textile Industry and Racial Inequality in the US”

Professional Activities

Referee for The Review of Economic Studies and Journal of Urban Economics

Presenter in 2019 Urban Economics Association PhD Student Workshop in Urban Economics

Presenter in 2022 NBER Development of the American Economy Summer Institute PhD poster session

Presenter in Applied Economics Workshop 2022 at Florida State University

Awards and Fellowships

The Prize Fellowship in Social Sciences, Princeton University, 2021-2022, 2022-2023

Clarence J. Hicks Memorial Fellowship, Industrial Relations Section, Princeton University, 2020-2021

Graduate Fellowship, Princeton University, 2016-2021

Samsung Scholarship Fellow (5-year merit-based scholarship of \$50,000 each year), 2016-2021

Samuel C. Lamport Prize for the best senior theses in Economics, Brown University, 2014

Undergraduate Teaching and Research Awards, Brown University, 2013

Research Experience

Research Assistant for Profs. Ilyana Kuziemko and Ebonya Washington, 2019

Research Assistant for Prof. Esteban Rossi-Hansberg, 2017-2018

Full-time Research Specialist for Profs. Matthew Gentzkow and Jesse Shapiro, 2014-2016

Research Assistant for Prof. Kaivan Munshi, 2013-2014

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant for Economics of the Internet: The Digital Revolution (Undergraduate), Fall 2020

Course Organizer for Introduction to Macroeconomics (Undergraduate), Spring 2020

Teaching Assistant for Econometric Applications (Undergraduate), Spring 2019

Teaching Assistant for Introduction to Macroeconomics (Undergraduate), Fall 2018

Languages and Skills

Programming languages: Stata, Matlab, R, Python, Java, Maple, ArcGIS

Languages: Fluent in English and Korean, Intermediate-Advanced level Chinese Mandarin

Citizenship: Republic of Korea

Last updated: November 14th, 2022