

Jiangnan Zeng

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, University of Pittsburgh, expected June 2024

Thesis Title: "Minority Representation, Segregation, and Racial Sorting"

Thesis Committee: Prof. Randall Walsh (Co-Chair), Prof. Daniel B. Jones (Co-Chair), Prof. Claire Duquenois, Prof. Carlos Fernando Avenancio-León

M.A. Economics, University of Pittsburgh, 2020

M.A. Public Policy, University of Chicago, 2018

B.S. Finance, Renmin University of China, 2017

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Primary Fields: Public Economics, Urban Economics

Secondary Fields: Labor Economics, Political Economy

PUBLICATIONS

Estimating the Economic Impact of Intensifying Environmental Regulation in China"
(with Dali Yang and Qiyao Zhou), *Environmental and Resource Economics*,
forthcoming.

WORKING PAPERS

"Minority Representations, Segregation, and Racial Sorting" (*Job Market Paper*)

"Meritocracy and Subnational GDP Manipulation in China" (with Qiyao Zhou),
Revised and resubmitted to the **Journal of Urban Economics**

"The City Council Member Next Door" (with Daniel B. Jones and Randall Walsh)
(under review)

"Housing market regulations and within-city spatial inequality", second-year paper

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS (with selected abstracts at the end)

"Sports and Racial Attitudes" with Claire Duquenois

“How Minority Representation in Government Affects Police Stop Minorities”
(with Daniel Jones and Xiaohong Wang)

"Local Politics and Migration Choice" (with Noah McKinnie Braun)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Main Instructor

- Introduction to Microeconomic Theory: Summer 2023

Teaching Assistant

- Intermediate Microeconomics (Grader): Summer 2022
- Introduction to Macroeconomic Theory: Spring 2021
- Game Theory Principles (Grader): Fall 2020

SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

2024: American Economic Association Meetings, scheduled; North American Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society, scheduled

2023: European Economic Association Annual Meeting; Society of Labor Economics Annual Meeting (SOLE)

2022: Asian Real Estate Society (AsRES) Annual Conference

2021: Midwest Economics Association Annual Conference (AERE@MEA)

HONORS, FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS:

Social Science Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (\$25,764), University of Pittsburgh, 2023-2024

Andrew Mellon Pre-doctoral Fellowship (\$25,332), University of Pittsburgh, 2022-2023
Department of Economics Summer Fellowship (\$2,500), University of Pittsburgh, 2020
Distinguished Undergraduate Thesis, Renmin University of China, 2017

RELEVANT POSITIONS HELD:

Research Assistant to Professor Randall Walsh, Pitt Department of Economics, 2021-2022

Research Assistant to Professor Yana Gallen, University of Chicago, 2018-2019

Research Assistant to Professor Dali Yang, University of Chicago, 2018-2019

COMPUTER SKILLS:

Stata, Python, ArcGIS, MATLAB, R, Python

LANGUAGES:

Mandarin (native); English (fluent); French (basic)

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Date of Birth: October 25, 1994

Citizenship: China

WORKING PAPERS ABSTRACTS

“Minority Representations, Segregation, and Racial Sorting” (job market paper)

This paper evaluates how changes in minority representation impact minority group location decisions and residential segregation. Using close elections for mayors and voter registration data in North Carolina, I causally identify the impact of having a black mayor on the location decisions of individuals within and across cities. Having a black mayor significantly increases the net population in both majority-black and non-majority-black neighborhoods in North Carolina. Further decomposition suggests that in majority black neighborhoods, a black mayor reduces the out-migration of both black and white individuals and attracts more black individuals from outside the city. In non-majority black neighborhoods, fewer individuals of both races move out, while more white individuals from outside the city move in. I find similar patterns for 300 major cities in the U.S. using tract-level aggregated data. Electing a black mayor increases the total population in all neighborhoods by 3.6%, and especially more blacks in majority-black neighborhoods by 6%. Further mechanism analyses reveal that minority representation has a positive impact on amenity conditions in minority neighborhoods and also leads to a shift in local public attention towards these neighborhoods. The above results suggest that minority representation can potentially decrease racial disparities by improving conditions in minority neighborhoods, slowing down black suburbanization trends, and making cities more appealing to all groups.

**“Meritocracy and Subnational GDP Manipulation in China” (with Qiyao Zhou),
Revised and resubmitted to the *Journal of Urban Economics***

What role do local officials' incentives play in regional economic growth? How do local officials behave under promotion pressure? This paper studies the unintended impact of mayors' promotion incentives on regional economic growth and subnational-level GDP manipulation in China. We employ a regression discontinuity design that accounts for age restrictions in deciding promotions for mayors. We find that when GDP performance is prioritized in officials' promotion evaluations (before 2013), mayors' promotion incentives significantly increase the statistical GDP growth rate by 3.4 percentage points. However, their effects on nighttime light and other non-manipulable real economic growth indicators are close to zero. This gap can be attributed to GDP manipulation under our empirical framework. The above pattern no longer persists after 2013, when the role of GDP statistics in mayoral promotions was reduced. Our findings indicate that GDP manipulation makes performance-based competition between mayors devolve into a data manipulation game. Further analyses suggest a dynamic pattern of GDP manipulation, and that GDP manipulation hampers officials' accountability.

“The City Council Member Next Door” (with Daniel B. Jones and Randall Walsh)

(under review)

This paper examines whether the election of a city council member generates highly localized benefits within their own neighborhoods. We use housing prices as a summary statistic to capture the numerous and difficult to observe ways in which local government allocates localized amenities. Drawing on data on North Carolina city council elections and the universe of housing transactions, we use a close-elections regression discontinuity strategy. We find that housing prices substantially increase for houses very close (within 0.2 miles) to a newly elected councilmember's place of residence.

“How Minority Representation in Government Affects Police Stop Minorities”

(with Daniel Jones and Xiaohong Wang)

We draw on statewide data from North Carolina to examine the impacts of racial and ethnic representation in city councils impacts policing. Specifically, we focus on outcomes of traffic stops; e.g., whether a driver receives a warning or a citation after being stopped. We first document large Black-white and Latino-white disparities in the likelihood of consequence (arrest or citation) after a traffic stop. We then use a difference-in-differences design, focusing on changes following (narrow) elections of nonwhite (rather than white) councilmembers, and find that heightened nonwhite representation significantly reduces Black-white gaps in stops and actions taken after a stop. The magnitude of the reduction is similar with and without officer fixed effects, suggesting that results are largely driven by individual officer-level behavior change rather than a change in the composition of the police force.

“Housing market regulations and within-city spatial inequality”, second-year paper

Housing prices more than tripled in China in the past decade, especially in big cities. The central and local governments took many steps to cool off the overheating housing market; among them, the most stringent one is the 2016-2017 wave of regulation, which tightens home purchasing restrictions on residential parcels by increasing the down payment ratio requirement for mortgages. This paper studies housing market regulations' impact on housing price dispersion and spatial inequality within a city. Evidence based on Shanghai housing market transaction records shows that the 2016-2017 wave regulation decreased city-level price dispersion and spatial inequality. The regulations have a differentiated impact on segments of the housing market, effectively stable the relative prices between low- and high-quality neighborhoods. Results for the other four major cities provide a similar pattern, suggesting a general pattern of the regulation effects in all the metropolitan cities in China.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS:

“Sports and Racial Attitudes” with Claire Duquenois

In this project, we investigate whether the public's racial attitudes are impacted in the short-run by exposure to, and the performance of, key visible minority athletes such as

Black NFL quarterbacks and Hispanic MLB pitchers, with potential implications for the incidence of hate speech and crimes.

"Local Politics and Migration Choice" (with Noah McKinnie Braun)

REFERENCES:

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