



February 22, 2022

Re: research annual review of Brittany Street, Assistant Professor

Below is a review of Professor Street's research for this year's annual review. I cover calendar year 2021 as well as noting developments in 2022 through February. The review is organized by paper. The extent of my own comments are generally inversely proportional to the strength of the signal from a journal's decision; for example, I try to say more about unpublished papers, but don't have much to add for already-published papers. Previously, she published a paper in the *Economics of Education Review* with fellow recent Texas A&M graduate Analisa Packham (2019), which has 29 citations per Google Scholar. All Google Scholar citation counts are as of February 22, 2022.¹

The Effect of Own-Gender Juries on Convictions (with Mark Hoekstra)

Journal of Law and Economics (accepted & published in 2021)

This journal is ranked #51 on RePEc's recursive discounted impact factor ranking, and the highest-ranked with "law" in its name.² (I think this ranking is most accurate, but the journal is also #50 on the aggregate ranking.) The journal is also ranked #23 on the Scimago "Journal Rankings on Law."³ As RePEc misses citations from law journals not on RePEc, the RePEc rank should be seen as a conservative bound on the true overall journal quality (which is arguably better than #51 for this reason). Coauthor Hoekstra was Professor Street's primary advisor in grad school. The paper has 12 citations per Google Scholar (after removing 3 duplicates among the 15 listed).

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 (submitted in 2021; R&R in 2022)

This is one of the papers coming from Professor Street's post-doc with the Criminal Justice Administrative Records System (CJARS) at the University of Michigan in 2019–2020. Coauthor Finlay is an economist at the US Census Bureau, and Mueller-Smith is an assistant professor at Michigan who directs CJARS.

The journal is ranked #3 on the Scimago "Journal Rankings on Public Administration."⁴ (Because of its methodology that counts only citations in other "economics" journals, RePEc systematically under-ranks interdisciplinary journals, whether in policy, education, statistics, or other fields.)

¹<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=kQ8s3eIAAAAJ>

²<https://ideas.repec.org/top/top.journals.rdiscount.html>

³<https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?category=3308>

⁴<https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?category=3321>

This paper provides an initial descriptive exploration of the new CJARS data linked to tax return data, focusing on self-employment (comparing individuals with and without past contact with the criminal justice system in the US), also highlighting the resulting (initial) disqualification of individuals from the COVID-related Paycheck Protection Program. Because this is an important area that is not understood well, the descriptive work alone was valuable enough for the journal to give the R&R decision.

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

Rejected by QJE in 2020; revised in 2021; next submitting to AEJ or REStat

This is Professor Street's solo job market paper. It was not accepted by the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, but seems to have a good chance at journals in the next tier (outside the "top 5").

The paper studies the relationship between criminal behavior and economic factors, using the arguably exogenous distribution across North Dakota of oil and gas reserves that suddenly became available for extraction by hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), combined with a novel dataset to distinguish original residents from those who moved into the state after the advent of fracking. This is important, otherwise the aggregate effect on crime is a combination of the effects on original residents (due to increased wealth during the leasing period and/or increased work hours during the production period) and the "migration" effects of changing types of residents due to the influx of workers. Because the workers are generally young males who tend to have higher crime rates, aggregate views tend to find positive correlations between local economic activity and crime. This dataset isolates the effects of the economic activity itself. The structure of fracking activity further provides some insight into wealth effects (the initial "leasing period" gave households money in return for mineral rights, but before any fracking work started) separate from wealth and employment effects. Employment can provide an "incapacitation effect" that reduces crime due to individuals having fewer free time in which to commit crime. Increased wealth could deter individuals on the margin from committing economically-motivated crimes, although it could potentially also increase demand for illegal drugs. Generally, Professor Street finds a drop in crime committed by original residents during the leasing period, especially for drug-related crimes, followed by a small increase in crime (but still below pre-leasing levels) during the production period. One possibility is that although the new residents' crimes are not included, their behavior may increase crime rates among old residents. The paper includes a variety of outcomes, robustness checks, pre-trend checks, placebo tests, multiple testing-adjusted p -values, etc.

Google Scholar reports 15 citations.

Other work

- (i) The working paper "The Vicious Circle of Blackouts and Revenue Collection in Developing Economies: Evidence from Ghana" is coauthored with one of Professor Street's former grad school committee members (Steve Puller) along with James Dzansi and Belinda Yebuah-Dwamena. Puller comments on Street's contribution: "Although I initially developed the research idea, Brittany was an equal (or greater) contributor to the project thereafter. She helped develop the identification strategy, choose empirical specifications, and write the paper. Along the way, she traveled twice to Ghana to interact with the utility's

personnel, assemble data, and gather institutional knowledge.” Google Scholar reports 6 citations. It was revised in 2021 and will be submitted to the *Journal of Development Economics* in 2022.

- (ii) There are two in-progress papers that are relatively close to a first draft, both with the same CJARS coauthors (Finaly and Mueller-Smith) as the paper above.
- (iii) There are four additional projects at varying early stages, like “Second Chance for the Second Generation: The Intergenerational Impacts of Felony Diversion,” where the identification strategy uses a past change in Texas policy/law that increased the possibility for alternatives to the standard felony prosecution and sentencing, coauthored with Mueller-Smith (CJARS/UMich) and Kevin Schnepel (Simon Fraser University); and “The Effect of Access to Financial Resources on Educational Attainment” (with Steve Puller and David Ripplinger), which leverages the quasi-random variation in fracking similar to Professor Street’s job market paper.

Report prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David M. Kaplan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David M. Kaplan
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