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Undergraduate Studies:

BA, Philosophy, Stanford University, distinction, *Phi Beta Kappa*, 2004

Graduate Studies:

Harvard University, 2007 to present
Thesis Title: "Essays in Political Economy"
Expected Completion Date: June 2012

References:

Professor Alberto Alesina
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Professor Edward Glaeser
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Professor David Cutler
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Professor Lawrence Katz
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Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Political economy, labor economics
Secondary fields: Public economics, macroeconomics

Teaching Experience:

Fall, 2008 Graduate macroeconomics, teaching fellow for Prof. Emmanuel Farhi
Fall, 2009 Undergraduate econometrics, teaching fellow for Prof. Eric Chaney

Research Experience and Other Employment:

8/04-8/05 Yale Law School, Research Assistant for Prof. John Donohue
8/05-8/06 Brookings Institution, Research Assistant for Peter Orszag and William Gale

Research Papers:

“The Effects of Racial Animus on Voting: Evidence Using Google Search Data” (Job Market Paper)

Traditional surveys struggle to capture socially unacceptable attitudes such as racial animus. This paper uses Google searches including racially charged language as a proxy for a local area’s racial animus. I use the Google-search proxy, available for roughly 200 media markets in the United States, to reassess the impact of racial attitudes on voting for a black candidate in the United States. I compare an area’s racially charged search volume to its votes for Barack Obama, the 2008 black Democratic presidential candidate, controlling for its votes for John Kerry, the 2004 white Democratic presidential candidate. Other studies using a similar empirical specification and standard state-level survey measures of racial attitudes yield little evidence that racial animus had a major impact in recent U.S. elections. Using the Google-search proxy, I find significant and robust effects in the 2008 presidential election. The estimates imply that racial animus in the United States cost Obama three to five percentage points in the national popular vote in the 2008 election.

“If Human Capital Causes Democracy, Must Democracy Better Develop Human Capital?”

This paper models investment in education with the government in power aware that greater human capital makes democracy more likely in the future. When overall human capital is low, democracy is unlikely in the future. This gives a greater incentive to invest in education for an autocratic government but a lower incentive to invest in education for a democratic government. When overall human capital is high, democracy is likely in the future, and the incentives are reversed. Education should be increasing in human capital in democracies but decreasing in human capital in autocracies. This is consistent with the data. Implications of the model include: If human capital is low enough, democracy can be an inefficient form of government; and small positive shocks to human capital can dramatically increase a country’s welfare.

Research Papers in Progress:

“Anxiety and GDP”

Estimating the economic consequences of anxiety has proven difficult for two reasons: First, anxiety, like many health conditions, may be inaccurately reported to surveys. Second, plausibly exogenous shocks to anxiety have not been found, limiting causal interpretations. This paper develops a monthly measure of an area’s anxiety from search data as well as an instrument for anxiety: conditions in foreign wars interacted with percent of the population at risk. Controlling for soldiers stationed abroad, danger abroad (casualties) increases anxiety relatively more in areas with more soldiers at risk but should not otherwise differentially affect an area’s economic performance. A one standard deviation increase in anxiety lowers GDP growth by one percentage point.

Publications:

“Encouraging Homeownership Through the Tax Code,” *Tax Notes*, June 18, 2007, 1-19 (with William Gale and Jon Gruber)

Personal Information: D.O.B: 9/15/82, Englewood, NJ; Citizenship: USA.