

Megan T. Stevenson

Antonin Scalia Law School, George Mason University
msteven@gmu.edu

APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor, George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School, 2017-current
Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2015-2017

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley, 2016
M.S., Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley, 2011
B.A., Interdisciplinary Studies, UC Berkeley 2009 (Highest Distinction)

PUBLICATIONS (LAW REVIEWS & ECONOMICS JOURNALS)

Algorithmic Social Engineering AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION PAPERS & PROCEEDINGS (forthcoming, 2020) (joint with Bo Cowgill)

- [ungated version here](#)

Misdemeanors By the Numbers 61 BOSTON COLLEGE LAW REVIEW, 2020 (FORTHCOMING) (joint with Sandra Mayson)

- [ungated version here](#)

Algorithmic Risk Assessment and the Double-Edged Sword of Youth 96 WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW, 2018 (joint with Christopher Slobogin; re-issued in BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES & LAW special edition on risk assessment)

- [ungated version here](#)

Distortion of Justice: How the Inability to Pay Bail Affects Case Outcomes, 34 JOURNAL OF LAW, ECONOMICS & ORGANIZATION 511, 2018

- [ungated version here](#)
- Winner, 2019 **Oliver E. Williamson Award** for best article, selected from all JLEO articles published within the preceding three years

Assessing Risk Assessment in Action, 103 MINNESOTA LAW REVIEW 303, 2018

- [ungated version here](#)
- Winner, 2017 **Young Legal Scholars Paper Competition**, Federalist Society

The Scale of Misdemeanor Justice, 98 BOSTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW 731, 2018 (joint with Sandra Mayson)

- [ungated version here](#)

The Downstream Consequences of Misdemeanor Pretrial Detention, 69 STANFORD LAW REVIEW 711, 2017 (joint with Paul Heaton and Sandra Mayson)

- [ungated version here](#)

Breaking Bad: Mechanisms of Social Influence and the Path to Criminality in Juvenile Jails, 99 REVIEW OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS 824, 2017

- [ungated version here](#)

PUBLICATIONS (OTHER)

Response to “What is ‘Fair’? Algorithms in Criminal Justice” 34 ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Summer 2018

Pretrial Risk Assessment: A Practice Guide for Judges, 57 ABA JUDGES JOURNAL, Summer 2018 (joint with David G. Robinson and Hannah Jane Sassaman)

Bail Reform: New Directions for Pretrial Detention and Release, ACADEMY FOR JUSTICE, A REPORT ON SCHOLARSHIP AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM (Erik Luna ed., 2017)

- [ungated version here](#)

Green Industrial Policy: Trade and Theory, WORLD BANK POLICY RESEARCH WORKING PAPER (2012, joint with Larry Karp)

- [ungated version here](#)

WORKING PAPERS

Jailed While Presumed Innocent: The Demobilizing Effects of Pretrial Detention (joint with Anne McDonough, Ted Enamorado, Tali Mendelberg; date of most recent draft: Dec. 12, 2019)

Bail, Jail, and Pretrial Misconduct: The Influence of Prosecutors (joint with Aurelie Ouss; date of most recent draft: Dec. 23, 2019)

- [ungated version here](#)

Algorithmic Risk Assessment in The Hands of Humans (joint with Jennifer Doleac; date of most recent draft: Nov. 18, 2019)

- [ungated version here](#)

A Decomposition of Racial Disparities in Pretrial Detention (date of most recent draft: Jan. 27, 2018)

The Risk the Justifies Detention (joint with Sandra Mayson; date of most recent draft: Aug. 20, 2019)

Tests of Random Assignment to Peers in the Face of Mechanical Negative Correlation: An Evaluation of Four Techniques (date of most recent draft: Aug. 9, 2015)

Better Bargaining: Using Machine Learning to Decrease Sentence Disparities (joint with David Abrams, Aurelie Ouss, Colin Sullivan and Brian Collopy; work in progress)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

2019-2020 (including forthcoming): JCLC Symposium on Prosecutors, Endogenous Rules Workshop, University of Berkeley Law, Accounting, and Business Workshop, University of Alabama Law & Economics Colloquium, Duke Law & Economics Colloquium, ASSA Annual Meeting, Conference on Empirical Legal Studies, NBER Summer Institute (Crime/Law Sessions), Schar School Microeconomic Policy Seminar

2018-2019: Economics and Fairness Workshop (Harvard, Computing Community Consortium), Law & Society Annual Meeting, Pretrial Reform and Operations Workgroup (Judicial Council of CA, appointed by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakuaye), Inter-American Development Bank, UCLA Workshop on AI and Law Enforcement, Moritz College of Law (Ohio State), University of Michigan Law & Economics Colloquium, Northwestern University Law & Economics Colloquium, University of Texas at Austin Law & Economics Colloquium

2017-2018: CrimFest, Panel on Algorithmic Fairness (GMU Symposium on the Law & Economics of Privacy and Data Security), ALEA, Rebellious Lawyering Conference (Yale Law School), Vanderbilt University Panel on Risk Assessment, University of Louisville School of Business, Federalist Society Young Legal Scholars Panel (at AALS), ACLU Convening on Racial Fairness and Risk Assessments, Boston University Symposium on Misdemeanors

2016-2017: AALS Summer Session on Criminal Law, University of California, Berkeley, Boalt School of Law, George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School, University of Arizona, School of Public Policy, NBER Summer Institute, Brookings Institution

2015-2016: University of Chicago Crime Lab in New York City, University of Virginia Law and Economics Colloquium, Transatlantic Workshop on Crime (Sweden), Early Career Behavioral Economics Conference (Germany) Understanding Guilty Pleas

2014-2015: American Law and Economics Association Annual Meeting, Conference on Empirical Legal Studies, University of Indiana Bloomington School of Public Policy, UC Davis Labor Economics Seminar, WEAI Graduate Student Dissertation Workshop, 2014

2013-2014: ARE Departmental Seminar, University College London Workshop on Crime (England), Berkeley Statistics Seminar

AWARDS

Oliver E. Williamson Award for best article, selected among all papers published within the preceding 3 years in the Journal of Law, Economics & Organization (*Distortion of Justice: How the Inability to Pay Bail Affects Case Outcomes*)

Winner, **Young Legal Scholars Paper Competition**, Federalist Society, 2017 (*Assessing Risk Assessment in Action*)

RESEARCH FUNDING

American Constitution Society
National Science Foundation Dissertation Grant
Russell Sage Small Grants in Behavioral Economics
Laura and John Arnold Foundation
IBER Dissertation Award
Graduate Student Summer Fellowship
Breslauer Award
Banque Syz & Co. Scholarship

TEACHING

Economics for Lawyers, Criminal Law

ACADEMIC SERVICES

Refereeing (Law & Economics Journals): Journal of Legal Studies, Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization, Journal of Empirical Legal Studies, American Law & Economics Review, Supreme Court Economic Review

Refereeing (Other Economics Journals): American Economic Review, Journal of Public Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Cuadernos de Economia, Journal of Development Economics

Refereeing (Law): Yale Law Journal, Behavioral Sciences and Law

Refereeing (Criminology): Journal of Quantitative Criminology, Criminology

Refereeing (Grant Review): National Science Foundation, Social Science and Humanities Research Council (Canada), Israel Science Foundation

Program Committee: Conference on Fairness, Accountability & Transparency in Algorithmic Systems (FAT)

Op-Eds:

- *In U.S. Bail Reform, Justice by Algorithm Can Only Go So Far*, [THE HILL](#), Feb. 2, 2018
- *Risk Assessment: The Devil's in the Details*, [THE CRIME REPORT](#), Aug. 31, 2017
- *Are Criminal Risk Assessment Scores Racist?*, [BROOKINGS INSTITUTION](#), Aug. 22, 2016 (with Jennifer Doleac)
- *Bail System is Unjust and Undermines Public Safety*, [HOUSTON CHRONICLE](#), Aug. 18, 2016 (with Paul Heaton and Sandra Mayson)
- *Reform Systems for Pretrial Incarceration in Philly*, [PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER](#), Sept. 9, 2016

Articles Focusing on My Research

- *Algorithms were supposed to make Virginia judges fairer. What actually happened was far more complicated.*, [THE WASHINGTON POST](#), Nov. 19, 2019
- *Algorithms should've made courts more fair. What went wrong?* [WIRED MAGAZINE](#), Sept. 05, 2019
- *In Philly, your race predicts whether you'll be locked up or go free before trial, study says*, [PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER](#), Apr., 29, 2019
- *Philly DA Larry Krasner stopped seeking bail for low-level crimes. Here's what happened next.* [PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER](#), Feb. 19, 2019
- *Why poor low-level offenders often plead to worse crimes*, [ATLANTIC MAGAZINE](#), July 24, 2016

Media Mentions (warning – citations sometimes inaccurate!):

- *Misdemeanors by the Numbers*: [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- *Evaluating the Impacts of Eliminating Prosecutorial Requests for Cash Bail*: [Time Magazine](#) (written by John Legend!), [Reason](#), [Philadelphia Tribune](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), [The Hill](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- *Algorithmic Risk Assessments and the Double-Edged Sword of Youth*: [Prison Policy Initiative](#), [Undark](#)
- *Assessing Risk Assessment in Action*: [Wired](#) (09/05/19) [Newsweek](#), [Science Magazine](#), [The Guardian](#), [US News & World Report](#), [The Daily Signal](#), [Wired](#), [The Atlantic](#), [Undark](#) (3/20/18), [Undark](#) (9/26/18), [Slate](#), [USA Today](#), [The Verge](#), [Pacific Standard](#), [US News and World Report](#), [Fast Company](#),
- *Pretrial Detention and Bail*: [Undark](#)
- *Distortion of Justice: How the Inability to Pay Bail Affects Case Outcomes*: [The Atlantic](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (8/5/2016), [International Business Times](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (3/12/19), [America Magazine](#)
- *The Downstream Consequences of Misdemeanor Pretrial Detention*: [The Houston Press](#), [NY Times](#), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#), [ABC News](#)

Podcasts:

- [Hi-Phi Nation \(Slate Podcasts\) S03E02: Risky Business](#)
- [Probable Causation \(Hosted by Jennifer Doleac\) S01E04](#)