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### Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Expected August 2022  
(Major Fields: Political Economy, Microeconomics)

M.A. in Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst, November 2019

Dual B.A. in Economics and Philosophy, University of Connecticut, 2007

### Primary Fields

- Political Economy
- Economic Development
- Urban Economics
- Applied Microeconomics

### Dissertation

Title: "Three Essays on Urban Economics"

Committee: Michael Ash (Chair), Vamsicharan Vakulabharanam (Member), JW Mason (Member), Max Page (Outside Member)

- Explores the role of spatial relations, particularly rent and land ownership, in the context of developed urban capitalist economies
- First essay: develops a Marxist-Georgist framework for thinking about urban land rents, drawing on classical political economy thought, radical geography, and urban sociology. This framework features a three-part class society (capital, land, labor) that engages in distributional conflict over the social product.
- Second essay: based on the above framework, develops a model of urban growth and distribution in an urban economy with particular attention to the evolution of the three factor shares (wages, profits, rents) along with changes in the spatial structure of production, communication, and transportation technology. This model is used to examine the role landed property (residential in particular) plays in the production and distribution of surplus.
- Third essay: an empirical analysis of rent control. Using an author-constructed database of New Jersey municipal rent control ordinances, I estimate the effects of rent control on the growth of rents and the rental housing stock in rent controlled vs uncontrolled towns using a first-differences approach.

### Papers and Contributions

"Towards a Theory of Ground Rent," Chapter in Doctoral Thesis

"What do Landlords Do? The Political Economy of Urban Growth and Distribution," Chapter in Doctoral Thesis

"The Effects and Effectiveness of Rent Control: Evidence from New Jersey," Chapter in Doctoral Thesis

Contributor, "Extremism and Radicalization: An Overview of the Social, Political, Cultural, and Economic Landscape of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan," *FATA Research Centre*, August 2012

**Research Experience**

Research Associate, FATA Research Centre, 2011-2012

- Produced reports on radicalization and terrorism in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, drawing from survey data and news reports.

**Research Interests**

- Economic power and distributional conflict
- Ground rent and its implications for inequality
- The interaction between institutions and economic power
- The political economy of radicalization
- Stratification economics

**Teaching Experience**

Instructor in the Department of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2016 – 2020

Courses

Intermediate Microeconomics (Online, Su2019)  
Intermediate Macroeconomics (Online, S2018)

Teaching Assistant in the Department of Economics at the University of Massachusetts, 2012 – 2019

Courses

Graduate Game Theory (S2015, S2016)  
Intro to Microeconomics (F2012, S2013, S2014, S2015, F2015, F2017, S2018)  
Intro to Macroeconomics (F2014)  
Intermediate Microeconomics (F2013, F2016, F2018, S2018)  
Intermediate Macroeconomics (S2013)  
Game Theory (F2017)

**Work History**

Data Research and Statistics Counselor at Smith College, August 2019 – Present; Northampton, Massachusetts

- Provided educational support and research supervision for undergraduates in statistics, data science, and economics at Smith College

**Teaching Interests**

- Political Economy
- Game Theory
- Urban Economics
- Economic History
- Economic Development
- Econometrics

**Seminars and Presentations**

UMass Amherst, Urban and Industrial Organization Workshop, 14 April 2019

Paper presented: "What do Landlords Do? The Political Economy of Urban Real Estate"

**References**

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Dr. Joshua Mason  
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Dr. Catherine McCune  
Spinelli Center for Quantitative Learning  
Smith College  
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**Dissertation Summary:****Three Essays on Urban Economics**

My dissertation is an exploration of the social, spatial, and economic relation of rent, and in particular, residential ground rents. While much has been written in the political economy literature regarding agrarian rents, comparatively little has been written on ground rents in urban capitalist economies. This dissertation synthesizes the work of classical political economy and the critical geography, focusing on growth and distribution in an urban context, with applications to housing policy. The first essay develops a theoretical framework based on classical political economy theories of ground rent, with particular focus on Karl Marx and Henry George. The second essay uses this framework to develop a theory of urban growth and distribution grounded in a tripartite class division between landlords, capitalists, and labor. The final essay is an empirical examination of rent control in the state of New Jersey.

**Towards a Theory of Ground Rent**

This essay develops a framework for understanding the role of landed property and ground rents in the operation of developed capitalist economies. This essay argues that, rather than being either simply subsumed under industrial or financial capital, landlords function as a distinct third class within capitalism—a view that had been common to the theories of Smith, Ricardo, Marx, George, and to some extent Keynes, but had largely been abandoned after John Bates Clark. I focus particularly on the work Marx and George, while borrowing heavily from radical geography and urban sociology (in particular, the idea of the socio-spatial dialectic) to develop a spatial theory of ground rent. In this framework, capitalists, landlords, and workers engage in conflict over the production and distribution of surplus value, where the crucial determinants of the landlord's share are the spatial structure of capitalist production and private property rights over land. I address differences in dynamics between *primary* (i.e., space used in direct production as in commercial real estate) and *secondary* (i.e., space indirectly used in production, as in residential real estate), with a main focus on the latter.

**What do Landlords Do? The Political Economy of Growth and Distribution**

My second essay uses the Marxist-Georgist framework developed in the first essay to develop a theoretical account of urban growth and distribution in an advanced capitalist economy. In particular, I address the following questions: How are the distribution of gains to urban economic growth affected by the distribution of and control over rights to land and housing? In order to answer this question, I develop a model of growth and distribution under the three-class framework, where the total surplus produced in an urban economy is divided into wages, profits, and rents, based on Sheppard and Barnes' Sraffian model in *The Capitalist Space Economy* (1990). The major focus of this essay is to examine the role that landed property plays in determining the ultimate distribution of gains from growth and the structure of the built environment in cities.

**The Effects and Effectiveness of Rent Control: Evidence from New Jersey**

The final essay is an intervention into the debate over rent control in the United States. Despite being widely panned by mainstream economists, calls for the implementation of rent regulations in the face of rising urban rents and stagnating wages. Opposition to rent control has been primarily on theoretical grounds on the basis of neoclassical assumptions regarding the effects of price controls, though the results of the few extant empirical studies have been decidedly mixed. In this essay, I construct a dataset of 112 rent controlled towns in New Jersey. I combine this with data on rents and households from the American Community Survey to create a 2-period panel data set. With this data, I use a first-difference estimation strategy to examine the impacts of rent control on median gross rents, the rental housing stock, and the total housing stock. To isolate cases where rent controls are binding, I use a geographic matching algorithm to identify rent controlled towns bordering top-quartile and top-half rent growth towns and examine the differential growth in rents and the stock of rental housing. Finally, I extend this by incorporating structure-level data from the Zillow ZTRAX database.