

# Megan T. Stevenson

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## APPOINTMENTS

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Professor of Law, University of Virginia, 2023-current  
Associate Professor of Law, University of Virginia, 2020-2023  
Associate Professor of Economics (by courtesy), University of Virginia, 2021-current  
Assistant Professor, George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School, 2017-2020  
Quattrone Fellow, University of Pennsylvania Law School, 2015-2017

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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Board of Directors, American Law and Economics Association  
Finance Committee, American Law and Economics Association  
Chair, AALS Section on Law & Economics  
Co-founder, Virtual Law and Economics Workshop  
Co-founder, Virtual Crim Workshop  
“Expert” on the [Criminal Justice Expert Panel](#)

## WORKING PAPERS

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**Conviction, Incarceration and Recidivism: Understanding the Revolving Door,**  
Revise & Resubmit at QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS (with John Eric Humphries,  
Aurelie Ouss, Kamelia Stavreva, Winnie van Dijk; date of most recent draft: July 2023)  
([link](#))

## PUBLICATIONS (ECONOMICS JOURNALS)

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**Algorithmic Risk Assessment in The Hands of Humans,** Accepted at AEJ:  
ECONOMIC POLICY (with Jennifer Doleac) ([link](#))

**Does Cash Bail Deter Misconduct?** 15 AEJ: APPLIED ECONOMICS 150, 2023 (with  
Aurelie Ouss) ([journal](#)) ([non-paywalled version](#))

**Algorithmic Social Engineering,** 110 AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION PAPERS &  
PROCEEDINGS 96, 2020 (with Bo Cowgill) ([link](#))

**Distortion of Justice: How the Inability to Pay Bail Affects Case Outcomes,** 34  
JOURNAL OF LAW, ECONOMICS & ORGANIZATION 511, 2018 ([link](#))

- Winner, 2019 **Oliver E. Williamson Award** for best article, selected from all JLEO articles published within the preceding three years

**Breaking Bad: Mechanisms of Social Influence and the Path to Criminality in Juvenile Jails**, 99 REVIEW OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS 824, 2017 ([link](#))

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PUBLICATIONS (LAW REVIEWS)

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**Cause, Effect, and the Structure of the Social World**, Forthcoming at BOSTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW ([link](#))

**Systemic Failures to Appear in Court**, Forthcoming at UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA LAW REVIEW (with Lindsay Graef, Sandra Mayson, Aurelie Ouss)

**The Counterintuitive Consequences of Sex Offender Risk Assessment at Sentencing**, 73 UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LAW JOURNAL 59, 2023 (invited symposium essay; with Jennifer L. Doleac) ([journal](#))

**Pretrial Detention and the Value of Liberty**, 108 VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW 709, 2022 (with Sandy Mayson) ([link](#))

**Misdemeanors By the Numbers** 61 BOSTON COLLEGE LAW REVIEW 971, 2020 (with Sandra Mayson) ([link](#))

**Algorithmic Risk Assessment and the Double-Edged Sword of Youth** 96 WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW 681, 2018 (with Christopher Slobogin; re-issued in BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES & LAW special edition on risk assessment) ([link](#))

**Assessing Risk Assessment in Action**, 103 MINNESOTA LAW REVIEW 303, 2018 ([link](#))

- Winner, 2017 **Young Legal Scholars Paper Competition**, Federalist Society

**The Scale of Misdemeanor Justice**, 98 BOSTON UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW 731, 2018 (with Sandra Mayson) ([link](#))

**The Downstream Consequences of Misdemeanor Pretrial Detention**, 69 STANFORD LAW REVIEW 711, 2017 (with Paul Heaton and Sandra Mayson) ([link](#))

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PUBLICATIONS (OTHER)

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**Average Monotonicity in a Setting with Covariates**, (August 2023, Note) ([link](#))

**Choosing Freedom**, Inquest, August 2021 (with Sandy Mayson, Andrea Roth, Jane Bambauer) ([link](#))

**Open Risk Assessment**, BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND LAW, forthcoming 2020 (with Brandon L. Garrett) ([link](#))

**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 (with David G. Robinson and Hannah Jane Sassaman)

**Are Criminal Risk Assessment Scores Racist?**, [BROOKINGS INSTITUTION](#), Aug. 22, 2016 (with Jennifer Doleac)

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

**Green Industrial Policy: Trade and Theory**, WORLD BANK POLICY RESEARCH WORKING PAPER (2012, with Larry Karp) ([link](#))

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#### WORKS IN PROGRESS

**The Origins of Predictive Algorithms in Criminal Justice** (with Robynn Cox)

**The Long-Term Socioeconomic Impacts of Incarceration** (with John Eric Humphries, Aurelie Ouss, Kamelia Stavreva, Winnie van Dijk)

**Robots Are Not Taking over the World** (with David Abrams, Aurelie Ouss, Colin Sullivan and Brian Collopy; work in progress)

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#### RESTING PAPERS

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

**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)

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#### 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)

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#### SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

**2023-2024 (including forthcoming):** Carceral AI Workshop (University of Pittsburgh), Loyola Symposium, Duke Economics, Columbia Law Criminal justice Roundtable

**2022-2023:** Stanford Law & Economics Workshop, NBER Summer Institute (Crime/Law Sessions), ~~Carnegie Mellon faculty workshop (Heinz College of Information~~

~~Systems and Public Policy), Washington University Law and Economics Colloquium, NYU Law & Economics Colloquium, University of Texas Law & Economics Colloquium, (Canceled due to illness) Harvard Program on Criminal Justice, University of Pittsburgh Series on Prediction and Forecasting, ALEA Annual Meeting, AALS Session on Law and Economics, Harvard Roundtable on Racial Disparities in Massachusetts Criminal Courts, CELS (UVA), Niskanen Flash Webinar Series~~

**2021-2022:** Harvard Data Science Initiative (Keynote Speaker), University of Virginia Applied Micro Workshop, Brooklyn Law Faculty Workshop, Tulane Law and Economy Workshop Series, Latin American Workshop in Law and Economics, George Mason Law and Economics Colloquium, University of Southern California Law and Social Science Colloquium, ALACDE Annual Conference (Keynote Speaker), AALS Session on Law and Economics, CELS (Toronto)

**2020-2021:** ETH Zurich Speaker Series in Law and Economics, Boston University Law and Economics Colloquium, Cardozo Law School Faculty Workshop, ABA Sentencing Task Force, University of Toronto Law and Economics Colloquium, University of Chicago Law and Economics Colloquium, University of Kentucky Panel on Bail, United State Civil Rights Commission Panel on Bail Reform, Kentucky Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission, Hebrew University of Jerusalem Law and Economics Workshop, UVA Federalist Society Lunch, American University Economics Workshop, George Mason Program on Economics & Privacy Panel on Algorithms

**2019-2020:** United States Commission on Civil Rights, Endogenous Rules Workshop, University of Berkeley Law, Accounting, and Business Workshop, 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

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## AWARDS AND LARGE GRANTS

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**2023 Donald M. Ephraim Prize in Law and Economics** “The [Ephraim Prize](#) recognizes an early-career scholar in the field of law and economics whose work has advanced the state of knowledge in the field and whose intellectual impact has the potential to reach the legal academy, legal profession, and beyond.”

**2022 Arnold Ventures grant, \$205,789** to study the long-term socioeconomic impacts of incarceration

**2022 Research Award, UVA** in recognition of significant contributions through research and scholarship to the University of Virginia

**2021 Research Award, UVA** in recognition of significant contributions through research and scholarship to the University of Virginia

**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*)

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## RESEARCH FUNDING

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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

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## TEACHING

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Criminal Law, Statistics for Lawyers, Economics for Lawyers, Rethinking Criminal Justice, Law & Economics Colloquium

## ACADEMIC SERVICES

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### **Refereeing (Law & Economics Journals):**

American Law & Economics Review  
Journal of Empirical Legal Studies  
Journal of Law & Economics  
Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization  
Journal of Legal Studies  
International Review of Law and Economics  
Supreme Court Economic Review

### **Refereeing (Other Economics Journals):**

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics  
American Economic Journal: Economic Policy  
American Economic Review  
Cuadernos de Economia  
Economic Development and Cultural Change  
Journal of Development Economics  
Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization  
Journal of Economic Literature  
Journal of Human Resources  
Journal of Public Economics  
Review of Economics and Statistics  
Quarterly Journal of Economics

### **Refereeing (Law):**

Behavioral Sciences and Law  
Harvard Law Review  
Journal of Legal Analysis  
Law and Society Review  
Yale Law Journal

### **Refereeing (Criminology):**

Criminology  
Journal of Quantitative Criminology

### **Refereeing (Other):**

American Political Science Review  
Health Affairs  
Journal of Policy Analysis and Management  
Journal of the Royal Statistical Society  
Nature Human Behavior  
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Science

**Refereeing (Other Research Organizations):**

RAND

Pew Research Center

**Grant Review:**

ETH Zurich Research Commission

Israel Science Foundation

National Science Foundation

Sloan Foundation

Social Science and Humanities Research Council (Canada)

Swiss National Science Foundation

**Other contributions to the field:**

- Committee on Research Integrity in Empirical Legal Studies
- Prize Committee (Best Article), American Law and Economics Review, 2022
- Creator, [Reading List: Black Economists on Criminal Justice](#)
- Reviewer (Criminal Justice), Conference on Empirical Legal Studies, 2021
- Program Committee, Conference on Empirical Legal Studies, 2022
- Area Organizer, Criminal Law, American Law and Economics Association, 2021
- Program Committee, FAccT (Fairness, Accountability & Transparency in Algorithmic Systems), 2019

**MEDIA**

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**Op-Eds:**

- *Too Many Philly Police Are No-Shows in Court, Delaying Cases and Undermining Justice*, [PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER](#), Dec. 1, 2023
- *Our Pretrial System Needs to Be Torn Down and Rebuilt*, [THE RIPON FORUM](#), May 2022
- *Virtually No One Is Dangerous Enough to Justify Jail*, [THE APPEAL](#), Mar. 15, 2021
- *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
- *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**

- *Systemic Failures to Appear in Court*, [ABA Journal](#), December 6, 2023
- *Trump out on bail – a criminal justice expert explains the system of bail.* [THE CONVERSATION](#), August 25, 2023
- *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](#)
- *Bail, Jail, and Pretrial Misconduct: The Influence of Prosecutors::* [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](#), [Law.com](#), [The Intercept](#)
- *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:

- [Common Law, The High Cost of Pretrial Detention](#)
- [Hi-Phi Nation \(Slate Podcasts\) S03E02: Risky Business](#)
- [Probable Causation \(Hosted by Jennifer Doleac\) S01E04](#)
- [The Pulse \(PBS Radio\): Can Algorithms Help Judges Make Fair Decisions?](#)
- [Ipsa Dixit S01E478](#)

### TV/Webcasts:

- [Fox LiveNow](#) on bail and Trump's indictment
- [The Appeal Live](#) (focus on Pretrial Detention and the Value of Liberty)
- [Testimony at the United States Commission on Civil Rights \(beginning approx 2:41\)](#)
- [The Appeal Live](#) (discussion of bail reform)