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Undergraduate Studies:

B.A. in Economics, Swarthmore College, *Highest Honors*, 2012

Graduate Studies:

Harvard University, 2016 to present

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics

Thesis Title: “*Essays in Development and Political Economy*”

Expected Completion Date: May 2023

References:

Professor Emily Breza
Department of Economics
Harvard University
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Professor Nathan Nunn
Vancouver School of Economics
University of British Columbia
(604) 822-2876
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Professor Rohini Pande
Department of Economics
Yale University
(203) 432-3637
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Professor Gautam Rao
Department of Economics
Harvard University
(734) 846-7754
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Fields:

Development Economics and Political Economy

Teaching Experience:

Fall 2021 Quantitative Analysis for Econ., Harvard, T.F. for Prof. Brendan Kelly
 - *Certificate of Distinction*

Spring 2021 Financial Markets for the Poor, Harvard, T.F. for Prof. Emily Breza
 - *Certificate of Distinction*

Fall 2017 Sophomore Undergraduate Advisor, Harvard, Economics Department
 - *Star Family Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising*

Research Experience and Other Employment:

- 2014-2016 Harvard University, Research Fellow for Prof. Rohini Pande
- 2012-2014 Innovations for Poverty Action, Research Associate for Prof. Dean Karlan

Professional Activities:***Invited Presentations:***

- 2022 Northeastern Universities Development Conference
- 2021 NBER Program on Children Meeting

Referee Service:

American Economic Review, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Political Economy, Quarterly Journal of Economics

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

- 2021-2022 Harvard Economics Warburg Fund Grant
- 2021-2022 JPAL Jobs and Opportunity Initiative Grant
- 2021-2022 JPAL Gender and Economic Agency Grant
- 2021 Harvard Certificate of Distinction in Teaching (Spring and Fall 2021)
- 2020-2021 DFID CEDIL Grant
- 2020 IGC Small Project Grant
- 2019-2020 Weiss Fund Grant
- 2019-2020 Foundations for Human Behavior Grant
- 2019 IGC Small Project Grant
- 2019 Star Family Prize for Excellence in Sophomore Advising
- 2018-2019 JPAL Governance Initiative Grant
- 2017 Gates Foundation Grant
- 2016 PEDL Research Grant
- 2016-2021 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

Publications:

“Household Matters: Revisiting the Returns to Capital Among Female Microentrepreneurs” (with Erica Field, Rohini Pande, and Natalia Rigol). *American Economic Review: Insights*, 2020, 1(2), pp. 141–160.

Multiple field experiments report positive financial returns to capital shocks for male and not female microentrepreneurs. But these analyses overlook the fact that female entrepreneurs often reside with male entrepreneurs. Using data from experiments in India, Sri Lanka, and Ghana, we show that the observed gender gap in microenterprise responses does not reflect lower returns on investment, when measured at the household level. Instead, the absence of a profit response among female-run enterprises reflects the fact that women's capital is typically invested into their husband's enterprise. We cannot reject equivalence of household-level income gains for male and female capital shock recipients.

“Male Social Status and Women’s Work” (with Erica Field, Rohini Pande, Natalia Rigol, Simone Schaner, and Charity Troyer-Moore). *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, 2018, 108, pp. 363-367.

Female labor force participation varies significantly even among countries with similar levels of economic development. Recent studies have shown that gender norms can help explain these differences in women's work, but the channels through which norms impact women's employment decisions are not well understood. We present novel data on spouses' preferences and perceptions of community attitudes about female labor in rural India and document associations with female work. We find that the perceived social cost of women's work falls on men and that husbands' opposition to female labor is associated with their wives' lower take-up of employment.

Job Market Paper:

“The Economics of Caste Norms: Purity, Status, and Women’s Work in India” (with Patrick Agte)

Caste norms, the religious and social rules that underpin the Hindu caste system, impose strong constraints on behavior: women should stay secluded within the home, caste groups should stay segregated, and certain foods should not be eaten. This paper shows that caste norms are weakened when Hindus live alongside Adivasis, an indigenous minority outside of the caste system. Using a number of estimation strategies, including a historical natural experiment that led to local variation in Adivasi population share, we show that having more Adivasi neighbors decreases Hindus’ adherence to a wide range of caste rules. Hindu women in Adivasi-majority villages are 50% more likely to work and have substantially higher earnings. Individuals higher on the caste hierarchy are less likely to practice “untouchability” towards those lower than them and villages are more likely to be integrated. We argue that Hindus adhere to caste norms as an investment in status within the caste system, and that this investment is less valuable when Adivasis—a lower-status out-group—form a larger share of the village population. Consistent with this explanation, caste norms are weaker in areas where British colonial policy led Adivasis to hold more land and political power, increasing the returns to social and economic interactions with Adivasis independent of their population share.

Other Research Papers:

“Investing in the Next Generation: The Long-Run Impacts of a Liquidity Shock” (with Patrick Agte, Erica Field, Rohini Pande, and Natalia Rigol)

Revise and Resubmit, American Economic Review

Liquidity constraints often require poor entrepreneurs to allocate scarce capital between business and education investment opportunities. To examine this trade-off and implications for intergenerational mobility, we exploit experimental variation in income from a liquidity shock and track schooling and business outcomes over 11 years. On average, children from treatment households are 35% more likely to attend college. However, education gains only accrue to literate households. In contrast, illiterate treatment households experience declines in child schooling alongside microenterprise expansion and parental income gains. As a result, treatment lowers intergenerational educational mobility and forecasted earnings equality.

Research in Progress:

“Endogenous Governance Institutions: Evidence from Rohingya Refugee Camps” (with Louise Paul-Delvaux)

In the chaos of their initial migration, the Rohingya refugees now living in Cox’s Bazar were often separated from their extended families and neighbors in Myanmar. The resulting allocation of households across the refugee camps thereby features considerable heterogeneity in the distribution of village of origin. In this project, we study the impact of this diversity on endogenous formation of local governance institutions. Combining administrative data collected by the UN with original surveys, we find that neighborhoods with smaller initial groups are more progressive today, as measured by the shape of tax schedules.