

# Ross Mattheis

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PhD Candidate, Harvard University

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## Education

Ph.D. Economics, Harvard University 2018-2024 (expected)

B.A. Applied Math, University of California, Berkeley (with honors) 2018

## Research Interests

Economic History, Labor Economics, Applied Econometrics

## References

Claudia Goldin  
[cgoldin@harvard.edu](mailto:cgoldin@harvard.edu)

Lawrence Katz  
[lkatz@harvard.edu](mailto:lkatz@harvard.edu)

Edward Glaeser  
[eglaeser@harvard.edu](mailto:eglaeser@harvard.edu)

Isaiah Andrews  
[iandrews@mit.edu](mailto:iandrews@mit.edu)

## Research

### WORKING PAPERS

“Spurious Mobility in Imperfectly Linked Data” with Jiafeng Chen

*Abstract:* Estimating intergenerational mobility often requires linking data across multiple sources. However, mistakes in record linkage can introduce biases in subsequent estimates. This paper studies inference for linear models using imperfectly linked data. We first show that point identification of parameters given ambiguity in the linked data requires additional assumptions about the relationship between the information used for record linkage and the information used for model estimation. However, in simulations satisfying the identifying assumptions, we show that estimates of the posterior distribution of the target parameter do not concentrate on the truth. We argue that the apparent inconsistency of the Bayesian estimator is due to the influence of the prior on linkages. Reasonable priors on the set of linkages imply beliefs about the target parameter which may not be reasonable and become increasingly concentrated as the sample size increases. Building on these results, we propose a new method which we call Robust Inference for Imperfectly Linked data (RIILink) which estimates the posterior and implicit prior distributions and then reports their ratio. We apply our method to reexamine intergenerational mobility in the United States between 1850 and 1940. Our estimates suggest that levels of mobility were lower than previously believed and are approximately constant over the period.

“There’s No Such Thing As Free Land: The Homestead Act and Economic Development” with Itzchak Raz

### WORK IN PROGRESS

“Our Crowd? Discrimination and Identity in Jewish Migration to the U.S.” with Sara Benetti and Elijah Locke

“Revolvers and Cowboys: Safety and Agglomeration on the American Frontier” with Grant Goehring

#### OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Harvard University, Research Assistant for Claudia Goldin 2019  
Harvard University, Research Assistant for Melissa Dell 2019

#### Honors, Grants, and Fellowships

Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Harvard University 2022-23  
Thomas Cochran Fellowship in Business and Economic History, Harvard University 2021-2022  
Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University 2020-23  
Research Grant, LEAP Program, Harvard University, (with Itzhak Raz) 2019

#### Teaching

##### HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Sophomore Tutorial Instructor, "Natural Experiments in History" 2021-23  
Teaching Fellow, Intro to Econometrics 2020

#### Conferences and Seminars

2023-2024: NBER Summer Institute Development of the American Economy, virtual session  
2022-2023: Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture (ASREC), Harvard University  
2021-2022: LBS Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference (TADC), Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics (SIOE)

#### Professional Service

##### REFEREEING

*Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Urban Economics, Labour Economics.*

##### OTHER SERVICE

Economic History Graduate Workshop Organizer, Harvard University, 2021-2023  
Center for History and Economics Undergraduate Research Program Co-organizer, Harvard University, 2022-present  
Resident Co-Pizzaiolo at Harvard Economics (with Aakaash Rao), 2020-present