INEquality and Social Policy

JAMES M. and CATHLEEN D. STONE PhD SCHOLARS

THE PHD SCHOLARS
2020-2021
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2020-2021

ECONOMICS
Alex Albright
Justin Bloesch
Romaine Campbell
Liz Engle
Benny Goldman
Emma Harrington
Kathryn Holston
Omeed Maghzian
Ayushi Narayan
Chika Okafor
Hannah Shaffer
Anna Stansbury
Jonathan Tebes
Alice Wu

EDUCATION
Janelle Fouché
Salman Khan
Preeya Mbekeani
Garry Mitchell
Nozomi Nakajima

GOVERNMENT
Avishay Ben Sasson-Gordis
Emma Ebowe
Hanno Hilbig
Sophie Hill
Uma Ilavarasan
Kaneesha Johnson
Mitchell Kilborn
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Kirsten Walters
Michael Zoorob

GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL POLICY
Jacob Brown
Meredith Dost
Diana Draghici
Brian Highsmith
Sarah James
Curtlyn Kramer
Audrey Latura
Nicholas Lillios
Nicholas Short
Elizabeth Thom
Jacob Waggoner

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL
Serena Hagerty

HEALTH POLICY
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Casey Petroff

PUBLIC POLICY
Alice Heath
Helen Ho
Eleanor Krause
Kadeem Noray
Felix Owusu

SOCIOLOGY
Clem Aeppli
Aaron Benavidez
Kristina Brant
Matthew Brooke
Jenna Cook
Aaron Fernandez
Leah E. Gose
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Mari Sanchez
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SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL POLICY
James Biblarz
Allison Daminger
Andrew Keefe
Evan MacKay
Abigail Mariam
Alexandra Mitukiewicz
Cresa Pugh
Nefara Riesch
Nathan J. Robinson
Cierra Robson
Andreja Siliunas
Lauren Taylor
Adam Travis
Lilly Yu
Michael Zanger-Tishler
Clem Aeppli

Harvard University  PhD Student in Sociology
James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration

Research Interests
Work and production; economic and racial inequality; cognition; quantitative methodology

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BIO
Clem is a PhD student in Sociology at Harvard University and a Stone PhD scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Clem studies recent transformations in the organization of production and work, and their implications for economic and racial inequality.

He is particularly interested in how shifting organizational boundaries – due to new forms of networked production, outsourcing, and informalization – may both exacerbate and mask class and racial inequalities. He studies this primarily with large-scale quantitative data, but hopes to also use interviews to understand organizational identification and perceptions of inequality.

Clem is from Watertown, Massachusetts, and studied mathematics and sociology as an undergraduate at Brown University.
ALEX P. ALBRIGHT

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  ECONOMICS  
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor/social economics, law and economics, and economic history.

Economics of crime and the criminal justice system. Technology, transparency, and fairness.

BIO

Alex Albright is an economics PhD student at Harvard. Her research interests are broadly in labor/social economics, law and economics, and economic history.

She is currently pursuing a set of projects on risk assessment scores as tools and subjects of study in the pretrial stage of the criminal justice system. She is also taking an empirical approach to examining the lasting and intergenerational consequences of the 1921 Tulsa race riots.

Alex has presented research at Oxford University, Cornell University, Université de Bordeaux, and Bloomberg Global Headquarters. She often writes for non-academic audiences; her articles have been published by The New Yorker and Quartz.

Alex is a Stone PhD Scholar in Harvard’s Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy as well as a Considine Fellow in Law and Economics at Harvard Law School. She developed many of her current research interests while working at Stanford Law School as an Empirical Research Fellow from 2014 to 2016.

She graduated from Williams College with a BA in math and economics in 2014 and was awarded the Carl Van Duyne Prize in Economics.

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Aaron Brennen Benavidez is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Harvard University. Funded by the Inequality and Social Policy Doctoral Fellows Program, his research examines institutional and city-level factors shaping college persistence, trajectory, and completion.

A six-time winner of the Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, given by the Office of Undergraduate Education, and winner of the 2018 Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching of Undergraduates, given each academic year by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences to the five most outstanding Teaching Fellows in GSAS, Aaron is committed to undergraduate education not only in research but in pedagogical practice.

In addition to his research and teaching, Aaron founded and served as President of the Harvard GSAS Latinx Student Association for three years. He currently serves as Vice President of Academic Affairs for the Du Bois Graduate Society; Chair of the Committee for Engaged Sociology in the Department of Sociology; Vice President of Administration and Vice President of Finances for the Harvard GSAS Latinx Student Association; Vice President of Finance and Vice President of External Affairs for the Harvard LGBTQ@GSAS Association; and Principal Cellist and Director of Education and Community Engagement for the Du Bois Orchestra.

He earned his B.A. in Sociology and Rhetoric, with highest honors, from the University of California, Berkeley, where he was named the University Medalist in 2011.
AVISHAY BEN SASSON-GORDIS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN GOVERNMENT
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Political theory; normative theory of democratic institutions.

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BIO

Avishay is a PhD candidate at the Harvard University Department of Government. He is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration, a research fellow at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society, and at Molad: the Center for the Renewal of Israeli Democracy.

Avishay studies the normative theory of democratic institutions, and his dissertation project focuses on the political theory of the democratic military. Among the questions the dissertation examines are issues surrounding social and economic inequality and its relationship to military service, how these notions relate to discourse surrounding draft and volunteer forces, and the moral concepts of citizenship that underlie discussion in this area.

He received his BA from the Joint Program in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
James Biblarz is a joint JD/PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy and a Stone PhD Scholar at Harvard University.

Generally, he is interested in stratification and inequality, crime and incarceration, and social networks. His research focuses on constitutional law, local government law, law and sociology, and the history of school desegregation.

His dissertation traces the rise and fall of racial integration as the ideological focus of social policy, and the subsequent emergence of competing ideologies. The project seeks to identify how and when sociological ideas about inequality (e.g. reputation, prestige, social capital and networks) have entered legal thinking about what the 14th Amendment guarantees schoolchildren. He hopes that the project will serve as the basis for a renewed policy emphasis on school and neighborhood segregation, as well as a litigation strategy that advocates for a more comprehensive vision of what the Equal Protection Clause requires.

In law school, he completed internships with Munger, Tolles & Olson, the Los Angeles County Public Defender’s Office, and the California State Senate. He has also worked as a student attorney with Protect Democracy, the Prison Legal Assistance Project, and Civil Rights Corps.

Originally from Los Angeles, he graduated from Harvard College, magna cum laude, in Social Studies and English in 2014. Before graduate school, he worked as a research assistant for David Gergen at CNN. His research is funded by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, the James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Inequality and Wealth Concentration Ph.D. Scholarship, and the Harvard Fellowship in Law and Graduate Studies.
JUSTIN BLOESCH

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Research interests: Labor and Macroeconomics. Wage inequality, skill specialization and assignment models, pay/productivity divergence, monetary Policy, Phillips Curve estimation, inflation expectations

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BIO

Justin is a PhD candidate in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. He is interested in macroeconomics and inequality, with a particular focus on the effects of monetary policy on the labor market.

His current research focuses on the effect of full employment on the distribution of wages. In particular, he is exploring the relationship between labor market tightness and the pay-productivity gap for low-to-middle income workers. He is also researching the relationship between firm productivity and wages for white collar and professional workers. Future work will focus on understanding the natural rate of unemployment and monetary policy in an environment of low inflation and low interest rates.

Justin received a BS in Economics and Applied Mathematics at the University Wisconsin—Madison and worked in the Macroeconomic Research division at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago prior to enrolling at Harvard.
Kristina Brant is a PhD candidate in Sociology. She is broadly interested in understanding the causes and consequences of persistent concentrated poverty, particularly in rural communities.

Kristina's current research focuses on the secondary effects of the opioid epidemic on families. Her dissertation is an in-depth qualitative investigation of the impact of parental addiction on children, through the lens of kinship care. Additional projects consider economic hardship and trust; post-coal economic development; rural heterogeneity; and rural rental housing markets.

For the past four years, Kristina has also been a part of the National Undocumented Research Project, a multi-site longitudinal study investigating the impact of DACA on undocumented young adults. With co-authors Roberto Gonzales and Ben Roth, she is currently working on a book manuscript under contract with UC Press, *The Growing Significance of Place: Assessing the Diverging Trajectories of DACA-eligible Young Adults*, exploring how the impact of DACA has been patterned by state and urbanicity.

Since 2016, Kristina has been conducting fieldwork in Central Appalachia, making her home in Eastern Kentucky. When not researching, she skates with Somer City Roller Derby, acts with Flashback Theater Company, and volunteers with Camp Mariposa – a program for youth impacted by parental substance abuse.

Kristina also holds a BA in Sociology and a BA in Economics from the University of Chicago.
MATTHEW BROOKE
HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN SOCIOLOGY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Political sociology; urban sociology; development of political parties and organizations; how political organizations influence social processes.

BIO
Matthew Brooke is a PhD student in Sociology and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Matthew’s research considers how expertise among political professionals mediates access to the political process. He is currently working on a project on congressional campaigning that combines ethnographic and quantitative methods, which examines how campaigns recruit voters and volunteers in diverse communities.

Matthew graduated from Oberlin College, majoring in Latin American Studies. Before coming to Harvard, he worked as a social worker in homeless services and as a journalist in Central America.

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JACOB BROWN

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

American Politics, Political Behavior, Political Geography, Race and Ethnic Politics.

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BIO

Jacob is PhD candidate in Government and Social Policy at Harvard University and a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Research Fellow in Inequality and Wealth Concentration at the Harvard Kennedy School.

His dissertation examines how partisan segregation — where Democrats and Republicans live in relation to one another — shapes how people conceive of their political identities and how they think about the out-party. This work uses nationwide partisanship and residential administrative data to measure individual’s geographic exposure to members of each political party and applies experimental and quasi-experimental methods to test how partisan geography shapes partisan conflict.

This dissertation project is part of a larger research agenda on how political geography shapes political behavior and group conflict in American politics. In related work, Jacob tests the downstream effects of early life cross-racial contact, the political reaction to increased exposure to addiction and homelessness in one’s community, and how formative political experiences produce differential downstream political attachments between racial groups.

Jacob also researches and teaches applied statistics, focusing on experimental design, causal inference, and geographic analysis.
ROMAINE CAMPBELL

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Race inequality, criminal justice, education, health, labor

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BIO

Romaine Campbell is a PhD candidate in the Department of Economics at Harvard University and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Romaine’s primary research interests concern the ways in which race, gender and income inequality affect educational, criminal justice and health outcomes. He is particularly interested in the intersectionality of the criminal justice and education systems.

In addition to being a Stone PhD Scholar in the Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy, Romaine is also National Science Foundation graduate research fellow and a graduate student affiliate at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science.

Prior to graduate school, Romaine worked in economic consulting for 5 years and then briefly in Massachusetts state government. During his time in consulting, Romaine also ran a local charter of a nonprofit that provides scholarships to low-income youth in the Greater Boston area.

He graduated with a BA in Mathematical Economics, with High Honors, from Wesleyan University in 2013 and is originally from Saint Andrew, Jamaica.
JENNA COOK

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Reproduction, Gender, Family, China, Law & Society

BIO

Jenna Cook is a PhD student in Sociology and a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar.

She received her BA in Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Yale University, and her MA in China Studies with a concentration in Law & Society at Peking University in Beijing, China.

Prior to beginning her studies at Harvard, Jenna researched Chinese adoption practices as a US-China Fulbright Scholar. In graduate school, Jenna plans to continue her research on the state governance of reproduction, gender, and the family.

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ALLISON DAMINGER

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Gender, family, inequality, division of household labor, qualitative methods, social class.

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BIO

Allison Daminger is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy at Harvard University and a doctoral fellow in the Harvard Kennedy School’s Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy, where she is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Allison uses qualitative methods to study the relationship between gender and class inequality and family life. Her current project focuses on “cognitive labor”: the work of anticipating household needs, identifying options for meeting those needs, deciding among the options, and monitoring the outcomes. While decades of sociological research shows a persistent gender gap in men’s and women’s household labor contributions, common definitions of household labor encompass only the physical elements of such work. Via in-depth interviews of couples with children, Allison shows that cognitive labor is in fact a ubiquitous component of household life—one that is unequally distributed on the basis of gender and, to a lesser extent, social class.

In two articles published in and forthcoming from the American Sociological Review, she highlights both the gendering of cognitive labor and how couples “de-gender” it, or obscure gender’s influence on their labor allocation processes. Her dissertation builds on this work to ask how gender and class interact to shape cognitive labor patterns and to identify the processes that lead couples to a traditional or non-traditional cognitive labor allocation.

Prior to graduate school, Allison worked as a research associate for ideas42, a nonprofit consulting firm that uses insights from behavioral science to solve social problems. She is originally from New Jersey and received an A.B. in anthropology from Princeton University in 2012.
MEREDITH DOST

HARVARD UNIVERSITY   PHD STUDENT IN  GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

American politics and policy; political methodology. Interest groups and public participation in policymaking and rulemaking.

Impacts of social policy on top-end income inequality.

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BIO

Meredith Dost is a Stone PhD Research Fellow and a PhD candidate in Government and Social Policy at Harvard University.

Originally from the Chicago suburbs, she earned a BA in Public Policy and Hispanic Studies from the College of William & Mary. In addition to research and teaching, Meredith serves as a resident tutor and government concentration advisor in Quincy House at Harvard College.

She is broadly interested in bureaucracy and governance, social policy, and policy feedback in the United States. Her dissertation research focuses on how administrative burden affects potential beneficiaries of governmental programs—specifically, how interactions with the administrative state influences political behavior and attitudes.

Meredith’s research considers participation by interest groups and the public in rulemaking, the process by which governmental agencies implement legislation. She is also interested in the causes and consequences of income inequality and has studied the relationship between community-level income inequality and income-based disparities in educational outcomes.

Meredith will be a Democracy Doctoral Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation for the 2020-2021 year. Prior to Harvard, Meredith worked at Pew Research Center in Washington, D.C. as a research assistant on the American politics and policy team.
DIANA DRAGHICI

HARVARD UNIVERSITY   PHD STUDENT IN   GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY 
INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS

American political economy, formal theory, statistics.

BIO

Diana Draghici is a PhD candidate in the joint Government and Social Policy Program at Harvard University.

Her research agenda is located at the intersection of macroeconomics, political processes, social policy, formal theory, and statistics.

Substantive research interests span several areas within the American political economy and social policy fields, in particular employment policies, financial regulation, and real estate market.

Methodological research interests include analytical and computational formal theory, and various topics in theoretical and applied statistics, such as probability, time-series analysis, stochastic processes, Bayesian statistical inference, and data visualization.

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Harvard Kennedy School | Inequality & Social Policy  PhD Scholar Profiles 2020-2021
EMMA EBOWE

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

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BIO
Emma is a PhD student in the Government department at Harvard University studying in the subfields of Political Theory, Political Methodology and African and African American Studies. She is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in the Inequality & Social Policy programme’s 2020 cohort.

Emma studies contemporary democratic theory, with a particular emphasis on egalitarian democratic discourse, learning and social justice.

Her current project evaluates the relationship between the use of algorithms in democratic institutions and racial justice or fairness.

She is also working on the topic of democratic pedagogy, egalitarian learning and the role of ideology critique in democratic discourse – specifically the question of whether democratic deliberation places particular discursive and pedagogical burdens on specific social groups.

After growing up in the UK, Emma completed a Joint BA degree in Political Science and German Studies with a minor in Economics at McGill University in Montreal. Prior to her studies at Harvard, she worked as a consultant in the UK, her projects including work for the civil service on the post-2010 Department of Work and Pensions national welfare reform.
LIZ ENGLE
HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS
MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Public economics and labor economics.

Effects of policies that influence the labor market participation and investment of people with criminal records.

Program and policy design, especially as it affects vulnerable populations.

BIO
Liz Engle is a PhD student in economics and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Research Fellow in Poverty and Justice.

She is broadly interested in how programs and policies shape the ways in which vulnerable groups interact with the world, particularly through labor market interactions and human capital investments.

Her work so far has focused on labor market regulations that affect people with criminal records. She is particularly fascinated by how individual and employer responses to these regulations spread effects through the labor market and the roles of information and signaling in the context of low-skill labor markets.

Prior to her doctoral studies, Liz worked with isolated elders in Chicago through Dominican Volunteers USA. She holds a BA in classics with a minor in mathematics (first honor, summa cum laude) from Davidson College.

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Harvard Kennedy School | Inequality & Social Policy  PhD Scholar Profiles 2020-2021
Aaron Fernandez is a PhD student in Sociology and a Stone PhD Scholar. He is interested in issues of race and immigration, with a particular focus on boundary creation and neighborhoods.

Aaron is currently working on a project examining the suburbanization of immigration and poverty, as well as its implications for spatial inequality in American cities. This project decomposes immigrant suburbanization into between metropolitan area dispersion and change within metropolitan areas, noting the role of changing the composition of immigrant and US-born populations. He is also interested in the effects of discrimination and segregation on labor markets.

Aaron received his BA in Sociology from Tufts University, where he researched the role of university career centers in social mobility. Before starting graduate school, he worked as a research assistant on a mixed-methods project examining intergroup contact between blacks, whites, Mexicans, and Indians in the Philadelphia and Atlanta metro areas, emphasizing neighborhood, public space, and workplace segregation.

He has also conducted ethnographic research on issues of urbanization and ethnic tourism in China through a study in Kunming and internships with Asia Society and the U.S.-China Strong Foundation.
BIO

Janelle Fouché is a PhD student in Education Policy & Program Evaluation and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice.

Her research interests lie at the intersection of the penal system and education policy, as she believes the two are inextricably linked to issues of race, inequality, and opportunity.

As of late, she is focused on evaluating prison education initiatives on the impact of recidivism, self-worth, and quality of life. She has completed the restorative justice training program at MCI-Norfolk, taught a college-level sociology course at MCI-Concord, and is now an elementary algebra teaching assistant at MCI-Framingham through BU’s Prison Education Program. Currently, she serves as one of the co-organizers of the Harvard Prison Divestment Campaign, which is a reparatory justice initiative that seeks to sever Harvard’s financial ties to the prison-industrial complex.

Janelle holds a BS in Economics and a BS in Management Science (Finance concentration) from MIT.

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BENNY GOLDMAN

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Intergenerational mobility, criminal justice, racial differences in economic opportunity, labor market inequality, welfare economics.

BIO

Benny Goldman is a PhD candidate in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. His primary fields are public economics and econometrics.

Benny’s current research examines trends in the black-white “opportunity gap” with an emphasis on the role of the criminal justice system. He is also interested in the impact of exposure to high-achieving adults on long-run outcomes for low-income children.

Separately, Benny is working on documenting the dynamics of inequality in the labor market using payroll data. This project will test for inequities in pay and scheduling volatility at different points in the income distribution and examine heterogeneity in responses to policies that aim to alleviate inequality (e.g., the minimum wage).

Originally from New York, Benny graduated with a B.A. in Economics and Applied Mathematics from Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN where he played football for the Fighting Scots. Prior to arriving at Harvard, Benny spent two years working with Professors Raj Chetty, John Friedman, and Nathan Hendren studying the role of race and ethnicity in intergenerational mobility in the US.

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LEAH E. GOSE
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MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD SCHOLAR IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Community-based responses to poverty; the social safety net, its structure and interorganizational networks; local and state poverty policy; food insecurity and hunger relief efforts.

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BIO
Leah Gose is a doctoral candidate in sociology and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice. At Harvard, Leah is exploring social policy, organizational sociology, and network theory to understand how organizations and communities serve people in need.

Leah’s current work focuses on the network of organizations working in hunger relief and food insecurity eradication. Leah’s dissertation is a study of how community organizations, in conjunction with local governments and in response to policies, are responding to increased rates of hunger in the suburbs of Atlanta.

Leah is particularly interested in utilizing new theories on poverty and human capabilities to understand how individuals, social organizations, and lawmakers influence policy to shape their communities and how such decisions affect people’s health and wellbeing, particularly the working poor and those living on fixed incomes.

Her additional scholarship includes participation in a longitudinal study on how smaller communities and grassroots political organizations are functioning during the Trump presidency. Leah’s prior research focused on the health of disadvantaged populations in both rural and urban environments, predominantly looking at minority populations. Her undergraduate thesis work espoused the combined powers of quantitative longitudinal data analysis and qualitative research to explain disparities in rural black health.

She graduated from Washington and Lee University in 2015 with majors in Sociology and German Language and a minor in Poverty and Human Capabilities studies. Prior to enrolling in graduate school, Leah served as an Elrod Fellow at a DC-area nonprofit dedicated to employing wounded veterans and individuals with disabilities.
Serena Hagerty is a PhD student in Marketing at Harvard Business School and a Stone PhD Research Fellow in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. Her research explores consumer behavior in the context of wealth inequality. In particular, she is interested in what is socially permissible to consume for lower- (versus higher-) income individuals.

Her current research explores why lower-income individuals are judged more negatively for their consumption decisions relative to higher-income peers. In this work she demonstrates that lower-income individuals’ consumption decisions are subject to more negative and restrictive evaluations because the same items are often perceived as less necessary for lower- (versus higher-) income individuals. In related work she is investigating how consideration sets and opportunity costs alter perceptions of the necessity of an item, particularly for lower-income consumers.

Prior to starting her PhD, Serena earned her bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Harvard College. As an undergraduate her thesis research focused on decision making under uncertainty in the health care domain.
EMMA HARRINGTON

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor and public economics with a focus on criminal justice

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BIO

Emma Harrington is a PhD candidate in the Department of Economics. She is broadly interested in inequality traps in criminal courts, labor markets, and school systems.

She is currently pursuing two projects that investigate the workings of the criminal justice system and its web of collateral consequences.

In the first project, she considers the tradeoffs from targeting different criminal-justice reforms through the instrument of prosecutorial discretion. Particularly, she asks how shifting towards prosecutors whose sentencing behavior aligns with a particular reform—e.g. achieving racial equity in sentencing—spills over into other objectives—e.g. protecting public safety.

In the second project, she considers how criminal records affect worker evaluations, by first assessing how criminal records predict on-the-job performance and then estimating how much firms are willing to pay to avoid criminal records in the context of a large staffing agency.

In previous work, she has developed algorithms to predict low literacy. She has also investigated the role of doctors’ prescribing practices in the origins of opioid-use dependence.

Emma studied economics and computer science at Williams College, where she wrote a thesis about intrinsic and extrinsic incentives to contribute to an online Q&A site.
ALICE HEATH

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  PUBLIC POLICY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

BIO

Alice Heath is a PhD student in public policy and a Stone PhD scholar.

Alice is focusing on labor and public economics, and is interested in how government policies aimed at investing in children’s health and education can reduce poverty and intergenerational inequality.

Her current projects examine barriers to participation in public programs amongst low-income families, and the impact of high-profile child deaths on child welfare removals and children’s subsequent outcomes. Alice has worked with several of Rhode Island's health and human services agencies in her roles as a fellow and project leader at the Government Performance Lab, and continues to work closely with the Department of Health on projects aimed at increasing the participation of new families who face high levels of adversity in post-birth home visiting programs.

In addition to her research interests, Alice is a dedicated teacher. She started her career in the UK as a secondary school mathematics teacher, and has taught analytic frameworks and game theory at the Harvard Kennedy School, where she has won the Distinction in Student Teaching award. She is currently an Adjunct Lecturer at the Watson Institute at Brown, teaching the MPA program’s core Policy Analysis class.

Alice holds a first class degree in philosophy, politics and economics from the University of Oxford, where she won the Hicks prize for best performance in microeconomics, and an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor economics and public economics

Intergenerational inequality, government investment in children and families, early childhood policy and program design

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ALICE HEATH
BRIAN HIGHSMITH

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INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Fiscal federalism, state/local tax and budget policy, public goods, residential segregation, criminal punishment, political economy, antitrust and corporate power, law and legal institutions

BIO

Brian Highsmith is a PhD student in Government & Social Policy at Harvard University and an affiliated Senior Researcher at the Arthur Liman Center for Public Interest Law at Yale Law School.

His research explores connections between economic inequality, residential segregation, fiscal federalism, corporate power, and mass punishment.

Recent writing has focused on the budget costs of local punishment bureaucracies and the ways that governments seek to shift such costs onto vulnerable residents, including through monetary sanctions and regressive “user-fee” financing models.

He also is working on two projects that document the antitrust harms of, respectively, corporate location subsidy megadeals and privatized criminal legal functions. Most broadly, he is interested in how the design of domestic political systems shapes available pathways for the democratically-supported redistribution of wealth.

After graduating from Yale Law School in 2017, he was a Skadden Fellow at the National Consumer Law Center; his litigation and advocacy there challenged unaffordable financial obligations imposed on poor families as a result of their contact with the criminal system.

Before joining NCLC, he worked in DC on domestic economic policy with a focus on income support programs and fiscal policy—including as an advisor at President Obama’s National Economic Council, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and the office of Senator Cory Booker. Brian graduated from Furman University in 2010.

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HANNO HILBIG

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RESEARCH INTERESTS


BIO

Hanno Hilbig is a PhD candidate at the government department and a graduate student affiliate at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science and the Center for European Studies at Harvard.

He is broadly interested in political, social and economic inequality in advanced democracies; public opinion and political representation; and gender, race and ethnicity.

Some of Hanno’s research considers how historical institutions and customs have repercussions for current levels of income and wealth inequality. In addition, he examines how policies that are designed to increase inclusion of minorities may backfire.

He holds a BA from Freie Universität Berlin, an MA in Economics from Humboldt Universität zu Berlin and is also an AM candidate at the Statistics department at Harvard. Prior to coming to Harvard, he worked as a research assistant for the migration and integration research group at the Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB), where he is also an affiliated researcher.

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SOPHIE HILL

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN GOVERNMENT  JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Comparative politics. Public opinion and electoral politics

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BIO
Sophie Hill is a PhD student in the Government department and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Her research focuses on public opinion and electoral politics. In particular, she is interested in how structural changes in labor markets have produced new social cleavages in rich democracies.

Sophie is an affiliate of the Center for European Studies and a doctoral fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy at Harvard University.

Prior to joining the doctoral program, Sophie spent two years working in financial markets in London. She received her undergraduate degree in Mathematics & Philosophy from the University of Oxford and she holds a master’s in Political Science from Columbia University.
HELEN HO
HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN PUBLIC POLICY
MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD SCHOLAR IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Labor economics and public economics, specializing in criminal justice policy.

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BIO
Helen Ho is a PhD candidate in public policy at Harvard Kennedy School. She is interested in American social policy, especially related to the criminal justice system, racial inequality, and economic opportunity.

Helen is currently working on two field experiments in the criminal justice system, one to evaluate the effects of criminal justice debt and one using SMS reminders to reduce failure to appear for court arraignments. Other research projects include the effects of charter school attendance on college graduation and the effect of criminal activity nuisance ordinances on evictions and crime.

In addition to being a Malcolm Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice at the Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy, Helen is a National Science Foundation graduate research fellow. She is also a research associate at the School Effectiveness and Inequality Initiative (SEII) at MIT and an affiliate of the Access to Justice Lab at the Harvard Law School.

Prior to the PhD program, she was a research assistant at SEII and the National Bureau of Economic Research and a research associate at the Urban Institute. She holds a BA in Public Policy from Duke University.
KATHRYN HOLSTON

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Macroeconomics, finance, inequality, and monetary policy.

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BIO

Kathryn Holston is a PhD student in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. She is also a guaranteed income fellow of the Jain Family Institute.

Her research interests include macroeconomics, finance, inequality, and monetary policy.

She holds a BS in economics and mathematics from the University of Pittsburgh, where she graduated summa cum laude.

Prior to starting her PhD, she worked in the Monetary Studies Section of the Federal Reserve Board, where she studied the natural rate of interest. Her work has been featured in The Economist and The Wall Street Journal.
UMA ILAVARASAN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  GOVERNMENT
MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Comparative and American politics; race and ethnic politics; political behavior; inter- and intragroup relations, identity, and inequality; emotions; public goods provision; normative implications of groupness

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BIO

Uma Ilavarasan is a PhD student in the Department of Government at Harvard University and a Malcolm Wiener PhD Research Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is also a graduate fellow at the MIT Global Diversity Lab.

Her research focuses on the political and psychological processes that underlie the formation and maintenance of group identities.

She asks two related questions: (1) what forces give rise to the configuration of politically-relevant identities within a given sociopolitical environment? and (2) what compels people to become attached to these identities and to act in ways that reflect those attachments? She is particularly interested in the role emotions play in the recognition and adoption of identities and hierarchies: what feelings and desires motivate someone to join a group, and what feelings are induced by the experiences of groupness and belonging?

Before coming to Harvard, Uma received her BA in economics from Reed College, where she received the Gerald M. Meier Award for Distinction in Economics.
Sarah is a PhD candidate in Government and Social Policy at Harvard University. She studies American politics, particularly at the state and local level, social policy, political recruitment, and the impact of government interactions on civic engagement. Most broadly, she is interested in understanding the barriers to enacting and improving policies that ameliorate rising inequality in the United States.

Her dissertation research explores when and how state-levels public officials recognize and respond to failed social policies. Sarah’s findings speak to the importance of institutional design and state investment in data collection and research capacities for enhancing the likelihood that public officials will address policy failure.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, Sarah will be a Dissertation Completion Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. She is also a fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy, and a graduate affiliate of the Institute for Quantitative Social Science.

Sarah graduated Phi Beta Kappa and with highest honors from the University of Texas at Austin in 2009 with a BA in Plan II Honors and Government. Her senior thesis, Does Content Matter: An Examination of Civics Curriculum’s Effects on Political Participation, won the William Jennings Bryan Award for Outstanding Senior Thesis.

Prior to Harvard, Sarah spent five years as a high school teacher and then high school principal at Boston Preparatory Charter Public School. While teaching, Sarah earned my Masters in Education (MEd) from Boston University in Curriculum and Instruction.
KANEESHA JOHNSON

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  GOVERNMENT
MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD SCHOLAR IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS
American politics, inequality, criminal justice

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BIO
Kaneesha R. Johnson is a PhD candidate in the department of government at Harvard University and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice.

Kaneesha's research focuses on inequality, the criminal justice system, and identity politics, specifically focusing on the intersection of race and class. She is the co-author of *Deadly Justice: A Statistical Portrait of the Death Penalty*, and has co-authored articles appearing in *Oxford Bibliographies* and the *Duke Journal of Constitutional Law and Public Policy*, and has contributed to multiple articles appearing in the *Washington Post*.

Kaneesha is a doctoral Fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy, a 2017-2018 American Political Science Association Minority Program (MFP) Fellow, and a 2015 Ralphe BuncheSummer Institute Fellow. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2016 with a BA in political science and philosophy.

In addition to her doctoral studies, Kaneesha has served as a teaching fellow in the 2017 Freedom Summer Collegiate program.
ANDREW BYRNE KEEFE
HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY  INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Crime, criminal law, and criminal justice; economic inequality; empire; mass incarceration; network analysis; policing; political economy; political sociology; race and racism..

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BIO

Andrew Keefe is a JD/PhD candidate in Sociology & Social Policy and a Harry S. Truman Scholar.

Andy uses mixed methods to study the origins and outcomes of racial and economic inequality in the U.S. criminal justice system. His ongoing ethnographic research examines how municipal agencies and neighborhood associations in Minneapolis, MN have altered or severed ties with the city's police department since the murder of George Floyd and how these actors have collaborated with social movement organizations to promote public safety. Data from Andy's fieldwork help explain a finding from quantitative studies that radical movement organizations are more likely to participate in coalitions than their non-radical counterparts.

For his dissertation, Andy relies on comparative historical methods and late-sixteenth-century legal cases to investigate how British settler colonialism transformed Ireland’s criminal justice system and what influence, if at all, this system had on the development of English common law — an important basis of U.S. criminal law. This research promises to contribute to emerging scholarship in global and transnational sociology that connects criminal justice, racism, and empire.

With Adaner Usmani, Andy is also working on two quantitative projects. The first leverages U.S. survey data on incarcerated people’s earnings since 1974 to demonstrate a new method of estimating incarceration’s effect on income inequality. The second, a cross-national conjoint survey experiment, compares predictors of Americans’ attitudes about incarceration with those of people from other countries.

Last summer, Andy served as a Peggy Browning Fellow and an Equal Justice America Fellow at Greater Boston Legal Services. He earned his B.A. from Macalester College and was born and raised in Minneapolis.
SALMAN KHAN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN EDUCATION
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Education policy; economics of education; how inequalities in college access, career readiness, and higher education manifest into inequalities in the labor market, particularly around social mobility and wealth concentration.

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BIO

Salman Khan is a PhD student in Education Policy & Program Evaluation and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

His research seeks to investigate the challenges that disadvantaged (typically low-income, first generation, and minority) students face as they progress through their educational pathways. This manifests into researching how inequalities in access and preparation for higher education manifest into inequalities in the labor market, as well as focusing on the future of work as it relates to the effects of automation on the labor supply.

Prior to his doctoral studies, Salman served as a school counselor in NJ, supporting students through the college application process. Since then, he has worked with the Palo Alto Unified School District’s Research, Evaluation, and Assessment office, the Stanford Admissions Office, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. He also served as a Data Fellow for the Strategic Data Project (SDP) Fellowship at the Connecticut RISE Network, where he led projects related to Grade 9 on-track strategies, college and career readiness efforts, and data dashboard development for ten low-performing school districts.

Salman earned his BA from Rutgers University and his MA in Education from Stanford University. He also earned a Certification in College Counseling from UCLA Extension.
MITCHELL KILBORN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN GOVERNMENT
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

American Politics. Descriptive and substantive representation of social class in federal and state legislative institutions, campaign finance reform, and interest group politics.

Top-end income inequality, perceptions of relative affluence, and attitudes towards economic redistribution.

BIO

Mitchell Kilborn is a PhD candidate in the Department of Government and a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration in the Harvard Inequality & Social Policy Program.

He is interested in how social class and wealth inequalities among office holders and interest groups affect policy outcomes and trust in government among the non-wealthy, and corrective institutional reforms such as public campaign financing.

A second line of research considers how media portrayals of top-end wealth have historically shaped American perceptions of relative affluence and attitudes towards economic redistribution.

Mitchell’s research has been published in State Politics and Policy Quarterly and has been funded by the Bobst Center for Peace and Justice at Princeton University, the Center for American Political Studies, and the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard University.

Prior to graduate school, he worked as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer with a children’s literacy non-profit, DIBS for Kids, in his hometown of Omaha, Nebraska. He holds a AB in Politics from Princeton University.

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Curtlyn Kramer is a PhD student in Government and Social Policy.

In the course of her PhD, Curtlyn plans to study how policy choices in the United States shape, and are shaped by, social, spatial, demographic, and economic inequities. In particular, she is interested in studying this question within the context of food and agriculture related policies. She hopes to be able to find creative ways to leverage data science methods to build and analyze novel data sets.

Curtlyn received her BS in Public Affairs from the University of Texas at Dallas in May of 2015, where she completed an independent thesis project titled “A Century of American Agricultural Policy: Seminal Legislation and Modern Implications.” For that project, she reviewed major pieces of legislation that have shaped the agricultural industry in the United States, and connected them to their implications for the environment, nutrition, and world trade using data from the USDA’s Economic Research Service and Foreign Agricultural Service.

Prior to attending Harvard, Curtlyn spent three years working at the Brookings Institution as a Research Analyst supporting Vanessa Williamson, Molly Reynolds, and Sarah Binder. Her work spanned a wide array of topics, including congressional rules and capacity, congressional gridlock, citizens attitudes regarding taxation in the United States, political donor consortia, and the Black Lives Matter protest movement.
ELEANOR KRAUSE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN PUBLIC POLICY  JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Spatial inequality, labor economics, environmental economics, neighborhoods and communities, rural poverty

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BIO
Eleanor is a PhD candidate in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration and a Harvard Environmental Economics Program Pre-Doctoral Fellow.

Eleanor’s research considers the intersection of place, environment, and economic inequality, and explores the causes and consequences of regional inequality. She is particularly interested in understanding and addressing the ways in which trends such as de-industrialization, the energy transition, and globalization have impacted local labor markets and communities.

Her current research focuses on the unique barriers to economic opportunity and mobility faced by displaced workers and their communities in rural America and Appalachia. This research explores why similar economic shocks, such as those experienced by many traditionally coal-dependent communities, yield heterogeneous outcomes across place.

Prior to her doctoral studies, Eleanor served as a Senior Research Assistant in the Economic Studies program at the Brookings Institution and as a Research Consultant for the U.S. Climate Initiative at the World Resources Institute. She holds an MPA from the University of Washington, and a BA in Political Science and BS in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont.
AUDREY LATURA
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PHD STUDENT IN GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Comparative early childhood care and education politics, social policy preference formation and change, work-family conflict, and gender and politics

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BIO
Audrey Latura is a PhD candidate in Government and Social Policy and an Inequality & Social Policy doctoral fellow.

Her research focuses on how social policy attitudes change at the individual level, comparative work family policy, and female professional advancement, particularly in Latin America, the Iberian Peninsula, and the United States.

Audrey received an MA in International Relations from Yale University and a BA in Latin American Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with Departmental Distinction. She is fluent in Portuguese and Spanish.
Angela Lee is a PhD student in Sociology and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar. In 2019-2020 she was a Dissertation Scholar in residence at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth.

Her dissertation research examines wealth inequality by gender in the United States. She looks at trends in the gender wealth gap over the past three decades, changes in the gender wealth gap over the life course, and wealth inequality between husbands and wives.

Angela also studies crime and criminal justice, including the causal effect of employment on crime for juvenile offenders and the high rates of dropout in residential drug treatment.

Her research has been supported by a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, by the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard University, and by the Washington Center for Equitable Growth.

She received a BA in sociology from Yale University.
Nicholas Lillios

Harvard University  Phd Student in Government and Social Policy  Inequality and Social Policy Phd Scholar

Research Interests

American politics. Networks, influence, and participation in bureaucratic policymaking.

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Nicholas Lillios is a doctoral student in Government and Social Policy at Harvard University.

His research interests include health policy, inequality, representation, institutions, and political discourse. His recent work focuses on examining how social and economic inequality affect political influence and representation.

Raised in Chicago, Nicholas received a BA in Political Science and Biochemistry with comprehensive honors from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As a Truman Scholar, Nicholas spent a year at the Department of Health and Human Services, primarily working in the Office of Rural Health Policy and for the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services.
Evan Mackay

Harvard University  Ph.D. Student in Sociology and Social Policy  Inequality and Social Policy Ph.D. Scholar

Research Interests

Inequality and Social Policy; Crime, deviance, restoration, and punishment; Social stratification; Race and Ethnicity; Gender; Discrimination; Geography; Poverty; Quantitative Methods

BIO

Evan Cliff MacKay is a doctoral student in Sociology and Social Policy at Harvard University.

Their research interests are centered within the carceral system, youth justice systems, policing, and social disadvantage. Many topics of interest expand in connections from these.

Evan will study the destabilizing impacts of short-term jail sentences, pre-trial incarceration, and arrest. They also hope to study community punishments, restrictions, and discrimination that can shape post-incarceration.

Evan is interested in the social and spatial concentration of the criminal justice system. They have researched the rise of rural incarceration and are interested in the politics of criminal justice and the political branding of criminal justice reform. With a focus on the history of race and racism, they are interested in regional comparisons of the carceral apparatus within the US.

They are also interested in economic and social precarity, availability of resources including education, and most broadly building a 21st century society and beyond.

Evan received an AB in Sociology and an AM in Statistics from Harvard in 2019, and an M.Phil in Criminology from the University of Cambridge in 2020.
OMEED MAGHZIAN

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Public Economics, Macroeconomics, Wealth Inequality, Household Finance, Taxation, Social Insurance

BIO
Omeed is a PhD candidate in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

His research aims to study the drivers and implications of inequality within the fields of public economics and macroeconomics.

Some of his current work focuses on understanding how the design of social insurance systems interacts with income inequality. In one project, he is studying the implications of expanding job retention schemes on labor market dynamics and long-term earnings declines following economic downturns in the United States.

Omeed is also interested in examining the spatial features of inequality. He would like to understand how local barriers in accessing the US bankruptcy system can limit recovery from recessions and impact broader trends in household wealth inequality.

He is also interested in the extent to which credit constraints can help explain geographic patterns in intergenerational mobility across the US as well as the relationship between firm dynamics and regional economic divergence.

Prior to the PhD program, Omeed worked as a research assistant at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He received a BA in Economics and Mathematics from Columbia University.

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ABIGAIL MARIAM

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MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD SCHOLAR IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Urban Policy, Neighborhoods, Community Institutions, Homelessness and Housing, Poverty, Race and Ethnicity, Local Social Networks, Volunteerism, Local Policymaking.

BIO

Abigail Mariam is a PhD student in Sociology and Social Policy. Her current research interests include volunteerism and community engagement at the local level, poverty and homelessness, and neighborhood dynamics in urban contexts.

Specifically, Abigail is interested in researching the mechanisms by which volunteers and community partners bridge the gap in providing key social services to those experiencing poverty or living on the streets.

Prior to beginning her PhD program, Abigail was the Communications Coordinator and Housing Policy Assistant for Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson in Oakland, California. Abigail provided policy updates for constituents and community partners, as well as helped design and conduct an assessment of existing services offered to those experiencing homelessness, the first of its kind for Alameda County.

As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, she pursued several research projects, culminating in her senior thesis entitled “Facebook and Frames: The role of social media in the Ethiopian diaspora mobilization of November 2013.” Her project focused on analyzing the role of social media in facilitating a transnational protest within the Ethiopian diaspora in 2013. Her research was later published in the International Journal of Ethiopian Studies.

Abigail holds a BA in Government from Harvard University.

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PREEYA PANDYA MBEKEANI

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Education policy and inequality.
College access and success of first-generation and low-income students.

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BIO

Preeya Pandya Mbekeani is an advanced doctoral student in Quantitative Policy Analysis in Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a doctoral fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard Kennedy School.

Her research focuses on education policy and inequality related to college access and success of first-generation and low-income students. Her research has been published in Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis and AERA Open.

Prior to beginning her doctoral studies, she worked at the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She spent five years as a teacher-counselor in a college access program for low-income youth and three years as a French teacher.

She holds a Master's degree in Education Policy and Management from Harvard Graduate School of Education and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Chicago.
GARRY MITCHELL

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN EDUCATION
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Education, philosophy of education, sociology of education, history of education, race, Black education.

Economic inequality, social inequality, mobility, education policy, education of elites.

Punishment to privilege spectrum, surveillance, school discipline.

Ethnographic methods, educational ethics, research ethics, uplift theory.

BIO

GARRY MITCHELL

Garry Mitchell is a PhD student in Education and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. His work lies at the nexus of sociology, philosophy, and history of education.

Garry’s research commitment to educational justice is inextricably linked to his lifelong identity as an African-American male and student alongside his professional identity as a teacher and pedagogue.

His research focuses on the punishment to privilege spectrum within K-12 schools as it relates to broader society. His most recent work examines the ethical underpinnings of college preparatory school programs (CPSPs) that cultivate low-income, minoritized students to compete at elite independent schools. The project engages in a joint empirical and ethical analysis of these programs and their role in shaping upward mobility discourse within the realm of education. Garry’s work aims to contribute to our understanding of education, particularly in elite settings, as a vehicle for broader social, economic, and racial uplift.

It so happens that his own schooling history consists of an array of educational environments. As a child he attended private, public, Protestant, and Catholic schools. He has even been homeschooled. He’s been a member of all Black student bodies as well as one of two Black students in a school of nearly 400 students. He’s been called “gifted” by teachers and on the other hand been told that he belonged in remedial classes due to lack of the “academic thirst” to excel. He has been a student. He has been a teacher. He’s taught in both coeducational settings and in an all-girls school. These seemingly disparate educational and pedagogical experiences, however, activated his interest in the spectrum of students’ educational experiences as well as his belief in the transformative power of education. Immediately prior to beginning his doctoral program, Garry worked as a middle school English and History/HERstory teacher in New York City. He holds a bachelor’s in African and African American Studies from Stanford University and a master’s in Teaching from Relay GSE.

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ALEXANDRA MITUKIEWICZ

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MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Aging; Inequality; Labor Markets and Institutions; Social Policy; Demography; Economic Well-being.

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BIO
Alexandra (Olenka) Mitukiewicz is a PhD student in Sociology and Social Policy. Alexandra’s research interests center on how economic and labor market inequalities shape the experiences of older workers.

Prior to graduate school, Alexandra worked in Washington, DC, as a Research Associate at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. There she conducted original research on work-family policy, the labor market, and human capital. Prior to joining Equitable Growth, Alexandra worked at the Center for American Progress and Abt Associates, and interned at the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Alexandra graduated from Wellesley College with a BA in economics.
NOZOMI NAKAJIMA

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN EDUCATION POLICY AND PROGRAM EVALUATION
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

The dynamics between education policy and family life in maintaining and reducing inequality.

Economics of education, causal inference, inequality, international development

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BIO

Nozomi Nakajima is a PhD candidate in Education Policy & Program Evaluation at Harvard University and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Her research examines how education policy interacts with family life to reduce and maintain inequality. One strand of work examines how education policies shape parent’s beliefs about education. Another strand of research examines how features of the education system impact and respond to parent’s work. Her work uses administrative data, surveys, and field experiments. Nozomi aims to produce research that informs evidence-based policies in education.

Nozomi’s work has been supported by the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy, the Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science, and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University.

Prior to her doctoral studies, Nozomi worked at the World Bank where she conducted research and provided technical assistance in the education sector. Born and raised in Japan, Nozomi holds a B.A. in Political Science from Yale University and a M.A. in International Education & Policy Analysis from Stanford University.
AYUSHI NARAYAN

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS  JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Inequality, Labor, and Education

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BIO
Ayushi is a PhD student in the Department of Economics, a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration, and a graduate student affiliate at Opportunity Insights.

She studies various topics related to labor, education, and inequality.

Her earlier work has examined how educational decisions respond to labor demand shocks, using the case study of hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) which increased the demand for less-skilled labor. A separate paper explores the barriers preventing low-income students from attending college, assessing how much the complexity of the FAFSA inhibits financial aid receipt and college enrollment.

Her more recent projects seek to understand workplace interactions between managers and employees and the ways in which those interactions contribute to labor market inequalities.

Prior to starting her PhD at Harvard, Ayushi worked as a Research Economist at the Council of Economic Advisers, specializing in education and labor policy. She graduated magna cum laude from Dartmouth College in 2014 with high honors in economics.
KADEEM NORAY

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN PUBLIC POLICY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor economics, public economics, and applied theory. Kadeem’s interests also overlap with law and economics and economic history.

For previous and ongoing work, see the research page on his website.

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BIO

Kadeem is currently a PhD student in Public Policy at Harvard University and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

He earned his MS in Applied Economics from Montana State University in 2017 and his BS in Mathematics, Economics, and Physics at Hillsdale College in 2015. He is also a graduate student affiliate at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science (IQSS), a Considine Fellow in Law and Economics at Harvard Law School, a Health Policy Research Scholar at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and a resident tutor at Adams House.

Currently, Kadeem is working on a couple of research projects related to human capital development. In an NBER working paper entitled STEM Careers and Technological Change, Kadeem and David Deming document that the return to majoring in STEM diminishes quickly after labor market entry. Furthermore, they provide evidence that this pattern is driven by rapid technological change in STEM occupations that make STEM skills obsolete.

Kadeem is also in the process of exploring the long-run human capital formation effects of early-life exposure to various public health interventions including water supply treatments (e.g. chlorination, filtration, etc.) and milk pasteurization requirements.

Additionally, Kadeem is interested in analyzing the implications of redistributing income from those who were fortunate enough to have been born into a high-quality neighborhood to those who were not so lucky through a place of birth tax. To do this, he plans to develop a dynamic model that accounts for the migration such a tax might produce and the spillover effects of migrants on residents in relatively worse off.
CHIKA O. OKAFOR

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor economics, law and economics, and political economy.

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Chika Okafor is a PhD candidate in Economics at Harvard University and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. He is a Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellow, a Terence M. Considine Fellow in Law and Economics at Harvard Law School, and a Senior Resident Tutor at Leverett House in Harvard College. He is also a graduate student affiliate at Opportunity Insights and at the Institute of Quantitative Social Science (IQSS).

Chika’s research interests include labor economics, law and economics, and political economy. Among his recent projects, one models referral market dynamics to uncover an alternative source of labor market discrimination from traditional economic theories. Another recent project has compiled a new dataset to analyze the impact of electoral politics on the criminal justice system. In general, Chika’s research focuses on discovering mechanisms of—and informing solutions to—aspects of socioeconomic inequality.

Before beginning the PhD, Chika served in various public service leadership roles. In his hometown, he managed an arm of the Chicago Public School's “Culture of Calm” initiative, a violence prevention effort featured in The New York Times and NPR tasked with improving school climate and reducing student victims of gun violence. He later returned to the school system as an Education Pioneers Fellow and developed its first College Persistence Toolkit. More recently, Chika served as the Tom & Andi Bernstein Human Rights Fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (in the Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide). In this role, he supported the efforts of the Early Warning Project, former Ambassador Stephen Rapp, and former Special Assistant to the President Stephen Pomper.

Chika earned a BA in Economics (with Honors) from Stanford University and a JD from Yale Law School. He is a proud graduate of the Chicago Public Schools for elementary and high school.
FELIX OWUSU

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN PUBLIC POLICY
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social policy, inequality, race, and discrimination.

Institutions affecting social and racial stratification, including the criminal justice system, education, and labor markets.

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BIO

Felix Y. Owusu is a doctoral candidate in public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School and a Research Fellow at Harvard Law School’s Criminal Justice Policy Program.

His training is primarily focused in labor economics and econometric methods, and his research interests focus on the role of social policy in influencing poverty and inequality across race and class, and national origin.

His research has focused on the role of institutional features of the court system in influencing criminal justice outcomes and disparities across race and class. His current work uses administrative data from the Massachusetts Trial Court and the MA Department of Criminal Justice Information Services to identify and measure the sources of racial disparities within MA’s criminal justice system. Another project seeks to understand how court resource constraints can influence judicial decision-making, defendant outcomes, and racial disparities in the justice system.

Prior to attending Harvard University, Felix worked as an economic consultant at Cornerstone Research and was involved in research at the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s Office of Research, and UC Berkeley’s Institute for Research on Labor and Employment.

Felix holds a BA in economics and political science from Williams College and an MPP from the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley.
CASEY PETROFF

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT  JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Political economy, economic history, health, cultural economics, long-run inequality

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Casey Petroff is a PhD candidate in Political Economy and Government and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

She researches topics in political economy and economic history with a focus on the politics of science, particularly how people learn about and use new scientific information and how states use novel technologies and discoveries. Her secondary areas of interest include public health (including inequalities in health outcomes) and cultural economics.

Casey holds a Bachelor of Science in mathematics and economics with minors in finance and history from American University in Washington, DC, and an MSc in economic history from the London School of Economics and Political Science.
DANIEL PRINZ

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN HEALTH POLICY AND ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health economics, labor economics, and public economics.

The functioning and design of social insurance programs, including disability insurance schemes and the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

Understanding what features of social insurance programs promote efficiency, equity, and fiscal sustainability.

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BIO

Daniel Prinz is a PhD student in Health Policy and Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

He is broadly interested in the economics of social insurance programs, conducting empirical research on disability insurance programs in the U.S. and the Netherlands, and on the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

His research has documented the screening behavior of insurance companies in the health insurance exchanges created by the Affordable Care Act and the consequences of Medicaid privatization in Texas and New York. His ongoing work develops new evidence on the employment sources of disability insurance claims, the consequences of plan design in Medicare Part D, the role of liquidity constraints in prescription drug consumption, and variation in program generosity and targeting in state Medicaid programs.

Daniel’s research has received support from Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard and from the Social Security Administration through the Retirement and Disability Research Center at the National Bureau of Economic Research. His work on screening in health insurance exchanges was awarded the Mark A. Satterthwaite Award for Outstanding Research in Healthcare Markets in 2017.

Daniel holds a BA in Mathematical Economics from Brown University.
CRESA PUGH

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY
INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Transnational and global sociology; historical sociology; imperialism; refugee and forced migration; war; violence and conflict; race, ethnicity and immigration; qualitative methods

BIO

Cresa Pugh is a doctoral student in Sociology & Social Policy. Her research interests include the social legacies of imperialism, ethnic and religious conflict in Southeast Asia, and the role of collective memory and identity in shaping peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict societies.

Cresa is currently working on a project that examines the effects of British imperial capitalism on the formation of ethnoreligious tensions in colonial Burma. She has done extensive fieldwork in Southeast Asia, particularly Myanmar (formerly Burma), and works with local civil society organizations to support the development of their peacebuilding efforts.

Cresa's dissertation will focus on the imperial origins of the contemporary global refugee crisis. A native of Nashville, TN, she holds a B.A. in Anthropology and Religion from Bates College and a Masters of Science in Migration Studies from the University of Oxford.

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ETHAN RAKER

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Socio-spatial Inequality, Climate Change, Health, Disaster, Environmental Justice

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BIO

Ethan Raker is a PhD candidate in sociology, a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice, and a graduate affiliate of the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies.

His research deploys quantitative methods to address questions related to socio-spatial inequality, climate change, health, and neighborhoods. He is particularly interested in the empirical application of large-scale administrative and climate data to address theoretical questions about the relationship between the natural environment and human society. Some of Ethan’s work has been published in *PNAS, Demography, Social Science & Medicine*, and the *Annual Review of Sociology*.

His dissertation examines how climate-related disasters impact racial and socioeconomic inequalities along two demographic dimensions: migration and fertility. This project consists of three empirical papers, which together argue that social contexts and political institutions produce inequalities by creating the conditions for disaster and by responding or changing in ways that structure unequal outcomes.

Ethan is originally from Indianapolis, Indiana. He holds a BA in sociology and business management from Columbia University and an AM in sociology from Harvard University. Before graduate school, he held research positions at NORC at the University of Chicago and the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University.
HUNTER E. RENDLEMAN

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PhD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Political behavior, minority politics, and the role of formal and informal institutions in shaping political and economic outcomes.

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BIO

Hunter Rendleman is a PhD candidate in Government at Harvard University. She is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration and is an affiliate of the Institute for Quantitative Social Science. She is chiefly interested in questions related to racial identity and the ways that local and personal economic circumstances condition the expressions of those identities.

Her current research focuses on understanding the politics of Black Americans. In particular, she is exploring the relationship between labor market discrimination and the political behavior of middle- and upper-income Black Americans. She is also researching the role of racial solidarity in shaping Black Americans’ policy preferences. Additional work attempts to understand the political effects of social and fiscal policies.

Before coming to Harvard, Hunter received her A.B. in Economics and Mathematics from Bryn Mawr College and studied at the London School of Economics and Political Science.
NEFARA RIESCH

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY  MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Race and ethnicity, poverty and inequality, criminal legal system, labor markets, policing, quantitative methods, social policy

BIO

Nefara Riesch is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy and a doctoral fellow in the Harvard Kennedy School’s Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy, where she is a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Research Fellow in Poverty and Justice.

She is broadly interested in race, policy, and inequality. Her research focuses on how policies and institutions such as the criminal legal system and labor market affect racial stratification.

She is currently working on projects spanning the areas of policing policy, wage inequality, and the relationship between racial prejudice and policymaking.

Prior to doctoral studies, Nefara worked in policy research, focusing on homelessness, employment, and policing. She also has extensive experience working in college access and retention.

Nefara received her MPP from the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley and BA in history from the University of California, Los Angeles. She is from East Palo Alto, California.

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NATHAN ROBINSON
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RESEARCH INTERESTS
Criminal justice, prisons, sociology of law, architecture and urban planning

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BIO
Nathan Robinson is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy at Harvard University.

Nathan is interested in criminal justice policy, particularly in Louisiana. His research focuses on adult education in U.S. prisons and on the politics of indigent legal defense.

Nathan graduated from Brandeis University with a BA in African American Studies and a BA/MA in Politics. He earned his JD at Yale Law School, where he co-directed the Green Haven Prison Project and worked for the New Orleans public defender and the ACLU's National Prison Project.

He is also the author of The Man Who Accidentally Wore His Cravat to a Gymnasium, a children’s book about fashion and conformity.
CIERRA ROBSON

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Racial inequality, technological advancement, surveillance, criminal justice, policing, social policy, AI ethics.

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BIO

Cierra Robson is a doctoral student in the Sociology and Social Policy program at Harvard, and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Research Fellow in Poverty and Justice.

Broadly, she is interested in the ways in which technological advancements both reinforce and revolutionize racial inequality in the United States, particularly within the criminal justice system.

Her most recent projects examines modern public-private collaborations to create predictive policing technologies and their impact on marginalized communities.

Cierra is also the Associate Director of the Ida B. Wells JUST Data Lab where she guides several research teams in partnership with community organizations to explore how data can be retooled for racial justice. She aims to use her research and advocacy to conceptualize what meaningful regulation of Big Tech looks like.

Cierra holds a BA in African American Studies from Princeton University, where she specialized in studies of race and public policy and pursued a minor in Technology and Society.
Mari Sanchez

Harvard University, PhD Student in Sociology
James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration

**Research Interests**

Culture and inequality, with a focus on how cultural narratives shape how we make sense of inequality and potential routes to address it.

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**BIO**

Mari is a Doctoral Student in Sociology and a Stone PhD Scholar.

Mari is broadly interested in the intersection of culture and inequality, with a focus on how cultural narratives shape how we make sense of inequality and potential routes to address it.

As a Stone fellowship holder, her research in the sub-area of economic inequality will interrogate how the boundary-making strategies of the upwardly mobile and stably upper class collide and change cultural meanings around the categories of “privilege” and “disadvantage.” In particular, her current research project traces how narratives of what it means to be “privileged” and “undeserving rich” induce the stably upper-class to distance themselves from perceptions of the “undeserving rich.”

In addition to her work on income inequality exploring cultural narratives of “privilege” and the “undeserving rich,” Mari is also interested in how cultural narratives can shape perceptions of racial inequality. In other projects, she explores the diffusion of the category “people of color” (POC or also BIPOC), how the meanings of this category are contested and enacted, and what opportunities and challenges it creates for interethnic solidarity and collective mobilization.

Before graduate school, Mari worked 9 years in the advertising world where she specialized in understanding how culture and identity shape consumption. She graduated with highest honors from the University of Notre Dame.
HANNAH SHAFFER

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  ECONOMICS
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Law and Economics; Game Theory. Discretion in the Criminal Justice System; Rape Law Reform

BIO

Hannah Shaffer is a PhD candidate in the Department of Economics and a JD candidate at Harvard Law School.

Her current work centers on the causes and consequences of prosecutorial discretion in the criminal justice system—specifically how structured sentencing impacts prosecutors’ choices and plea deal outcomes.

She received her undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis, with majors in political theory and economics. Before beginning the PhD program, she worked as a Research Assistant at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

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NICHOLAS SHORT

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

American political economy and economic inequality; the politics of the American knowledge economy

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BIO

Nick is a PhD candidate in Government and Social Policy at Harvard University and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Nick’s research focuses on the politics of the American knowledge economy and the ways in which the American knowledge economy produces economic, geographic, and political inequality.

A core contention in Nick’s research is that the American knowledge economy is not premised on the production of knowledge per se but on the production of intellectual property, an argument that is partially based on his own experience as an intellectual property attorney. He is especially interested in the reforms to U.S. patent, antitrust, and trade policy that facilitated the knowledge economy transition, the realignment within the Democratic Party coalition that made the knowledge economy a politically viable strategy for producing economic prosperity, and the interest groups---from venture capitalists to patent lawyers to inventors and their employers---that continue to shape knowledge economy development today.

Nick has an MS in Technology and Policy from MIT and a JD from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. Before coming to Harvard, Nick spent seven years practicing law as an associate attorney at two prominent law firms with an emphasis in intellectual property litigation. Nick studied physics as an undergraduate.
ANDREJA SILIUNAS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY  INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL POLICY PHD SCHOLAR

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Family Demography; Stratification; and Social Policy

BIO

Andreja is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy at Harvard University.

Her research interests span family demography, stratification, and social policy. She is particularly interested in kinship networks and hopes to continue exploring ways in which public institutions impact resource distribution among/between extended family members.

Her dissertation research, “Post-Soviet Graffiti Wars: Decisions to Produce, Commission, Deter, and Remove Graffiti in Urban Lithuania,” is supported by the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University.

Andreja grew up in a suburb of Chicago and completed her bachelors degree at the College of Wooster with a sociology major and math minor. As an undergraduate, she wrote a thesis exploring cross-county variation in child welfare agencies' willingness and ability to support the grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, and other kinship caregivers who take in their relatives' abused or neglected children to divert them from traditional foster care.

After graduating, she worked at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, assisting sociologists with projects pertaining to intergenerational transmission of wealth, intimate partner violence/unintended pregnancy, and correlates of children's telomere length (a biomarker of accumulated stress).
ANNA STANSBURY

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN ECONOMICS
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor economics and the macroeconomics of labor markets, particularly relating to income and wealth inequality, poverty and unemployment in advanced economies.

Primary research focus: labor market power and labor market institutions, including their effects on rent-sharing, wages, firm profits, and income inequality; and firm incentives to comply with labor law.

Other areas of interest include the determinants of rising top 1% and 0.1% labor income, the natural rate of unemployment and hysteresis effects, and full employment policy.

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BIO

Anna Stansbury is a PhD candidate in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. Her research interests are at the intersection of labor economics and macroeconomics, in particular on areas related to income and wealth inequality, poverty, and unemployment, in advanced economies.

Her work primarily focuses on labor market power and labor market institutions. In a paper with Gregor Schubert and Bledi Taska, she is studying the effect of employer concentration across different occupations and cities in the U.S. They show that employer concentration has a substantial dampening effect on wages for a large minority of US workers, particularly those in low-density areas and highly specialized occupations. In a recent paper with Larry Summers, published in the Spring 2020 Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, she showed that the decline in worker power in the US over the last four decades can account for a large portion of a number of major macroeconomic trends: the decline in the labor share of income, the rise in top 1% income concentration, the rise in corporate valuations, the decline in the NAIRU (non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment). In a report published by the Resolution Foundation, Anna and Lindsay Judge quantified UK firms’ incentives to comply with the minimum wage based on data on actual penalties levied and frequency of detection, and concluded that for many firms, the system of legal penalties provides little incentive to comply; Anna is also working on a similar project for US firms.

More broadly, her interests focus on the macroeconomics of labor markets, and the role of macroeconomic stabilization policy in shaping employment and incomes. She has published on the divergence between productivity and pay in the US with Larry Summers (in Facing Up to Low Productivity Growth from the Peterson Institute for International Economics); and on central bank independence with Ed Balls and James Howat.

Anna has a BA in Economics from Cambridge University in 2013, where she graduated joint first in her year, and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School, where she was a Kennedy Scholar.
Lauren Taylor is a doctoral student in Sociology and Social Policy and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration. Her research interests include employment, household finance, intergenerational social mobility, and social welfare programs. In particular, she is interested in studying the effects of government interventions on inequality in the United States and how specific institutional policies interact with systems of inequality.

She is from Van Wert, Ohio, and received her undergraduate degree from Oberlin College, where she studied mathematics and sociology. Prior to pursuing her graduate degree, Lauren worked for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as a research assistant. At the CFPB, she studied consumer use of high-cost, small-dollar products, which informed the CFPB’s proposed rule on payday, vehicle title, and certain high-cost installment loans.
Jonathan Tebes is a PhD candidate in economics, a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, and a Stone Scholar in the Inequality and Social Policy program.

John's research broadly examines the causes and consequences of urban poverty in the United States. He is particularly interested in understanding how components of the criminal justice system, racial discrimination, and mental health contribute to the persistence of urban poverty.

One strand of his current research seeks to better understand the root of racial differences in the use of force by police, while another examines the causal effects of legal fines and fees on recidivism and labor market outcomes.

John holds a Bachelors of Science from MIT in economics, where he was awarded the MIT Undergraduate Economics Association Journal Award for his senior thesis.
Elizabeth Thom is a PhD student in Government and Social Policy and a Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Scholar in Poverty and Justice.

Elizabeth studies the political economy of rural and rust belt communities in the United States. She is particularly interested in how transitions to the knowledge economy are affecting poverty and inequality in these communities. Her work examines the spatial dimensions of welfare state dependence and the political attitudes of beneficiaries. She has conducted field work in Pennsylvania and Kentucky and plans to utilize her research funds as a Wiener Scholar to travel to other parts of the country undergoing similar political and economic transitions.


She is also currently working on a project with Professor Stephen Ansolabehere on how climate change and decarbonization will impact rural industries and communities.

Elizabeth holds a BA in Political Science and Hispanic Studies from the University of Pennsylvania and an MSc in Comparative Social Policy from the University of Oxford where she was a Thouron Scholar in St Cross College. Prior to her studies, Elizabeth worked with E.J. Dionne Jr. as a Senior Project Coordinator and Research Assistant in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution.
Mo Torres is a PhD candidate in sociology, a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration, and a Democracy Doctoral Fellow at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance. Previously, he was a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil (2019) and an Urban Dissertation Fellow at the Taubman Center for State and Local Government (2017-2018).

Mo’s research interests include stratification, urban politics, schools, the carceral state, and the role of elite actors in producing and maintaining systems of inequality. Broadly, he seeks to understand the political economy of racism: how race is produced and how racism creates unequal social structures.

His dissertation uses mixed and historical methods to explore the causes and consequences of economic and democratic decline in Detroit, Flint, and other Rust Belt cities. Ongoing article-length projects include work on race-class stratification and financial institutions, police militarization and the carceral state, the sociology of W. E. B. Du Bois, and race theory.

Before graduate school, Mo was a high school teacher in Detroit and worked in the nonprofit K-12 sector. He holds a master’s in sociology from Harvard, a master’s in public policy from the University of Michigan (Ford School of Public Policy), and a bachelor’s in history and Chicana/o Studies from the University of California, Davis. A first-generation college graduate, Mo is originally from Sacramento, CA.
JOHN TOWEY

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JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Economic Sociology; Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility; Organizations, Occupations, and Work; Political Economy; Political Sociology; Quantitative Methods; Social Movements and Collective Behavior; Theory

BIO

John Towey is a PhD student in Sociology and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

He is interested in the relationship between social networks, government, and social movements in the production and modification of market institutions. John is further interested in how this process affects and is affected by social inequality and mobility.

John’s previous research has examined the extent to which policy and culture affect perceptions of the credibility of organizational leadership in labor markets in the United States. He has also assisted in research measuring the non-profit employment effects of regional variation in public policy. In addition, John has been assisting NSF-funded research on racial tracking in Bay Area high schools.

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ADAM TRAVIS

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Housing, poverty, urban sociology, and public policy.

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BIO

Adam Travis is a PhD student in Sociology and Social Policy and a doctoral fellow in the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard Kennedy School.

Adam’s research interests include housing, poverty, urban sociology, and public policy. Broadly, Adam’s current projects examine the behavior of developers, homeowners, and landlords in urban housing markets. His research seeks to expand upon Jane Jacobs’ insight that, “private investment shapes cities, but social ideas (and laws) shape private investment.”

Prior to graduate school Adam worked in Kenya as a Michael C. Rockefeller Fellow and in Washington D.C. for the U.S. Senate. He holds a BA in Social Studies and AM in Sociology from Harvard University.
Jacob Waggoner

Harvard University PhD Student in Government and Social Policy
James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration

Research Interests
- American Politics, Institutions, Power
- Land Use Law, Administrative Law, Criminal Law

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Bio

Jacob is a PhD student in Government and Social Policy at Harvard’s Department of Government and Kennedy School. He is a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration and a Terence M. Considine Fellow in Law and Social Sciences.

Jacob studies the distribution of political and economic power in and across American institutions. His dissertation project empirically examines local-level concentration in landownership across the US, asking who owns how much, where, and to what effect. Other work examines corporate favoritism in rulemaking processes of the administrative state and the fiscal exploitation of politically disadvantaged groups through the penal state.

These projects contribute to Jacob’s pursuit of the larger question: what is the role of political and economic power in explaining why some institutions advantage the few at the expense of the many while others advantage the many at the expense of the few?

Jacob received a BA in Political Science, honors BS in Mathematical and Computational Sciences, and MA in Public Policy from Stanford University in 2018. In parallel with his PhD, he will begin a JD at Yale Law School in 2021-22.
KIRSTEN WALTERS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  GOVERNMENT
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD RESEARCH FELLOW IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS
American politics, social policy, federalism, subnational institutions, interest groups, top-end inequality

BIO
Kirsten is a PhD student in Government at Harvard University and a James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration.

Kirsten studies American politics and social policy, with a particular focus on federalism and subnational institutions. Broadly, she is interested in how states impose limitations on the policy autonomy of localities, how interest groups distort direct democracy at the local and state levels, and how these interactions exacerbate top-end economic inequality.

Kirsten’s dissertation project examines the organizational capacity that right- and left-wing advocacy organizations exert over the implementation of tax and expenditure limitations at the state level. She is specifically studying how these organizations influence the success or failure of measures that restrict the ability of states to implement a progressive tax structure. This project relates to her broader interests in tracing how policy development processes are distorted in ways that contribute to top-end economic inequality.

Prior to beginning her graduate studies, Kirsten received a BA from Carleton College, where she studied Political Science.

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Tom Wooten is a PhD student in sociology and an Inequality & Social Policy doctoral fellow.

Tom studies the transition to adulthood for ambitious young Americans at opposite ends of the opportunity spectrum. He is particularly interested in the work young adults do to try to secure life opportunities for themselves. By studying students on the cusp of joining the workforce and the high schools and colleges they attend, he discovers previously unidentified ways America’s staggeringly immobile and unequal class structure reproduces itself.

His dissertation project is based on two years of ethnographic fieldwork about the transition to college for a small cohort of low-income Black men in New Orleans. The project has implications for sociology's understandings of attempted upward mobility, the process of leaving college, and the interpersonal causes and consequences of urban gun violence.

Tom’s other project examines extracurricular life at Harvard College, showing how students use college-sponsored outside-of-class activities to construct desirable, marketable, seemingly “authentic” selves.

Before entering graduate school, Tom wrote two historical books about disasters. His first book, co-written with Utpal Sandesara, is called No One Had a Tongue to Speak (Prometheus 2011). It is a narrative history of the 1979 Machhu Dam Disaster in Gujarat State, India. His second book, We Shall Not Be Moved: Rebuilding Home in the Wake of Katrina (Beacon 2012), follows five neighborhood-based recovery efforts in New Orleans.
ALICE WU

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  ECONOMICS  
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Labor Economics, Econometrics, Career Progression, Wage Polarization, Impacts of Top-end Inequality on Lower-skilled Workers, Labor Market Discrimination.

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BIO

Alice Wu is a PhD candidate in Economics and a Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality and Wealth Concentration at Harvard University.

Her research interests include labor economics and econometrics, with a focus on the causes and implications of labor market inequality.

She aims to study the career progression of workers from less advantaged backgrounds, and further understand the role of firms and institutions in driving income inequality.

Her research also documents bias against women and minorities in various settings, and draws insights from multiple disciplines to interpret her findings. In the future, she will also test for mechanisms that reduce bias and foster diversity at the workplace.

Alice is a proud graduate of the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to Harvard, she also spent a year at Princeton doing research on mental health and gender discrimination.
LILLY YU

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN  SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY
MALCOLM HEWITT WIENER PHD SCHOLAR IN POVERTY AND JUSTICE

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social inequality, criminal justice policy, and punishment. The impact of criminal justice reform and justice-based interventions and their intersection with issues of gender, race, and immigration.

WEBSITE

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BIO

Lilly Yu is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy at Harvard University.

Her research interests lie broadly in criminal justice policy and practice, particularly how local justice reform efforts and the proliferation of system-based interventions alleviate or perpetuate social inequality. She is particularly interested in the impacts of justice reform on victims of crime, immigrants, and women and girls. Her research is supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

Prior to beginning her PhD, Lilly was a researcher in the Urban Institute’s Justice Policy Center for four years where she worked on a wide portfolio of studies in partnership with government agencies, practitioners, and community-based organizations. Her prior research focused on crime victimization and victim services, as well as the justice involvement of young people in a variety of settings and interventions. She also extensively studied human trafficking and its related issues, including the criminalization of trafficking survivors and survivor perceptions of justice.

Lilly earned her BA from Rice University, where she majored in sociology and minored in the program in Poverty, Justice, and Human Capabilities.
Michael Zanger-Tishler

Harvard University  PhD Student in Sociology and Social Policy
Malcolm Hewitt Wiener PhD Research Fellow in Poverty and Justice

Research Interests
Criminology, Sociology of Punishment, Race, Ethnicity and Migration, Quantitative Methods, Comparative Sociology, Social Theory, Inequality and Social Policy, Antisemitism, Middle Eastern Studies, Law and Society

BIO
Michael Zanger-Tishler is a PhD student in Sociology & Social Policy.

He is interested in understanding the relationship between race, ethnicity, and the criminal justice system in a comparative context, specifically looking at the United States, Israel, and Europe.

As an undergraduate, he wrote his senior thesis on criminal justice contact among diverse populations using an original survey and coauthored an article entitled “The Great Decoupling: The Disconnection Between Criminal Offending and Experience of Arrest Across Two Cohorts” with Vesla Weaver and Andrew Papachristos. He also conducted summer math research through the Yale SUMRY program, and was a research assistant for economist Robert Shiller.

Before beginning his graduate study, Michael studied at a Hebrew speaking Israeli religious seminary (2013-2014) and was a CASA Arabic fellow in Amman Jordan (2018-2019) where he studied Formal and Levantine Arabic and worked as a volunteer translator for the International Refugee Assistance Project.

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MICHAEL ZOOROB

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  PHD STUDENT IN GOVERNMENT
JAMES M. AND CATHLEEN D. STONE PHD SCHOLAR IN INEQUALITY AND WEALTH CONCENTRATION

RESEARCH INTERESTS

American politics, policing, and public health.

The differences in behavior between elected and appointed law enforcement executives, the political and law enforcement consequences of police unions, the contemporary drug epidemic, and the health consequences of increased inequality and economic change

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BIO

Michael is a PhD candidate in Government and an AM candidate in Statistics. He holds a BA in Political Science and Economics from Vanderbilt University.

Michel is broadly interested in crime and policing policy, street-level bureaucracy, and organizational networks in American politics. Separately, he is interested in understanding the individual and community-level factors which predict resilience to overdose to inform policy responses to the contemporary drug crisis.

Michael's prior work has been published in the journals Drug and Alcohol Dependence, Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety, and PS: Political Science & Politics. His work has been supported by the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy and the Center for American Political Studies.