

# KATE MUSEN

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## EDUCATION

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<b>Columbia University</b>	2020 – Present
Doctor of Philosophy, Economics, in progress	
Master of Arts (en route), Economics, May 2022	
Master of Philosophy (en route), Economics, May 2023	
<b>Swarthmore College</b>	2014 – 2018
Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Highest Honors, Minors in Psychology and Mathematics	
GPA: 3.97/4.00	

## OTHER EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

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<b>IRP Training Series On Poverty and Economic Mobility Research</b>	2023 – 2024
Participant	
<b>Berkeley/Sloan Summer School in Environmental and Energy Economics</b>	August 2021
Attendee	
<b>University of Edinburgh</b>	Spring 2017
Visiting Undergraduate Student in the School of Mathematics	

## AFFILIATIONS

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<b>California Child Welfare Indicators Project</b>	February 2023 – Present
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## HONORS AND AWARDS

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National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2020 – 2025
Caswell Johnson Fellowship, Columbia University	May 2024
Reubens Travel and Research Award, Columbia University	January 2024
Wueller Pre-Dissertation Award, Runner-up, Columbia University	January 2024
Wueller Teaching Award, Runner-up, Columbia University	September 2023
Harriss Prize for Best Second Year Paper, Runner-up, Columbia University	January 2023
Dean's Fellow, Columbia University	2020 – 2021
Adams Prize in Economics, Swarthmore College	June 2018
— “awarded annually for the best paper applying quantitative methods to an economic issue or problem”	
Phi Beta Kappa	May 2018
Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Honor Society	March 2017
National Merit Scholar	May 2014

## RESEARCH GRANTS

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Program for Economic Research, Columbia University (with Donato Onorato), \$5,000	2024
Transition-Age Youth Research & Evaluation Hub, University of California, Berkeley, \$7,780	2023

## RESEARCH AND WORK EXPERIENCE

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<b>Research Assistant to Prof. Janet Currie</b>	November 2021 – Present
<i>Princeton University</i>	
<b>Pre-Doctoral Fellow to Profs. Raj Chetty &amp; Nathan Hendren</b>	July 2018 – July 2020
<i>Opportunity Insights, Harvard University</i>	

**Research Assistant to Prof. Syon Bhanot**  
*Behavioral Economics Lab, Swarthmore College*

January 2016 – May 2018

**Joel Dean Fellow in Economics**  
*Department of Economics, Swarthmore College*

Summer 2017

**Research Assistant to Prof. Jay Bhattacharya**  
*Center for Primary Care & Outcomes Research, Stanford University*

Summer 2016

**Data Science Intern**  
*Information Sciences Institute, University of Southern California*

Summer 2015

**Research Assistant to Prof. Jay Bhattacharya**  
*Center for Primary Care & Outcomes Research, Stanford University*

Summer 2014

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Teaching Fellow for Principles of Economics**  
*Department of Economics, Columbia University*

Spring 2023

**Teaching Fellow for Economics of Race**  
*Department of Economics, Columbia University*

Fall 2022

**Teaching Assistant for Intermediate Microeconomics**  
*Department of Economics, Swarthmore College*

Fall 2016

## WORKING PAPERS

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**“Minimum Wages and Racial Infant Health Inequality: Evidence from the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1966” [\[link\]](#)**

Abstract: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1966 increased the federal minimum wage to \$1 in several previously excluded industries starting in 1967. These changes disproportionately affected Black workers, substantially narrowing the racial wage gap over the period of just a few years. In this paper, I use a triple differences approach to evaluate the effect of narrowing the racial wage gap on the infant mortality gap. I estimate the model at the county level, exploiting variation in industry employment shares measured in the early 1960s. Intuitively, counties that pre-reform had higher shares of employment in industries affected by the FLSA of 1966 were more treated by the reform and experienced greater narrowing of the racial wage gap. I find that an increase in covered employment by one percentage point reduced the infant mortality gap by about 0.16 deaths per 1,000 births (or 1.2% of the mean gap).

**“A Hard Pill to Swallow: Spillovers of the Opioid Epidemic on Educational Progress” [\[link\]](#)**

Abstract: Despite a substantial increase in the number of children living in households and exposed to neighbors with opioid addiction in the past two decades, the impacts of this trend on children are poorly understood. This paper provides novel estimates of the causal effects of exposure to the opioid epidemic on educational progress for California students. I develop a new time-varying instrument for prescription opioids derived from Purdue Pharma’s evolving marketing strategy, which targeted areas with high rates of different diseases over time. Moving from the 25th to the 75th percentile of instrumented per capita opioids, standardized test scores fall by 0.65–1.57% of the mean. High school exit exam pass rates fall by a greater magnitude. I find no evidence of overall changes in dropout rates, but ninth- and tenth-grade dropout rates increase. Estimates from IV regressions are much larger in magnitude than those using OLS. I find a significant adverse impact of community opioid use on the academic performance of the marginal affected child, highlighting previously overlooked intergenerational consequences of the opioid crisis.

**“Adding Salt to the Womb: The Benefits of Salt Iodization on Infant Health”  
(with Donato Onorato) [\[link\]](#)**

Abstract: Iodine deficiency is a major public health issue across the world the world today affecting an estimated 241 million children. Iodine deficiency is particularly detrimental to fetal and infant health, increasing the risk of infant mortality and inhibiting cognitive developmental. This paper studies the effects of the nationwide introduction of iodized table salt to the United States in 1924. We exploit this natural experiment and pre-period geographic variation in iodine deficiency driven by differences in naturally occurring iodine using a difference-in-differences design. We find that the introduction of iodized table salt in the United States reduced infant mortality by 0.58–1.1 deaths per 1,000 births (0.8–1.6 percent) for counties at the 75th percentile of the goiter distribution relative to the 25th percentile. We also show that these reductions in infant mortality are concentrated among urban counties, where salt was disproportionately consumed. Given the similarities in infant health outcomes between the United States during the 1920s and developing countries today, our findings are relevant for contemporary policy targeting iodine deficient regions of the world.

**“First Do No Harm? Doctor Decision Making and Patient Outcomes”  
(with Janet Currie and W. Bentley MacLeod) [\[link\]](#)**

Abstract: Doctors facing similar patients often make different treatment choices. These decisions can have important effects on patient health and health care spending. This paper seeks to organize the recent economics literature on physician decision making using a simple model that incorporates doctor diagnostic and procedural skills, differences in beliefs and patient populations, and incentives. Economic considerations that affect the quality of decision making include training, experience, peer effects, financial incentives and time constraints. We also consider interventions aimed at improving decision making including provision of informational, heuristics and guidelines, and the use of technologies including electronic medical records and algorithmic decision tools. Our review suggests that we have learned a great deal about specific factors that influence doctor decision making but that our knowledge of how to apply that knowledge to improve health care is still quite limited.

**WORK IN PROGRESS**

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**“Fostering a Gentler Flight from the Nest: Effects of Foster Care Reform on Labor Market Outcomes”**

**“Prior Authorization and Inappropriate Antipsychotic Prescribing to Children on Medicaid”  
(with Janet Currie)**

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS**

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Transition Age Youth Special Interest Group Annual Meeting, CESifo / ifo Junior Workshop on the Economics of Education, Transition-Age Youth Research & Evaluation Hub Convening, 25th IZA Summer School in Labor Economics (poster)	2024
Annual Conference of the American Society of Health Economists, Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting, Children’s Data Network	2023
Behavioral and Experimental Economists of the Mid-Atlantic Conference	2019

**OTHER WRITING**

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“Recreational Marijuana Legalization and Tobacco Use: Early Evidence from Colorado and Washington,”  
Senior Honors Paper at Swarthmore College

## **SERVICE**

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Mentor, Economics Department Undergraduate Mentoring Program, Columbia University 2022 – Present  
Rapporteur, Current Research in Applied Microeconomics Seminar, Columbia University 2023 – 2024  
Referee: *Journal of Human Resources*

## **SKILLS**

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**Computer Languages and Software** Stata, Python, Matlab, R, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Bash, oTree,  
Django, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Xpress-Mosel,  
Qualtrics, SPSS

**Languages** English (native speaker)  
Spanish (full professional working proficiency)

## **PERSONAL**

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Citizenship: United States