

Geoffrey C. Schnorr

CONTACT INFORMATION University of California, Davis
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EDUCATION Ph.D. Economics, University of California, Davis, 2021
M.A. Economics, Hunter College, CUNY, 2015
B.S. Health Care Management and Policy, Georgetown University, 2011

RESEARCH INTERESTS Public, Labor, Health

EMPLOYMENT Postdoctoral Scholar, California Policy Lab at UCLA, Fall 2021-
joint with the California Employment Development Department

PUBLICATIONS **Unemployment Insurance as a Worker Indiscipline Device? Evidence from Scanner Data**
(with Lester Lusher and Rebecca Taylor),
Forthcoming at *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*

We provide causal evidence of an ex-ante moral hazard effect of Unemployment Insurance (UI) by matching plausibly exogenous changes in UI benefit duration across state-weeks during the Great Recession to high-frequency productivity measures from individual supermarket cashiers. Estimating models with day and cashier-register fixed effects, we identify a modest but statistically significant negative relationship between UI benefits and worker productivity. This effect is strongest for more experienced and less productive cashiers, for whom UI expansions are especially relevant. Additional analyses from the American Time Use Survey reveal a similar increase in shirking during periods with increased UI benefit durations.

WORKING PAPERS **Claim Timing and Unemployment Insurance Benefit Generosity**

Unemployment Insurance replaces a percentage of prior earnings while a claimant is out of work. To implement the program, policymakers must define a base period from which prior earnings are measured. I analyze two implications of this previously unexamined policy choice. First, for claimants with volatile enough earnings, a commonly used base period structure creates “benefit risk”—a job loss at the wrong time implies lower benefit amounts. Second, since base periods are determined by the claim filing date, claimants can partially avoid the negative effects of this risk by strategically timing their claims. Using several new sources of administrative data from California’s Unemployment Insurance program, I make three contributions. First, I use a simple dynamic model of job search and Unemployment Insurance to show that the private welfare costs of benefit risk are large. The average claimant would trade 5% of their expected Unemployment Insurance benefits to eliminate exposure to benefit risk and this number rises substantially among young and especially low-income claimants. Second, I demonstrate that claim-timing responses can act as an effective solution to this problem. Some claimants strategically delay their claims after a job loss in order to receive higher benefits. Third, I provide suggestive evidence that information frictions are a key barrier to this mitigating behavior.

Am I My Brother's Barkeeper? Sibling Spillovers in Alcohol Consumption at the Minimum Legal Drinking Age (with Eunju Lee)

We use data on sibling pairs near the minimum legal drinking age to provide causal estimates of peer effects in alcohol consumption. Following prior work on other outcomes, we exploit the discontinuous increase in alcohol consumption of the older sibling at the legal drinking age in a regression discontinuity design. Our preferred point estimates imply that the number of binge drinking days reported by the younger sibling *decreases* by 27% of the mean at the cutoff. While our estimates are somewhat imprecise, we are consistently able to rule out positive estimates from the existing literature. Our research design provides estimates which are interpretable as the causal effect of the peer's alcohol consumption. This is in contrast to most prior work which instead identifies the causal effect of exposure to the peer. We explain how this distinction matters for policy.

**SELECTED
WORKS IN
PROGRESS**

Peer Effects in the Take-up of Unemployment Insurance Unemployment Insurance and Labor Supply During the Coronavirus Crisis (with Alex Bell and Till von Wachter)
The Effect of Pandemic Added Benefits on Unemployment Insurance Take-up (with Alex Bell and Till von Wachter)

POLICY WORK

Employment and Earnings Among LA County Residents Experiencing Homelessness (with Till von Wachter and Nefara Riesch), *California Policy Lab Policy Brief*, 2020.
California Unemployment Insurance Claims During the COVID-19 Pandemic (with Alex Bell, Thomas J. Hedin and Till von Wachter), *California Policy Lab Policy Brief*, 2020-2021.

**SELECTED
PRE-PHD
PUBLICATIONS**

Overspending driven by oversized single dose vials of cancer drugs (with Peter Bach, Rena Conti, Raymond Mueller, and Leonard Saltz), *British Medical Journal*, 2016.

**TEACHING
EXPERIENCE**

Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Microeconomics (UC Davis) Fall 2015, Winter 2016, Fall 2016
Teaching Assistant, Economic Statistics (Hunter College, CUNY) Spring 2014
Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Microeconomics (Hunter College, CUNY) Fall 2013

**RESEARCH
EXPERIENCE**

Graduate Student Assistant for Till von Wachter, Summer 2018 - Summer 2021
joint with the California Employment Development Department
Graduate Student Researcher for Marianne Page Winter 2017 -Spring 2018

AWARDS

Postdoctoral Grant, Washington Center for Equitable Growth 2021-2022
Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Dissertation Fellowship, UC Davis 2020-2021
Graduate Fellowship, UC Davis 2017
Non-Resident Tuition Remission, UC Davis 2015-2016

PRESENTATIONS (including scheduled)

2021: APPAM Fall Research Conference
2020: California Policy Lab, SOLE-EALE-AASLE World Conference, IZA Workshop on Labor Market Institutions, UC Santa Barbara, NTA Annual Conference, UC Davis Applied Micro Brownbag
2019: UC Davis Applied Micro Brownbag (x2), California Policy Lab, UC Davis Alumni conference (poster), Hawaii Applied Micro One Day Conference
2018: APPAM California Student Regional Conference
2017: APPAM Fall Research Conference (poster), UC Davis Applied Micro Brownbag
(* = coauthor presented)

**Professional
Activities**

Referee: American Journal of Health Economics, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
Service: Graduate Student Mentor, UC Davis (2016 - 2018)

References

Marianne Bitler

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Professor

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Economist

Federal Reserve Board of Governors

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