

BENJAMIN A. OLKEN

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Education

2004 Ph.D., Economics, Harvard University
1997 B.A. *summa cum laude*, Ethics, Politics, and Economics; Mathematics,
Yale University

Employment

2005 – 2008 Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows
2004 – 2005 Health and Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research
2001 – present Consultant, The World Bank, Jakarta Office
1998 – 1999 Business Analyst, McKinsey and Company, New York
1997 – 1998 Luce Scholar in Economic Policy, The Castle Group, Jakarta

Affiliations

2005 – present Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)
2005 – present Member, Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)
2006 – present Affiliate, Bureau for Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD)
2006 – present Research Affiliate, Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR)
2005 – 2008 Visiting Scholar, MIT Department of Economics and Poverty Action Lab

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships

2005 – 2008 Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows
2005 Review of Economic Studies Tour (declined)
2004 – 2005 Health and Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research
2003 – 2004 Justice, Welfare, and Economics Fellowship, Harvard University
2001 – 2002 Social Science Research Council Fellowship in Applied Economics
1998 – 2003 National Science Foundation Graduate Student Fellowship
1997 – 1998 Henry Luce Scholar
1997 Yale DeForest and TenEck Public Speaking Prizes
1996 *Phi Beta Kappa*
1994 – 1997 Yale Math Prizes: DeForest (1997), Stanley (1996), Barge (1995, 1994)

Research Support

2007 – 2008 NIH/NICHD R03 Grant
“Health Policies and Infant Mortality In Indonesia”
co-PI with Amy Finkelstein
2007 – 2008 Harvard Asia Center Grant
“Informal Taxation”
co-PI with Monica Singhal
2006 – 2007 Harvard Milton Fund
“Economic Growth and Infant Mortality in Indonesia”
2005 – 2006 World Bank Office Jakarta / DSF / Royal Netherlands Embassy Trust Fund
“The Simple Economics of Extortion: Evidence from Trucking in Aceh”
Co-PI with Patrick Barron
2005 – 2006 World Bank Office Jakarta / DSF Trust Fund
“Political Institutions and Local Public Goods”
2003 – 2005 World Bank Office Jakarta / DFID Strategic Poverty Trust Fund
“Monitoring Corruption”

Publications

"The Anatomy of Start-Stop Growth"

Review of Economics and Statistics, forthcoming August 2008.

(with Benjamin F. Jones) Earlier version: NBER Working Paper 11528: August 2005.

"Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"

Journal of Political Economy 115 (2), pp. 200-249, April 2007.

"Corruption and the Costs of Redistribution: Micro Evidence from Indonesia"

Journal of Public Economics 90 (4-5), pp. 853-870, May 2006.

"Do Leaders Matter? National Leadership and Growth since World War II"

(with Benjamin F. Jones) Quarterly Journal of Economics 120 (3), pp. 835-864, August 2005.

"Revealed Community Equivalence Scales"

Journal of Public Economics 89 (2-3), pp. 545-566, February 2005.

Working Papers

"The Simple Economics of Extortion: Evidence from Trucking in Aceh"

Submitted to Journal of Political Economy

(with Patrick Barron) May 2007.

"Hit or Miss? The Effect of Assassinations on Institutional Change and War"

Submitted to Quarterly Journal of Economics

(with Benjamin F. Jones) May 2007.

"Political Institutions and Local Public Goods: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"

February 2007.

"Do Television and Radio Destroy Social Capital? Evidence from Indonesian Villages"

Revise and resubmit requested, Quarterly Journal of Economics

NBER Working Paper 12561, BREAD Working Paper 130: September 2006.

"Corruption Perceptions vs. Corruption Reality"

Revise and resubmit requested, Journal of Public Economics

NBER Working Paper 12428, BREAD Working Paper 126: August 2006.

"A Biological Model of Unions."

Revise and resubmit requested, American Economic Journal – Applied Economics

(with Michael Kremer) Current version: January 2006. NBER Working Paper 8257: April 2001.

Research in Progress

"Climate Change and the World Economy: The Evidence Thus Far"

(with Melissa Dell and Benjamin F. Jones).

"Informal Taxation"

(with Monica Singhal).

"Decentralization and Deforestation: Understanding the Rapid Demise of Indonesia's Forests"

(with Robin Burgess and Stefanie Sieber).

"Should Aid Be Conditional on Performance? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"

(with Junko Onishi and Susan Wong).

Invited Talks

- 2007-2008 AEA, Chicago Law and Economics, Columbia, Dartmouth, NBER Crime Working Group, NBER Political Economy Meeting, NEUDC, LSE Conflict and Polarization Conference, Washington University
- 2006-2007 AEA, Berkeley, Brown, CEPR / EUDN Development Economics Conference, CEPR / Stockholm Development Economics Conference, Chicago GSB, Harvard / MIT Development Seminar, Harvard Labor Seminar, MacArthur Network on Inequality, Michigan Ford School, NBER Economics of National Security Meeting, NBER Income Distribution and Macroeconomics Meeting, NEUDC, Princeton Political Science, Stanford Psychology and Economics SITE Conference, Tufts, World Bank (Applied Micro Seminar, Corruption Conference, Macroeconomics Seminar, Microeconomics of Growth Conference), Yale
- 2005-2006 AEA, Boston University, Brown Corruption Conference, Dartmouth, Harvard Business School, IMF, NBER Africa Meeting, NEUDC, Stanford GSB, UCL / LSE, Wharton Corruption Conference, World Bank PREM Week, World Bank Economists' Conference, Yale
- 2004-2005 Berkeley, BREAD, Chicago GSB, Columbia, Harvard, IMF, MIT, NBER China Meeting, Princeton, Stanford, World Bank, UCSD
- 2003-2004 Columbia, NBER Economic Fluctuations & Growth, NEUDC

Invited Discussions

- 2007-2008 World Bank Randomization and Development Conference
- 2006-2007 NBER Political Economy Meeting
- 2005-2006 AEA Health and Development, AEA Political Economy, CID Venezuela Conference, NEUDC

Other Professional Activities

Referee for *American Economic Review*, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, *American Economic Journal: Macro Economics*, *American Political Science Review*, *Berkeley Electronic Journals in Macroeconomics*, *Demography*, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *Economic Journal*, *Economics of Transition*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Economic Growth*, *Journal of the European Economic Association*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, and *World Bank Economic Review*.