

## EDUCATION

2020 **Ph.D., Economics**, University of Colorado Boulder  
2017 **M.A., Economics**, University of Colorado Boulder  
2013 **M.A., Economics**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Thesis: "Educational & Income Inequality in Latin America: Paradox & Progress"  
2006 Fundación Cristina Heeren de Arte Flamenco, flamenco guitar  
1996 **B.S., Economics**, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Dissertation:** "Marijuana, Mexico, and Migration: Three Essays on Illegal Drugs"  
**Committee:** Francisca Antman (advisor), Tania Barham, Brian Cadena, and Richard Mansfield

## PRIMARY FIELDS OF INTEREST

Economic Development, Health Economics, and Labor Economics.

## JOB MARKET PAPER

### **Declining Deadly Demand? The Impact of US Marijuana Liberalization on Violence in Mexico**

**Abstract:** Marijuana demand in the United States historically provided drug cartels with a thriving export market, fueling marijuana cultivation and violence in Mexico. However, the liberalization of marijuana laws in the US led to an explosion of marijuana production in the US, lowering demand for marijuana imports from Mexico, *ceteris paribus*. Using a sample of over 2,300 rural municipalities from 1996-2018, I compare the impacts of US liberalization on Mexican municipalities more suitable to marijuana cultivation relative to those less suitable. These results show US marijuana laws have led to a large and statistically significant reduction in both marijuana cultivation and gun-related homicides in Mexico as well as an increase in legal agricultural output. Through 2018, US liberalization induced a further decrease in marijuana cultivation of 27 percentage points in a municipality in the top decile of suitability compared to one of average suitability, a further decrease in gun-related homicides of 19 percentage points, and a further increase in legal agricultural output of 9 percentage points. The increase in legal agricultural output provides evidence that these poor rural municipalities look to replace the income lost to marijuana production in the US. By isolating exogenous variation in marijuana cultivation in Mexico, I show a 10% decrease in cultivation decreases gun-related homicides 1-6%. These findings directly tie US drug demand to violence in Mexico.

## OTHER WORKING PAPERS

### **The Interaction of State and Federal Laws: Evidence from Medical Marijuana**

Revise and resubmit, *Journal of Law and Economics*

**Abstract:** Early state medical marijuana laws (MMLs) were met with continued federal enforcement of the Controlled Substance Act (CSA). However, in 2009, the federal government began to cede enforcement to the states, which significantly reduced the risk of prosecution faced by marijuana producers and distributors to serve the legal medical market. This research shows that the impacts of MMLs were attenuated prior to the change in enforcement, after which there was a dramatic decline in the illegal market, with marijuana border seizures plummeting, and a concurrent surge in the legal market. Given this, I ask how these changes affect the impacts of MMLs on heavy marijuana use in adults and adolescents. Using the Treatment Episodes Data Set (TEDS), I show that after the change in federal enforcement MMLs increase heavy marijuana use in adults; however, adolescent use is unaffected by MMLs both before and after the change in federal enforcement.

## **Is there a Link between Undocumented Immigrants and Illegal Drug Flows?**

Revise and resubmit, *Applied Economic Letters*

**Abstract:** Mexico is the primary wholesale supplier of illegal drugs to the US market, yet little is known about drug smuggling networks and the extent to which they overlap with migrant networks. Some policy makers suggest tighter immigration policy as a means of controlling drug trafficking. Therefore, this paper asks whether undocumented Mexican migration flows or migration networks are associated with the flow of marijuana into US communities using two distinct empirical strategies. The first strategy tests whether, on average, marijuana flows from a Custom and Border Patrol (CBP) sector further impact the prevalence of marijuana in US states that receive a greater share of that sector's undocumented Mexican immigrants. In the second strategy, I test whether, on average, marijuana flows from a Mexican state further impact the prevalence of marijuana in US states to which they have stronger migration ties relative to US states to which they have weaker ties. Both empirical approaches produce null results, which suggests that neither migration flows nor migration networks play a role in marijuana smuggling. This implies tighter immigration policies are unlikely to impact marijuana trafficking.

## **WORKS IN PROGRESS**

Technology at the Border: Apprehension Rates, Coyote Prices, and Migration  
Correlates or Consequences? Adolescent Marijuana Use and Later Life Outcomes

## **TEACHING CREDENTIALS**

Pursuing Excellence in College Teaching Credential

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Public Economics (Spring 2023, Fall 2023)  
Economic Development (Spring 2022, Spring 2023)  
Principles of Microeconomics (Fall 2021)  
Data Analysis and Interpretation (Fall 2021, Spring 2022)  
Introduction to Statistics with Computer Applications (Spring 2021, Fall 2022)  
Math Tools for Economists 1 (Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2020)  
Math Tools for Economists 2 (Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2022, Spring 2023)  
Principles of Microeconomics (TA, Fall 2013)

## **EMPLOYMENT**

2022-Current	Teaching Assistant Professor, University of Colorado Boulder
2021-2022	Teaching Assistant Professor, University of Arkansas
2008-Current	Sole Member, Swanson Real Estate Development LLC
1997-2004	Senior Actuarial Analyst, Group Health Cooperative
1996	Economics Clerk, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service

**HONORS & AWARDS**

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| 2018 | Graduate Award for Public Policy Research,<br>University of Colorado Boulder, Economics Department (\$3,000 Grant) |
| 1996 | Bachelor of Science <i>Graduated with Distinction</i> ,<br>University of Wisconsin-Madison                         |
| 1994 | Departmental Distinction Awards in Economics,<br>University of Wisconsin-Marathon Center                           |
| 1994 | Thomas Hammer Memorial Award (Economics),<br>University of Wisconsin-Marathon Center                               |

**CITIZENSHIP** US Citizen

**LANGUAGES** English (fluent), Spanish (Intermediate-Advanced)