



The Seventeenth Annual Federal Trade Commission Microeconomics Conference

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Washington, D.C.

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Steven Berry

Dr. Berry is the David Swensen Professor in the Economics Department at Yale University, specializing in the empirical analysis of markets in equilibrium. He is a winner of the Frisch Medal of the Econometric Society, was elected to be a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2014, and was named the 2017 Distinguished Fellow of the Industrial Organization Society. At Yale, he has served as Department Chair, as Director of Division of Social Sciences and as inaugural Director of the Tobin Center at Yale, a research center focusing on domestic economic policy. He has served as a consultant for governments, policy institutes and the private sector, focusing on questions of antitrust as well as environmental and trade policy. Dr. Berry is also affiliated with the Cowles Foundation at Yale and is a Research Fellow at the NBER.

Aviv Nevo

Aviv Nevo is the Director, Bureau of Economics, FTC on leave from the University of Pennsylvania where he is the George A. Weiss and Lydia Bravo Weiss PIK Professor with appointments in the Wharton School and the Economics Department.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Allan Collard-Wexler

Allan Collard-Wexler is a professor of Economics at Duke University, specializing in industrial organization and productivity analysis. He is also a Research Fellow at the NBER.

Zack Cooper

Zack Cooper is an Associate Professor of Public Health and Associate Professor of Economics at Yale University. He also serves as Director of Health Policy at Yale's Tobin Center for Economic Policy. Professor Cooper is a health economist whose work is focused on producing data-driven scholarship that can inform public policy. In his academic work, he has analyzed the impact of competition in hospital and insurance markets, studied the influence of price transparency on consumer behavior, and explored the causes of surprise out-of-network bills. He has published his research in leading economics and medical journals including the Quarterly Journal of Economics and the New England Journal of Medicine. Likewise, Professor Cooper has testified before the US Senate, presented his research at the White House, the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services, and his scholarship has been widely credited as a driver of the No Surprises Act.

Cooper received his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago and his PhD from the London School of Economics, where he received the Richard Titmuss prize for Best PhD thesis. He was an Economic and Social Science Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow in economics at the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance where he remains a Faculty Associate. Cooper is a Faculty Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and a 2019 winner of and Andrew Carnegie Fellowship from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Pinar Yildirim

Pinar Yildirim is Associate Professor of Marketing and Economics at the Wharton School. She is a quantitative marketing and economics expert specializing in media, technology, and information economics. Combining applied theory and empirical analysis, Professor Yildirim studies online platforms, artificial intelligence (AI), privacy, digitization, and social networks. The American Marketing Association (AMA) honored her in 2020 with the Erin Anderson Award, which recognizes a female marketing scholar likely to become a leading academic in the field.

In her research, Professor Yildirim analyzes such topics as advertising and competitive product positioning, the role of choice in two-sided platforms, and the incentive of platforms to moderate content. Professor Yildirim also studies social network design, the impact of advertising on media content, and the use of social network data in credit scoring. At Wharton, Professor Yildirim has received awards for teaching excellence. She teaches undergraduate and M.B.A. courses in marketing research and marketing strategy for technology platforms and executive education modules focused on digital economy.

Professor Yildirim is also a Faculty Research Fellow in the Productivity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Program at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

SELECTED PAPERS' PRESENTERS

Yanyou Chen

Yanyou Chen is an empirical industrial organization economist specializing in transportation and platforms and currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Toronto. His research focuses on assessing the efficiency of mergers in the railroad industry and optimizing the allocation of transmission capacity for natural gas pipelines in the U.S. Additionally, he examines assignment algorithms and platform competition in the ride-hailing and food-delivery sectors, utilizing transactional data and structural methods to uncover insights into regional transportation dynamics.

Gregor Jarosch

Gregor Jarosch is an Associate Professor of Economics at Duke University. He was previously an Assistant Professor at Princeton University and Stanford University and obtained a PhD in Economics from the University of Chicago in 2015. He is also a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He researches topics at the intersection of macroeconomics and labor economics.

Malika Korganbekova

Malika Korganbekova is an Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. She got her PhD in Quantitative Marketing from Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. Professor Korganbekova's research applies tools from causal inference, empirical industrial organization, and machine learning to study the impact of technology on societal issues, with the focus on privacy, data regulation, and sustainability.

Professor Korganbekova's dissertation work has received MSI A.G. Clayton Best Dissertation Proposal, ISMS Sheth Foundation Dissertation award, and Shankar-Spiegel Best Dissertation Proposal awards.

She holds Master's degrees in Economics from Penn State and Central European University, and an undergraduate degree in Economics from Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Miriam Larson-Koester

Miriam Larson-Koester is an economist in the Antitrust I division of the FTC's Bureau of Economics. Her research focuses on monopsony and gender in the workforce. Since joining the FTC in 2018, Miriam has worked on a variety of conduct and merger cases. She graduated with a PhD in economics from Cornell University in 2018 with a specialization in labor economics.

Andrey Simonov

Andrey Simonov is a Gary Winnick and Martin Granoff Associate Professor of Business at Columbia Business School. His research work is in the areas of quantitative marketing, empirical industrial organization, and political economy, and focuses on media and entertainment markets, such as news, advertising, and video games.

Disclosure: The project received \$18,500 in funding from the Center on Japanese Economy and Business at Columbia Business School.

Mark Shepard

Mark Shepard is an associate professor at Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). His research studies health care markets, with topics at the intersection of health, industrial organization, and public economics. His work asks: "How can smart policy design make health insurance markets work?" Key applications include Obamacare marketplaces, Medicaid, and Medicare Advantage. Shepard received a PhD in economics from Harvard University (2015) and an A.B. in applied math from Harvard (2008). Prior to joining Harvard, he was a Post-doctoral Fellow (in Aging and Health Economics) at the NBER.

Evan Starr

Dr. Evan Starr is an Associate Professor of Management & Organization at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland. His research examines issues related to employment contracts, employee mobility, entrepreneurship, innovation, and human capital. He is particularly interested in how the fine print in employment contracts (e.g., noncompete and nondisclosure agreements) and the policies that regulate them influence workers, firms, and markets. Dr. Starr has authored more than a dozen articles in leading journals in economics and management and testified in front of the US Senate, the US House of Representatives, and many state governments. His research has been covered in major news outlets including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, NPR, Financial Times, and The Washington Post. Formerly a professor at the University of Illinois, Dr. Starr received his PhD in Economics from the University of Michigan.

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Benjamin Vatter

Benjamin Vatter is the Class of 1943 Career Development Assistant Professor and an Assistant Professor of Applied Economics at the MIT Sloan School of Management. His research focuses on competition and optimal policy design, with particular emphasis on health care markets. Vatter completed a PhD in economics at Northwestern University in 2021 and a post-doctoral fellowship at Stanford University in 2022.

SELECTED PAPERS' DISCUSSANTS

Heski Bar-Isaac

Dr. Heski Bar-Isaac is the University of Toronto Distinguished Professor of Economics and Finance at the Rotman School of Management and is currently serving as the Special Economic Advisor for Digital and Platform Markets at the Canadian Competition Bureau. He has broad interests in applied microeconomic theory, especially with applications to industrial organization and digital markets. Recent research includes work on content moderation, acquiring, and platform monetization. He currently serves as an editor at the *Economic Journal*, and an associate editor at the *RAND Journal*, and formerly as a co-editor at the *Journal of Industrial Economics* and *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, and on the board of editors at the *American Economic Review*. He is currently a CEPR and CRESSE fellow, and a board member for the Industrial Organization Society and previously served on the Executive Committee of the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics. He holds a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics.

Nicholas Buchholz

Nicholas Buchholz is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Princeton University. His work focuses on industrial organization, particularly relating to the design and regulation of transportation markets, platform markets, and measurement using dynamic models. Recent work examines welfare and efficiency of pricing and price discrimination in taxi and ride-hail markets, as well as the use of these markets as settings to conduct novel measurements of labor supply elasticity and consumers' value of time. Buchholz holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Texas and a B.S. in Economics and Mathematics from the University of Chicago.

Andrew Ching

Andrew Ching is a professor of marketing at the Carey Business School at Johns Hopkins University, where he is also jointly appointed at the Department of Economics and the Bloomberg School of Public Health. He is a core faculty and a leadership team member at the Hopkins Business of Health Initiative (HBHI), and a faculty associate at the Canadian Centre of Health Economics. He also served as Associate Editor at *Management Science* from 2014 to 2022. His research focuses on estimating models of the forward-looking, strategic, and bounded rational behavior of consumers and firms. He has received the Young Economist Award from the European Economic Association, the Honorable Mention of Dick Wittink Prize Award, and is a finalist for the John Little Award.

Fabliha Ibnat

Fabliha Ibnat is an economist at the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Economics. She has worked on a variety of consumer protection issues at the FTC including loot box use in video games, privacy and discrimination concerns around facial recognition software, misrepresentations by for-profit colleges, and harmful hidden fees. She holds a Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of Maryland.

Ginger Jin

Ginger Zhe Jin is currently Neil Moskowitz Professor of Economics at the University of Maryland, College Park. In 2015-2017, she was on leave at the Federal Trade Commission, serving as the Director of the FTC Bureau of Economics from January 2016 to July 2017. From January 2019 to May 2020, she was on leave at Amazon.com as Amazon Scholar and Senior Principal Economist. Most of her research focuses on information asymmetry among economic agents and how to provide information to overcome the information problem. The applications she has studied include retail food safety, health insurance, prescription drugs, e-commerce, regulatory inspection, scientific innovation, air quality, blood donation, vaccination, intrafamilial interaction, data regulation, and consumer protection. Her research has been published in leading economics, management and marketing journals, with support from the National Science Foundation, the Net Institute, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. She is currently a managing editor of the International Journal of Industrial Organization, advisory council member of Journal of Industrial Economics, and board member of Industrial Organization Society. She has been Research Associate of NBER since 2012, and has provided consulting services to Alibaba, Amazon and a few other companies. In October 2014, she co-founded Hazel Analytics, an analytics company that promotes the use of open government data. She received her PhD of Economics from UCLA in 2000.

Elena Prager

Elena Prager is an empirical economist whose research is in the industrial organization of health care markets and labor markets. Prager's research studies health care price determination, insurance design, and labor market competition. Her work uses empirical analyses of large, detailed datasets to answer policy-relevant questions about strategic behavior among firms. Prager is an Assistant Professor at the Simon Business School, University of Rochester and previously served as a visiting economist at the US Department of Justice Antitrust Division.

Ananya Sen

Ananya Sen is the Alfred Blumstein Associate Professor at Carnegie Mellon University (Heinz College). His research focuses on platforms and digitization, particularly in media and education, employing empirical methods like field experiments, natural experiments, and online survey experiments. Ananya's work bridges managerial and policy issues, analyzing how digital technologies impact firm profitability and societal outcomes relevant to policy debates. His research has been published in journals such as Management Science, Nature, and PNAS. He was recently awarded the Andrew Carnegie Fellowship (2024) and the INFORMS ISS Sandra Slaughter Early Career Award (2024).

Shoshana Vasserman

Shoshana Vasserman is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the Stanford GSB and a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. Her research applies an Industrial Organization lens to topics such as risk and profit sharing, information disclosure and price controls across policy settings including transportation, online media markets and pharmaceuticals.

FTC ORGANIZERS

Viola Chen

Dr. Viola Chen is an economist in the Bureau of Economics at the FTC. She works on antitrust matters including merger and non-merger investigations in a wide variety of industries, including branded & generic pharmaceutical drugs, medical devices, veterinary specialty clinics, and wholesalers of alcoholic beverages. Her research focuses on merger retrospectives. She received her Ph.D. in economics from UCLA.

Samuel Kleiner

Dr. Samuel Kleiner is an Economist in the Bureau of Economics, specializing in antitrust and health care. Dr. Kleiner has experience in merger evaluation and antitrust litigation and has published on topics in health economics, labor economics, industrial organization, and public economics. He received his Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to joining the Federal Trade Commission, he was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell University.