

# Scott Kaplan

Department of Economics  
United States Naval Academy

352 Michelson Hall  
Annapolis, MD 21402  
skaplan@usna.edu  
www.scottkaplan.org  
@skaplan92  
Mobile: (818) 903-8517  
Office: (410) 293-6971

---

## Employment

From 2021 **Assistant Professor of Economics**, United States Naval Academy

---

## Education

- 2021 **Ph.D.**, *Agricultural and Resource Economics*, University of California, Berkeley  
Dissertation committee: David Zilberman (Co-Chair), James Sallee (Co-Chair), Benjamin Handel, Sofia Villas-Boas
- 2017 **M.S.**, *Agricultural and Resource Economics*, University of California, Berkeley
- 2014 **B.S. (with honors)**, *Environmental Sciences; Environmental Economics and Policy*, University of California, Berkeley

---

## Peer-Reviewed Research

### Food and Health Policy

- 2023 **Evaluation of the sugar-sweetened beverage tax in Oakland, United States, 2015-2019: A quasi-experimental and cost-effectiveness study**,  
*PLOS Medicine*, 20(4): e1004212. (with Justin White, Sanjay Basu, Kristine Madsen, Dean Schillinger, and Sofia Villas-Boas)
- Adolescent Emergency Department (ED) Visits and Mental Health ED Visits During the COVID-19 Pandemic**,  
*JAMA Network Open* 6(10): e2336463 (with Sofia Villas-Boas, Justin White, and Renee Hsia)
- Patterns of mental health-related emergency department visits during the COVID-19 pandemic**,  
*JAMA Network Open* 6(7): e2322720. (with Sofia Villas-Boas, Justin White, and Renee Hsia)
- Trends in depression risk before and during the COVID-19 pandemic**,  
*PLOS ONE*, 18(5): e0285282. (with Sofia Villas-Boas, Justin White, and Renee Hsia)
- Estimating worldwide benefits from improved bananas resistant to Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4**,  
*Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association* 2(1), 20-34. (with Felipe de Figueredo Silva, Freddy Magdama, Matthew D. Potts, Ramon Leonardo Espinel Martinez, and David Zilberman)
- 2021 **The Impact of Policy Timing on the Spread of COVID-19**,  
*Infectious Disease Modeling*, 6, 942-54. (with Moshe Elitzur, Zeljko Ivezic, and David Zilberman)
- The political economy of COVID-19**,  
*Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 44(1), 477-88. (with David Zilberman and Jacob Lefler)
- 2020 **Higher Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Retail Prices After Taxation in Oakland and San Francisco**,  
*American Journal of Public Health*, 110(7), 1017-23. (with Jennifer Falbe, Matthew Lee, Nadia Rojas, Alberto Ortega Hinojosa, and Kristine Madsen)
- Willingness to Pay vs. Willingness to Vote: Consumer and Voter Avoidance of Genetically Modified Foods**,  
*American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 102(2), 505-24. (with David Zilberman and Gina Waterfield)

- Recycling policies, behavior and convenience: Survey evidence from the CalRecycle program,**  
*Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(2), 641-58. (with Peter Berck, Gabriel Englander, Samantha Gold, Shelley He, Janet Horsager, Molly Sears, Andrew Stevens, Carly Trachtman, Rebecca Taylor, and Sofia Villas-Boas)
- 2019 **Soda Wars: The Effect of a Soda Tax Election on University Beverage Sales,**  
*Economic Inquiry*, 57(3), 1480-96. (with Rebecca Taylor, Sofia Villas-Boas and Kevin Jung)
- The Future of Autonomous Vehicles: Lessons from the Literature on Technology Adoption,**  
*Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 41(4), 583-97. (with Ben Gordon, Feras El-Zarwi, Joan Walker, and David Zilberman)
- 2018 **The Political Economy of Labeling,**  
*Food Policy*, 78, 6-13. (with Ben Gordon and David Zilberman)
- 2015\* **The Loss from Underutilizing GM Technologies,**  
*Agbioforum*, 18(3), 312-19. (with Justus Wesseler and David Zilberman)
- The Political Economy of Biotechnology,**  
*German Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 64(2), 212-23. (with Gregory Graff, Gal Hochman, and David Zilberman)
- 2014\* **Biotechnology and Food Security,**  
*Journal of International Affairs*, 67(2), 91-107. (with Geoffrey Barrows, Eunice Kim, Steven Sexton, and David Zilberman)
- 2013\* **Continents Divided: Understanding Differences on GM Acceptance between Europe and North America,**  
*GM Crops and Food: Biotechnology in Agriculture and the Food Chain*, 4(3), 1-7. (with Gregory Graff, Gal Hochman, Eunice Kim, and David Zilberman)
- Technology and the Future Bioeconomy,**  
*Agricultural Economics*, 44(s1), 95-102. (with Eunice Kim, Sam Kirschner, Jeanne Reeves, and David Zilberman)
- 2012\* **Biofuel and Food-Commodity Prices,**  
*Agriculture*, 2(3), 272-81. (with Gal Hochman, Deepak Rajagopal, and David Zilberman)

### Sport and Entertainment

- 2023 **Leveling the playing field: The distributional impact of maximum- and minimum-level contracts on player compensation,**  
*Forthcoming at Contemporary Economic Policy.*
- Pay equality among heterogeneous agents,**  
*Economics Letters* 229: 111188. (with Ryan Hoffman and Ashwin Kambhampati.)  
Ryan Hoffman's 2023 honors thesis, co-advised with Ashwin Kambhampati.
- 2022 **Putting a Price on Popularity: Evidence from Superstars in the National Basketball Association,**  
*Economic Inquiry* 60(3), 1357-81.

### Economic Growth

- 2020 **Hindered Growth,**  
*Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, 111: 103807. (with Moshe Elitzur and David Zilberman)

\*Pre-Graduate School

---

## Working papers

### **Impact of US sugar-sweetened beverage taxes on prices and purchases: Evidence from a multi-city synthetic control analysis** (with Justin White, Sanjay Basu, Kristine Madsen, Dean Schilling, and Sofia Villas-Boas)

*Accepted for publication. Winner of Emerging Scholar Best Conference Paper at the 2023 Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA) Annual Meeting.*

Sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) excise taxes are promoted as a key policy to reduce cardiometabolic diseases and other conditions, but comprehensive analyses of US SSB taxes have been difficult due to the absence of suitable methodologies to account for confounding factors. We use new quasi-experimental methods to estimate the overall effect of SSB taxes implemented in five large cities in the US: Boulder, Philadelphia, Oakland, Seattle, and San Francisco. We evaluated changes in SSB prices and volume purchased in these cities in the two years following tax implementation, compared to control groups constructed from other cities. We find prices of SSB products increased by an average of 33.1% (95% CI: 14.0%, 52.2%;  $p < 0.001$ ) over the 2 years following tax implementation, corresponding to an average price increase of 1.3 cents per ounce and a price pass-through rate of 92% from distributors to consumers. SSB purchases in total volume declined by an average of 33.0% (95% CI: -2.2%, -63.8%;  $p = 0.035$ ) following tax implementation, corresponding to a price elasticity of demand of -1.00. Both effects were immediate and sustained, and we found no evidence of increased cross-border purchases following tax implementation. Scaling SSB taxes nationally could yield significant public health benefits.

### **Preferences and demand for information that entertains** (with Oskar Zorrilla. *Previously circulated under the title "Entertainment Utility from Skill and Thrill" and "Entertainment Demand from Expectations."*)

This paper uses revealed preference methods to estimate demand for non-instrumental information in entertainment. We apply and extend the theory presented in Ely, Frankel, and Kamenica (2015, JPE) to conduct an empirical analysis that examines the effect of suspense and surprise on consumer demand. We first introduce alternative definitions of suspense and surprise using the theory of mutual information, and prove that suspense is in fact expected surprise. We then estimate the impact of suspense and surprise on television viewership using play-by-play and high-temporal frequency television ratings data from the National Basketball Association (NBA). Our primary results suggest that a one standard deviation increase in suspense increases viewership by 2.53% - 2.91%, while surprise, intuitively, has no impact. We also estimate heterogeneous within-game impacts of (i) absolute score differential and (ii) absolute score differential with respect to the point spread on viewership, finding significant effects on viewership. These findings have important implications for entertainment media companies, including leagues and television broadcasters, and advertisers.

## Works in progress

### **The fear of first strike: quantitative theory of delayed punishments** (with Diego Gebhardt and Jacek Rothert)

### **Are consumers willing to pay to avoid price uncertainty? Evidence from the vehicle leasing market** (with Andy Hultgren and Derek Wolfson)

### **Environmental regulation, market structure, and intellectual property** (with David Zilberman)

---

## Conference and invited presentations

- 2024 American Economic Association (AEA) Annual Meeting<sup>†</sup>
- 2023 American Economic Association (AEA) Annual Meeting; Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA) Annual Meeting; Cornell University; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign<sup>†</sup>; Southern Economic Association (SEA) Annual Meeting<sup>†\*</sup>
- 2022 Southern Economic Association (SEA) Annual Meeting (x3)
- 2021 United States Naval Academy

- 2020 Auburn University; NYU Stern Marketing Seminar; UC Berkeley Haas School of Business Marketing Seminar Series; UC Berkeley IO Seminar Series; North American Association of Sports Economics (NAASE) Annual Meeting; Reading University ROSES Seminar in Sports Economics
- 2019 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Annual Meeting; Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE) Annual Meeting<sup>\*</sup>; BERCKconomics Memorial Conference
- 2018 UC Berkeley Environmental and Resource Economics Seminar
- 2017 21st Annual International Consortium on Applied Bioeconomy Research; Tufts University Future of Food and Nutrition Conference
- 2016 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Annual Meeting

<sup>\*</sup>Coauthor presentation    <sup>†</sup>Scheduled

---

## Teaching Publications, Books, and Technical Reports

- 2023 **Environmental and Resource Economics: Theory and Practice**, *Lecture Notes in Economics and Policy: Volume 17. World Scientific.* (with David Wells Roland-Holst and David Zilberman)  
  
**Teaching Water Economics: Dynamic and Political Economy Perspectives**, *Forthcoming at Applied Economics Teaching Resources (AETR).* (with David Zilberman, Alice Huang, and Lanie Goldberg.)  
 Paper in special issue titled "Contemporary Adjustments Needed for Teaching Water Economics in Light of Challenges Facing the Water Sector and its Users."
- 2018 **Convenient beverage recycling in California. A report to the California state legislature** (with Peter Berck, Gabriel Englander, Samantha Gold, Shelley He, Janet Horsager, Molly Sears, Andrew Stevens, Carly Trachtman, Rebecca Taylor, and Sofia Villas-Boas)

---

## Teaching

- 2023 – **Natural Resource Economics**, Department of Economics (FE485A, United States Naval Academy)
- 2023 – **Math with Economics Senior Capstone**, Department of Economics (SA475E, United States Naval Academy)
- 2022 **Quantitative Economics Senior Capstone**, Department of Economics (SE475, United States Naval Academy)
- 2021 – **Econometrics**, Department of Economics (SE445, United States Naval Academy)
- 2019 – 2021 **First Time Graduate Student Teaching Workshop**, Graduate Student Instructor Center (UC Berkeley)
- 2017 – 2020 **Economics "Summer Bootcamp" Lecturer**, Masters of Development Practice (UC Berkeley)
- 2018 **Introductory Applied Econometrics**, Environmental Economics & Policy (Env. Econ. 118, UC Berkeley)

## Teaching Assistant

- 2018 – 2020 **Economics of Sustainable Resource Development**, Masters of Development Practice (DEVP 222, UC Berkeley)

---

## Advising

- 2023 **Ryan Hoffman**, *United States Naval Academy*, "Pay Equality Among Heterogeneous Agents" (co-advisor with Ashwin Kambhampati)  
 Received the *Clair E. Morris Prize* for Best Honors Project in the Department of Economics and the *Naval Intelligence Foundation Award* for Best Honors Project at the United States Naval Academy for the Class of 2023.

- Jordan Brooks, Paul Kim, and Cameron Woods**, *Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)*, "O-3 retention: Monetary vs. quality of life factors—is money the solution?" (co-advisor with Marco DiRenzo (NPS))
- 2022 **Haydn Tidball**, *United States Naval Academy*, "The Effect of a Suspension of Ridesharing Services on DUI Rates" (co-advisor with Karen Thierfelder)
- Ellie Kroskirty**, *UC Berkeley*, "Examining the Impact of Native American Welfare Policies on Socio-economic Well-Being: Evidence from the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934" (co-advisor with Sofia Villas-Boas)

---

## Media

### Media mentions

ESPN (Outside the Lines - live on-camera interview), Business Insider, NBC Sports, The Action Network, MIT Sloan Management Review, Basketball Illuminati, TrueHoop, KCBS Radio, Berkeley News, AusTaxPolicy Blog, Breakthroughs Magazine, NBC Bay Area, US News & World Report, San Francisco Chronicle, The Daily Californian, Fierce Healthcare

### Media publications

- 2019 **Preferences for GMOs: Do purchasing patterns differ from voting behavior?**, *ARE Update* (with Gina Waterfield and David Zilberman)
- Lessons from Berkeley's sugar-sweetened beverage election and tax**, *ARE Update* (with Rebecca Taylor and Sofia Villas-Boas)
- Did Zion's 'shoe explosion' actually impact Nike's value?**, *Fansided: Nylon Calculus*
- 2014 **The cost of delaying approval of Golden Rice**, *ARE Update* (with Justus Wesseler and David Zilberman)
- The political economy of biofuel**, *Choices* (with Gal Hochman, Eunice Kim, and David Zilberman)
- An overview of California's agricultural adaptation to climate change**, *ARE Update* (with David Zilberman)

---

## Fellowships and prizes

- 2024 **Junior Naval Academy Research Council (NARC) Award**, United States Naval Academy (\$30,000)
- 2023 **Emerging Scholar Best Conference Paper Award**, Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA) Annual Meeting
- Junior Naval Academy Research Council (NARC) Award**, United States Naval Academy (\$25,000)
- Volgenau Fellowship**, United States Naval Academy (\$15,000)
- 2022 **Junior Naval Academy Research Council (NARC) Award**, United States Naval Academy (\$22,500)
- 2021 **Volgenau Fellowship**, United States Naval Academy (\$12,500)
- 2020 **Graduate Remote Instruction Innovation Fellowship**, UC Berkeley (\$4,000)
- 2019 **Sacheti Family Fellowship**, UC Berkeley (\$2,500)
- Sloan Sports Analytics Conference: Best Poster Winner**, MIT (\$500)
- 2016 – 2018 **National Science Foundation Data Science Fellowship**, UC Berkeley (\$52,000)
- 2015 **Honorable Mention, Quality of Communication Award (for "An Overview of California's Agricultural Adaptation to Climate Change")**, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association

Earlier **Sponsored Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR) Grant**, UC Berkeley (\$500)  
**Leadership Scholarship**, UC Berkeley (\$2000)  
**Horace Albright Memorial Scholarship**, UC Berkeley (\$2000)

---

## Professional and University service

**Referee**, Marketing Science, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (JPAM), Economic Inquiry (EI), American Journal of Agricultural Economics (AJAE), Journal of Environmental Economics and Management (JEEM), Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (JAAEA), Applied Economics, Agricultural Economics, Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy (AEPP), Applied Economics Letters (AEL), International Journal of Sport Finance (IJSF)

**United States Naval Academy**, Economics Department Research Seminar Co-Founder and Co-Chair (2022; 2023), Economics Department Awards Committee (2022; 2023)

**UC Berkeley**, Rausser College of Natural Resources Alumni Board Member (2017-22); Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP) Mentor (2017-20); Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics (2019); Giannini Foundation Agricultural and Resource Economics Student Conference Co-Organizer (2018)

**Miscellaneous**, Big Brothers and Sisters of America (BBSA) Big Brother (2020-21)