

Scott Kaplan

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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

Research

Refereed publications

- 2022 **Putting a Price on Popularity: Evidence from Superstars in the National Basketball Association**, *Economic Inquiry* 60 (3), 1357-81, 2022.
- 2021 **The Impact of Policy Timing on the Spread of COVID-19**, *Infectious Disease Modeling*, 6, 942-54, 2021. (with Moshe Elitzur, Zeljko Ivezic, and David Zilberman)
The political economy of COVID-19, *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 44 (1), 477-88, 2021. (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, 2020. (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, 2020. (with David Zilberman and Gina Waterfield)
Hindered Growth, *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, 111: 103807, 2020. (with Moshe Elitzur and David Zilberman)
Recycling policies, behavior and convenience: Survey evidence from the CalRecycle program, *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43 (2), 641-58, 2020. (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, 2019. (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, 2019. (with Ben Gordon, Feras El-Zarwi, Joan Walker, and David Zilberman)
- 2018 **The Political Economy of Labeling**, *Food Policy*, 78, 6-13, 2018. (with Ben Gordon and David Zilberman)
- 2015* **The Loss from Underutilizing GM Technologies**, *Agbioforum*, 18 (3), 312-19, 2015. (with Justus Wesseler and David Zilberman)
- The Political Economy of Biotechnology**, *German Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 64 (2), 212-23, 2015. (with Gregory Graff, Gal Hochman, and David Zilberman)
- 2014* **Biotechnology and Food Security**, *Journal of International Affairs*, 67 (2), 91-107, 2014. (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, 2013. (with Gregory Graff, Gal Hochman, Eunice Kim, and David Zilberman)
- Technology and the Future Bioeconomy**, *Agricultural Economics*, 44 (s1), 95-102, 2013. (with Eunice Kim, Sam Kirschner, Jeanne Reeves, and David Zilberman)
- 2012* **Biofuel and Food-Commodity Prices**, *Agriculture*, 2 (3), 272-81, 2012. (with Gal Hochman, Deepak Rajagopal, and David Zilberman)

*Pre-Graduate School

Working papers

Entertainment Utility from Skill and Thrill

This paper uses revealed preference methods to estimate demand for non-instrumental information in entertainment. I do this by examining the "thrill" associated with the trajectory of an event, which includes both suspense and surprise, and the "skill" of performers in an event. I apply the theory presented in Ely et al. (2015, JPE) to conduct an empirical analysis that examines the effect of thrill on consumer attention. I extend the Ely et al. (2015, JPE) framework by examining spectator preferences for characteristics of the performers themselves, which I call "skill." I use game-specific, high-temporal frequency television ratings data from the National Basketball Association (NBA) to measure spectator responses to skill and thrill. First, I find that a doubling of skill present in a game leads to an approximately 11% increase in initial viewer turnout, while the expected thrill of a game has no statistically significant impact. Next, I show that thrill during a game increases viewership by 7-30%, while a doubling of skill on the court during a specific portion of a game leads to a 1.9-2.4% increase in viewership, depending on specification. Interestingly, I find a negative interactive effect between suspense and skill, suggesting that heightened suspense leads to differentially higher viewership with lower skill on the court. The findings suggest that skill of information-conveying agents primarily impacts viewership on the extensive margin (across games), while thrill is highly time-dependent and primarily impacts viewership on the intensive margin (within games). These findings have important implications for entertainment media companies, including leagues and television broadcasters, and advertisers.

Estimating worldwide benefits from improved bananas resistant to Fusarium Wilt Tropical race 4,

(with Felipe de Figueredo Silva, Freddy Magdama, Matthew D. Potts, Ramon Leonardo Espinel Martinez, and David Zilberman)

We assess the economic welfare implications of developing and introducing a gene-edited banana with resistance against an emerging plant disease, *Fusarium oxysporum f.sp. cubense* Tropical race 4, on global banana production. Using a model incorporating disease dynamics and diffusion of a technological solution, we find that a 5-year delay in adoption results in discounted losses of \$94 billion. Consumers always lose from delay, while the impact on producers depends on timing and severity of the disease. The results suggest that regulatory delay significantly decreases return on investment from research, and acceptance of a technological solution may depend on the distribution of benefits and costs across stakeholders.

Leveling the paying field: The distributional impact of salary caps on player compensation

How does a salary cap impact (i) superstar compensation and (ii) the distribution of player compensation across a league? Using ticket price data from the NBA, I estimate player market values based on observed talent and compare them to their observed salaries. First, I find that players receive a significantly smaller share of league revenues than the sum of their market values. Next, the ratio of actual to expected salary is 1-21% for the most talented players, primarily resulting from a maximum contract threshold. This results in the top 20th percentile of talented players subsidizing the bottom 80%. The findings have important implications for the structure of compensation in professional sports leagues as well as bargaining among players and between players and team governors.

Works in progress

The impact of sugar-sweetened beverage taxes on consumption: evidence from a multi-city synthetic control approach (with Justin White, Sanjay Basu, Kristine Madsen, Dean Schillinger, and Sofia Villas-Boas)

Association of the Oakland and San Francisco sugar-sweetened beverage taxes with beverage sales and health and cost outcomes (with Justin White, Sanjay Basu, Kristine Madsen, Dean Schillinger, and Sofia Villas-Boas)

Welfare impact of adopting a high-yield cocoa tree in West African countries (with Felipe de Figueredo Silva, Hamza Husain, Matthew D. Potts, and David Zilberman)

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)

Research presentations

- 2023 American Economic Association Annual Meeting
- 2022 Southern Economic Association 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; BERCKonomics 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

*Coauthor presentation †Scheduled

Teaching

- 2022 – **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)

Undergraduate Advising

- 2023 **Ryan Hoffman**, *United States Naval Academy*
- 2022 **Haydn Tidball**, *United States Naval Academy*, "The Effect of a Suspension of Ridesharing Services on DUI Rates" (co-advisor with Karen Thierfelder)
Ellie Kroskrity, *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 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 Wessler 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

- 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, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Economic Inquiry, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Economics, Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy, International Journal of Sport Finance

United States Naval Academy, Economics Department Research Seminar Co-Chair (2022-23), Economics Department Awards Committee (2022)

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)