

Lucy Page

Contact Information

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Academic Positions

University of Pittsburgh	Assistant Professor of Economics	Starting 2025
Inclusion Economics at Yale University	Postdoctoral fellow	2024

Education

Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Ph.D., Economics	2024
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	M.Sc., Economics	2020
Williams College	B.A., Mathematics	2016

Publications

“Ending Global Poverty: Why Money Isn’t Enough,” (with Rohini Pande). *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2018. [Available here.](#)

Between 1981 and 2013, the share of the global population living in extreme poverty fell by 34 percentage points. This paper argues that such rapid reductions will become increasingly hard to achieve for two reasons. First, the majority of the poor now live in middle-income countries where the benefits of growth have often been distributed selectively and unequally. Second, a reservoir of extreme poverty remains in low-income countries where growth is erratic and aid often fails to reach the poor. If the international community is to most effectively leverage available resources to end extreme poverty, it must ensure that its investments in institutions and physical infrastructure actually provide the poor the capabilities they need to craft an effective pathway out of poverty. We term the human and social systems that are required to form this pathway "invisible infrastructure" and argue that an effective domestic state is central to building this. By corollary, ending extreme poverty will require both expanding state capacity and giving the poor power to demand reforms they need by solving agency problems between citizens, politicians, and bureaucrats.

“Childhood Confidence, Schooling, and the Labor Market: Evidence from the PSID,” (with Hannah Ruebeck). *Journal of Human Resources*, forthcoming. [Available here.](#)

We link over- and under-confidence in math at ages 8-11 to education and employment outcomes 22 years later among the children of PSID households. About twenty percent of children have markedly biased beliefs about their math ability, and beliefs are strongly gendered. Conditional on measured ability, childhood over- and under-confidence predict adolescent test scores, high school and college graduation, majoring or working in STEM, earnings, and unemployment. Across all metrics, higher confidence predicts better outcomes. These biased beliefs persist into adulthood and could continue to affect outcomes as respondents age, since intermediate outcomes do not fully explain these long-run correlations.

Working Papers

“Reaching Across the Aisle: Does Affective Polarization Hinder Grassroots Climate Mobilization?” (with Hannah Ruebeck).

Political action spreads through social networks, so citizens may have power to shape policy both through their own advocacy and by recruiting others to act. Do citizens try to spread grassroots action? If so, do they work to build broad, bipartisan coalitions or to recruit others like them? We focus on the climate movement, where most citizen advocates are Democrats.

Mobilizing bipartisan action could more effectively promote climate policy in Congress, but record-high affective polarization—animosity towards counter-partisans—may impede cross-party grassroots cooperation. In online experiments with 25,000 participants, we connect Democrats with other Americans across the political spectrum (all of whom believe climate change is human-caused) to understand whether and how they try to recruit others to push for climate policy. Democrats are motivated to recruit others—they are 10% more likely to email Congress when doing so allows them to invite others to act. Even while Democrats say that a bipartisan climate movement would be more effective, however, they are 27% more likely to invite other Democrats than Republicans to email Congress. This gap does not arise from Democrats’ own distaste for engaging with counter-partisans, but rather can be explained by their correct beliefs that their invitation will have about half as much impact on Republicans’ action. Anticipated affective polarization drives these beliefs: Democrats estimate that Republicans would respond three times more to invitations that did not identify them as Democrats.

“Got Beef with Beef? Evidence from a Large-Scale Carbon Labeling Experiment” (with Lisa Ho)

Food systems account for approximately one-third of total greenhouse gas emissions, and simple shifts across food choices can yield large cuts in emissions. In a randomized field experiment with over 200,000 meal kit customers in the US, we find that carbon footprint labels cause customers to choose lower-emission meals, and that the introduction of labels increases customer retention and company profits. Both the reduction in emissions and the increase in profits are driven by customers with high baseline beef consumption. We find evidence that the labels act through salience rather than knowledge, and that the effects on meal choices depend on whether customers’ values are aligned with the mission to address climate change through behavioral change.

“The Narrative of Policy Change: Fiction Builds Political Efficacy and Climate Action” (with Hannah Ruebeck and Jamie Walsh)

Can fictional narratives contribute to building political momentum? In an online experiment (N=6,000), learning about the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) strengthens beliefs about government responsiveness to citizen action by only 0.07sd. Watching a short, fictional story about political climate advocacy as a loose backstory to the IRA yields much larger effects on beliefs (0.5sd). While IRA information alone does not affect climate advocacy, the story increases information-gathering about climate marches by 54 percent and donations to lobbying organizations by 19 percent. We show evidence that beliefs and emotions may drive this effect.

Refereeing

American Economic Review, American Economic Review Insights, Science, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists

Grants, Fellowships, and Awards

2021-2024	George and Obie Shultz Fund Grant	\$48,000
2022	J-PAL King Climate Action Initiative	\$36,000
2022	Strengthening American Democracy Program at Beyond Conflict	\$10,000
2018	NSF Graduate Research Fellowship	
2016	Valedictorian, Williams College Class of 2016	

Teaching	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (as Graduate Student Instructor)	
	<i>Principles of Microeconomics</i> (Undergraduate)	2020, 2021, 2024
	<i>Development Economics: Macro</i> (Graduate)	2021
	<i>Foundations of Development Policy</i> (Undergraduate)	2020
Presentations	2024	University of Toronto; University of British Columbia; Simon Fraser University; Brown University; Harvard Kennedy School; UC Berkeley; ARE; University of Pittsburgh; Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability; EJPE-CEPR Political Economy
	2023	MIT Development Economics Seminar