Ben Fifield

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EDUCATION

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY | PRINCETON, NJ
PhD in Politics, January 2019
Dissertation: Empirical and Computational Methods for Electoral Politics
Committee: Kosuke Imai (chair), David Nickerson, Nolan McCarty

MA in Politics, October 2013

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS | ST. LOUIS, MO
BA in Political Science, May 2010

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION | Data Scientist, Legal Analytics
May 2020 - present | New York, NY
- Directed ACLU's quantitative analysis of state redistricting plans, in support of partisan and racial gerrymandering litigation and advocacy.
- Built new statistical models of vote choice and vote mode in the 2020 general election, to illustrate the racially disparate impacts of attempts to suppress by-mail vote counting. Work summarized in external report, "Racial Justice Demands that Every Vote is Counted".
- Developed R packages implementing new statistical methods for the causal analysis of discrimination in policing, for analyses supporting ongoing lawsuits and monitoring relationships.

FACEBOOK | Research Scientist, Demography and Survey Science
Dec. 2018 - May 2020 | Seattle, WA
- Led the design and evaluation of over 120 experimental message tests, which guided theme and messaging development of a $50m advertising campaign
- Designed and implemented large-scale survey experiments assessing privacy concerns among messaging app users in the United States, India, and Brazil
- Developed new statistical methods for efficiently analyzing survey experiments at scale, reducing uncertainty of experimental estimates by on average 8pp

HILLARY FOR AMERICA | Senior Data Scientist
Sept. 2015 - Nov. 2016 | New York, NY
- Team leader responsible for managing three data scientists
- Built and directed methodological development of all persuasion models
- Developed new forecasting models to predict the election outcome, and provided daily reports to campaign leadership
- Developed statistical models of voter turnout and candidate support to optimize primary and general election resource allocation

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE | Research Analyst
Jul. 2010 - Apr. 2011 | Washington, DC
- Conducted vetting on individuals appearing as surrogates on behalf of the Democratic Party and private donors
- Team leader responsible for coordinating vetting efforts in Florida

PUBLICATIONS

Automated Redistricting Simulation using Markov chain Monte Carlo (with Kosuke Imai, Michael Higgins, and Alexander Tarr). 2020. Journal of Computational and Graphical Statistics, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 715-728.

The Essential Role of Empirical Validation in Legislative Redistricting Simulation (with Kosuke Imai, Jun Kawahara, and Christopher Kenny). 2020. Statistics and Public Policy, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 52-68.

Using a Probabilistic Model to Assist Merging of Large-scale Administrative Records (with Ted Enamorado and Kosuke Imai). 2019. American Political Science Review, Vol. 113, No. 2, pp. 353-371.

WORKING PAPERS

Model Selection and Model Comparison for Predicting Heterogeneous Treatment Effects

`fastLink`: R Package for Fast Probabilistic Record Linkage (with Ted Enamorado and Kosuke Imai)

OTHER WRITINGS

User's Guide and Codebook for the ANES 2016 Time Series Voter Validation Supplemental Data (with Ted Enamorado and Kosuke Imai)

CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA | Consulting Expert

Jan. 2018 - Feb. 2018 | Harrisburg, PA

- Applied new Markov chain Monte Carlo algorithms to assess whether proposed Pennsylvania redistricting plans were gerrymandered
- Cleaned and harmonized shapefiles and electoral data gathered across multiple levels of government to estimate the electoral bias of proposed and simulated redistricting plans

AFFILIATIONS

INSTITUTE FOR QUANTITATIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE | Affiliated Researcher

Harvard University
Oct. 2019 - present | Cambridge, MA

SOFTWARE

R package `fastLink:` Fast Probabilistic Record Linkage (with Ted Enamorado and Kosuke Imai)

R package `redist:` Computational Algorithms for Redistricting Simulation (with Christopher Kenny, Cory McCartan, Alexander Tarr, and Kosuke Imai)

R package `hettx:` Detecting and Measuring Treatment Effect Variation (with Avi Feller, Luke Miratrix, and Peng Ding)

Shiny app `randomizeAuthor`: Replicable Author Randomization (with Yang-Yang Zhou and Evan Lieberman)

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Q-APS Graduate Fellowship, Princeton University	AY2014, 2015
NSF Funding for the Annual Society for Political Methodology Conference	2014
Alpheus Thomas Mason '23 Fellow, Princeton University	AY2012
University Fellowship, Princeton University	AY2011 - AY2018
CSDP Fellowship, Princeton University	AY2011 - AY2018
Grossman-Alexander Prize, Washington University	2010
Office of Undergraduate Research Grant, Washington University	2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Statistical Programming Camp (with Katherine McCabe)	Jan. 2014
Statistical Programming Camp (with Alex Ruder)	Jan. 2013

Teaching Assistant

POL 329 Policymaking in America (U), Professor Charles Cameron	Fall 2014
POL 572 Quantitative Analysis II (G), Professor Kosuke Imai	Spring 2013

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Co-Captain, Leviathan, Princeton Politics Department Softball Team	2015
Organizer, Political Methodology Seminar, Princeton University	AY2014

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE

Memberships:

American Political Science Association   2011 - present
Midwest Political Science Association   2013 - present
Referee:
Political Analysis, Election Law Journal, Urban Affairs Review, Statistics and Public Policy, International Journal of Public Opinion
Research (x2), The R Journal