



The Economics of Crime

Giovanni Mastrobuoni

Collegio Carlo Alberto, University of Turin & CEPR

Overview: This course will provide an overview of the main research questions and recent contributions in the economics of crime literature. The class covers a series of topics, including deterrence, incarceration, policing, undocumented migration, but also how social programs and social conditions (family structure, education, etc.) influence crime. Lectures will focus on econometric identification issues, data availability, as well as potential need of economic modelling.

Syllabus (more papers could be added at a later stage)

Lecture 1: Severity of sanctions & deterrence

Becker, Gary S. "Crime and punishment: An economic approach." In *The economic dimensions of crime*, pp. 13-68. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 1968.

Drago, Francesco, Roberto Galbiati, and Pietro Vertova. "The deterrent effects of prison: Evidence from a natural experiment." *Journal of Political Economy* 117, no. 2 (2009): 257-280.

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni, and David Rivers. "Criminal discount factors and deterrence." Available at SSRN 2730969 (2016).

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni, and David A. Rivers. "Optimising criminal behaviour and the disutility of prison." *The Economic Journal* 129, no. 619 (2019): 1364-1399.

Lecture 2 and 3: Prisons and crime

Buonanno, Paolo, and Steven Raphael. "Incarceration and incapacitation: Evidence from the 2006 Italian collective pardon." *American Economic Review* 103, no. 6 (2013): 2437-65.

Barbarino, Alessandro, and Giovanni Mastrobuoni. "The incapacitation effect of incarceration: Evidence from several Italian collective pardons." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 6, no. 1 (2014): 1-37.

Bhuller, Manudeep, Gordon B. Dahl, Katrine V. Løken, and Magne Mogstad. "Incarceration, recidivism, and employment." *Journal of Political Economy* 128, no. 4 (2020): 1269-1324.

Dobbie, Will, Jacob Goldin, and Crystal S. Yang. "The effects of pretrial detention on conviction, future crime, and employment: Evidence from randomly assigned judges." *American Economic Review* 108, no. 2 (2018): 201-40.

Kleinberg, J., Lakkaraju, H., Leskovec, J., Ludwig, J. and Mullainathan, S., 2018. Human decisions and machine predictions. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(1), pp.237-293.

Patrick Bayer, Randi Hjalmarsson, and David Pozen (2009), "Building Criminal Capital Behind Bars: Peer Effects in Juvenile Corrections", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 124(1): 105-147.

Misdemeanor Prosecution, Amanda Agan, Jennifer Doleac, and Anna Harvey

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni, and Daniele Terlizzese. Leave the Door Open? Prison Conditions and Recidivism, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* (forthcoming)

Lecture 4: Police and crime

Di Tella, Rafael, and Ernesto Schargrodsky. "Do police reduce crime? Estimates using the allocation of police forces after a terrorist attack." *American Economic Review* 94, no. 1 (2004): 115-133.

Draca, Mirko, Stephen Machin, and Robert Witt. 2011. "Panic on the Streets of London: Police, Crime, and the July 2005 Terror Attacks." *American Economic Review*, 101 (5): 2157-81.

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni "Police Disruption and Performance: Evidence from Recurrent Redeployment Within a City", *Journal of Public Economics*, August 2019, 176, 18-31.

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni "Crime is Terribly Revealing: Information Technology and Police Productivity," *The Review of Economic Studies*, 87(6), 2727-2753

Maheshri, Vikram, and Giovanni Mastrobuoni "The Race Between Deterrence and Displacement: Theory and Evidence from Bank Robberies," *Review of Economics and Statistics* (forthcoming)

Lecture 5: Migration and crime

Bianchi, Milo, Paolo Buonanno, and Paolo Pinotti. "Do immigrants cause crime?." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 10, no. 6 (2012): 1318-1347.

Damm, Anna Piil, and Christian Dustmann. "Does growing up in a high crime neighborhood affect youth criminal behavior?." *American Economic Review* 104, no. 6 (2014): 1806-32.

Mastrobuoni, Giovanni, and Paolo Pinotti. "Legal status and the criminal activity of immigrants." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 7, no. 2 (2015): 175-206.

Pinotti, Paolo. "Clicking on heaven's door: The effect of immigrant legalization on crime." *American Economic Review* 107, no. 1 (2017): 138-68.

Lecture 6: Other topics, including social conditions and crime

Lochner, Lance and Enrico Moretti (2004) "The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self-reports." *American Economic Review*. 94(1): 155-89.

Anker, Anne Sofie Tegner, Jennifer, and Rasmus Landersø, "The effects of DNA databases on the deterrence and detection of offenders." Forthcoming, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*.

Jennifer Doleac and Benjamin Hansen “The unintended consequences of “ban the box”: Statistical discrimination and employment outcomes when criminal histories are hidden”. 2020. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 38(2): 321-374.

David Arnold, Will Dobbie, Crystal S Yang, Racial Bias in Bail Decisions, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 133, Issue 4, November 2018, Pages 1885–1932

Canay, Ivan, Magne Mogstad and Jack Mountjoy “On the Use of Outcome Tests for Detecting Bias in Decision Making”