# BENJAMIN A. OLKEN

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**Education**

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|---|---|
| 2004 | Ph.D., Economics, Harvard University |
| 1997 | B.A. *summa cum laude*, Ethics, Politics, and Economics; Mathematics, Yale University |

**Employment**

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|---|---|
| 2008 – present | Associate Professor of Economics (with tenure), Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology |
| 2005 – 2008 | Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows |
| 2004 – 2005 | Health and Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research |
| 2001 – 2008 | Consultant, The World Bank, Jakarta Office |
| 1998 – 1999 | Business Analyst, McKinsey and Company, New York |
| 1997 – 1998 | Luce Scholar in Economic Policy, The Castle Group, Jakarta |

**Affiliations**

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|---|---|
| 2005 – present | Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) |
| 2005 – present | Member, Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) |
| 2006 – present | Affiliate, Bureau for Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD) |
| 2006 – present | Research Affiliate, Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) |
| 2005 – 2008 | Visiting Scholar, MIT Department of Economics and Poverty Action Lab |

**Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships**

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|---|---|
| 2005 – 2008 | Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows |
| 2005 | Review of Economic Studies Tour (declined) |
| 2004 – 2005 | Health and Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research |
| 2003 – 2004 | Justice, Welfare, and Economics Fellowship, Harvard University |
| 2001 – 2002 | Social Science Research Council Fellowship in Applied Economics |
| 1998 – 2003 | National Science Foundation Graduate Student Fellowship |
| 1997 – 1998 | Henry Luce Scholar |

**Publications**

*"The Simple Economics of Extortion: Evidence from Trucking in Aceh"*
(with Patrick Barron) Journal of Political Economy, forthcoming June 2009.

*"Corruption Perceptions vs. Corruption Reality"*
Journal of Public Economics, forthcoming.

*"Temperature and Income: Reconciling New Cross-Sectional and Panel Estimates"*
(with Melissa Dell and Benjamin F. Jones) American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings, forthcoming May 2009.

*"Hit or Miss? The Effect of Assassinations on Institutional Change and War"*
(with Benjamin F. Jones) American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics, forthcoming.

*"A Biological Model of Unions"*
(with Michael Kremer) American Economic Journal – Applied Economics, forthcoming April 2009.

*"The Anatomy of Start-Stop Growth"*
(with Benjamin F. Jones) Review of Economics and Statistics, August 2008.

"*Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia*"
Journal of Political Economy 115 (2), pp. 200-249, April 2007.

*"Corruption and the Costs of Redistribution: Micro Evidence from Indonesia"*
Journal of Public Economics 90 (4-5), pp. 853-870, May 2006.

"*Do Leaders Matter? National Leadership and Growth since World War II*"
(with Benjamin F. Jones) Quarterly Journal of Economics 120 (3), pp. 835-864, August 2005.

"*Revealed Community Equivalence Scales*"
Journal of Public Economics 89 (2-3), pp. 545-566, February 2005.

**Working Papers**

*"Informal Taxation"*
(with Monica Singhal) February 2009.

*"Climate Shocks and Economic Growth: Evidence from the Last Half Century"*
(with Melissa Dell and Benjamin F. Jones) November 2008. NBER Working Paper 14132.

*"Direct Democracy and Local Public Goods: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"*
June 2008. NBER Working Paper 14123.

*"Do Television and Radio Destroy Social Capital? Evidence from Indonesian Villages"*
Revise and resubmit requested, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics
NBER Working Paper 12561, BREAD Working Paper 130: September 2006.

**Research in Progress**

*"E-Procurement: Evidence from Construction Projects in India and Indonesia "*
(with Abhijit Banerjee and Rohini Pande).

*"Decentralization and Deforestation: Understanding the Decline of Indonesia's Forests"*
(with Robin Burgess and Stefanie Sieber).

*"Community-Based Targeting: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"*
(with Vivi Alatas, Abhijit Banerjee, Rema Hanna, and Julia Tobias).

*"Should Aid Be Conditional on Performance? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia"*
(with Junko Onishi and Susan Wong).

**Research Support**

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|---|---|
| 2008 – 2009 | World Bank Office Jakarta / Royal Netherlands Embassy Trust Funds<br>"Community-Based Targeting"<br>Co-PI with Vivi Alatas, Abhijit Banerjee, and Rema Hanna |
| 2007 – 2008 | NIH/NICHD R03 Grant<br>"Health Policies and Infant Mortality In Indonesia"<br>co-PI with Amy Finkelstein |
| 2007 – 2008 | Harvard Asia Center Grant<br>"Informal Taxation"<br>co-PI with Monica Singhal |
| 2006 – 2007 | Harvard Milton Fund<br>"Economic Growth and Infant Mortality in Indonesia" |
| 2005 – 2006 | World Bank Office Jakarta / DSF / Royal Netherlands Embassy Trust Fund<br>"The Simple Economics of Extortion: Evidence from Trucking in Aceh"<br>Co-PI with Patrick Barron |
| 2005 – 2006 | World Bank Office Jakarta / DSF Trust Fund<br>Political Institutions and Local Public Goods" |
| 2003 – 2005 | World Bank Office Jakarta / DFID Strategic Poverty Trust Fund<br>"Monitoring Corruption" |

**Invited Talks (last 3 years)**

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|---|---|
| 2008-2009 | AEA, Berkeley, Brown, Colège de France, Columbia, NEUDC, UCLA, Stockholm, Washington University |
| 2007-2008 | AEA, Chicago Law and Economics, Columbia, Dartmouth, NBER Crime Working Group, NBER Political Economy Meeting, NEUDC, LSE Conflict and Polarization Conference, University of Indonesia |
| 2006-2007 | AEA, Berkeley, Brown, CEPR / EUDN Development Economics Conference, CEPR / Stockholm Development Economics Conference, Chicago GSB, Harvard / MIT Development Seminar, Harvard Labor Seminar, MacArthur Network on Inequality, Michigan Ford School, NBER Economics of National Security Meeting, NBER Income Distribution and Macroeconomics Meeting, NEUDC, Princeton Political Science, Stanford Psychology and Economics SITE Conference, Tufts, World Bank (Applied Micro Seminar, Corruption Conference, Macroeconomics Seminar, Microeconomics of Growth Conference), Yale |

**Invited Discussions (last 3 years)**

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|---|---|
| 2008-2009 | AEA, NBER Political Economy Meeting |
| 2007-2008 | World Bank Randomization and Development Conference, Brookings Conference on "Thinking Big and Thinking Small," NBER Economic Growth Summer Institute, NBER National Security Summer Institute |
| 2006-2007 | NBER Political Economy Meeting |

**Other Professional Activities**

Associate Editor, *Journal of Development Economics*

*Updated March 2009*