Eviction: Intersection of Poverty, Inequality, and Housing

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May 22, 2019
Collaborators

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Lavar Edmonds
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Adam Porton
Matthew Desmond (Principal Investigator)
What is Eviction?

Definition: Landlord forces tenant to vacate rental property

Other types of forced moves:

- Home foreclosure
- Condemned property
- Natural disaster
Negative Health & Economic Consequences

- Poorer mental health
  (Desmond & Kimbro 2015; Fowler, Gladden, Vagi, Barnes, & Frazier 2014)

- Job loss
  (Desmond & Gershenson 2016)

- Material hardship
  (Desmond & Kimbro 2015)
Negative Impact on Future Housing

• Increases residential instability
  (Desmond, Gershenson & Kiviat 2015))

• Relocation to disadvantaged neighborhoods
  (Desmond & Gershenson, 2016)

• Limits access to federal housing assistance
  (Greiner et al. 2013)

• Difficulting renting in private market
  (Kleysteuber 2006)

• Homelessness
  (Burt 2001; Crane & Warnes 2000; Weitzman, Knickman & Shinn 1990)
Reproduction of Inequality

Disproportionately affects:

- Economically disadvantaged
- Minority communities
- Women

Local Studies of Eviction

- 2.4% of households in Detroit Metro (prior 12 months)
  Michigan Recession and Recovery Survey (Gould-Werth & Seefeldt 2012)

- 13% of Milwaukee renting households (prior 2 years)
  Milwaukee Area Renters Study (Desmond & Shollenberger 2015)

- 14% children born in U.S. cities (by age 15)
  Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (Lundberg & Donnelly 2019)
How should we measure eviction?

- No official statistics

- Difficult to capture eviction using surveys
  - Estimates affected by how and to whom question is asked (Desmond & Kimbro 2012)
  - Hard to capture population (Tourangeau, Edwards, & Johnson 2014)

- Public court records of civil lawsuits
  - Not aggregated into national database
How should we measure eviction?

- No official statistics
- Difficult to capture eviction using surveys
  - Estimates affected by how and to whom question is asked (Desmond & Kimbro 2012)
  - Hard to capture population (Tourangeau, Edwards, & Johnson 2014)
- Public court records of civil lawsuits
  - Created national dataset of eviction records
Data Coverage

- LexisNexis Risk Solutions
- American Information Research Services
• 82,935,981 individual-level court records

• 26,353 aggregated county-year filing counts, 2000-2016
What is in Eviction Court Records?

- Case information
  - Filing date
  - Location

- Parties
  - Plaintiff (Landlord) name & address
  - Defendant (Tenant) name & address

- Resolution (if resolved)
  - Judgment date
  - Outcome (e.g. Judgment for plaintiff, Settled, Dismissed)
Estimation of Prevalence

• Definitions
  • Case Filings: Any eviction case initiated
  • Evictions: Cases ending in eviction judgment

• Statistical modeling to estimate filings and judgments
  • Bayesian Hierarchical modeling (filings)
  • Negative binomial regression (judgments)
National Eviction Case Filings

Note: Error bars show 95% credible interval.
National Eviction Case Filings
County-level Case Filing Rates, 2016
Demographic Disparities

Note: Red lines show 95% credible interval
Case Filing Disparities across States

Note: Error bars show 95% credible interval. Unadjusted filing rate shown in parentheses following state name.
Repeated Filings & Eviction Judgments

States with Highest Filing Rates
- Maryland
- South Carolina
- District Of Columbia
- Georgia
- Michigan

States with Lowest Filing Rates
- Montana
- North Dakota
- Hawaii
- Arkansas
- South Dakota

- Repeated Filings against Same Households
- Eviction Judgments
Prevalence of Eviction

- Common threat to renting households...
  - 3.6 million cases annually
  - 1.5 million eviction judgments

- ...in areas outside national conversations on housing
  - Highest prevalence in Southeastern United States

- Reproduces residential inequality

- Strong differences across states
  - Likely strong role of landlord-tenant code
Recommendations

• Clear policy implications
  • Disincentivize use of courts for collection of past-due rent
  • More uniformity in landlord-tenant code
  • Scrutinize use of public records for tenant screening
Thank You!

Data available at: https://evictionlab.org/

Methodology Report: https://evictionlab.org/methods/

Funding acknowledgment:
JPB Foundation
Gates Foundation
Ford Foundation
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

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## Total Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proprietary Data</th>
<th>State Court Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,115,496</td>
<td>159,911</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,599,757</td>
<td>239,384</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1,852,351</td>
<td>299,523</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>1,922,931</td>
<td>323,433</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>2,112,148</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>2,323,079</td>
<td>341,539</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>2,346,524</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>2,422,506</td>
<td>578,819</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2,396,487</td>
<td>560,077</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,577,471</td>
<td>818,497</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,661,063</td>
<td>876,951</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,626,225</td>
<td>857,172</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>2,557,112</td>
<td>861,823</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,604,022</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,479,508</td>
<td>794,992</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>2,397,706</td>
<td>269,139</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38,162,704</td>
<td>9,260,720</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Percentage of Cases Part of Multi-Case Series

#### Highest Proportions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>54.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>26.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>21.3</td>
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#### Lowest Proportions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>5.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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