DESMOND ANG

(Updated: November 4, 2026)

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND AFFILIATIONS

Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government

Associate Professor of Public Policy (without tenure), 2024-present

Assistant Professor of Public Policy, 2018-2024

Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2024-present

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of California, San Diego, 2018

B.A. in Economics, Dartmouth College, 2008

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Race, Political Economy, Economic History

PUBLICATIONS

"Vanguard: Black Veterans and Civil Rights after World War I" with Sahil Chinoy, ***Quarterly Journal of Economics***, February 2026.

Media: Harvard Gazette

"Community Engagement with Law Enforcement after High-Profile Acts of Police Violence" with Panka Bencsik, Jesse Bruhn and Ellora Derenoncourt, ***American Economic Review: Insights***, March 2025.

Media: The Economist, AEA Research Highlight

"Civic Responses to Police Violence" with John Tebes, ***American Political Science Review***, May 2024.

Media: Stanford Social Innovation Review, LSE US Politics and Policy

"The Birth of a Nation: Media and Racial Hate", ***American Economic Review***, June 2023.

Media: The Economist, Science, The Boston Globe, Econofact, Harvard Gazette

"The Effects of Police Violence on Inner-City Students", ***Quarterly Journal of Economics***, February 2021.

Media: The New York Times, The Washington Post, Time, The Economist, Vox, FiveThirtyEight, CBS News, NBC News, Education Next, Stanford Social Innovation Review

"Do 40-Year-Old Facts Still Matter: Long-Run Effects of Federal Oversight under the Voting Rights Act", ***American Economic Journal: Applied Economics***, July 2019 [lead article].

Media: *The Atlantic, National Affairs, Cato Institute, AEA Research Highlight*

"Association between Academic Medical Center Pharmaceutical Detailing Policies and Physician Prescribing" with Ian Larkin, Jonathan Steinhart, Matthew Chao, Mark Patterson, Sunita Sah, Tina Wu, Michael Schoenbaum, David Hutchins, Troyen Brennan and George Loewenstein, ***JAMA***, May 2017.

Media: *CNBC, Forbes, Foreign Affairs, NBC News, Newsweek, NPR, Slate, U.S. News*

"Restrictions on Pharmaceutical Detailing Reduced Off-Label Prescribing of Antidepressants and Antipsychotics in Children" with Ian Larkin, Jerry Avorn and Aaron Kesselheim, ***Health Affairs***, June 2014.

Media: *The Wall Street Journal*

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WORKING PAPERS

"Pure Americanism: World War I and the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan" with Sahil Chinoy, ***American Economic Review***, revise and resubmit.

"Paywalls" with Avi Moorthy, Stephen Pettigrew, and Benjamin Schneer

"The Historical Incarceration Penalty" with Ellora Derenoncourt, Kyle Hancock and Jing Wu

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

"Despacito: How Music Shapes Racial Attitudes" with Carlos Avenancio-Leon and Patton Chen

"Misperceptions of Life Expectancy" with Benjamin Schneer

"Police Violence and Online Racial Polarization"

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship, 2026-2028

National Bureau of Economic Research, Faculty Research Fellow, 2024-present

Harvard University, William F. Milton Fund, 2024-2026

W.E. Upjohn Institute, Early Career Research Award, 2021

Harvard University, Foundations of Human Behavior, 2020-2023

University of California, President's Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2017-2018

University of California, California Poverty and Socioeconomic Fellowship, 2017-2018

National Science Foundation, Graduate Research Fellowship, 2015-2018

University of California, San Diego, Clive Granger Research Fellowship, 2016-2017

Russell Sage Foundation, Summer Institute in Behavioral Economics, 2016

University of California, San Diego, Frontiers of Innovation Scholar, 2015-2016

U.S. State Department, Fulbright Scholar, 2010

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Invited Presentations

2026: University of California, Berkeley (GSPP); IFS Conference on Economic Opportunities by Race and Ethnicity (Keynote); Princeton University; New York University

2025: University of Pittsburgh; Northwestern University; Stanford University; University of California, Berkeley (GSPP); Vanderbilt University; Paris Dauphine; Dartmouth College; Race, Racism and Structural Inequality Conference; NBER Summer Institute (DAE); University of Toronto; Chicago Booth; Boston University

2024: University of Toronto; Tilburg University; Goethe University Frankfurt; Ludwig-Maximilans-Universitat Munchen; Princeton University; CEPR Paris Symposium

2023: Duke University; Syracuse University; Race, Racism and Structural Inequality Conference; University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Brown University (Population Studies and Training Center); London School of Economics (Political Science & Political Economy); University of Warwick; University of Essex, NBER Summer Institute (DAE)

2022: University of California, San Diego; Northwestern University; Brown University; University of California, Los Angeles (Anderson); University of Nottingham; Princeton University; Inter-American Development Bank; Tufts University; University of Milan; Bocconi University; San Diego State University; University of Chicago, (Booth)

2021: Williams College; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Stanford University; New York University; University of Southern California; University of Virginia

2020: APSA Annual Meeting; University California, Berkeley (Political Science); University of California, Berkeley (Economics); Harvard University; University of Virginia; Columbia University; Pomona College; London School of Economics

2019: Boston University; IZA Education; Transatlantic Workshop on the Economics of Crime; Texas Economics of Crime Workshop; Behavioral Science & Policy Association Annual Conference

2018: University of Arizona; RAND Corporation; Dartmouth College; University of Illinois, Chicago; Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government; Tulane University; University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy; Harvard University, Opportunity Insights; NBER, Economics of Education

Referee Service

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics; American Economic Journal: Economic Policy; American Economic Review; American Economic Review: Insights; American Journal of Political Science; American Political Science Review; American Sociological Review; Annals of Regional Science; Criminology & Public Policy; Econometrica; Economic Inquiry; Economic Journal; Economics & Politics; Economics Letters; Journal of Economic History; Journal of the European Economic Association; Journal of Development Economics; Journal of Health Economics; Journal of Law and Economics; Journal of Policy Analysis and Management; Journal of Political Economy; Journal of Politics; Journal of Public Economics; Law & Society Review; Race and Social Problems; Review of Economics and Statistics; Review of Economic Studies; SSM – Mental Health; Quarterly Journal of Economics

Excellence in Refereeing: AER: Insights (2021), American Economic Review (2025)

OTHER INFORMATION

Citizenship: USA