



GERARD TORRATS-ESPINOSA

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Columbia University

(Last updated: March 2024)

Department of Sociology
Columbia University
606 West 122nd Street
New York, NY 10027

<https://gerardtorratsespinosa.com> 
gerard.torrats@columbia.edu 

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Causal Inference; Crime; Data Science; Demography; Inequality; Policing; Public Health

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Sociology, New York University	2014-2019
Dissertation: "Inequality and Opportunity in the Crime Decline Era"	
Committee: Ingrid Ellen, Jennifer Hill, Mike Hout, Patrick Sharkey (Chair), and Florencia Torche	
Master in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School	2012-2014
B.S. Building Engineering, Polytechnic University of Catalonia	2001-2004

ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS

Columbia University	
Department of Sociology, Assistant Professor (tenure track)	2020-
On Sabbatical as Russell Sage Foundation Visiting Scholar	2024-2025
Population Research Center, Affiliate	2019-
Data Science Institute, Member	2019-
Department of Sociology, Post-Doctoral Fellow in Data Science	2019-2020
Behavioral Insights Team North America	
Research Fellow	2017-2019
New York University	
Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, Doctoral Fellow	2014-2019

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- 2024 Mark, Nicholas and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2024. "Exposure to Crime and Racial Birth Outcome Disparities." *Journal of Urban Health*
- 2023 Fabbri, Camilla, Timothy Powell-Jackson, Katherine Rodrigues, Alexandra De Filippo, Michael Kaemingk, **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**, Baptiste Leurent, Elizabeth Shayo, Vivien Barongo, and Karen M. Devries. 2023 "Understanding why EmpaTeach did not reduce teachers' use of violence in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp: A quantitative process evaluation of a school-based violence prevention intervention." *PLOS Global Public Health* 3(6): e0001404.
- 2022 Mark, Nicholas and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2021. "Declining Violence and Improving Birth Outcomes in the US: Evidence from Birth Certificate Data" *Social Science and Medicine* 294: 114595
- 2021 Fabbri, Camilla, Katherine Rodrigues, Baptiste Leurent, Elizabeth Allen, Mary Qiu, Martin Zuakulu, Dennis Nombo, Michael Kaemingk, Alexandra De Filippo, **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**, Elizabeth Shayo, Vivien Barongo, Giulia Greco, Wietse Tol, and Karen M. Devries. 2021. "The EmpaTeach Intervention for Reducing Physical Violence from Teachers to Students in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp: A Cluster-Randomised Controlled Trial." *PLoS Medicine* 18(10): e1003808
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard**. 2021. "Using Machine Learning to Estimate the Effect of Racial Segregation on COVID-19 Mortality." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118(7): e2015577118
- 2020 **Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard**. 2020. "Crime and Inequality in Academic Achievement across School Districts in the United States." *Demography* 57: 123-145
- Ellen, Ingrid G. and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2020. "Do Vouchers Protect Low-Income Households from Rising Rents?" *Eastern Economic Journal* 46: 260-281

- 2019 Ellen, Ingrid G. and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2019. "Gentrification and Fair Housing: Does Gentrification Further Integration?" *Housing Policy Debate* 29(5): 835-851
- Ellen, Ingrid G., Michael Suher, and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2019. "Neighbors and Networks: The Role of Social Interactions on the Residential Choices of Housing Choice Voucher Holders." *Journal of Housing Economics* 43: 56-71
- 2018 Balcells, Laia and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2018. "Using a Natural Experiment to Estimate the Electoral Consequences of Terrorist Attacks." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115(42): 10624-10629
Outstanding Paper Award from the Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration Section of ISA
- Heissel, Jennifer A., Patrick T. Sharkey, **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**, Kathryn Grant, and Emma K. Adam. 2018. "Violence and Vigilance: The Acute Effects of Community Violent Crime on Sleep and Cortisol." *Child Development* 89(4): 323-331
- 2017 Sharkey, Patrick, **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**, and Delaram Takyar. 2017. "Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effect of Local Nonprofits on Violent Crime." *American Sociological Review* 82(6): 1214-1240
- Sharkey, Patrick and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2017. "The Effect of Violent Crime on Economic Mobility." *Journal of Urban Economics* 102: 22-33

WORK IN PROGRESS AND UNDER REVIEW

- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "The Prevalence and Mental Health Impacts of Violent Police Raids in the Black Community."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "Neighborhood Organizations, Social Capital, and Crime: The Case of Chicago's Business Improvement Districts."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "The Changing Form of Urban Inequality: Trends in Between-City Income Residential Segregation."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "Internal Migration in the US. A Network Approach."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "The Impact of Violence on the Mental Health of Children."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "Police Violence and Racial Relations in the US."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard. "Summer Crime and Summer Setbacks."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard and Patrick Sharkey. "The Fall of Violence and the Reconfiguration of Urban Neighborhoods."
- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard and Samuel Donahue. "Peer Influences, Diversity, and Police Officer Behavior."
- Ben-Menachem, Jonathan and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa. "The Impact of High-Profile Police Violence Events on Legal Estrangement: Evidence from a Natural Experiment"
- Donahue, Samuel and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa. "Racial Threat at Home: How Violence in Officers' Neighborhoods Shapes Racially Biased Policing."
- Wimmer, Andreas and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa. "COVID, Compassion, and Creed. Explaining Non-Black Participation in the BLM Protests of 2020."

BOOK CHAPTERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Torrats-Espinosa, Gerard**. 2024. "Firefighting in Barcelona" in *Between Us: Healing Ourselves and Changing the World Through Sociology* edited by Marika Lindholm and Elizabeth Anne Wood. Chicago University Press.
- Ellen, Ingrid G., Brian J. McCabe, and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2020. "How Can Historic Preservation Be More Inclusive?" in *Preservation and Social Inclusion*. Columbia University Press
- Weiss, Christopher, Emma Garcia, and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2015. "A Comparative Analysis of the Relationship between Learning Environments and Educational Performance in Japan and the United States." Pp. 211-240 in *Japan Viewed from Interdisciplinary Perspectives* edited by Yoneyuki Sugita. Lexington Books

GRANTS AND FUNDING

- Russell Sage Foundation Trustee Grant (PI, \$130,497), 2022-2023
- Data Science Institute Seed Grant, Columbia University (PI, \$50,000), 2022-2023
- Lenfest Junior Faculty Development Grant, Columbia University (PI, \$11,100), 2022
- Provost's Grants Program for Junior Faculty, Columbia University (PI, \$20,060), 2021

Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy (co-PI, \$29,467), “The Relationship between Incarceration and COVID-19,” 2021
 Hettelman Junior Faculty Summer Research Grant, Columbia University (PI, \$6,000), 2021
 Russell Sage Foundation & William T. Grant Foundation (PI, \$7,000), “Crime and Inequality in Academic Achievement across School Districts in the United States,” 2016

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Russell Sage Foundation Visiting Scholar, 2024-2025
 Dean’s Dissertation Fellowship, New York University, 2019-2020 (Declined)
 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award, New York University, 2018
 Urban Doctoral Fellowship, New York University, 2018-2019
 Outstanding Paper Award from the Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration Section of ISA, 2017
 Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Fellowship (PIRT), New York University, 2014-2017
 Henry M. MacCracken Doctoral Fellowship, New York University, 2014-2019
 “La Caixa” Graduate Fellowship, Spain, 2012-2014

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

(Includes scheduled conferences)

- 2023 Population Association of America, New Orleans, LA, 2023
 American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA, 2023
- 2020 American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, 2020 (Cancelled)
- 2019 SREE Spring Conference, Washington, DC, 2019
- 2018 APPAM Fall Research Conference, Washington, DC, 2018
 American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA, 2018
 Population Association of America, Denver, CO, 2018
- 2017 APPAM Fall Research Conference, Chicago, IL, 2017
 Population Association of America, Chicago, IL, 2017
 International Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, 2017
- 2016 Urban Economics Association, Minneapolis, MN, 2016
 American Society of Criminology, New Orleans, LA, 2016
 APPAM Fall Research Conference, Washington, DC, 2016
 American Sociological Association, Seattle, WA, 2016
 American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association, Washington, DC, 2016
 Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia: Conference in Gentrification, Philadelphia, PA, 2016
 Education and Inequality in 21st Century America, Stanford University, CA, 2016
 Population Association of America, Washington, DC, 2016
- 2015 Russell Sage Foundation: Intergenerational Mobility in the United States, New York, NY, 2015

INVITED TALKS

(Includes scheduled talks)

- 2024 University of Chicago, Sociology Department, 2024
 CUNY Graduate Center, Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality, 2024
- 2023 Princeton University, Sociology Department, 2023
 Columbia University, Justice Lab, 2023
 Paris School of Economics, Neighborhoods Workshop, 2023
- 2022 Pompeu Fabra University, Criminology Program, 2022
- 2021 Berkeley University, Computational Social Science Forum, 2021
 Columbia University, Injury Center, 2021
 Paris School of Economics, 2021 (Cancelled)
- 2020 Columbia University, Data Science Institute, 2020
 Columbia University, Race, Ethnicity, and Migration Workshop, 2020 (Cancelled)

- Pompeu Fabra University, Criminology Program, 2020 (Cancelled)
- 2019 Pompeu Fabra University, DemoSoc Research Group Workshop, 2019
Columbia University, Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences Research Seminar, 2019
Northwestern University, School of Education and Social Policy, 2019
Columbia University, Department of Sociology, 2019
- 2018 Columbia University, Center for the Study of Wealth and Inequality, 2018
- 2017 New York University, Furman Center Speaker Series, 2017

TEACHING

Columbia University

Crime and Policing (UN3983), Sociology, Undergraduate, Spring 2022, Fall 2022
Methods for Social Research (UN3010), Sociology, Undergraduate, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2024
Social Data Analysis II (GR6001), Sociology, Graduate, Spring 2021, Spring 2023, Spring 2024
Sociological Methods (GR5052), Sociology, Graduate, Fall 2019

New York University

Introduction to Quantitative Methodology, Sociology, Graduate, Fall 2017 (TA and Lab Instructor)
Math, Probability and Statistics Refresher, Sociology, Graduate, Summer 2017 (TA and Lab Instructor)
Statistical Inference & Regression Analysis, Stern, Undergraduate, Spring 2016 (TA)

Harvard Kennedy School

Markets and Market Failure (API-101), MPP Program, Graduate, Fall 2012 (TA)

MEDIA WRITING

- "Ideas in Action: More Non-Profits, Fewer Crimes" *Vital City*. March 28, 2023 (with Michael Jacobson)
- "Do terrorist attacks make people more politically engaged?" *Washington Post*. August 28, 2017 (with Laia Balcells)
- "Els efectes politics del terrorisme" ("The Political Consequences of Terrorism"). *Ara*. August 22, 2017 (with Laia Balcells)
- "La violencia policial y la division racial en los Estados Unidos" ("Police Brutality and the Racial Divide in the United States"). *La Vanguardia*. July 12, 2016

SERVICE

University Service

Columbia Latin American Studies, Postdoc Selection Committee, 2023
Columbia Population Research Center, Steering Committee, 2021-
Columbia Experimental Laboratory for Social Science, Board Member, 2020-

Department Service

Co-organizer of Frontiers of Sociology Colloquium, Columbia University, 2024
Co-organizer of Data and Racial Inequality Project Conference, Columbia University, 2023
Department Representative for Summer Session, Columbia University, 2022, 2023, 2024
Faculty Search Committee, Columbia University, 2021, 2023

Conference Service

Organizer, "Inequalities and Social Justice in the 21st Century City," ASA Pre-Conference, New York, NY, 2019
Session organizer, "Fair Housing Research 50 Years after the Fair Housing Act," APPAM Fall Research Conference, Washington, DC, 2018
Session organizer, "Understanding the Locational Decisions and Outcomes of Assisted Housing Recipients," APPAM Fall Research Conference, Chicago, IL, 2017

Session organizer, “Reforming the Housing Choice Voucher Program,” APPAM Fall Research Conference, Chicago, IL, 2017

Discussant, “Gentrification and Urban Policies,” Urban Economics Association Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, 2016

Session organizer, “Gentrification in the 21st Century,” APPAM Fall Research Conference, Washington, DC, 2016

Journal Review Service

American Journal of Sociology
American Political Science Review
American Sociological Review
Journal of Politics
Journal of Public Economics
PLOS ONE

Review of Economics and Statistics
Social Forces
Sociological Methods and Research
Sociology of Education
Criminology & Public Policy

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Grant Review Service

William T. Grant Foundation

STUDENT ADVISING

PhD Dissertation Committees

Mireia Triguero Roura, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2024

Timothy Ittner, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2024

Josh Aleksanyan, Columbia University, Exp. 2023

Joanna Chae, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2023

Sang Won Han, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2022

Master’s Thesis Advisor

Jasmeen Bains, Sociology, Columbia University, 2023-2024

Nicole Sarette, Sociology, Columbia University, 2022-2023

Susie Du, Sociology, Columbia University, 2022-2023

Nina Zhou, QMSS, Columbia University, 2022-2023

Chandler Jong, QMSS, Columbia University, 2022-2023

Yumo Wang, Sociology, Columbia University, 2021-2022

Jane Mills, QMSS, Columbia University, 2020-2021

Anika Lanser, Sociology, Columbia University, 2020-2021

PERSONAL

Born in Barcelona, Spain

Languages: Spanish and Catalan (Native), English (Fluent), French (Intermediate)

NON-ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE

Barcelona Fire Department, Spain

Fire-Fighter (full-time, civil servant)

2007-2011

Spanish Army, Spain

Special Operations Group

2005-2007