



# GERARD TORRATS-ESPINOSA

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Columbia University

(Last updated: September 2024)

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

<https://gerardtorratsespinosa.com>   
[gerard.torrats@columbia.edu](mailto:gerard.torrats@columbia.edu) 

---

## 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-present
Center for Injury Science and Prevention, Member	2024-present
Population Research Center, Urbanism and Neighborhoods Co-Leader	2019-present
Data Science Institute, Member	2019-present
Department of Sociology, Post-Doctoral Fellow in Data Science	2019-2020
Other Affiliations	
Russell Sage Foundation Visiting Scholar	2024-2025
U. Chicago Stone Center for Research on Wealth Inequality and Mobility, Affiliate	2024-present
Behavioral Insights Team North America, Research Fellow	2017-2019
NYU Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, Doctoral Fellow	2014-2019

## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Forthcoming* Wimmer, Andreas and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. "Suffering, Compassion, and Altruistic Mobilization. Explaining Non-Black Participation in the Black Lives Matter Movement of 2020." *Mobilization*.
- 2024 Ben-Menachem, Jonathan and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. "Police Violence Reduces Trust in the Police Among Black Residents." *PLoS ONE* 19(9): e0308487
- Mark, Nicholas and **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**. 2024. "Exposure to Crime and Racial Birth Outcome Disparities." *Journal of Urban Health* 101: 692-701.
- Duncan, Dustin, Su Hyun Park, Christoffer Dharma, **Gerard Torrats-Espinosa**, Jessica Contreras, Roberta Scheinmann, Cristina Herrera, Kim Watson, Denton Callendar, John A. Schneider, Maria Khan, Sahnah Lim, Chau Trihn-Shevrin, and Asa Radix. 2024. "Neighborhood Safety and Neighborhood Police Violence Are Associated with Psychological Distress Among English and Spanish-speaking Transgender Women of Color in New York City: Finding from the TURNNT Cohort Study." *Journal of Urban Health* 101: 557-570.
- 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

- Donahue, Samuel and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa. "Racial Threat at Home: How Violence in Officers' Neighborhoods Shapes Racially Biased Policing."
- 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 Samuel Donahue. "Peer Influences, Diversity, and Police Officer Behavior."

## 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

- CDC Injury Control Research Centers (co-PI with Kara Rudolph, \$532,994), 2024-2029
- 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  
Hettleman 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)*

- 2024 American Sociological Association, Montreal, Canada, 2024  
International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2), Philadelphia, PA, 2024  
Population Association of America, Columbus, OH, 2024
- 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)*

- 2025 CUNY Graduate Center, Sociology Department, 2025
- 2024 New York University Abu Dhabi, Center for Interacting Urban Networks, 2024  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Institute for Research on Poverty, 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*

Co-Organizer, Annual Meeting of the International Network of Analytical Sociologists, New York, NY, 2025  
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	Review of Economics and Statistics
American Political Science Review	Social Forces
American Sociological Review	Sociological Methods and Research
Journal of Politics	Sociology of Education
Journal of Public Economics	Criminology & Public Policy
PLoS ONE	
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences	

### *Grant Review Service*

William T. Grant Foundation

## **STUDENT ADVISING**

### *PhD Dissertation Committees*

Sam Donahue, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2025  
Timothy Ittner, Sociology, Columbia University, Exp. 2025  
Mireia Triguero Roura, Sociology, Columbia University, 2024  
Josh Aleksanyan, Sociology, Columbia University, 2023  
Joanna Chae, Sociology, Columbia University, 2023  
Sang Won Han, Sociology, Columbia University, 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