

[Working Papers](#)

The Financial Accelerator and the Flight to Quality

Ben Bernanke, Mark Gertler & Simon Gilchrist

SHARE   

WORKING PAPER 4789

DOI 10.3386/w4789

ISSUE DATE July 1994

Adverse shocks to the economy may be amplified by worsening credit-market conditions--the financial 'accelerator'. Theoretically, we interpret the financial accelerator as resulting from endogenous changes over the business cycle in the agency costs of lending. An implication of the theory is that, at the onset of a recession, borrowers facing high agency costs should receive a relatively lower share of credit extended (the flight to quality) and hence should account for a proportionally greater part of the decline in economic activity. We review the evidence for these predictions and present new evidence drawn from a panel of large and small manufacturing firms.

[Download a PDF](#)

[Information on access](#)

Acknowledgements and Disclosures



Download Citation



Published Versions

[Review of Economics and Statistics](#), vol. LXXVIII, no. 1, February 1996, pp. 1-15 citation courtesy of [RePEc](#)

Related

TOPICS

[Macroeconomics](#)

[Business Cycles](#)

[Money and Interest Rates](#)

PROGRAMS

[Monetary Economics](#)

More from NBER

In addition to [working papers](#), the NBER disseminates affiliates' latest findings through a range of free periodicals — the [NBER Reporter](#), the [NBER Digest](#), the [Bulletin on Retirement and Disability](#), the [Bulletin on Health](#), and the [Bulletin on Entrepreneurship](#) — as well as online [conference reports](#), [video lectures](#), and [interviews](#).



16th Annual Martin Feldstein Lecture:

Lessons for Economists from the Pandemic

Cecilia E. Rouse, The Brookings Institution
and Princeton University
July 22, 2024

2024, 16th Annual Feldstein Lecture, Cecilia E. Rouse, "Lessons for Economists from the Pandemic"

FELDSTEIN LECTURE

PRESENTER: [CECILIA E. ROUSE](#)

Cecilia Rouse, president of the Brookings Institution and a professor at Princeton University, who chaired the Council...



Methods Lectures, Summer Institute 2024:

Analysis and Design of Multi-Armed Bandit Experiments and Policy Learning

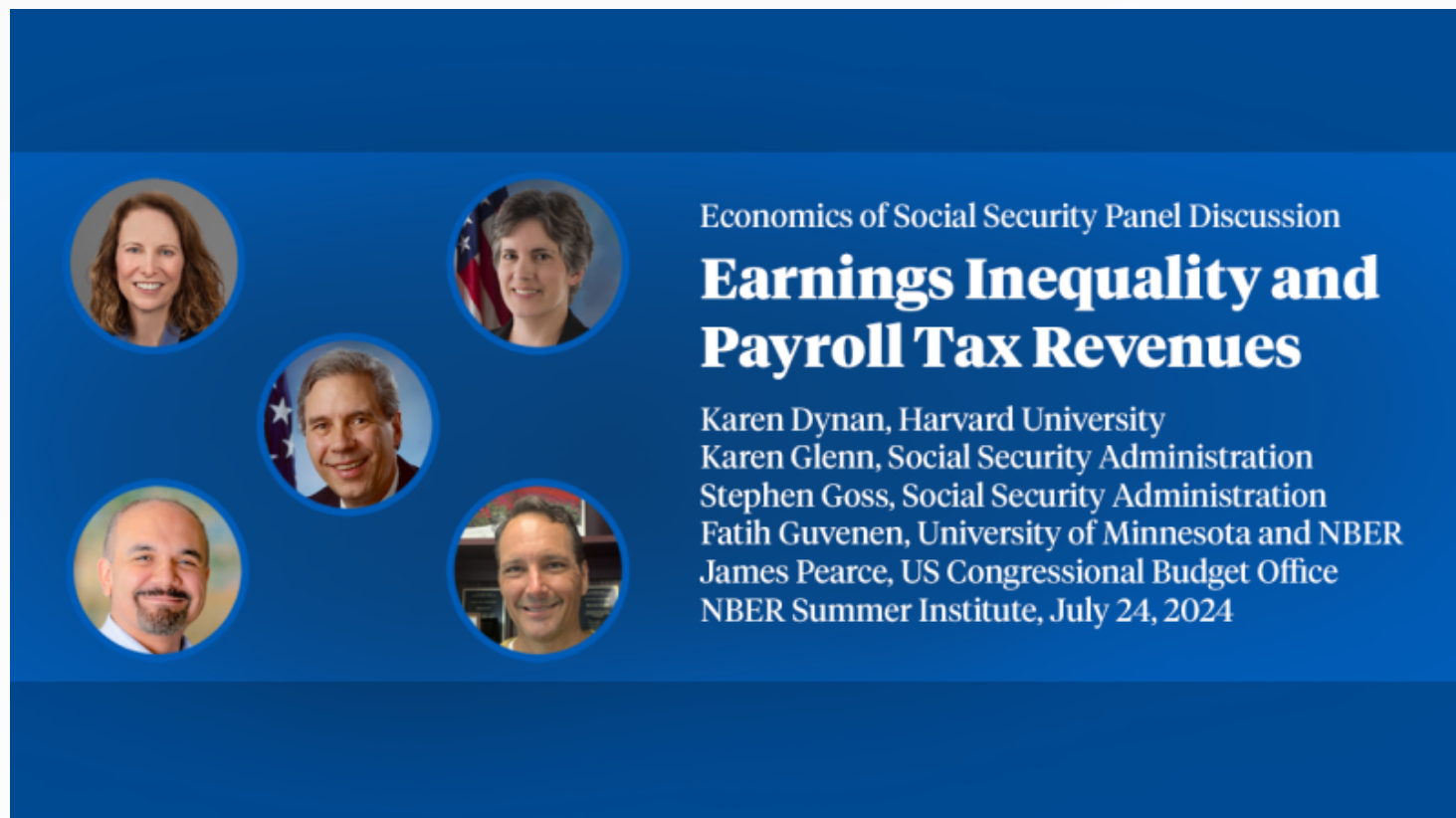
Susan Athey, Stanford University and NBER
July 25, 2024

2024 Methods Lecture, Susan Athey, "Analysis and Design of Multi-Armed Bandit Experiments and Policy Learning"

METHODS LECTURES

PRESENTER: [SUSAN ATHEY](#)

Background Materials:backgroundAthey, Susan, Undral Byambadalai, Vitor Hadad, Sanath Kumar Krishnamurthy, Weiwen Leung...



Economics of Social Security Panel Discussion
Earnings Inequality and Payroll Tax Revenues
Karen Dynan, Harvard University
Karen Glenn, Social Security Administration
Stephen Goss, Social Security Administration
Fatih Guvenen, University of Minnesota and NBER
James Pearce, US Congressional Budget Office
NBER Summer Institute, July 24, 2024

2024, Economics of Social Security Panel, "Earnings Inequality and Payroll Tax Revenues"

PANEL DISCUSSION

PRESENTERS: [KAREN DYNAN](#), KAREN GLENN, STEPHEN GOSS, [FATIH GUVENEN](#) & [JAMES PEARCE](#)

National Bureau of Economic Research

Contact Us

1050 Massachusetts Avenue

Cambridge, MA 02138

617-868-3900

info@nber.org

webaccessibility@nber.org

[HOMEPAGE](#)

[Accessibility Policy](#)

[Diversity Policy](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

FOLLOW



© 2024 NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.