

Robert Arons

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PROFILE

Applied microeconomist with more than a decade of experience using econometric and theoretical analysis to define markets, measure prices, predict choices, and assess the effects of mergers and alleged anticompetitive conduct. Leads teams of technical staff and delivers on project goals for stakeholders across healthcare, manufacturing, media, technology, and agriculture. Work has informed decisions by federal and state government officials and private corporations and has supported their positions in court.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY	2014
M.A. in Economics, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY	2010
B.A. in Economics, <i>cum laude</i> , Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH	2006
Professional training	
Graduate in Leadership, Virginia Executive Institute, Richmond, VA	2024

EMPLOYMENT

Virginia Department of Social Services	
<i>Director of Research and Planning and Chief Data Officer</i>	Nov 2023–present
- Oversee three teams (Research, Data Warehouse, and Data Governance) comprising 27 staff. - Reorganized the research system to streamline research and evaluation requests and to clearly define roles and deadlines. - As Chief Data Officer, lead the agency’s data governance and data strategy.	
Freshwater Economics	
<i>Managing Economist</i>	Feb 2023–present
Conduct economic modeling, empirical data analysis, report writing, and presentations that answer policy-relevant questions.	
Secretariat Economists (formerly Economists Inc.)	2020–2023
<i>Associate Director</i>	Jul 2022–Feb 2023
<i>Senior Economist</i>	Feb 2020–Jun 2022
- Performed economic analysis and financial and economic modeling in Stata and Excel; evaluated models; wrote technical reports and gave oral presentations answering clients’ policy-relevant questions. - Used data and economic theory to establish metrics for evaluating programs and for event studies of product and labor markets; contributed to peer-reviewed economic research. - Managed teams and budgets; recruited, evaluated, and hired candidates.	
U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division	
<i>Staff Economist</i>	2014–2020
- Performed economic analysis, including market definition and statistical analysis of economic models; managed teams. - Answered policy-relevant questions for senior U.S. government management; reviewed studies and disseminated findings; contributed to peer-reviewed economic research. - Served as ArcGIS liaison and economic knowledge liaison; handled statistical computing; established and applied best practices in data management and collection.	

Other positions

Economics Editor, ABA Media and Technology News e-Bulletin	2021–present
Adjunct Instructor, ECON 562 (master’s level), Georgetown University	Spring 2019, Spring 2020
Data Analyst, Aetna	2008
Research Assistant on Medicare, Stanford University	2006–2008

RESEARCH

Working papers

- “Do Bigger Firms Get Better Terms? Evidence from Pay TV,” with Alexander Raskovich.
- “Size Effects and Bargaining Power in the Multichannel Television Industry,” with Nikolay Doudchenko and Ali Yurukoglu.
- “The Effect of Race-Accountability on Student Achievement.”
- “The Impact of HMOs on Preventive Care and Undiagnosed Conditions Along the Life-Cycle.”

Work in progress

- “Cost Sharing and Price Competition in MRI Services,” with Mark Votruba.

Other publications

- Review of *Controlling Mergers and Market Power: A Program for Reviving Antitrust in America*, 2021 (non-peer-reviewed).
- Dan Kessler and Chris Afendulis, “Vertical Integration and Optimal Reimbursement Policy,” *International Journal of Health Care Finance and Economics*, 2011 (research assistant).

PRESENTATIONS AND PANELS

EARIE, Barcelona GSE, Barcelona, Spain	2019
Stockman Conference, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY	2018
DC Industrial Organization Day, Compass Lexecon and the Maryland Center for Economics and Policy, Washington, DC	2017
14th Annual International Industrial Organization Conference, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA	2016
Panel: “Vertically Challenged: An AT&T/TWX Retrospective”	Nov 2021

TEACHING

Georgetown University

Adjunct Instructor, ECON 562 Industrial Organization (master’s level)	Spring 2019, Spring 2020
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University of Rochester

Course Instructor, ECO 108 Principles of Economics (undergraduate)	Summer 2011
Teaching Assistant, MKT 414 Pricing Policy (graduate)	Fall 2010–Spring 2013
Teaching Assistant, ECO 230 Econometrics (undergraduate)	Fall 2010
Teaching Assistant, ECO 108 Principles of Economics (undergraduate)	Spring 2011
Teaching Assistant, ECO 207 Intermediate Economics (undergraduate)	Fall 2011
Teaching Assistant, ECO 231 Econometrics (undergraduate)	Spring 2012
Teaching Assistant, ECO 230 Economic Statistics (undergraduate)	Fall 2012

Case Western Reserve University

Teaching Assistant, ECON 342 Public Finance (undergraduate)	Spring 2006
Teaching Assistant, ECON 378 Healthcare Economics (undergraduate)	Fall 2005, Spring 2006

SELECTED MATTERS

In the Matter of Competition Commission of India Suo Motu Case No. 2 of 2019, Competition Commission of India (CCI) v. ACC Limited and Ambuja Cements Limited. Signed expert report submitted to the CCI. Analyzed the alleged cartel’s effect on price and output. Analyzed the impact of the COVID-19 emergency shutdown on the cement industry. Managed a team of economists and research assistants, as well as cross-disciplinary subject-matter experts.

Anthony Colucci and Vanessa Lorraine Skipper, Individually and on Behalf of Those Similarly Situated v. Health First, Inc. Performed regression analysis showing that the class met the criteria of Federal Rule 23. Managed a team of economists and research assistants.

In re Broiler Chicken Antitrust Litigation. Analyzed efficiencies stemming from partnership. Analyzed the alleged conspiracy's effect on price and production. Managed a team of economists and research assistants.

In re Broiler Chicken Grower Litigation. Analyzed the alleged conspiracy's effect on production. Managed a team of economists and research assistants.

Linus Gilbert and James Jn-Marie v. Spartan Concrete Products, LLC and Heavy Materials, LLC. Assisted with a class certification report analyzing pricing in the concrete industry. Analyzed the effect of alleged market allocation on discounting.

North American Soccer League, LLC v. United States Soccer Federation, Inc. and Major League Soccer, LLC. Analyzed the opposing expert report.

T-Mobile/Sprint. Analyzed geolocation-specific, individual-user network speed data for major cellular companies. Reviewed the merger for cognizable network speed efficiencies.

Google/Looker. Examined vertical foreclosure and incentives to raise rivals' costs. Examined competitor products and closeness of substitution.

Slack/Atlassian. Managed the economics team. Examined vertical foreclosure and incentives to raise rivals' costs.

U.S. v. Custom Wristbands, Inc.; U.S. v. Christopher Angeles; U.S. v. Netbrands; and U.S. v. Yeh Fei Chu aka Jim Chu and G Nova Corporation. Performed structural break analysis of the conspiracy and price. Calculated damages.

AT&T/TWX. Managed a team of economists and research assistants. Conducted a survey and worked with a survey expert to analyze the data. Assisted in depositions of defense experts. Estimated pass-through and efficiencies from the elimination of double marginalization, and incentives to raise rivals' costs. Analyzed the effect of withholding necessary inputs.

Anthem/Cigna. Managed a team of economists and research assistants. Analyzed the procurement market for health care services. Analyzed payer claims data and calculated market shares. Predicted the merger's effects on provider compensation and patient outcomes.

Aetna/Humana. Analyzed the market for prescription payer services.

U.S. and the State of North Carolina v. Carolinas Healthcare System. Predicted the impact of tying behavior on prices and on patient outcomes.

Comcast/TWC. Calculated market shares in pay TV and internet service. Analyzed the merger's effect on price in the upstream programming market for cable TV using merger simulation. Simulated the merger's effect on market shares in high-speed internet service.

Scripps/Nexstar. Measured market concentration in DMAs. Investigated cross-market effects on affiliate fees.

National Beef/Iowa Premium. Analyzed the effect of the merger of two beef packers on cattle prices in the contract and cash markets.

Iron Mountain/Recall. Analyzed the effect of the merger of the two largest document storage firms.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Assistant Attorney General Award, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice	2015, 2017, 2019
Best Empirical Project, Economic Analysis Group, U.S. Department of Justice	2015
Graduate Fellowship and Tuition Scholarship, University of Rochester	2008–2014

SKILLS

Software and programming: Stata, R, Python, SAS, SQL, ArcGIS, Unix, Excel, Word
Methods: Machine learning text analysis