As an international student, my first experience in the US was having a biometric scan taken at Customs. Noting the increased use of automation and artificial intelligence (AAI) in government services, I became interested in how data-driven political institutions surveil and stratify marginalized communities. These ideas motivated me to enroll in MIT's Political Science doctoral program. However, after much thought, I've realized that my substantive interests are better suited to sociological approaches. I believe pursuing a PhD in Sociology at Stanford would best support my development into a scholar of local politics, inequality, and carceral technologies.

My decision to pursue a PhD has been greatly informed by my undergraduate research experiences. As a sophomore, I provided research assistance to Professor Sarah Gaby. The laborious yet worthwhile task of hand-coding sentiment in survey data increased my interest in computational methods. As a junior, I interned with *The Bail Project* and researched socioeconomic implications of pretrial electronic monitors (EM). After conducting three interviews and surveying 43 clients, my independent report documented disruptions to family and work. This formative experience enriched my understanding of poverty governance's participatory implications and the inferential challenges to studying them. Desiring more exposure, I worked for the *Surveillance Technology Oversight Project* (STOP) and Professor Anca Parvulescu's *Modernist Prehistory of Facial Recognition Lab* during my senior year. At STOP, I co-authored a report on police foundations procuring surveillance tools, and another on racial disparities in ShotSpotter deployment. Overall, I have completed four RA positions and two research-oriented internships to prepare for doctoral training.

At MIT, I have continued to study how marginalized people navigate social control. My master's thesis uses an instrumental variable design to examine whether pretrial EM reduces voter turnout to a similar degree as pretrial detention. Merging the Florida voter file and felony court records for 10,000 defendants gave me invaluable experience collecting, cleaning, and analyzing large administrative datasets. Parallel to my studies of demobilization, I developed two ongoing projects that ask: under what conditions can localities carve out democratic practices within social control institutions? One project uses topic modeling on *Community Control Over Police Surveillance* (CCOPS) ordinances to analyze stated reasons for their adoption. I then use Random Forest to test which municipal characteristics best predict CCOPS. The second project examines resident councils as sources of political power within public housing authorities (PHA), a "central site of surveillance and racial control."[1] Existing theories predict low political participation in under-resourced communities, but few studies examine these tenant-led governance systems. I sent FOIA requests to 2,000 PHAs nationwide to build a novel dataset on resident councils, and the demographic composition of the Boards and PHA officials that oversee them. My paper examines how development-level ethnoracial diversity affects resident council emergence, and what PHA-level characteristics make councils more effective at securing policy changes.

While conducting the FOIA campaign, I found my phone calls with housing advocates and PHA staff to be a surprising source of fulfillment and insight about meaning-making. Beyond independent reading, I've had limited access to qualitative pedagogies conducive

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[1] Miller, S. (2020). Reconceptualizing Public Housing: Not as a Policed Site of Control, but as a System of Support. Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy XXVIII(1).

to mixed methods research. As such, Stanford Sociology's commitment to methodological pluralism in its doctoral training is a major draw for me. At WashU and MIT Political Science, I engaged with substantive political issues while learning quantitative methodologies suited to advance our understanding of them. Notably, I served as an undergrad TA for *Quantitative Political Methodology*, and have completed MIT's graduate-level, four-class quantitative sequence which covers advanced model-based and design-based research methods in R. Through the *Political Experiments Research Lab*, I've also fielded three original survey experiments. As a PhD student, I hope to further develop my computational social science abilities and add qualitative skills to my methodological toolkit.

At Stanford, I wish to study how local institutions and marginalized people experience, perceive, and respond to technological changes. I am interested in the socio-political effects of interacting with local institutions of poverty governance, particularly police departments and PHAs. When does this carceral contact (re)produce ethnoracial and class-based inequalities in political participation? I also wish to study how relationships between AAI technology companies and local institutions impact civilian-state interactions. Where and why do local officials–from mayors to teachers–implement geographically concentrated, AAI-assisted policies like ShotSpotter in policing and Landlord Tech in housing? What are the implications for political trust and biases in public service provision? My research agenda is motivated by the idea that institutional actors' use of "smart" policing tools increases government exposure to corporate influence while shaping mass political behavior by (re)configuring civilian interactions with local institutions.

Throughout graduate school, my persistent interest in gaining empirical traction on socio-political phenomena strengthened my resolve to pursue a PhD. MIT Political Science provided valuable training, but the kinds of questions I wanted to tackle with this training increasingly seemed more aligned with Sociology. The largely electoral focus of MIT's American politics subfield led me to seek out sociological frameworks for my studies on poverty and punishment. Taking Mary Waters' *Sociology of Immigration* class, attending sociology workshops, and drawing inspiration from *Sociology of AI*, helped confirm my suspicions that I could more productively engage with, and contribute to, this field. The strong overlap between my interests and Stanford Sociology's faculty make it an ideal department for mentorship. Sarah Brayne's expertise has direct relevance for my interest in racialized surveillance and police technology. I would be an enthusiastic student of Matthew Clair and Asad L. Asad. Their research on interactions between carceral institutions and marginalized communities will help me understand where and why carceral technologies are adopted. Forrest Stuart's work on urban poverty will inform my study of AAI-assisted poverty governance. There are also several research centers at Stanford that align with my interests, including HAI, RegLab, and the Center on Poverty and Inequality. Collaborating with, and learning from, these interdisciplinary teams would bolster my scholarly potential.

After completing my PhD, I wish to pursue a career in academia. I want to spend my career conducting research at the intersection of AAI-assisted poverty governance and political behavior. During my TAships and teaching certification courses, I've also enjoyed mentoring students and hope to continue growing as an educator. In the long-term, I hope my work contributes to more equitable local policymaking.