



HARVARD Kennedy School
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Doctoral RESEARCH

PhD in Political Economy & Government (PEG)
PhD in Public Policy (PPOL)

2016

The PhD in Political Economy & Government (PEG) and PhD in Public Policy (PPOL) programs provide rigorous academic training to students who are committed to making the world a better place through research that inspires new ideas.

The PEG Program equips doctoral students for careers either in academia or policymaking that demand advanced knowledge of economics and political science. The PPOL Program trains doctoral students to shape new directions in public policy research and prepares them for careers in academia, government, and research organizations. PPOL students develop skills to teach the next generation of educators, researchers, and practitioners in public policy and the social sciences.

Students in both programs share an intellectual interest in the impact of politics on economic processes and outcomes, the reciprocal influence of economic conditions on political life, and developing scholarly research that empowers public policy practitioners to make informed decisions.

This document provides some of the students' publications and presentations over the past year.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT

Ban, Pamela, Elena Llaudet, and James M. Snyder, Jr. "Challenger Quality and the Incumbency Advantage." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 41 No. 1 (February 2016): 153–179.

Ban, Pamela, Alexander Fourniaies, Andrew Hall, and James M. Snyder, Jr. "How Newspapers Reveal Political Power." Political Science Research & Methods, Revise and Resubmit, May 2016.

ABSTRACT



Ban, Pamela, Daniel Moskowitz, and James M. Snyder, Jr. "Leadership Power in Congress, 1890–2014: Evidence from PAC Contributions and Newspaper Coverage." Under Review, April 2016.

> For decades, scholars have studied the relative power of parties and committees in the U.S. Congress. An influential theory, Conditional Party Government (CPG), hypothesizes that as intra-party preferences converge and inter-party preferences diverge, rank-and-file members and committees transfer power to party leaders. Most previous tests of CPG and other theories of party power rely on roll call votes to measure both the distribution of preferences within the chamber and the relative power of party leaders. We propose an alternative that assesses shifts of power within Congress by using PAC contributions and newspaper coverage. Since PACs are sophisticated donors who target their contributions to gain access and influence in Congress, following the money allows us to construct a measure of relative power. During the period 1978–2014, we find that party leaders receive an increasing share of the donations over time at the expense of committee leaders and rank-and-file. The share of PAC donations to party leaders closely tracks standard measures of CPG.

Another measure of power, based on newspaper coverage, produces similar patterns for an even longer period, from 1890–2014. Overall, our results provide strong support for the CPG theory.

Ban, Pamela, Alexander Fourniaies, Andrew Hall, and James M. Snyder, Jr. "The Decline of American Party Organizations." Working Paper, April 2016.

Ban, Pamela, Alexander Fourniaies, Andrew Hall, and James M. Snyder, Jr. "Congressional Incumbents and Newspaper Coverage." Working Paper, June 2016.

Coglianesi, John, Lucas W. Davis, Lutz Kilian, and James H. Stock. "Anticipation, Tax Avoidance, and the Price Elasticity of Gasoline Demand." *Journal of Applied Econometrics* (2016).

Coglianesi, John. "Do Unemployment Insurance Extensions Reduce Employment?" Working Paper (2015). Presented at the Society of Labor Economics Annual Meeting, May 2016.

Di Gregorio, Enrico. "Ethnic Business Cycles: A First Survey for Africa." Working Paper, February 2016.

Garin, Andrew. "Putting America to Work, Where? The Limits of Infrastructure Construction as a Locally-Targeted Employment Policy." Taubman Center Working Paper, May 2016. http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/garin/files/taubmancenterworkingpaper2016_01.pdf?m=1463508797

Henn, Soeren J. "The Further Rise of the Career Politician — And Its Consequences." Submitted.

ABSTRACT



Lowes, Sara. “Kinship Systems, Gender Norms, and Household Bargaining: Evidence from the Matrilineal Belt.”

Working Paper, 2016.

› In matrilineal kinship systems lineage and inheritance are traced through female members. I test the predictions of the “matrilineal puzzle,” the hypothesis that matrilineal systems decrease spousal cooperation by creating split allegiances within the household. I use a geographic regression discontinuity design along the matrilineal belt, which describes the distribution of matrilineal societies across Central Africa, to compare the cooperation of couples from matrilineal and patrilineal ethnic groups. Consistent with anthropologist’s accounts of split allegiances within matrilineal couples, I find that individuals from matrilineal ethnic groups cooperate significantly less with their spouses in an experimental setting, leading to monetary losses. This result is driven by opportunities to conceal income from spouses. I present evidence that the decrease in cooperation is due to lower levels of altruism between spouses and increased women’s bargaining power. I examine the implications of these findings for investment in children. Finally, I explore external validity using Demographic and Health Survey data.

ABSTRACT

Lowes, Sara and Eduardo Montero. “Blood Rubber: The Effects of Labor Coercion on Institutions and Culture in the Democratic Republic of Congo.” Working Paper, 2016.

› Historic exposure to extractive institutions can affect longterm development. We examine how institutions and culture perpetuate the effects of extractive institutions in the case of the Congo Free State (CFS). The CFS gave concessions to private companies that used violent tactics to col-

lect rubber. Local chiefs were co-opted into supporting the rubber regime, and individuals struggled to fulfill mandated quotas as natural rubber became increasingly scarce. We use a geographic regression discontinuity along the former concession boundaries to show that greater exposure to extractive institutions causes significantly worse education, wealth, and health outcomes. We then use survey and experimental data to examine how the effects of extractive institutions persist through local institutional quality and cultural norms. Consistent with their historic co-option by the concession companies, we find that chiefs within the former concessions are of lower quality and less accountable to their constituents. Additionally, we find that individuals within the concessions have stronger norms of redistribution and are less likely to respect earned property rights. The results highlight how culture and institutions can reinforce each other and explain the persistence of historical events.

Lowes, Sara and Eduardo Montero. “Mistrust in Medicine: The Legacy of Colonial Medical Campaigns in Central and West Africa.” Working Paper, 2016.

Lowes, Sara, Nathan Nunn, James Robinson, and **Jonathan Weigel**. “The Evolution of Culture and Institutions: Evidence from the Kuba Kingdom.” NBER Working Paper No. 21798, December 2015.

Paryavi, Maliheh. “Competing on Behalf of Others: Women Lean Out.” Working Paper, 2016.

Paryavi, Maliheh with Iris Bohnet and Alexandra van Geen. “Descriptive Norms and Gender Diversity: Reactance from Men.” Working Paper, 2016.

PUBLIC POLICY

ABSTRACT



Abel, Martin. “Discrimination and Sorting in the Informal Sector: Evidence from South Africa.” Working Paper, February 2016.

› Using a unique data set of classified ads in South Africa, I explore whether employers discriminate against immigrants in the hiring process. I find that stating that one is an immigrant is associated with receiving 10–20% fewer visits to the job seeker profile page than South Africans. Exploiting variation in the applicant pool composition due to timing of postings, I find that both foreigners and natives benefit from being pooled with foreign job seekers. Results are consistent with a simple tournament model in which immigrants are penalized. Lastly, using data on the residential location of applicants and the location of job search, I test whether discrimination affects search behavior. Controlling for location fixed effects, I find suggestive evidence for sorting: immigrants search further away and higher discrimination in the residential area is positively correlated with the decision to search in different suburbs.

Abel, Martin. “Long-run Effects of Forced Resettlement: Evidence from Apartheid.” Working Paper, March 2016.

ABSTRACT



Bacher-Hicks, Andrew with Mark Chin, Heather C. Hill, and Douglas O. Staiger. “Explaining Teacher Effects on Achievement Using Mea-

sures from Multiple Research Traditions.” Revisions requested.

› Researchers have identified many characteristics of teachers and teaching that contribute to student outcomes. However, most studies investigate only a small number of these characteristics, likely

underestimating the overall contribution. In this paper, we use a set of 28 teacher-level predictors drawn from multiple research traditions to explain teacher-level variation in student outcomes. These predictors collectively explain 28% of teacher-level variability in state standardized math test scores and 40% in a predictor-aligned math test. In addition, each individual predictor explains only a small, relatively unique portion of the total teacher-level variability. This first finding highlights the importance of choosing predictors and outcomes that are well aligned, and the second suggests that the phenomena underlying teacher effects is multidimensional.

Bacher-Hicks, Andrew with Thomas J. Kane and Douglas O. Staiger. “Validating Teacher Effect Estimates Using Changes in Teacher Assignment in Los Angeles.” NBER Working Paper No. 20657, Under review.

Bacher-Hicks, Andrew with John P. Papay, Lindsay C. Page, and William H. Marinell. “The Challenge of Teacher Retention in Urban Schools: Evidence of Variation from a Cross-Site Analysis.” Under review.

Bacher-Hicks, Andrew with Mark Chin, Thomas J. Kane, and Douglas O. Staiger. “Validating Three Components of Teacher Quality: A Random Assignment Study.” Preparing for submission.

Baker, Jonathan. “Subsidies for Succulents: The Welfare Impacts of Las Vegas’ Cash-for-Grass Rebate Program.” Presentation at the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists 5th Annual Conference, June 2016.

Chauvin, Juan Pablo, Edward Glaeser, Yurean Ma, and Nina Tobio. “What is Different About Urbanization in Rich and Poor Countries? Cities in Brazil, China, India and the United States.” NBER Working Paper No. 22002, February 2016.

ABSTRACT



Chen, Cuicui and Richard Zeckhauser. “Collective Action in an Asymmetric World.” Cambridge, Massachusetts, United

States: Harvard Environmental Economics Program, 2016. NBER Working Paper No. W22240.

> A central authority possessing tax and expenditure responsibilities can readily provide an efficient level of a public good. Absent a central authority, the case with climate change mitigation, voluntary arrangements must replace coercive arrangements; significant under-provision must be expected. Potential contributors have strong incentives to free ride, or to ride cheaply. International public goods are particularly challenging. The players - the nations of the world - are many and they start in quite different circumstances. Voluntary arrangements that might emerge from negotiations fall short for two reasons: First, players frame negotiations from their own standpoint, making stalemate likely. Second, the focal-point solution where contributions are proportional to benefits clashes with the disproportionate incentives little players have to ride cheaply. We identify a solution, the CheapRiding Efficient Equilibrium, which defines the relative contributions of players of differing size (or preference intensity) to reflect cheap riding incentives, yet still achieves Pareto optimality. Players start by establishing the Alliance/Nash Equilibrium as a base point. From that point they apply either the principles of the Lindahl Equilibrium or the Nash Bargaining Solution to proceed to the Pareto frontier. The former benefits from its focal-point properties; the latter is a standard analytic tool addressing bargaining. We apply our theory to climate change by first examining the Nordhaus Climate Club proposal. We then test the Alliance Equilibrium model using individual nations’ Intended Nationally Determined Contributions pledged at the Paris Climate

Change Conference. As hypothesized, larger nations made much larger pledges in proportion to their Gross National Incomes.

Chen, Cuicui with Rebecca Epanchin-Niell and Robert Haight. “Optimal Inspection of Imports to Prevent Invasive Pest Introduction.” Revise and resubmit at *Risk Analysis*.

Dykstra, Holly. “Increasing Engagement with a Complicated Policy: Evidence from Public Housing.” Working paper (forthcoming).

Aldy, Joseph E., **Todd D. Gerarden**, and Richard L. Sweeney. “Capital versus Output Subsidies: The Implications of Alternative Subsidies for Wind Investment.” Working Paper, May 2016.

Gerarden, Todd D., W. Spencer Reeder, and James H. Stock. “Federal Coal Program Reform, the Clean Power Plan, and the Interaction of Upstream and Downstream Climate Policies.” NBER Working Paper No. 22214, April 2016.

ABSTRACT



Gerarden, Todd D., Richard G. Newell, and Robert N. Stavins. “Assessing the Energy-Efficiency Gap.” *Journal of Economic Literature* (forthcoming).

> Energy-efficient technologies offer considerable promise for reducing the financial costs and environmental damages associated with energy use, but these technologies appear not to be adopted by consumers and businesses to the degree that would apparently be justified, even on a purely financial basis. We present two complementary frameworks for understanding this so-called “energy paradox” or “energy-efficiency gap.” First, we build on the previous literature by dividing potential explanations for the energy-efficiency gap into three categories: market failures, behavioral anomalies, and model and measurement errors. Second, we posit that it is useful to think in terms of the fundamental elements of cost-minimizing energy-effi-

ciency decisions. This provides a decomposition that organizes thinking around four questions. First, are product offerings and pricing economically efficient? Second, are energy operating costs inefficiently priced and/or understood? Third, are product choices cost-minimizing in present value terms? Fourth, do other costs inhibit more energy-efficient decisions? We review empirical evidence on these questions, with an emphasis on recent advances, and offer suggestions for future research.

Gerarden, Todd D., Richard G. Newell, and Robert N. Stavins. “Deconstructing the Energy-Efficiency Gap: Conceptual Frameworks and Evidence.” *American Economic Review Papers & Proceedings*, 105 (5), 2015, p. 183-86.

ABSTRACT



Chingos, Matthew, Rebecca Griffiths, **Christine Mulhern**, and Richard Spies. “Interactive Online Learning on Campus: Comparing

Students’ Outcomes in Hybrid and Traditional Courses in the University System of Maryland.” *Journal of Higher Education* (forthcoming).

> Massively open online courses (MOOCs) have received a great deal of attention but little research exists on how they might fit into the existing system of higher education. We study the impacts on learning outcomes of hybrid courses redesigned using online materials from MOOCs created on the Coursera platform and digital materials created by the Open Learning Initiative, relative to existing versions of the same courses. We find that student performance is about the same in both sections, as measured by pass rates and scores on common assessments. This finding held across a variety of disciplines and subgroups of students. We find no evidence supporting the worry that disadvantaged or academically underprepared students were harmed by taking hybrid courses with

reduced class time. Despite the similar student outcomes produced by the two course formats, students in the hybrid sections reported considerably lower satisfaction with their experience.

Mukharji, Aroop. *Diplomas and Diplomacy: The History of the Marshall Scholarship*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Lewis-Faupel, Sean, **Yusuf Neggers**, Benjamin A. Olken, and Rohini Pande (2016). “Can Electronic Procurement Improve Infrastructure Provision? Evidence from Public Works in India and Indonesia.” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 8(3): 258–83.

ABSTRACT

Do, Quy-Toan, Shareen Joshi, and **Samuel Stolper**. “Can Environmental Policy Reduce Infant Mortality? Evidence from the Ganga Pollution Cases.” World Bank Policy Research Working Paper #7799, August 2016.

> In many developing countries, environmental quality remains low and policies to improve it have been inconsistently effective. We conduct a case study of environmental policy, focusing on an unprecedented ruling by the Supreme Court of India, which targeted industrial pollution in the Ganga River. Difference-in-difference estimations indicate that the ruling led to reductions in river pollution and one-month infant mortality. To look at the mechanisms of impact, we test whether the identified health impact is fully explained by changes in pollution induced by the policy, and fail to reject that it indeed is. In so doing, we also quantify the adverse impact of water pollution on infant health and document the persistence of such impacts in downstream communities.



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