

LAURENCE WILSE-SAMSON

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Department of Economics,
Columbia University,
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Placement Chair: Yeon-Koo Che

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Education:

2014 (expected)	Ph.D. Economics	Columbia University
2011	M.Phil. Economics	Columbia University
2008	Postgraduate Diploma in EC Competition Law	King's College London
2006	M.Sc. Economics	LSE
2004	B.Sc. (Hons) Mathematics	University of Cape Town
2003	B.Com (Hons) Economics	University of Cape Town

Fields of Interest: Development Economics, Political Economy, Economic History

Job Market Paper:

“Structural Change and Democratization: Evidence from Rural Apartheid”

The relationship between economic development and democracy is key in political economy. Many commentators have suggested that economic growth increases support for democracy. One proposed mechanism is that modernization, by reducing the demand for low-skilled labor, increases the willingness of elites, particularly in agriculture, to extend the franchise. I use subnational variation in South Africa to test this mechanism. I employ national shocks to the mining sector's demand for native black workers and cross-sectional variation in labor market competition induced by apartheid to estimate the effect of black labor scarcity on wages, capital intensity, and changes in partisan voting preferences. I find that reductions in the supply of foreign mine labor following the sudden withdrawal of workers from Malawi and Mozambique (and the increased demand for native black workers) increased mechanization on the mines and on farms competing with mines for labor. I then show that these induced structural changes resulted in differential increases in pro-political reform vote shares in the open districts relative to closed districts, even as mining districts became more conservative and voted more to maintain the non-democratic regime.

Working Papers

“Foreclosure Contagion: Measurement and Mechanisms”, October 2013, with David Munroe

“Valuing Institutions: A Measure of the Bond Market's Views of Term Limits in Developing Countries,” April 2013, with Sebastien Turban

“Learning Within the State: a research agenda”, with L. Jordan and S. Turban, prepared for "Making Growth Happen: Implementing Policies for Competitive Industries" October 16-17, 2013, World Bank

Completed

“Political Polarization and the Dynamics of Political Language: Evidence from 130 Years of Partisan Speech” with J. Jensen, E. Kaplan and S. Naidu (2012) *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, Fall 2012, pp 1-82

“Global Public Goods and Investment Obstacles: A Survey of the Long-Term Institutional Perceptions”, with Rachel Harvey, Patrick Bolton, Frederic Samama, and Li An (2013) *Rotman International Journal of Pension Management* (revise and resubmit)

Work in Progress

“Labor Conflict and the Economic Incidence of Institutional Change: Evidence from South Africa”, with Suresh Naidu and Sebastien Turban

“The Effects of Foreclosures on Crime”, with David Munroe

Research Experience

2011-2013 Research Assistant for Joseph E. Stiglitz, Columbia University

2010-2011 Research Assistant for Patrick Bolton, Columbia University

Teaching Experience

Teaching assistantships:

Summer 2013	Globalization, Markets & the Changing Economic Landscape, EMBA (Bruce Greenwald and Joseph Stiglitz), Columbia
Spring and Fall 2010	Law and Economics (Yeon-Koo Che), Columbia
Summer 2010	Intermediate Macroeconomics (Ama Baafrá Abebarese), Columbia
Fall 2009	Globalization and its Risks (Graciela Chichilnisky), Columbia
Michaelmas&Lent 2005-2006	Intermediate Microeconomics (Margaret Bray and Jonathan Leape), London School of Economics and Political Science

Lecturer:

Summer 2009	International Finance, University of Cape Town
Spring 2004	Game Theory, University of Cape Town

Honors and Awards:

2011-2013	Research Fellowship, Columbia University
2009-10	Teaching Fellowship, Columbia University
2005–2006	Commonwealth Scholarship

Personal:

Citizenship: South African

Languages: English (Native), Afrikaans (Fluent)

References:

Suresh Naidu (Primary),
Department of Economics and SIPA,
Columbia University
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Ethan Kaplan
Department of Economics,
University of Maryland
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Joseph E. Stiglitz,
Department of Economics and Graduate School of Business,
Columbia University
jes322@columbia.edu