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Fields of Concentration:

Primary Fields: Economic History, Development Economics
Secondary Field: Applied Microeconomics

Desired Teaching:

Economic History
Development Economics
Labor Economics

Comprehensive Examinations Completed:

2014 (Oral): Economic History, Development Economics
2013 (Written): Microeconomics, Macroeconomics

Dissertation Title: *Institutions and Economic Development: Lessons from Haiti's Economic History*

Committee:

Professor Timothy Guinnane
Professor Christopher Udry
Professor Naomi Lamoreaux

Expected Completion Date: May 2017

Degrees:

Ph.D., Economics, Yale University, 2017 (expected)
M.Phil., Economics, Yale University, 2015
M.A., Economics, Yale University, 2014
B.S. Economics (*cum laude*), Brigham Young University, 2012

Fellowships, Honors and Awards:

Yale University Dissertation Fellowship, 2016
Falk Fellow, Falk Foundation, 2014-2016
Economic History Association Exploratory Travel and Data Grant, 2015
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2013-2016
Yale University Cowles Foundation Fellowship, 2012-2016
Yale University Graduate Fellowship, 2012-2016
BYU Office of Research and Creative Activities grant, 2012
Brigham Young University Gordon B. Hinckley Presidential scholarship, 2006-2012

Teaching Experience:

Statistics for Economists (undergraduate, adjunct at BYU), Summer 2015

Research and Work Experience:

Research Assistant to Professor Joseph Altonji, Yale University, 2013-2014
Research Associate, FINCA Haiti, 2012
Research Assistant to Professor Joseph Price, Brigham Young University, 2010-2012

Working Papers:

Smartphones and Child Injuries (2016) Revise and Resubmit, *Journal of Public Economics*

Breaking from Colonial Institutions: Haiti's Idle Land, 1928-1950, (2016), *Job Market Paper*

Measuring the Effect of Strengthening Property Rights on Political Support in the Presence of Voter Fraud

Is Uber a substitute or complement to public transit? (with Jonathan Hall and Joseph Price)

Publications:

Ratings and Revenues: Evidence from Movie Ratings, (with Joe Price and Jared Shore)
Contemporary Economic Policy, 2013; Vol 31, Issue 1, pp 13-21

Taxing the Opposition: Cactus League Attendance and the Efficiency of the 'Cubs Tax,'
(with Michael Davis and Joe Price) *International Journal of Sport Finance*, 2013; Vol. 8, No. 2, pp 157-17

What Matters in Movie Ratings? Cross-country Differences in which Content Influence Mature Movie Ratings. (with Joe Price and Doug Gentile). *Journal of Children and Media*, 2014; Vol 8, Issue 3

Technological change, relative worker productivity, and firm-level substitution: Evidence from the NBA (with Grant Gannaway, Joe Price, and David Sims). *Journal of Sports Economics*, October 2014; vol. 15, 5: pp. 478-496

Work In Progress:

Refugees and the Provision of Public Goods: Haiti and the 1937 Refugee Influx

Seminar and Conference Presentations:

2016 –Northeast Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC) Conference; Institutions and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Historical and Contemporary Issues; Economic History Association; Western Economics Association; NBER Summer Institute: Development of the American Economy (poster)

2015 – Economic History Association (poster)

2014 – Brigham Young University Graduate Student Conference

Referee Service:

Journal of Public Economics, Economic Inquiry, Economics of Education Review, National Tax Journal

Languages:

English (native), Haitian Creole (fluent), Portuguese (intermediate), Spanish (intermediate), French (intermediate)

References:

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Institutions and Economic Development: Lessons from Haiti's Economic History
Dissertation Abstract

Although we attribute a greater weight to institutions in explaining global divergence, we need a better understanding of how institutions affect development, why poor countries do not adopt better institutions, and how institutions evolve. My dissertation looks at these issues by focusing on historical and contemporary Haiti. Haiti's history teaches us that as the global economy develops, institutions well suited to an old order may become outmoded and this mismatch can impede development.

Breaking from Colonial Institutions: Haiti's Idle Land, 1928-1950 [Job Market Paper]

In the early 20th century, large numbers of Haitian workers migrated abroad to work on plantations elsewhere, leaving lots of fertile land idle at home. Approximately 20% of the prime-age male labor force worked outside of Haiti, while about half of its agricultural land (one million hectares) sat idle. This puzzle reflects two land institutions developed during the nineteenth century. Lineages had joint claims over the alienation of land; one household could exploit land, but to sell it they needed agreement from a large number of extended kin. In addition, the early-nineteenth century Haitian government had distributed early land and forbade land ownership by foreigners, preventing the creation of large holdings. After the ban's removal, entrepreneurs could not assemble plots into plantation-sized holdings because households were spread over idle land in a checkerboard pattern. Creating a holding of 100 ha could entail buying off 20 households and their kin.

A simple model of the optimal allocation of labor (between Haiti and elsewhere) and land (between subsistence holdings and plantations) implies that the checkerboard reduces land adoption and attenuates the extent to which new plantations develop after a migration cost shock. Without the checkerboard, farmers would allocate more resources to the more productive large-scale farms, but the checkerboard inhibits this process and causes farmers to adopt more small-scale farms.

To assess how the checkerboard pattern led to idle land, I use data on 5,700 plots adopted over 22 years under a government rental program. Data from settlement patterns in Haiti and a massacre in the Dominican Republic confirm the model's predictions. Using the institutional histories of the Dominican Republic and Jamaica as counterfactuals drives this point home: both countries lacked this checkerboard pattern, developed plantation agriculture, and saw little idle land. Haiti's experience shows that the conditions created by colonial governments did not necessarily constrain future institutional development; in Haiti's case, post-independence institutional innovations undermined the conditions for development.

Measuring the Effect of Strengthening Property Rights on Political Support in the Presence of Voter Fraud

Many developing countries have not established secure property rights even though research has overwhelmingly concluded that they significantly affect economic development. But leaders might only implement reforms when they can capture some of the benefits since they hold different asset portfolios and face different property rights. To test this hypothesis, we can look at the effect of

reforms on political support. Measuring political support in this context is difficult because countries with weak property rights protections also likely have weak democratic institutions. I show that in the presence of fraudulent voting we can only identify the elasticity of support with respect to the property rights reform. I then examine a cattle registration program in Haiti where the government in 2014 provided titles to cow owners. Cattle and goats are the two most important livestock in a typical Haitian's asset portfolio, and households with more cows benefited more from the reform. I find that in the 2015 election, areas with more cows relative to goats provide more supported to the incumbent party. Because the ratio of cows to goats is exogenously affected by terrain (since goats have a comparative advantage in mountainous areas), I use the region's slope as an instrument for the ratio of cows to goats and confirm the causal effect. The government improved property rights because it had an incentive to maintain power.

Refugees and the Provision of Public Goods: Haiti and the 1937 Refugee Influx

With millions of refugees seeking resettlement, we must understand how refugees affect the receiving countries. I contribute to this literature by looking at how refugees to Haiti affected the provision of public goods. Escaping the 1937 Trujillo massacre in the Dominican Republic, thousands of refugees arrived in Haiti and needed government services. The unexpected influx strained the government's resources and forced refugees to wait years to receive services. After the government increased income taxes, it cleared its backlog and improved program administration. Thus, the refugees provided a short-term strain on public goods, but in the long-run improved government services.