

# Kathryn N Vasilaky

## Education

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**Ph.D. Agricultural & Resource Economics, 2011** *University of Maryland, College Park, MD*

**B.A. Economics & Mathematics, 2003** *Columbia University, New York, NY*

## Dissertation

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“Development, Technology Adoption and Social Networks,” August 2011, Chair: Kenneth Leonard.

## Fields of Interests

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Development Economics, Experimental Economics, Data Science.

## Work Experience

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**Assistant Professor** *California Polytechnic State University* 2017 – Present

*Classes:* Survey of Economics; Programming for Economics & Analytics; Experimental Economics; Machine Learning for Prediction and Causal Inference

**Adjunct Associate Research Scientist** *Columbia University* 2017 – Present

*Division:* International Research Institute for Climate and Society

**Instructor** *Girls Who Code* 2016

*Classes Taught:* Introduction to CS 101 Intensive

**Postdoctoral Research Fellow** *Columbia University* 2013 - 2016

*Classes co-Taught:* Challenges in Sustainable Development

**Consultant** *World Bank* 2016

*Division:* Poverty and Equity Group

**Consultant** *World Bank* 2013

*Division:* Development Prospects Group

**Lecturer** *United States Naval Academy* 2011

*Classes Taught:* Intermediate Statistics

**Consultant** *World Bank* 2009 - 2010

*Division:* Development Economics Research Group

**Research Associate** *Clinton Health Access Initiative* 2009 - 2010

*Study: Malaria Diagnostics Clinical Trial*

**Graduate Teaching Assistant**

*University of Maryland*

2008

*Sections Taught: Dynamic Optimization and Optimal Control*

**Associate Economist**

*Federal Reserve Bank of New York*

2003 - 2005

*Division: International Research*

## Refereed Publications

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1. Ovaisi, Zohreh, Kathryn Vasilaky, Elena Zheleva, “Propensity-independent Bias Recovery in Offline Learning-to-rank Systems” (2021) *44th International ACM SIGIR Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval (SIGIR)*
2. Hamilton, Steve, Tim Richards, Aric Shafran, Kathryn Vasilaky, “Farm Labor Productivity and the Impact of Mechanization” (2021) *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, conditionally accepted.
3. Ovaisi, Zohreh, Ragib Ahsan, Kathryn Vasilaky, Elena Zheleva, “Correcting for Selection Bias in Learning-to-rank Systems.” (2020) *Proceedings of the 29th International World Wide Web Conference (WWW/WebConf)*. pp. 1863–187, DOI:10.1145/3366423-3380255.
4. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Michelle Brock (2020) “Power(ful) Guidelines for Experimental Economists.” *Journal of the Experimental Science Association*. Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 189-212. DOI: 10.1007/s40881-020-00090-5.
5. Enenkel, M., Brown, M.E., Vogt, J.V., McCarty, J.L., Reid Bell, A.Guha-Sapir, D., Dorigo, W.A., Vasilaky, K., Svoboda, M., Bonifacio, R., Voigt, S., Anderson, M., Funk, C., Osgood, D.E., Hain, C., Vinck, P. (2020) “Why predict climate hazards if we need to understand impacts? Mobile technologies could put humans back into the equation.” *Climatic Change*. Vol. 162, pp. 1161–1176, DOI:10.1007/s10584-020-02878-0.
6. Buehren, Niklas, Joao Montalvao, Markus Goldstein, Kenneth Leonard, Kathryn Vasilaky (2020) “Spillover Effects of Girls? Empowerment on Brothers? Competitiveness: Evidence from a Lab-in-the-Field Experiment in Uganda.” *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. DOI:10.1086/713882
7. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Sofia Saenz Martinez, Radost Stanimirova, Daniel Osgood (2020) “Perceptions of Farm Size Heterogeneity and Demand for Group Index Insurance.” *Games*. Vol 11, No. 1, DOI:10.3390/g11010015
8. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Rahel Diro, Geoff McCarney, Daniel Osgood (2019) “Can Education Unlock Scale? The Demand Impact of Educational Games on a Large-Scale Unsubsidised Index Insurance Programme in Ethiopia.” *Journal of Development Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/00220388.2018.1554207.
9. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Asif Islam (2018) “Competition or cooperation? Using team and tournament incentives for learning among female farmers in rural Uganda.” *World Development*. Vol 103, March 2018, pp. 216-225.
10. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Kenneth Leonard (2018) “As Good as the Networks They Keep?: Improving Outcomes through Weak Ties in Rural Uganda.” *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. Vol 66, No. 4 pp. 755-792.

11. Haack, Robert A., Kerry O. Britton, Ekehard G. Brockerhoff, Joseph F. Cavey, Lynn J. Garrett, Mark Kimberley, Frank Lowenstein, Amelia Nuding, Lars J. Olson, James Turner, Kathryn N. Vasilaky (2014) “Effectiveness of the International Phytosanitary Standard ISPM No. 15 on Reducing Wood Borer Infestation Rates in Wood Packaging Material Entering the United States.” *PLoS ONE*. Vol 9, No. 5., DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0096611.
12. Vasilaky, Kathryn (2013) “Female Social Networks and Farmer Training: Can Randomized Information Exchange Improve Outcomes.” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. Vol 95, No. 2 pp. 376-383.

## Reports

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Mejía-Mantilla, Carolina, Ruth Hill, Kathryn Vasilaky (2017). “Input Adoption among Small-Holder Farmers: Potential and Constraints.” Poverty and Equity Global Practice, Africa Region, The World Bank.

Montalvao, Joao, Markus Goldstein, Kenneth Leonard, Kathryn Vasilaky (2016), “Girls’ Empowerment, Sibling Rivalry, and Competitiveness: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial and a Lab Experiment in Uganda.” World Bank Research Paper Vol. 12, No. 33.

Vasilaky, Kathryn, Kenneth Leonard (2015), “Policy Implications of Social Networks and Learning.” Gender Innovation Lab Policy Brief, World Bank Report Number 103850.

## Invited Seminar Presentations

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1. 2021: Centre for Environmental and Resource Economics (CERE), “The effects of bonus pay when working in a team; evidence from strawberry pickers in the field.”
2. 2018: University of Montpellier, “Learning Digitally via Mediated Farmer Edutainment in India.”
3. 2016: New York University, “An Iterative Approach to the Tikhonov Inverse Problem with a Stopping Rule.”
4. 2016: Paris School of Economics, “Learning Digitally: Evaluating the Impact of Farmer Training via Mediated Videos.”
5. 2015: Microsoft Research, Cambridge, MA, “Informal Risk Sharing and Formal Insurance: Substitutes or Complements?”
6. 2015: Microsoft Research, NY, NY, “Mechanisms of Information Exchange in Social Networks in Rural Uganda?”
7. 2014: Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne “Informal Networks within Index Insurance: Randomizing Social Distance in Group Insurance.”
8. 2014: Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique LAMETA “Informal Networks within Index Insurance: Randomizing Social Distance in Group Insurance.”
9. 2011: Development Economics Research Group, World Bank, “Mothers, Daughters and Sisters; Is Competitiveness Socialized?”
10. 2010: Yale University, “Randomizing Social Networks in Rural Uganda: New Links do Improve Outcomes.”
11. 2005: Federal Reserve Bank of New York NY, “DYNARE: Bayesian Estimation in Matlab.”

## Conference Presentations

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1. May 2021: Bay Area Behavioral and Experimental Economics Workshop (BABEEW), “The effects of bonus pay when working in a team; evidence from strawberry pickers in the field.”
2. July 2021: ACM SIGIR Conference on Research and development in information retrieval, “Propensity-independent Bias Recovery in Offline Learning-to-rank Systems.”
3. October 2020: The Science of Diversity Inclusion Initiative (SODI) Virtual Convening at Berkeley Haas School of Business. (Invite-only meeting in which we brainstorm ideas.)
4. March 2020: International World Wide Web Conference, “Correcting for Selection Bias in Learning-to-rank Systems.”
5. October 2019: Experimental Economics Association, Los Angeles, California, “Revealing Group Choices: the Demand for Index Insurance”
6. September 2019: Advances in Field Experiments, Chicago, Illinois, “Revealing Group Choices: the Demand for Index Insurance”
7. September 2019: Experimental Economics Association, Dijon, France, “Group Heterogeneity and the Demand for Index Insurance”
8. October 2018: Advances in Field Experiments, Boston, Massachusetts, “Groundwater Depletion in Northern India, Myself or Others?”
9. September 2018: Science of Diversity & Inclusion Initiative, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, “Can Social Networks help de-bias Employee Evaluations?”
10. August 2018: French Association for Environmental and Resource Economics, Axes-en-Provence, France, “Learning Digitally via Mediated Farmer Edutainment in India.”
11. May 2018: Bay Area Behavioral and Experimental Economics Workshop, San Francisco, CA, “Changes in Competitiveness with Motherhood Stages and Culture: Evidence from Patrilocal and Matrilocal Society?”
12. October 2017: Experimental Economics Association, Richmond, Virginia, “Groundwater Depletion in Northern India, Myself or Others?”
13. March 2016: Centre for the Study of African Economies - University of Oxford, Oxford, UK, “Towards a Deeper Understanding of Female Competitiveness and the Gender Gap: Evidence from Patrilocal and Matrilocal Cultures.”
14. November 2015: Northeast Development Conference, Providence, Rhode Island, “Learning Digitally: Evaluating the Impact of Farmer Training via Mediated Videos?”
15. October 2015: Experimental Economics Association, Dallas, Texas, “Childhood, Girlhood, Motherhood: Is Competitiveness Socialized?”
16. March 2015: Centre for the Study of African Economies - University of Oxford, Oxford, UK, “As Good as the Networks They Keep? Mechanisms of Information Exchange in Social Networks in Rural Uganda?”
17. December 2014: Symposium on Economic Experiments, Bergen, Norway, “Informal Networks within Index Insurance: Randomizing Social Distance in Group Insurance.”
18. November 2014: Northeast Development Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, “Informal Networks within Index Insurance: Randomizing Social Distance in Group Insurance?”
19. September 2014: Postdoctoral Data Science Panel, New York, NY, “Data Science in the Social Sciences.”

20. June 2014: 17th Annual Conference on Global Economic Analysis, Dakar, Senegal, “Demographic Transition, Education, and Inequality in India.”
21. September 2012: Workshop on Information in Networks, New York, NY, “As Good as the Networks They Keep? Mechanisms of Information Exchange in Rural Uganda.”
22. July 2010: World Meeting of the Economic Science Association, Copenhagen, Denmark “Institutional Incentives for Information Exchange: Information Games in Rural Uganda.”
23. May 2009: Midwest International Economic Development Conference Minneapolis, MN, “The Effects of School Quality on Fertility in Ukraine.”
24. May 2009: Population Association of America (PAA) Detroit, MI, “The Effects of School Quality on Fertility in Ukraine.”

## Working Papers

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1. Vasilaky, Kathryn, “Robust Ridge Regression with a Stopping Rule.” (*in preparation*)
2. Vasilaky, Kathryn, Aurélie Harou, Chia-Ying Lee, Dan Osgood, “Timely Disaster Response and its Impacts on Poverty in the Philippines.” (*in preparation*)

## Grants, Honors and Awards

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- ◇ 2020-2021: Co Principal Investigator, *Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities, RSCA*, “Nudging Women into Business and Economics,” Amount: \$18,000.
- ◇ 2019-2020: Principal Investigator, *Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities, RSCA*, “Correcting for Selection Bias in Learning-to-rank Systems,” Amount: \$8,985.
- ◇ 2019-2021: Co-Investigator, *United States Department of Agriculture, AFRI*, “Immigration Reform And Farm Labor Shortages,” Amount: \$500,000.
- ◇ 2016-2018: Co-Investigator, *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Grand Challenges*, “Multi-modal Satellite Rainfall Measurement for Index Insurance” Grant Number OPP1150740, Amount: \$100,000.
- ◇ 2015-2017: Co-Investigator, *World Bank, International Finance Corporation*, “Evaluating the Timeliness of Disaster Response” Grant Number 7176127, Amount: \$200,000.
- ◇ 2015-2017: Principal Investigator, *Earth Clinic Grant, Columbia University*, “SMS Based System for Rainfall Reporting,” Amount: \$31,000.
- ◇ 2015-2017: Principal Investigator, *Cross Cutting Initiatives Grant, Columbia University*, “India Water Depletion Study,” Amount: \$32,000.
- ◇ 2009-2010: PhD Thesis, *Africa Gender Innovation Lab of the World Bank*, “Social Networks in Uganda,” Amount: \$20,000.

## Visiting Positions

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- ◇ Visiting Scholar, Toulouse School of Economics; Toulouse, France; September - December 2014.
- ◇ Visitor, Microsoft Research; Cambridge, Massachusetts; August 17, 2015 - August 22, 2015.

## Professional Service

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### Referee:

*Review of Economics and Statistics, The Economic Journal, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, World Development, Climatic Change, International Food Policy Research Institute, Agricultural Economics*

## University Service

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Organizer and co-founder of PyData San Luis Obispo with Hunter Glanz (Statistics) and Brian Granger (Physics); Economics Society faculty advisor; former Economics brownbag organizer; BEA-CON mentor; chair of Ethics and Social Justice Committee, member of Educational Initiatives Committee, and member of Training Committee for the [Data Strategic Research Initiative at Cal Poly](#).