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Doctoral Studies:

PhD Economics, University College London, 2009 to present.
Thesis title: "Political Parties, Special Interest Groups, and Political Outcomes".
Expected date of completion: Spring 2015.

References:

Professor Ian Preston   Professor Guy Laroque
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Research Interests:

Political Economy, Applied Game Theory

Previous Education:

MSc Economics, University of Warwick, distinction, 2009.

Visiting research student on full scholarship, Jesus College, Oxford, 2007/08.

Diploma in Economics, University of Trier, 2007.

Teaching Experience:

Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, University of Trier

2005/06	Introductory Economics

Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, University College London

2010/11	Microeconomics (MSc Economic Policy), Advanced Microeconomics (MSc Economics)
2011/12	Advanced Microeconomics (MSc Economics)
2012/13	Public Economics (MSc Economics)
	Award for Best Teaching Assistant on an MSc Optional Module
2013/14	Microeconomics (MSc Economics), Health Economics (MSc Economics)

Research Experience and Professional Activities:

Research Assistant to Aureo de Paula on "Identification and estimation of preference distributions when voters are ideological"

Referee for Economic Journal, referee for Annual Meeting Verein für Socialpolitik 2014

Presentations:

2014	European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society. Madrid; Symposium of the Spanish Economic Association, Palma de Mallorca; Department of Economics, Stockholm University; Meeting of the Society for Social Choice And Welfare, Boston; Conference of the Royal Economic Society, Manchester;
2013	Conference of the Singapore Review of Economics, Singapore; RIPED, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce;
2011	Department of Economics, Mannheim University; Department of Economics, Autonomous University of Barcelona;

Personal:

Languages: German (native), English (fluent), Spanish (intermediate), Thai (basic)

Citizenship: German

Working Papers:

"How Political Parties Shape Electoral Competition" - Job Market Paper

This paper provides a model of party formation that can explain political monopolies, where one party consistently wins elections with a large share of votes. I use data on election results from a sample of federal countries to demonstrate that monopolies are observable at the state rather than the federal level, and that these monopolies are typically held by national parties with a relatively broad ideological appeal. This raises the question of why there is no entry of regional parties better able to cater to the political preferences of voters in particular states. In the model, the answer lies in the career concerns of politicians: State politicians would like to advance their career to the federal level, but only have the opportunity of doing so as a member of a federally successful party. If politicians value such career opportunities sufficiently strongly, entry of regional parties does not occur. There then exists an equilibrium with two parties, one centre-left and one centre-right, where each party dominates some states. Beyond explaining the existence of regional monopolies, the model is also able to reproduce broader patterns in the data on election results and makes empirical predictions regarding the sorting of politicians into parties across different regions.

"Competing Candidates, Competing Interest Groups, and the Efficacy of Political Threats"

Interest groups seem to achieve large policy favours for small sums of campaign contributions. This has long puzzled observers. I provide an explanation of this so called ``Tullock paradox" that is robust to competition among opposing interests. In the model, I allow interest groups to specify their donations as very general functions of policies and donations by other groups. This allows potential donors to influence the policy choice of an incumbent through threats of contributions to the campaign of a challenger. It is therefore possible that the incumbent chooses policies that favour a particular interest group even if this group has not made any actual donations. When lobbies face a small amount of uncertainty about the policy that the incumbent will choose, I am able to provide a clear characterisation of equilibrium. Policies are always skewed in favour of the group with deeper pockets. This group may also use actual donations on top of threats in order to increase its influence over policies. The weaker lobby, on the other hand, does not promise any money for any policy the incumbent may implement. Outcomes nevertheless differ from the case with only one interest group as the weaker group can become active if the stronger group tries to exert even more pressure.

"Who Emerges from Smoke-Filled Rooms? Political Parties and Candidate Selection"

This paper presents a model of candidate selection through political parties where politicians differ in terms of their quality and their favored policies. The central assumption is that political parties are better informed about their potential candidates than voters are. Questions of interest include whether voters can gain information about candidates by observing the party's choice and to what extent parties select the candidates preferred by the median voter. The results depend crucially on how competitive the race is. Under strong competition, nominating a politically more extreme politician is a signal of high quality. Sufficient competition also induces parties to act in the interest of the median voter most of the time, even when parties attach very little intrinsic value to quality. As ideological alignment between the median voter and a party reduces the degree of competition that this party faces, the median voter can be better off when parties are polarized.