

# Desha M. Girod

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## EDUCATION

- Stanford University      Ph.D. in Political Science, expected June 2008  
Dissertation: *Foreign Aid and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*  
Committee: Jim Fearon (Chair), Steve Krasner, David Laitin,  
Jeremy Weinstein
- Trinity College, Dublin      M.Phil in International Peace Studies, Awarded July 2002
- Penn State University      B.A. in Political Science with Highest Distinction and Honors in  
Communications, Awarded May 2000

## RESEARCH

Foreign Aid, Comparative Political Institutions, Civil War, Africa

## FELLOWSHIPS

- Post-doctoral fellowship, granted by the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, Spring, 2008.
- Fellow at the Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation, Stanford University, granted November, 2007.
- Hewlett pre-doctoral fellowship, granted by the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, Spring, 2007.
- Stanford Political Science Scholarship for five years of doctoral study, granted by the Political Science Department, Stanford University, Fall 2002.
- George J. Mitchell Scholarship for post-graduate study in Ireland, granted by the US-Ireland Alliance, Washington, DC, January 2000.
- Harry S. Truman Scholarship for graduate study, granted by the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation, Washington, DC, June 1999.

## FIELD WORK

- Mozambique (interviews and data collection conducted in Portuguese)
- Uganda
- Panama (interviews and data collection conducted in Spanish)

## LANGUAGES

- Fluent in Spanish
- Proficient in Portuguese and French
  - Berlitz Language Center, Lisbon, Portugal, 60 three-hour sessions of individual instruction in Portuguese grammar and oral communication, September 2004.
  - Berlitz Language Center, San Francisco, California, 60 three-hour sessions of individual instruction in Portuguese grammar and oral communication, June to August 2004.
  - Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France, class in French grammar and oral communication, associated with Penn State, June 1997.

## MANUSCRIPTS

### *Foreign Aid and Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Dissertation)

#### “Foreign Aid and Post-Conflict Reconstruction” (*Under Review*)

Paper presented:

- Cornell University Symposium on Failed States, Scheduled for April 2008
- The 2008 Meeting of the International Studies Association, Scheduled for March
- The 2007 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association
- The Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, October 2007
- The 2006 Meeting of the American Political Science Association
- The 2006 Meeting of the African Studies Association
- The Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, Yale University, May 2005

*Abstract:* Why are some governments better than others at rebuilding their states in the aftermath of civil war? Existing arguments typically propose that post-conflict reconstruction is more likely when governments receive enough aid to offset the devastation from conflict. The analysis reported here shows that multilateral aid helps resource-poor states, but not their resource-rich counterparts, because resource-poor states face incentives to use aid well. Drawing on previously unavailable data on compliance with donor-required reforms collected by the World Bank’s internal auditing group, this paper also demonstrates that reform is a mechanism for post-conflict reconstruction. Moreover, the data are consistent with the expectation that multilateral donors adjust aid according to the extent of reform. None of these results hold for bilateral aid, which has a similar impact to natural-resource rents.

#### “Do remittances improve governance? Remittance flows and public goods in Mexico, 1995-2000” (*Under Review*) (with Claire Adida)

Paper presented:

- The 2008 Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Scheduled for August
- The 2006 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association

*Abstract:* Scholars increasingly show that remittances improve development, but how do remittances, or direct money transfers from migrants, affect government responsiveness? Remittances may substitute essential governmental functions since they sometimes finance access to public goods and services. Mexico offers a unique opportunity to assess the competing impacts of government spending and remittances since Mexican states receive varying levels of remittance flows originating primarily from a single source, the United States. Using census data from Mexico’s Municipal Database System and remittance data from its National Population Council, this paper offers a sub-national analysis of Mexican states’ access to drainage and tap water between 1995 and 2000 controlling for political and economic variables. The data show that, when remittances improve access to public goods, government spending, at best, has no impact. Additionally, remittances’ impact is strongest for the most private types of public goods, suggesting that remittances may indeed substitute government services.

“Do Autocrats Create Democrats?” (*Working Paper*)

Paper presented:

- The 2007 Meeting of the American Political Science Association
- The Latin American Studies Center, Stanford University, Scheduled for May 2008

*Abstract:* Why do some post-authoritarian rulers respect rights while others become new authoritarians? This paper argues that new leaders are deterred from violating citizens' rights when their authoritarian predecessors employed indiscriminate attacks on potential regime challengers. The rights violated by the previous ruler generate a consensus on what institutions the new government should protect. The paper further demonstrates that certain conditions are more likely to trigger these attacks. Dictators are more likely to attack a majority of citizens when faced with a particular sort of crisis: when their sources of patronage decline because their international legitimacy is suffering. This paper first tests the theory in Panama, which democratized after the US overthrew its dictator Noriega. Second, it analyzes coups of authoritarian leaders and finds support for two observable implications of the theory: (1) the more repressive the dictatorship, the more democratic the government that follows it and (2) the greater the decline in a dictatorship's international legitimacy, the more democratic the regime that follows it. In conclusion, the paper explores implications for democracy promotion.

“The Geography vs. Institutions Debate Revisited” (*Working Paper*) (with Luz Marina Arias)

*Abstract:* Recent scholarship argues that the extractive goals of European colonizers determined the colonial institutions they imposed, which then influenced subsequent postcolonial institution building. We claim that the literature overlooks an important variable: settlers' abilities to use preexisting regulatory authority in newly discovered lands. We argue that pre-colonial institutions influenced institution building both at colonization and after the colonial period.

“Cut From The Same Cloth? Multilateral vs. Bilateral Aid” (*Manuscript in progress*)

Paper presented:

- The 2008 Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Scheduled for August

*Abstract:* Existing scholarship finds that foreign aid has little, if any, positive impact on political and economic development. This paper argues that the results in the literature can be attributed to bilateral aid flows, which have similar effects to natural-resource rents. Bilateral donors represent individual country governments making decisions about how to distribute funds. They find it easier, on average, to support a strategic interest than multilateral donors, who consist of many countries with divergent strategic interests. As long as aid recipients believe their government's survival is of greater value to foreign patrons than reform implementation, these governments lack incentive to use aid well. Multilateral donors are less likely to coordinate strategically and, therefore, more likely to disburse according to the degree of reform in recipient states. If multilateral donors disburse for development more than bilateral donors, then across developing countries, multilateral aid should have more positive effects on political and economic development than bilateral aid. This paper disaggregates aid flows into multilateral and bilateral categories and finds that bilateral aid drives the negative effects of total aid across developing countries since 1960 while multilateral aid positively impacts political and economic development.

### **INVITED TO COMMENT**

Discussant for “Deference, Dissent, and Dispute Resolution: An Experimental Intervention Using Mass Media to Change Norms and Behavior in Rwanda” by Elizabeth Levy Paluck at the Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University, February 2008.

Discussant/Chair for “Democratization” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association, 2007.

Discussant for “Constitution Writing and Conflict Resolution” by Jennifer Widner in the Comparative Politics Seminar, Stanford University, January 2007.

Discussant for “The Price of Oil and Democracy” by Kristopher Ramsay in the International Relations Seminar, Stanford University, October 2006.

Discussant/Chair for “Post-Conflict Political Dynamics” panel at the Midwest Political Science Association, 2006.

Discussant for “Premature Alliance Termination: Explaining Decisions to Abrogate or Renegotiate Existing Alliances” by Ashley Leeds in International Relations Seminar, Stanford University, October, 2005.

Discussant for “Where Do Peacekeepers Go?” by Page Fortna at the Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University, April 2005.

Discussant for “Hierarchy in International Relations” by David Lake in the International Relations Seminar, Stanford University, March 2005.

### **TEACHING**

Lecture entitled “Natural Resources and Post-conflict reconstruction” in Transitions from War to Peace, a Master’s course in International Policy Studies, Stanford University, February 2008.

Lecture entitled “State building” in Introduction to International Relations (300 students) at Stanford University, November 2004.

Head Teaching Assistant for Introduction to International Relations, 300 students Stanford University, Fall Quarter 2004, Faculty Instructor: Michael Tomz.

Head Teaching Assistant for NGOs and Development, Stanford University, Spring Quarter 2004, Faculty Instructor: David Abernethy.

Teaching Assistant for Introduction to International Relations, Stanford University, Fall Quarter 2003, Faculty Instructor: Stephen Krasner.

Teaching Assistant for International Security in a Changing World, Stanford University, Winter Quarter 2004, Faculty Instructors: Scott Sagan, Coit Blacker, and William Perry.

Teaching Assistant for Introduction to American Politics, Stanford University, Spring Quarter 2005, Faculty Instructors: Morris Fiorina and John Ferejohn.

**UNIVERSITY/ACADEMIC SERVICE**

Reader of Summer Fellows applications for the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, 2008.

Member of interview panel for Rhodes-Marshall Committee, Stanford University, September 2004 -present.

Member of national interview panel for the Mitchell Scholarship, Washington DC, November, 2006.

Reader of Mitchell Scholarship applications, US-Ireland Alliance, Washington DC, October 2001.