

DESIREE A. DESIERTO

W. Allen Wallis Institute of Political Economy
University of Rochester
107 Harkness Hall, Box 027-0158
Rochester NY 14627

www.desireedesierto.com
ddesiert@ur.rochester.edu

Current Position

July 2019 Postdoctoral Associate, Wallis Institute of Political Economy, University of Rochester

Education

- 2013 – 2019 Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Fields: Comparative Politics, Political Methodology
Dissertation: “The Great Development Tradeoff: Corruption vs. Public Goods”
Committee: Prof. Scott Gehlbach (advisor), Prof. Rikhil Bhavnani,
Prof. Tepei Yamamoto, Prof. David Weimer
- 2013 – 2014 M.A. in Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2003 – 2006 Ph.D. in Economics, University of Nottingham
- 2001 – 2002 M.Sc. in Development Economics, University of Oxford
- 2000 – 2001 M.Ec. in Economics, Macquarie University
- 1993 – 1997 B.S. in Business Economics, University of the Philippines, cum laude

Research Interests

Political Economy; Corruption; Institutions.

Working Papers

“Public Goods, Corruption, and the Political Resource Curse.”

When do resource revenues increase corruption? I develop a model of public good provision by a politician who obtains rents by stealing government revenues or extracting bribes in exchange for public goods spending. I show there is a threshold level of revenues below which the politician does not steal, and therefore obtains rents only from bribes. Higher revenues unambiguously increase public goods spending, and decrease corruption (in the form of bribes) if the marginal social value of the public goods is sufficiently high. Above this threshold, revenues have no effect on spending, but unambiguously increases corruption (in the form of theft). Hence, a political resource curse emerges when resources provide ‘too much’ government revenues — that is, beyond a threshold level that corrupt politicians would credibly spend on public goods.

“Grand Corruption by Public Officials: Measuring Theft and Bribery” (job market paper).

A public official who has discretionary power over the government budget can obtain rents by stealing government revenues or receiving bribe payments in exchange for spending those revenues on public goods and services. I propose a method of simultaneously measuring these two kinds of grand corruption. I then demonstrate it using data from asset declarations of municipal mayors in the Philippines. The results suggest

that an increase in government revenues increases theft, but decreases bribes by a larger extent such that total corruption falls. However, public good provision also declines since some of the additional revenues are stolen.

Main Publications

1. “Formal Models of the Political Resource Curse,” 2018. *Economics of Governance* 19(3): 225-259.
2. “What Resource Curse? The Null Effect of Remittances on Public Good Provision,” 2018. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. doi.org/10.1177/0951629818791033.
3. “Prohibition vs. Taxation in Corrupt Environments” (with John V.C. Nye), 2017. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 173(2): 239-252.
4. “When Do Formal Rules and Informal Norms Converge?” (with John V.C. Nye), 2011. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 167: 613-629.

Additional Publications

5. “Investment Pricing and Social Protection: A Proposal for an ICESCR-adjusted Capital Asset Pricing Model” (with Diane A. Desierto), 2017. *ICSID Review* 28(2): 405-419.
6. “Judicial Independence: Evidence from the Philippine Supreme Court (1970-2003),” 2015, in *The Political Economy of Governance: Institutions, Democratic Performance and Elections*, eds. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. Springer.
7. “Stimulating Investment and Growth in the Philippines: The Need for First-Order Market Reforms” (with Geoffrey Ducanes), 2013, in *Asia Rising: Growth and Resilience in an Uncertain Global Economy*, eds. Hal Hill and Ma. Socorro Gochoco-Bautista. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
8. “Why Do Weak States Prefer Prohibition to Taxation?” (with John V.C. Nye), 2011, in *The Political Economy of Institutions, Democracy and Voting*, ed. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. Berlin: Springer-Verlag.
9. “2D:4D Asymmetry and Gender Differences in Academic Performance” (with John V.C. Nye, Grigory Androuschak, Garrett Jones, and Maria Yudkevich), 2012. *PLoS ONE* 7(10): e46319.
10. “Is It Worth Taxing Pirated Products? The Case of Optical Media Discs in the Philippines” (with Karen Annette D. Lazaro and Kevin Thomas G. Cruz), 2010. *Asian Economic Papers* 9(2): 79-112.

Invited Seminars and Conference Presentations

- 2019 Tulane University (seminar); George Mason University (seminar); King's College Political Economy (seminar); Institute for Corruption Studies; Illinois State University (seminar); APSA Meetings (Washington DC); Texas Tech University (seminar), George Mason University, Schar School (seminar).
- 2018 WSD Handa Center, Stanford University (seminar); APSA Meetings (Boston); University of Kentucky (seminar).
- 2017 University of the Philippines School of Economics (seminar).
- 2014 Workshop on Institutional Analysis, Ronald Coase Institute; International Society for the New Institutional Economics; 3rd International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions.
- 2012 Philippines Update, Australian National University 2nd International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions; Institutions and Development (Discussant), Asian Institute of Management;
- 2011 Workshop on Sustaining Asia's Growth and Investment, Asian Development Bank; Asian Development Review Workshop (Discussant), Asian Development Bank;
- 2010 & Earlier: Philippine Economics Society Meetings, BSP (Central Bank of the Phils.); Workshop on Health, Institutions and Development, University of the Philippines; 1st International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions; Workshop on Institutions and Development, University of the Philippines; International Society for the New Institutional Economics; The Probabilism Sessions, Cournot Centre for Economic Studies; Conference, European Society for the New Institutional Economics; 13th Conference, Dynamics, Economic Growth and International Trade; Spring Meeting of Young Economists; Workshop on Institutional Analysis, Ronald Coase Institute; Conference, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Growth; KTH Royal Institute of Technology; Conference, Growth and Distribution: On the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Lucca, Italy.

Teaching Experience

- Graduate: Microeconomics, Mathematical Economics, Econometrics, Development Economics (University of the Philippines)
- Undergraduate: Political Choice and Strategy, Understanding Political Numbers, Research Methods in Political Science (UW-Madison); Microeconomics, Mathematical Economics, Econometrics, Development Economics (University of the Philippines); Macroeconomics (University of Nottingham)

Refereeing

Journal of Politics; Games & Economic Behavior; Journal of Institutional Economics; Applied Economic Letters; Asian Development Review.

Fellowships and Awards

2016 – 2019 Research Fellowship, WSD Handa Center, Stanford
2013 – 2014 Gordon Hoxie Graduate Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2011 – 2012 UPD Faculty Centennial Grant, University of the Philippines
2005 – 2006 Robert Solow Postdoctoral Fellowship, Cournot Centre for Economic Studies
2005 – 2006 Visiting Scholarship, St. Edmund's College
and Faculty of Economics and Politics, University of Cambridge
1993 – 1997 University and College Scholarship, University of the Philippines

Previous Appointments

Aug. 2016 – June 2019 Research Fellow, WSD Handa Center, Stanford University
June 2007 – May 2013 Assistant & Associate Professor, University of the Philippines
June 2005 – May 2007 Lecturer & Senior Lecturer, University of the Philippines

References

Prof. Scott Gehlbach
Department of Political Science and
Harris School of Public Policy
University of Chicago
gehlabach@uchicago.edu,+1 (773) 702-8400

Prof. Rikhil R. Bhavnani
Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin-Madison
bhavnani@wisc.edu,+1 (608) 262-5638

Prof. Teppei Yamamoto
MIT Political Science
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
tepei@mit.edu,+1 (617) 253-6959

Prof. David Cohen
WSD Handa Center for Human Rights and
International Justice, Stanford University
dcohen3@stanford.edu,+1 (650) 736-7622

Prof. Maria Socorro G. Bautista
School of Economics
University of the Philippines
msgb@up.edu.ph,+63 (2) 927-9686

Prof. Emmanuel S. de Dios
School of Economics
University of the Philippines
esdedios@econ.upd.edu.ph,+63 (2) 927-9686

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