

# Greg Distelhorst

Email [gregd@mit.edu](mailto:gregd@mit.edu)

Web [www.gregdistelhorst.com](http://www.gregdistelhorst.com)

## CURRENT POSITION

Assistant Professor of Global Economics and Management 2016-  
Sloan School of Management  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## PREVIOUS POSITIONS

Associate Professor of International Business 2015-2016  
University of Oxford, Saïd Business School

Postdoctoral Fellow, Strategic Management 2013-2015  
University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management

Predocotrual Fellow, Center on Democracy, Development & Rule of Law 2012-2013  
Stanford University

## EDUCATION

Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2013  
B.A., Cognitive Science, *Magna Cum Laude*, Yale University 2003

## PUBLICATIONS and WORK IN PROGRESS

### 1. Globalization, Labor, and Multinational Business

#### **Does Lean Improve Labor Standards?**

#### **Management and Social Performance in the Nike Supply Chain**

*Management Science*, 2016. (with Jens Hainmueller & Richard Locke)

Can modern management practices reduce workplace abuses in the developing world?  
We study Nike Inc.'s program to promote new manufacturing practices in factories across eleven developing countries. Adoption of lean manufacturing yielded a 15 percentage point reduction in serious labor violations. However, this effect is primarily observed in Southeast Asia; factories in China did not improve.

Practitioner summaries:

“Can Lean Manufacturing Put an End to Sweatshops?” *Harvard Business Review*,  
Digital Article, 2016, <https://goo.gl/NjlZUb>

“How to Improve Working Conditions in the Developing World,” *Insights by Stanford Business*, 2016, <https://goo.gl/Dpnat8>

**Production Goes Global, Compliance Stays Local: Private Regulation in Global Electronics**  
*Regulation & Governance*, 2015, 9(3): 224-242. (with Richard Locke, Timea Pal, & Hiram Samel)

We examine the efficacy of private regulation by studying HP's regulation of labor and environmental standards in its global electronics suppliers. Regulatory outcomes are largely dependent on national context, which is explained in part by how private regulation interacts with local regulatory authorities and civil society groups.

### **Does Compliance Pay?**

#### **Global Supply Chains and Trade-based Diffusion of Social Institutions**

MIT Sloan Research Paper (with Richard Locke)

How does trade respond to information about labor and environmental standards? Contrary to the "race to the bottom" hypothesis, we find that exporting firms are *rewarded* for exhibiting higher standards. Difference-in-differences estimates from two thousand emerging market manufacturers show that compliance results in a 4% annual increase in business. These results suggest that private transnational regulation creates economic incentives for raising social standards.

### **Can Radical Transparency Raise Labor Standards in Global Manufacturing?**

Work in progress

### **Are Western Purchasing Practices Creating Foreign Sweatshops?**

Work in progress

## 2. Politics and Public Policy in China

### **The Power of Empty Promises: Quasidemocratic Institutions and Activism in China**

*Comparative Political Studies*, DOI: 10.1177/0010414015617960

This study shows how even poorly-implemented institutions can empower activists in nondemocracies. Activists transform the weaknesses of these institutions into assets, exploiting them to generate spectacular governance failures that support their campaigns for policy change. Original quantitative and qualitative evidence comes from China's "Open Government Information" reform.

### **Ingroup Bias in Official Behavior: A National Field Experiment in China**

*Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2014, 9: 203–230. (with Yue Hou)

Does citizen ethnicity bias political accountability? In a national field experiment, we contacted 258 local governments in China and manipulated signals of ethnic identity. Appeals from apparently Muslim citizens reduced official assistance by 33 percent. Our results reveal ethnically-motivated distortions to public service in China and suggest these biases are more globally widespread than commonly assumed.

## **Constituency Service Under Nondemocratic Rule: Evidence from China**

*The Journal of Politics*, forthcoming (with Yue Hou)

When are authoritarian institutions responsive to citizen appeals? We develop a theory of nondemocratic constituency service using a national field audit of China's "Mayor's Mailbox." We estimate this institution's responsiveness to citizens and propose a demand-driven theory: in order to sustain the informational benefits of citizen participation, service institutions must increase responsiveness according to citizen demand.

## **Reassessing the Quality of Government in China**

MIT Sloan Research Paper No. 5181-16 (with Margaret Boittin and Francis Fukuyama)

How should scholars measure the quality of government across disparate contexts? We pilot a new approach using an original survey of Chinese civil servants and a comparison to the United States. Chinese municipal officials perceive their workplaces to be more meritocratic than U.S. federal employees in all but the highest ranked American agencies, such as NASA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Our findings contrast with numerous indices of good government and suggest that incorporating the opinions of political insiders may significantly revise comparative measures of quality of government.

## SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

**Reassessing the Quality of Government in China** 2016  
Stanford University, CDDRL Seminar

**Does Compliance Pay?**  
International Political Economy Society, Virtual Workshop 2017  
MIT Sloan School, IWER Seminar 2016  
University of Edinburgh, Strategy Seminar 2016  
Manchester University, GPNs and Social Upgrading Workshop 2016  
University of Toronto, Centre for Industrial Relations and HR 2016

**Constituency Service Under Nondemocratic Rule**  
Brown University, Watson Institute for International Studies 2016

**The Power of Empty Promises**  
University of Michigan and Shanghai Jiaotong University 2015  
Brown University, Workshop on Comparative Gilded Ages 2015

**Does Lean Improve Labor Standards?**  
University of Oxford, Saïd Business School 2015  
The New School, Milano School of International Affairs 2015  
The Wharton School 2015  
University of Toronto, Employment Relations Student Association 2015  
MIT, Just Supply Chains Workshop 2012

**Ethnicity and Political Responsiveness in China**  
Duke University, New Faces in China Studies Conference 2013  
UC-San Diego, China Research Workshop 2013  
Stanford-Berkeley China Social Science Workshop 2013

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association, Annual Meeting	2011, 13, 14, 17
Labor and Employment Relations Association, Annual Meeting	2013, 17
Association of Chinese Political Studies, Annual Meeting	2016
Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, Annual Meeting	2011, 12
Association of Asian Studies, Annual Meeting	2010, 11, 17

## RESEARCH GROUPS and CONSULTING

The Governance Project, Stanford University, Co-investigator	2012-present
Just Supply Chains, MIT, Co-investigator	2008-present
International Labour Organization, Bureau for Employers' Activities	2015
Ford Foundation Beijing Office, Consultant	2011, 12
Researcher, Philip P. Pan, The Washington Post ( <i>Out of Mao's Shadow</i> )	2005-06
Researcher, Ching Kwan Lee, UCLA Sociology ( <i>Against the Law</i> )	2003

## AWARDS

Stanford University, Freeman Spogli Institute, Predoctoral Fellowship	2012-13
NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant	2011
MIT MISTI Greater China Fund for Innovation	2011
National Security Education Program Boren Fellowship	2010
Fulbright U.S. Student Award	2009
Carroll L. Wilson Award, MIT	2007
NSF IGERT Fellowship	2007
Yale-China Association, Mainland China English Teaching Fellowship	2003

## TEACHING

Global Strategy (EMBA), MIT Sloan School	2016
Global Markets (Sloan Fellows), MIT Sloan School	2016
Leadership and Integrative Management (EMBA), MIT Sloan School	2016
Global Strategy (MBA), Saïd Business School, Oxford University	2016
Global Challenges, Univ. of Toronto, Guest lecturer and project judge	2015
Topics in Industrial Relations and HR, Univ. of Toronto, Guest lecturer	2014
Yale-China Association, Yali School, Changsha, China	2004-05

## SERVICE

Peer reviewer: *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Business Ethics: A European Review*, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *China: An International Journal*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Human Relations*, *The Journal of Politics*, *Oxford University Press*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Regulation & Governance*.

MIT Distinguished Fellowships Committee	2016-present
Carroll L. Wilson Award Committee	2009-present
International Institute of Boston, Workforce Development Volunteer	2009, 12
Yale College Opera Company, Producer and Director of Operations	2001-02
Student Conservation Association, Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas	1999

## SKILLS

Languages—Mandarin Chinese (fluent), Spanish (basic)  
Programming—Perl, Python, and Visual Basic  
Statistical software—R and STATA  
Interests—running, wildlife, dance, baseball