

William Walker Hanlon

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Education:

Ph.D. Economics	Columbia University	2012 (<i>expected</i>)
M.Phil. Economics	Columbia University	2009
M.A. Economics	Columbia University	2008
B.A. Economics	Stanford University	2004

Research fields:

Primary: International Trade, Development, Economic History
Secondary: Innovation and Growth, Economic Geography

Job market paper: “Necessity is the Mother of Invention: Input Supplies and Directed Technical Change”

The leading theory of directed technical change, developed by Acemoglu (2002), offers two main predictions. First, when inputs are sufficiently substitutable, a change in relative input supplies will generate technical change directed towards the inputs which become more abundant. Second, if technical change is strongly directed towards the more abundant inputs, the relative price of these inputs will increase – the strong induced-bias hypothesis. This paper provides the first empirical test of these predictions using a large exogenous shock to the cotton textile industry in 19th century Britain caused by the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865). I extend the theory to a setting in which input quantities are endogenous and affected by international transport cost shocks, such as that caused by the war. Using detailed new patent data, I show that there was a burst of cotton textile innovation in Britain during the war directed towards taking advantage of one input – Indian cotton – which became relatively more abundant. Next, I show that the relative price of Indian cotton first declined and then rebounded, consistent with the strong induced-bias hypothesis. These results provide support for the theory. My extended model also predicts that technical change directed towards the more abundant input will be magnified by a higher elasticity of input supply. This may explain why inventors chose to focus on innovations for Indian cotton, rather than Brazilian or Egyptian cotton, since I find evidence that the elasticity of supply was higher for Indian cotton.

Working papers:

“Industry Connections and the Geographic Location of Economic Activity”

“A Theory of Leadership Selection in Small Groups – With Evidence from Ugandan Farmer Associations”
-with Guy Grossman

Awards:

Wueller Pre-dissertation Award for best proposal by a 4 th year student Columbia University Economics Department	December 2009
Vickery Award for best paper by a 3 rd year student Columbia University Economics Department	July 2009
Wueller Award (runner-up) for best research proposal by a 3 rd year student Columbia University Economics Department	January 2009
Sobieski Honors Thesis Award for Creative Thinking in Economics Stanford Economics Department	June 2004

Research grants:

Columbia University CIBER Research Grant	2011
Economic History Association Exploratory Data and Travel Grant	2010
NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant	2010-2011

Fellowships:

Kauffman Dissertation Fellowship	2011-2012
Economic History Association Graduate Dissertation Fellowship	2011-2012
AMID Fellowship, London School of Economics	Spring 2011
Mellon Graduate Fellowship	2009-2011
Columbia Institute of Latin American Studies Travel Fellowship	Summer 2009
National Science Foundation IGERT fellowship	2007-2009
Columbia University Faculty Fellowship	2006-2007

Presentations (completed and scheduled):

“Necessity is the Mother of Invention...”	
Sciences Po lunch seminar	Sept. 2011
LSE Economic Organization and Public Policy Work-in-Progress Seminar	June 2011
LSE Economic History Seminar	June 2011
“Industry Connections...”	
Urban Economics Association Annual Conference	November 2011
Economic History Association Annual Conference	September 2011
MOOD Conference, EIEF Rome	July 2011
LSE Spatial Economics Research Center Conference	May 2011
Royal Economic Society Annual Meeting	April 2011
Brooks World Poverty Center, Manchester Graduate Summer School	June 2010
“A Theory of Leadership Selection...”	
Paris School of Economics	January 2011
NEUDC Annual Conference	November 2010

Experience:

Intern, United Nations ECLAC, Mexico City Office	Summer 2009
Research Assistant, Prof. Eric Verhoogen	Summer 2008
Economic Consultant, Bates White, LLC	2004 - 2006
Intern, World Bank, Bangkok, Thailand Office	Summer 2003
Research Assistant, Prof. Bruce Blonigen, University of Oregon	2001- 2002

Teaching:

Teaching Assistant – International Trade, Columbia University for Prof. Ron Findlay	Fall 2011
Instructor – STATA short course for Economics Honors students, Columbia University	Spring 2010
Teaching Assistant – Globalization, Incomes, and Inequality, Columbia University for Prof. Donald Davis	Spring 2010
Teaching Assistant – Manchester Graduate Summer School, Manchester University for Prof. Joseph Stiglitz and Prof. Akbar Noman	Summer 2009
Teaching Assistant – Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs for Prof. Jose Antonio Ocampo	Spring 2009
Teaching Assistant – Manchester Graduate Summer School, Manchester University for Prof. Joseph Stiglitz and Prof. Akbar Noman	Summer 2008

Professional activities:

Referee – Journal of Development Economics

References:

Donald Davis (Co-chair)
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Eric Verhoogen (Co-chair)
Department of Economics
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Ronald Findlay
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