

Participant Bios of the David K Smith '42 Economics Symposium [April 2019]



Martin Abel joined the Economics Department at Middlebury College as an Assistant Professor in the fall of 2017 after completing his Ph.D. at Harvard University. His research interests are in development economics, labor economics, and behavioral economics. He is conducting field experiments focusing on topics of information asymmetries and discrimination in labor markets. In cooperation with the governments of South Africa and Saudi Arabia, he has worked on how to improve employment prospects of unemployed youths and women.



Robert Bernhardt is a senior economics and math double major from Champaign IL, graduating in February 2020. He has academic interests in international finance, public economics, and political philosophy, and is currently doing a mathematics thesis on Brouwer's Fixed Point Theory and Exchange Economy Equilibrium. He has conducted research with Professor Munro and Professor Wolcott on CPS non-response, and has an upcoming research internship at Columbia Business School on a consumer debt project.



Tanya Byker is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Middlebury College. She received her PhD in Economics from the University of Michigan in 2014 and B.A. with honors in Economics and Philosophy from Swarthmore College. Her research focuses on the interrelated choices individuals make about education, work and parenthood. She has studied how birth-related career interruptions in the US vary by mother's education, and the ways that parental leave laws impact labor-supply decisions. In a developing country context, she has studied how access to family planning impacts fertility and longer-term outcomes such as schooling and employment in Peru and South Africa. She was the recipient of a W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research Early Career Research Award in 2017. Byker and her co-author Martha Bailey are recipients of grants from the National Science Foundation and the Washington Center for Equitable growth to study the long-term impacts of the California paid leave statute using US tax data.



Brad Hershbein is a senior economist at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, a labor studies research organization in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He also serves as the Institute's

director of information and communications services. His fields of interest focus on labor economics, demography, and economics of education. Hershbein has investigated how new high school graduates fare in the labor market during and after a recession, how the availability of birth control allowed young women in the 1960s and 1970s to invest in their careers, and how employers use the selectivity of school and GPA to infer the productivity of new college graduates. More recently, he has worked on issues of higher education access and completion, how employers may permanently change the skills they demand from workers following recessions, and measuring nontraditional work activities. His work has appeared in *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, and *American Economic Review*. He earned his BA in economics from Harvard College, and his PhD, also in economics, from the University of Michigan.



Peter Hans Matthews is the Charles A. Dana Professor of Economics at Middlebury College and Visiting Professor at the Helsinki Graduate School of Economics. He teaches courses in poverty and inequality, public economics, labor economics, macroeconomics and game theory. His current research uses experimental and other methods to explore decision-making, political economy and inequality.



Aniruddha Mitra is an Associate Professor of Economics at Bard College. His research interests lie in the economics of gender, conflict, and migration, including the consequences and determinants of remittances. In addition to these areas, his recent research has focused on how labor rights are reconstituted in the era of globalization, with a special emphasis on the role of transnational migration and financialization. Apart from his research area of migration and remittances, Mitra offers courses in Game Theory, Industrial Organization, and Microeconomic Theory.



William M. Rodgers, III is Professor of Public Policy at the Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy. He is also Chief Economist at the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, and serves as the Academy's Board Chair. He is a Non-Resident Fellow at The Century Foundation. Prior to joining Rutgers, Rodgers served as chief economist at the U.S. Department of Labor, appointed by Alexis Herman, U.S. Secretary of Labor, was the Frances and Edwin L. Cummings Associate Professor of Economics at the College of William and Mary. Rodgers served on the National Urban League's Council of Economic Advisors and President Obama's Department of Labor Transition Team. Rodgers' expertise on compensation, pay equity, diversity and inclusion, labor market and general economic trends is frequently called upon by journalists for articles in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *The Financial Times*, and other publications. He is a frequent guest on numerous television and radio talk shows such as PBS'

Nightly Business Report, NBC's Meet the Press and Nightly News, CNN's Your \$\$\$\$, CNBC's Squawk Box, Power Lunch, and Street Signs, and National Public Radio's Market Place.



Christian A. Schmitt is a senior Economics/German double major at Middlebury college, where his research has focused on the effects of sleep on labor productivity, the effects of protests on electoral outcomes, and German corporate sustainability reporting. In September, Christian will begin a graduate-level theology program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where he was awarded the Dr. Douglas G. Pratt Scholarship. Afterwards, he plans to earn a doctorate in theology and enter the pastoral ministry.



Stephanie Seguino is Professor of Economics at the University of Vermont. Prior to obtaining a Ph.D. from American University in 1994, she served as economist in Haiti in the pre- and post-Baby Doc era. Her research explores the two-way relationship between intergroup inequality by class, race, and gender on the one hand, and economic growth and development on the other. She has also explored the economics of stratification and the impact of globalization on well-being. Seguino has published in a wide variety of journals, including *Review of Development Economics*, *Journal of Development Studies*, and *World Development*. She has consulted with a number of international organizations including the UNDP, UNRISD, UNCTAD, World Bank, and USAID. She is an instructor in the African Program for Rethinking Development Economics (APORDE), Associate Editor of *Feminist Economics*, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, and *Review of Keynesian Economics*.



Edward Wolff received his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1974 and is currently professor of economics at New York University, where he has taught since 1974. He is also a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, and is an editorial board member of *Journal of Economic Inequality* and *Review of Income and Wealth*. He was Managing Editor of the *Review of Income and Wealth* (1987-2004), Senior Scholar at the Levy Economics Institute of Bard College (1999-2011), Visiting Scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation (2003-04), President of the Eastern Economics Association (2002-2003), and council member of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (1987-2012). His principal

research areas are income and wealth inequality. Recent books include: *The Transformation of the American Pension System: Was It Beneficial for Workers?* (2011); *Inheriting Wealth in America: Future Boom or Bust?* (2015); and *A Century of Wealth in America* (2017).



Phanindra V. Wunnava is currently David K. Smith '42 Chair in Applied Economics at Middlebury College. In addition, he is a research fellow at IZA (Institute for the Study of Labor, Bonn, Germany). He was trained under noted labor economist Solomon W. Polachek at SUNY-Binghamton. His research focusing on life-cycle union non-union wage/benefit differentials, firm size effects, gender and racial wage differentials, efficiency wage models, charitable contributions towards higher education, disincentive effects of unemployment insurance, infant mortality, effect of net foreign investment on manufacturing productivity, time-series properties of the north American unemployment rates and Asian stock markets, the effect of political regimes on economic growth, fertility determinants, determinants of internet diffusion, the economics of optimal currency area, brain-drain, linking financial liberalization and remittances, and linking globalization with ethnic division appeared in a wider range of academic journals.