

Atul Pokharel

EDUCATION

- June 2014 **PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**
Urban Studies and Planning, International Development, Political Economy
- 2005 **B.A., Princeton University**
Mathematics (major). Applied and Computational Mathematics (minor)

DISSERTATION

Title ***A Theory of Sustained Cooperation with Evidence from Irrigation Institutions in Nepal***

Committee **Bish Sanyal (chair), Amartya K. Sen, Richard M. Locke**

Summary How to develop and sustain cooperative behavior between interdependent users of shared infrastructure or other resources over decades is of great interest to policy makers, development agencies and scholars alike. To study this, I replicate, thirty years later, a famous study of irrigation canals in Nepal by Ostrom (*Governing the Commons*, 1990). I document unexplained changes in canal performance in the face of challenging circumstances. Through additional fieldwork, I find that *perceived fairness* of outcomes and a *bounded flexibility* of the rules governing them affect institutional adaptation, learning and evolution. These relationships also hold in the original data and explain performance changes. Building on this, I elaborate a more general theory relating sustained cooperation, collective action, fairness and institutional flexibility over time.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2016 - 2017 Visiting Professor in Science Technology and International Affairs (STIA), Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, **Georgetown University**
- 2014 - current Postdoctoral Fellow in International and Public Affairs, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, **Brown University**
- 2013 - 2014 Visiting Research Fellow, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, **Brown University**

BOOK MANUSCRIPTS

1. ***Fairness and Cooperation.***

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND WORKING PAPERS

1. ***Fairness and Sustained Cooperation: Evidence from Revisiting Ostrom.*** (under review)
2. ***Incredible commitments: Flexible enforcement and local infrastructure governance over time.*** (under review)
3. ***Flexible Governance and Perceived Fairness.*** (Brown University Working Paper)

4. ***Maintaining the Digital Commons: A Comparison of Debian Linux and Irrigation Canals in Nepal.*** (Brown University Working Paper)
5. ***When Courts Plan: Greening Delhi's Auto Rickshaws.*** (Brown University Working Paper)

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

1. Chaudhury, N. & Hammer, J. & Pokharel, A. (2008) ***First Things First: Infectious disease and the poor in India during the 1990's***, Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics, World Bank, South Africa.
2. Miller, S.J. & Pokharel, A. & Goldmakher, L. (2003) ***Statistical Investigations as a Tool in Undergraduate Mathematics Research.*** Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on Statistics, Honolulu.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND TALKS

1. 2016, November. ***Just Counting: Lessons from the Frontiers of Big Data.*** Panel organized at the 56th Annual Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP).
2. 2016, November. ***Flexible Rules and Local Governance.*** Paper accepted at the 56th Annual Conference of the ACSP.
3. 2016, November. ***Planning for the Digital Commons.*** Paper accepted at the 56th Annual Conference of the ACSP.
4. 2016, November. ***When courts plan: The greening of New Delhi's Auto Rickshaws.*** Paper accepted at the 56th Annual Conference of the ACSP.
5. 2016, June. ***Maintaining the Digital Commons: A Comparison of Debian Linux and Irrigation Canals in Nepal.*** Paper accepted at the 28th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Socio Economics (SASE).
6. 2016, June. ***Flexible Governance and Perceived Fairness.*** Paper accepted at the 28th Annual Meeting of SASE.
7. 2016, June. ***Fairness in the Commons: Questions from Nepal.*** Invited talk at the Annual meeting of the Ostrom Center for Advanced Study in Natural Resource Governance, Asia Institute of Technology, Bangkok.
8. 2015, October. ***What happened to Farmer Managed Irrigation Systems in Nepal between 1976 and 2013?*** Presented at the Brown University Land and Water Conference.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapters

1. Conrey, J.B. & Pokharel, A. & Rubinstein, M.O. & Watkins, M. ***Secondary terms in the number of vanishings of quadratic twists of elliptic curve L-functions***, in Ranks of Elliptic Curves and Random Matrix Theory, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Others

1. It's time to be a good neighbor. *The Hindu*, October, 2015. (with Nirupama Rao)
2. Arguing with a young Nepali scientist at Harvard. *Republica*, October, 2012.
3. Outsiders looking in and learning from Nepal. *Republica*, September, 2012.
4. Tapping brain circulation. *Republica*, June, 2012.

5. Nepal's Century. *Republica*, June, 2010.
6. Remembering a Giant. *Republica*, April, 2010.
7. Pokharel, Atul & Gnawali O. (2006). *Reflections of a Nepalese-American NGO*, Asian American Policy Review, 15.

TEACHING

Spring 2017	Big Data and its Politics (<i>Georgetown</i>)	Instructor
Fall 2014	Thesis Writing in Development Studies (<i>Brown, Undergraduate</i>)	Instructor
Spring 2014	Analyzing Regional Economic Change (w/ Prof. Karen Polenske). Cross listed in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and MIT's Engineering Systems Division. (<i>MIT, Graduate Level</i>)	Instructor
Fall 2011	Gateway to the Profession of Planning (<i>MIT, Graduate</i>)	Head TA
Fall 2010	Gateway to the Profession of Planning (<i>MIT, Graduate</i>)	Head TA
Spring 2010	Quantitative Reasoning and Statistical Methods for Planning (<i>MIT, Graduate</i>)	TA
Spring 2010	Law and Development (<i>MIT, Graduate</i>)	TA
Fall 2009	Gateway to the Profession of Planning (<i>MIT, Graduate</i>)	TA

SERVICE ACTIVITIES: Reviewer for the International Journal of the Commons (IJC)

AWARDS

2012-2013	MIT Energy Initiative Martin Fellowship
2012	Department of Political Science Dean's Fund, MIT
2012	Horwitz Prize, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT
2011	Nominated for the Goodwin Teaching Medal for excellence in teaching, MIT
2009	Emerson Travel Grant, Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP), MIT
2009	Horwitz Prize, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT
2008-2009	Presidential Fellowship, MIT

WORK EXPERIENCE

2006-2008	The World Bank , Consultant	New Delhi, India
Jan-July 2006	MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning , Research Assistant to Prof. Bish Sanyal.	Cambridge, MA
March-June 2006	Harvard University Weatherhead Center for International Affairs , Research Assistant to Prof. Devesh Kapur	Cambridge, MA
July-Dec. 2005 and	American Institute of Mathematics , Researcher	Palo Alto, CA

Jun-Aug. 2003

Jun-Sept 2004 **University of Waterloo Department of Mathematics**, Researcher Waterloo, CA

Aug 2003 – **Princeton University, Department of Mathematics**, Princeton, NJ
May 2004 Research Assistant to Prof. John F. Nash Jr.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY : English (fluent), Nepalese (fluent)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Co-founder and volunteer**, Nepalese Children's Education Fund, Inc. a 501(c)(3) charity providing need-based scholarships in Nepal. (April 2002 – current)
- **Founder**, Boston Summer Nepali Classes at MIT. (June - August 2010)