

Luke Sonnet

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Education

2020 PhD, Political Science; UCLA

2012 BS, Economics, Political Science, History; University of Pittsburgh

Affiliations

2017–2020 Graduate Student Affiliate, California Center for Population Research, UCLA

Publications

2018 Adam Boche, Jeffrey B. Lewis, Aaron Rudkin, and **Luke Sonnet**. “[The new Voteview.com: Preserving and Continuing Keith Poole’s Infrastructure for Scholars, Students and Observers of Congress](#)”, *Public Choice*, 176 (1-2): 17–32. [pre-print]

Papers in Preparation

“Improving Political Communication: A Field Experiment in Pakistan,” with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar [pilot report for IGC].

“Estimating NOMINATE scores over time using penalized splines,” with Jeff Lewis [working paper]

Software

estimatr - A package in R using C++ to speed up the fitting of linear estimators with robust standard errors and appropriate confidence intervals. Lead author, written as part of the [DeclareDesign](#) software suite with Graeme Blair, Jasper Cooper, Alex Coppock, and Macartan Humphreys.

[Voteview.com](#) - A complete overhaul of the old VoteView website maintained by Keith Poole. An entirely new ingestion, storage, estimation, and delivery for canonical DW-NOMINATE ideology scores of U.S. congresspeople and rollcalls. Written in Python and JavaScript, using MongoDB, with Jeff Lewis, Adam Boche, and Aaron Rudkin. Includes [Rvoteview](#), an R package to facilitate access to DW-NOMINATE scores.

KRLS - An update to the KRLS R package which provides flexible machine learning models with interpretable results. This update includes a logistic regression specification and improvements in speed from moving core estimation code to C++ and truncated approximations to the original model. Written with Jens Hainmueller and Chad Hazlett.

Research Grants

- 2018 United States Institute of Peace, “Building Open Data on Pakistani Parliamentarians and Polling Stations” (\$24,000)
- 2018 JPAL Governance Initiative, “Social Spillovers and the Gender Gap in Political Participation in Pakistan”, Co-PI with Saad Gulzar and Muhammad Yasir Khan (\$94,796)
- 2018 IGC Pakistan, Small Project Grant, “Social Spillovers and Female Political Participation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”, Co-PI with Saad Gulzar and Muhammad Yasir Khan (£15,000)
- 2018 JPAL Governance Initiative, “Continuing Data Collection for ‘Establishing Responsive Linkages between Politicians and Voters in Pakistan”, Co-PI with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar (\$140,199)
- 2018 UPS Endowment Fund “Improving Political Responsiveness to Citizen Demands in Pakistan by Using Scalable Technological Tools”, Co-PI with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar (\$62,400)
- 2018 Stanford Center of Global Poverty and Development, “Responsive Linkages between Voters and Politicians in Pakistan – Continuing Data Collection and Extension to Local Government”, Co-PI with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar (\$40,000)
- 2017 American Institute of Pakistan Studies, Summer Research Grant (\$3,000)
- 2016 JPAL Governance Initiative, “Establishing Responsive Linkages between Politicians and Voters in Pakistan”, Co-PI with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar (\$200,000)
- 2016 IGC Pakistan, Small Project Grant, “Establishing Responsive Linkages between Politicians and Voters in Pakistan”, co-PI with Miriam Golden and Saad Gulzar, December 2016 (£20,000)

Research Fellowships & Awards

- 2019–2020 Dissertation Year Fellowship, UCLA Graduate Division
- 2018 Pakistan@100 Pre-Doctoral Fellowship (summer), Lahore University of Management Sciences-World Bank
- 2016 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA Graduate Division
- 2015 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA Graduate Division
- 2014–2015 Graduate Research Mentorship, UCLA Graduate Division

Employment & Consulting

- 06/2019 – 08/2019 RESEARCH SCIENTIST INTERN, FACEBOOK. Worked on the Demography and Survey Science team designing and analyzing survey experiments as well as validating and developing weighting modules using Python.
- 10/2018 – 03/2019 J-PAL REPLICATION FELLOW. Graduate student fellow with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab’s Research Transparency and Reproducibility Initiative to carry out pre-publication replications of J-PAL affiliate research. Replications are carried out in Stata and R.
- 07/2017 – 06/2018 DECLAREDESIGN. Open source statistical software developer writing a suite of R packages to study, and analyze social science data ([DeclareDesign](#)). Chief developer of the package for

statistical estimation, [estimatr](#).

- 01/2016 – 07/2017 VOTEVIEW.COM. Full stack developer writing in Python, Javascript, and R, using MongoDB to overhaul [Voteview.com](#) and update the delivery of DW-NOMINATE ideology scores.
- 2016 USAID. Consultancy to assess feasibility of impact evaluations for USAID’s mission to improve civil society participation in Macedonia.

Teaching Assistantships

- 2017 “Causal Inference” (graduate level), with Chad Hazlett at UCLA
- 2016 “Causal Inference” (graduate level), with Chad Hazlett at UCLA
- 2015 “Data Analysis of Political Corruption” (undergraduate level), with Miriam Golden at UCLA
- 2012 “Latin American Politics” (undergraduate level), with Scott Morgenstern at University of Pittsburgh

Service & Conferences

- Referee Journal of Politics
- Convener Graduate Student Conference in Comparative Politics at UCLA (2015 with others, 2016, 2017 with others)
- Presenter APSA, MPSA, NPSA, Applied Dev. Economics Conference at the Lahore School of Economics
- Attendee BITSS Summer Workshop on Transparency and Reproducibility in the Social Sciences

Skills

Advanced: R, git

Intermediate: Python, C++, MongoDB, Stata, \LaTeX

Limited: Spanish, Julia, Javascript

Field Work

- 2017–2018 Pakistan, roughly 11 months total
- 2016 Maiduguri, Nigeria for 2 months

References

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Jeff Lewis
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& Statistics
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