

# Byunghwan ‘Ben’ Son

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 @Byunghwan\_Son;  Google Scholar

## Current Academic Positions

- George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)
  - Associate Professor (with tenure), [Global Affairs Program](#) 2020–current
    - \* Assistant Professor, [Global Affairs Program](#) 2014–2020
  - Director, [Asia–Pacific and Northeast Asian Studies](#) 2014–current
  - Associate Director, [Korean Studies Center](#) 2020–current
  - University Affiliate Faculty, [Schar School of Policy and Government](#) 2021–2022

## Previous Academic Positions

- [The College of Wooster](#) (Wooster, OH) 2013–2014
  - Gillespie Visiting Professor (VAP), [Political Science](#)
- [University of Missouri-Columbia](#) (Columbia, MO) 2011–2013
  - Graduate Instructor, [Political Science](#)
- [Korean Air Force Academy](#) 2003–2007
  - Instructor, [Department of Military Strategy](#)

## Education

- [University of Missouri-Columbia](#) (Columbia, MO) 2007–2013
  - PhD, [Political Science](#)
    - \* Dissertation: [Democratization and Exchange Rates](#)
    - \* Dissertation Advisor: Dr. [Jonathan Krieckhaus](#)
- [Yonsei University](#) (Seoul, South Korea) 1997–2003
  - MA & BA, [Political Science](#)

## Research & Teaching Areas

Politics of Global Finance; Politics in Asia; Public Opinion; Democratization; Democratic Support; Democratic Backsliding; Inequality & Contentious Politics; Political Communication; Social Media; Quantitative Methods; Data Visualization

## Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles Published

- 2024. “Consequences of Democratic Backsliding in Popular Culture: Evidence from Blacklist in South Korea.” *Democratization*. Forthcoming. [[Journal Link](#)][[PDF](#)]
- 2024. “Foreign Policy Consequences of Democratic Backsliding: The Case of the Comfort Women Agreement 2015” *The Pacific Review* Forthcoming. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2024. “The Political Economy of Life Satisfaction: Democracy, National Wealth, and Personal Income” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*. 36(1): 1-14. (with Nisha Bellinger and Jonathan Kriekhaus). [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2024. “Foreign Pop Culture and Backlash: the case of non-fan K-pop Subreddits during the pandemic” *Journal of Cultural Economics*. 48(1): 117–143. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2022. “The Health Cost of Autocratization” *Journal of Development Studies*. 58(5): 873-890. (with Nisha Bellinger). [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
  - Winner of the **Dudley Seers Memorial Prize**
- 2021. “Security Threats and Investment: North Korean Threats and the South Korean Stock Market” *Pacific Focus*. (with Chungshik Moon). 36(3): 544-569. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2021. “Presidential Approval Ratings and Foreign Exchange Market: The Case of the Korean Won during the Park Government” *Asian Survey*. 61(5): 767–796. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Doi Moi and Vietnamese Threat Perception of Chinese Economic Growth,” *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 21: 179-193. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Interpersonal Trust and Confidence in Labor Unions: the case of South Korea,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 20: 267-290. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Democracy and Reserves,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16(3): 417–437. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2019. “Political Parties and Foreign Direct Investment Inflows Among Developing Countries” *Political Studies* 67: 712–731. (with Nisha Bellinger) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2018. “The Mysterious Overvaluation of KRW in the 1990s,” *The Pacific Review* 31: 573– 597. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2018. “Democratization and Currency Crises in Latin America,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 21: 442–463. (with Jonathan Kriekhaus) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2016. “Are the Poor the Weak Link? Democratic Support and Income Levels in Post-Crisis South Korea,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 16: 219-237. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2016. “Policy Choices in Tough Times: The case of democratization and currency defense,” *International Political Science Review* 37: 453-469. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2015. “Economic Coercion and Currency Crises in Target Economies,” *Journal of Peace Research* 52: 448-462. (with Dursun Peksen) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2014. “Inequality and Democratic Support,” *Journal of Politics* 76: 139-151. (with Jonathan Kriekhaus, Nisha Bellinger, and Jason Wells) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]

## Projects in Progress/Under-review

- “Developmental State Revisited: Foreign Reserves of Asian Emerging Economies”
- “Income Levels and Institutional Confidence”
- “K-pop and Male Masculinity” (with Dae Young Kim)
- “Fan Perspectives on Racism in K-pop” (with Dae Young Kim)
- “Nationalism and Petition” (with Myunghee Lee)
- “A tale of two crises” (with Nisha Bellinger)
- “Democratic Backsliding and Financial Data Transparency” (with Chung-shik Moon)

## Book Review

- 2024. *Supercorporate: Distinction and Participation in Post-hierarchy South Korea* by Michael Prentice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022. xiii, 248 pp. ISBN: 9781503631878.
  - *Journal of Asian Studies* 83(1): 187–188. [[Journal Link](#)]

## Other Writings & Media Appearances

- Comments on the politics of the doctors’ strike in South Korea. 2024
  - featured in “[How row over medical school places thwarted Korean president](#),” Times Higher Education
- Comments on the Legislative Election in South Korea. Featured in AFP 2024
  - [Result](#)
  - [Outlook](#)
- “[Democratic Backsliding as a Threat to Regional Cooperation in East Asia](#)” 2023
  - Korea On Point
- “Income inequality: A distant but significant threat to South Korea’s democracy” 2022
  - in R. Hass & P. Kim Eds., *Democracy in Asia*. Policy Brief. Brookings Institution. Washington DC.
- “The Retreat from Kabul is NOT a sign of declining American Hegemony” 2021
  - [Pressian](#) (Korean).
- Comments on “[Korea-US Summit 2021](#)” NewsUp, CBS Radio (Korean) 2021
  - also featured in [Nocut News](#); [Hankookilbo](#) (Korean).
- “The Causes of Biden’s Victory and its Implications” [Pressian](#) (Korean) 2020
- “Is Authoritarianism Bad for the Economy?” (with N. Bellinger) [The Conversation](#) 2019
  - Translated in Portuguese at [Gazeta do Povo](#).
- “Party Systems Matter for FDI Inflows” [PSA Blog](#) 2019

## Invited Talks, Lectures, Panels & Roundtables

- “Inequality and Democracy in South Korea” 2022
  - Democracy in Asia Workshop. Brookings Institution. Virtual.
- “Big Data Panel Discussion” 2022
  - Urban Research Hub Method Series, [CSSR](#), GMU
- “South Korea’s role in regional economic architecture and supply chain resilience” 2021
  - Workshop (roundtable). Brookings Institution. Virtual.
- “[The End of War Declaration in the Korean Peninsula and Vision 2030](#)” 2021
  - Round Table. [Institute of National Security and Strategy](#). Virtual.
- “Democratic Backsliding and Human Security” 2021
  - Public Lecture. [Hankuk University of Foreign Studies](#) Virtual.
- “Affective Polarization and Right-Wing Populism” 2021
  - Public Lecture. ‘EverySecondSaturday7PM’ (local activists’ society) Virtual.
- “Autocratization and Public Health Outcomes” 2020

- Invited talk. [Institute of Korean Studies](#). University of Missouri, Columbia. MO. Virtual.
- “Presidential Impeachment in South Korea and Financial Market” 2017
  - Invited talk. Korean Studies Center. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Obama Administration’s Pivot to Asia” 2016
  - Invited Talk (student-organized). George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “KRW in the 1990s” 2016
  - Public Lecture. Korean Studies Center. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Is Democratization to Blame for the Economic Difficulties of S. Korea?” 2014
  - Invited Talk. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Territorial Disputes in East Asia” 2013
  - Guest Lecture. [Lincoln University](#). Jefferson City, MO.
- “Democratization and Exchange Rate Policies” 2013
  - Invited Talk. Korean Fellow Society, Harvard University, Boston MA.

## Grants, Awards, & Fellowships

- [4VA Grant](#). \$15,000 2022
  - with Dae Young Kim (GMU) Younga Jung (GMU), and Yoon Hwa Choi (UVA)
  - [Commonwealth of Virginia](#)
- [Faculty Research and Professional Development Award](#). \$14,288 2020
  - with Dae Young Kim and Younga Jung, [College of Humanities & Social Sciences](#), GMU
- [Global Democracy Fellow](#). \$2,000 2017
  - [Korean Democracy Foundation](#)
- [Faculty Research and Professional Development Award](#). \$3,636 2016
  - [College of Humanities & Social Sciences](#), GMU
- [Online Course Development Grant](#). \$4,000 2016 to 2017
  - [GMU Online Course Development Institute](#)
- [J.G. Heinberg Fellowship](#). 2009–2010
  - One semester’s tuition and stipend. University of Missouri
- [Brain Korea 21 Scholarship](#). 2002
  - Stipend of about \$3,600. Yonsei University, South Korea.

## Conference Presentations

*Only the latest 10 projects.*

- “Democratic Backsliding and Central Bank Independence” 2024
  - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia. PA
- “Democratic Backsliding and Financial Statistics Transparency” (w/ Chungshik Moon) 2024
  - Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago. IL.
- “Fiscal Policy Regimes in Asia Across Two Crises” (w/ Nisha Bellinger)
  - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia. PA 2024
  - Midwestern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago. IL. 2024
- “Behavioral impacts of K-pop” (w/ Dae Young Kim) 2024
  - Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Washington DC.
- “K-pop and Male Masculinity” (w/ Dae Young Kim) 2023
  - Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Philadelphia. PA
- “Fan Perspectives on Racism in K-pop” (w/ Dae Young Kim)

- Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Washington DC. 2024
- Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Philadelphia. PA 2023
- “Nationalism and Petition”
  - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Montreal, Canada. 2022
- “Blacklists Killed Movie Starts”
  - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual. 2022
- “Foreign Policy Consequence of Democratic Backsliding”
  - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual. 2022
- “Soft Power and Pop Cultural Products: The case of Pandemic and K-pop Sub Reddit”
  - Korean Wave in North America. George Mason University. Virtual. 2021
  - Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual. 2021

## Courses Taught

- George Mason University
  - Economic Globalization and Development (MA) every semester
  - Interdisciplinary Research Method (MA)
  - Capstone Seminar (MA)
  - Case Studies in Globalization: Globalization in Asia (MA)
  - Globalization in Asia (BA) every other year
  - Introduction to Global Affairs (BA)
    - \* Online section development [GMU OCDI](#) 2017
    - \* recognized as “[Outstanding](#)” teaching by GMU multiple years
  - Korea in Global Perspective (BA & MA)
- The College of Wooster
  - Independent Studies supervisor for nine senior students
  - International Political Economy
  - Introduction to International Relations
  - East Asian Politics
- University of Missouri-Columbia
  - East Asian Politics
  - Introduction to International Relations
- Korean Air Force Academy
  - Readings on the First World War
  - Introduction to Defense Studies
  - Arms Control
  - The Sociology of Civil-Military Relations

## Services

- To Global Affairs Program (GLOA), GMU
  - Search Committee
    - \* chair, Assistant Professor, GLOA-SIS joint hire 2021
    - \* chair, Associate Professor, GLOA-Communication joint hire 2020
    - \* member, GLOA Director 2020
    - \* member, Term Assistant Professor (Songdo Campus) 2019
    - \* chair, Graduate Coordinator 2019
    - \* chair, Assistant Director 2018
    - \* chair, Graduate Coordinator 2018
    - \* member, Assistant Director 2016
  - GLOA Multi-Year Term Faculty Renewal Committee 2021
  - GLOA Bylaw Committee 2020–current
  - Curriculum/Academic Advising GLOA BA/MA students 2014–2020
  - Graduate Admission Committee, Global Affairs 2015–current
  - Executive Committee, Global Affairs 2015–2020
  - Organizer, GLOA Faculty Brownbag 2016–2017
  - Director Renewal Committee 2016
  - Textbook Renewal Committee (GLOA 101) 2016
- To the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, GMU
  - Intellectual Life of the College Committee 2023 to 2026
  - Senior Leadership Committee 2020 to 2023
  - Director, Asia-Pacific & Northeast Asian Studies Minor 2014–current
  - Term Faculty Promotion Committee. MCL. 2021
  - Judge, Diversity Webpage Re-design Competition. Dept. of Psychology 2019
  - Judge, Annual CHSS Undergraduate Research Symposium 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019
  - Adviser for visiting scholars, [Korean Studies Center](#) 2016–current
  - Dissertation Committee
    - \* Yukiko Furuya, Sociology 2016–2020
- To George Mason University
  - Faculty discussant for Mason Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference 2023
  - Focus Group for Tenure-track Faculty Experience 2016
  - Panelist, New Faculty Orientation 2015
  - Grant Proposal Reviewer
    - \* Provost Multidisciplinary Research Initiatives. 2015, 2016
- To the profession
  - Editorial Board 2019–Current
    - \* [East and West Studies](#) (interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal)
  - Reviewer for publishers: Routledge

- Reviewer for peer-reviewed journals: *American Journal of Political Science*; *Arts and International Affairs*; *Asian Survey*; *British Journal of Political Science*; *Comparative Political Studies*; *Comparative Politics*; *Defence & Peace Economics*; *Economics & Politics*; *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*; *European Journal of Korean Studies*; *Foreign Policy Analysis*; *Global Perspectives*; *International Interactions*; *International Political Science Review*; *International Studies Quarterly*; *International Studies Review*; *Japanese Journal of Political Science*; *Journal of Asian Studies*; *Journal of Conflict Resolution*; *Journal of East Asian Studies*; *Korea Observer*; *Pacific Focus*; *Pacific Affairs*; *Political Research Quarterly*
- Discussant / Chair
  - \* APSA 2014, 2017, 2019, 2024
  - \* MPSA 2014, 2019, 2021, 2022
  - \* [GWIKS](#) Workshop 2021
  - \* DC-Area Comparativist Workshop 2017, 2019
- Conference/Section/Panel Organized
  - \* Association of Korean Political Studies, Related Group Section 2024
    - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia. PA.
  - \* Association of Korean Political Studies, Related Group Section 2023
    - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. LA. CA.
  - \* [The Korean Wave in North America](#) 2021
    - Virtual. With Dae Young Kim and Younga Jung (GMU)

## References

- Dr. Jonathan Kriekhaus. University of Missouri-Columbia
- Dr. Cooper Drury. University of Missouri-Columbia
- Dr. Matthew Krain. The College of Wooster

Last Update: April 24, 2024