

# NATALIE WENZELL LETSA

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729 Elm Avenue  
Farzaneh Hall, Room 315  
Norman, OK 73019

nwletsa@ou.edu  
www.natalieletsa.com  
209.304.5459

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University of Oklahoma, 2017-  
Wick Cary Assistant Professor of Political Economy, Department of  
International and Area Studies  
Stanford University, 2018-2019  
Postdoctoral Scholar, Center on Democracy Development and the Rule  
of Law

## EDUCATION

Cornell University, 2017  
Ph.D., Government  
Reed College, 2009  
B.A., Political Science

## PUBLISHED WORK

2020. "Expressive Voting in Autocracies: A Theory of Non-Economic Participation with Evidence from Cameroon." *Perspectives on Politics*, 18 (2), 439-453.  
-Recipient of APSA's Heinz I. Eulau Award for best article published in *Perspectives on Politics* in 2020.
2020. "The Mechanisms of Direct and Indirect Rule: Colonialism and Economic Development in Africa" (with Martha Wilfahrt). *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 15 (4), 539-577.
2019. "The Political Geography of Electoral Autocracies: The Influence of Party Strongholds on Political Beliefs in Africa." *Electoral Studies*, Volume 60.
2018. "Popular Support for Democracy in Autocratic Regimes: A Micro-Level Analysis of Preferences" (with Martha Wilfahrt). *Comparative Politics*, 50 (2), 231-250.
2017. "'The People's Choice': Popular (Il)Legitimacy in Autocratic Cameroon." *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 55 (4), 647-679.
2017. "Voting for Peace, Mobilizing for War: Post-Conflict Voter Turnout and Civil War Recurrence." *Democratization*, 24 (3), p. 425-443.

WORKING  
PAPERS

“Contesting Autocracy: Explaining the Origins of Opposition Strongholds in Cameroon” with Leonardo Arriola, David Dow, & Martha Wilfahrt (Presented at APSA, ASA, SPSA, WPSA 2018/19)

“Social Networks and Partisanship in Electoral Autocracies” (Presented at APSA 2021)

“Judge, Landlord, Broker, Watchman: Assessing Variation in Chiefly Duties in the Ghana-Togo Borderlands” (with Martha Wilfahrt) (Presented at APSA 2021)

“Echoes of the ‘Hidden War:’ Collective Memories of UPC Violence” (with Joseph Lasky)

IN PROGRESS

**Book Project:** *The Autocratic Citizen: Partisanship and Political Behavior under Dictatorship*

**Book Project:** *Legacies of British and French Colonialism in sub-Saharan Africa* (with Martha Wilfahrt)

“Legalism and Legitimacy in Autocratic Regimes: Evidence from Cameroon” (with Yonatan Morse)

OTHER  
WRITING

Book review of *The Autocratic Middle Class: How State Dependency Reduces the Demand for Democracy*, by Bryn Rosenfeld. *Political Science Quarterly*, Fall 2021.

“The Roots of Violence: Cameroon’s Anglophone Crisis” *The Republic* (Nigeria), February 2020.

Book review of *How Autocrats Compete: Parties, Patrons, and Unfair Elections in Africa*, by Yonatan Morse. *Perspectives on Politics*, 17 (4), December 2019.

“What’s Driving the Conflict in Cameroon?” *Foreign Affairs* (online), November 8, 2018.

“Cameroon’s Anglophone Crisis May Intensify Post Post-Poll” *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, October 5, 2018.

“Cameroon’s Anglophone Resistance Will Endure” *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief*, July 5, 2017.

## GRANTS

West African Research Association Postdoctoral Fellowship  
(Cameroon) 2021  
OU International Studies Faculty Support Grant 2021, 2019  
(Ghana and Togo), and 2018 (France)  
APSA Centennial Center Research Grant (Cameroon), 2020  
OU Faculty Investment Program (Cameroon), 2020  
OU Junior Faculty Fellowship (Ghana and Togo), 2019  
African Studies Association Student Travel Award (Ghana and Benin),  
2016  
Houston I. Flournoy Graduate Fellowship (with Nicolas van de  
Walle), 2016  
The Mario Einaudi Research Travel Grant (Cameroon), 2014  
Cornell Graduate School Research Travel Grant (Cameroon), 2014  
Department Grant for Language Training (Senegal), 2014

## CONFERENCES & WORKSOPS

American Political Science Assoc.: 2021 2020, 2019, 2017, 2016,  
2015  
African Studies Association: 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015  
Authoritarian Politics Mini-Conference at WPSA: 2019  
Southern Political Science Association: 2019  
Cameroon Conference - Université Paris Diderot: 2018  
Midwest Group in African Political Economy (MGAPE): 2017  
Visions in Methodology: 2017  
Midwest Political Science Association: 2017, 2016, 2014, 2013  
APSA Workshop on Elections and Democracy in Africa: 2009

## TEACHING

### University of Oklahoma

*Political Economy of Development*, Undergraduate (Fall 2021, Spring  
2020, Fall 2019, Fall 2017)

*Political Economy of Development*, Master's (Fall 2020, Fall 2019)

*African Politics and Society*, Undergraduate (Spring 2020, Fall 2017)

### Cornell University

*African Elections* (Freshman Writing Seminar, Fall 2016)

*Protest & Political Participation in Authoritarian Regimes* (Freshman  
Writing Seminar, Spring 2016)

INVITED  
TALKS

“The Autocratic Citizen: Partisanship and Political Behavior under Dictatorship” NYU Comparative Politics Workshop. April 28, 2021.  
“Legacies of British and French Colonial Rule in sub-Saharan Africa” UC Berkeley Africa Colloquium. February 20, 2019.  
“Political Geography in Africa’s Electoral Autocracies” Center on Development, Democracy and the Rule of Law, Stanford University. November 15, 2018.  
“Perceptions on Regime Legitimacy and Political Participation in Cameroon,” US Department of State, Executive Exchange with the Ambassador to Cameroon. November 30, 2017.

REFEREE

*American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, Comparative Politics, Comparative Political Studies, Journal of Borderlands Studies, Journal of Modern African Studies, Journal of Politics, Peace and Conflict Studies, Perspectives on Politics, Political Behavior, Political Research Quarterly, Political Studies, Public Opinion Quarterly*

ADVISING

Moriah Hayes, MA Policy Thesis, Department of International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma (2020)

Bailey Ashbaker, MA Internship Paper, Department of International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma (2020)

Caleigh Penn, MA Policy Thesis, Department of International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma (2019)

Nela Mrchkovska, MA Thesis, Department of International and Area Studies, University of Oklahoma (2018)

SERVICE  
TO THE  
DISCIPLINE

APSA–APCG Africa Research Development Group,  
co-organizer, 2020  
Secretary, African Politics Conference Group (APCG), 2019-  
Graduate Studies Committee (OU), 2019-  
Founding Organizer, APCG Online Colloquium, 2018-2020  
Executive Committee, OU African Studies Institute, 2017-  
Expert Witness on 14 Cameroonian asylum cases to the US, 2017-