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Published on November 15, 2021 – Updated on November 17, 2021

Date

Le 16 November 2021 De 12:30 à 14:00

Location

Room 214

Research seminar. The economic effects of the English
Parliamentary enclosures.

The economic effects of the
English Parliamentary
enclosures.

Co-authors: Leander Heldring et James A. Robinson.

ABSTRACT

We use a dataset of the entire population of English Parliamentary enclosure acts between 1750 and 1830 to provide the first causal evidence of their impact. Exploiting a feature of the Parliamentary process that produced such legislation as a source of exogenous variation, we show that enclosures were associated with significantly higher crop yields, a lower proportion of the population in agriculture, but also significantly lower population density and higher land inequality. Our results are in line with a literature going back to Karl Marx on the effects of enclosure on structural change and inequality. They do not support the argument that informal systems of governance or “private orderings”, even in small, cohesive and stable communities, were able to efficiently allocate commonly used and governed resources. Parliamentary intervention was necessary.

[Read the paper](http://conference.nber.org/conf_papers/f148360.pdf)(http://conference.nber.org/conf_papers/f148360.pdf)





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