Chinese trade reciprocity, WTO membership and US manufacturing job losses

While free trade has generally been a staple of the GOP policy agenda, Trump has raised some interesting and important questions about free trade vs fair trade, and the impact of trade deals on US manufacturing workers. Some details:

- The first chart on the next page shows an almost universal **lack of trade reciprocity** when it comes to tariffs applied BY the US, and tariffs applied TO the US; the former are always lower than the latter. While there are other benefits from this state of affairs (access to low-cost consumer goods, higher corporate profits, pursuit of geopolitical objectives), benefits and costs are not equally distributed
- The other charts show that after China joined the WTO, there was a collapse in US manufacturing employment and in labor's share of profits. There is a growing body of literature that shows **that import competition can have a direct impact on US manufacturing jobs:**
 - o A January 2016 analysis from the Center for Economic Studies (a department of the US Census Bureau) found that from 1992 to 2007, import competition from China and other developing economies increased the likelihood of job loss among manufacturing workers with less than a high school degree, but not among workers with a college degree¹. Furthermore, unlike other studies², the authors did not find a link between technological investment and job loss.
 - o A 2012 report from the Petersen Institute for International Economics highlighted the negative impact of foreign central bank currency intervention on US manufacturing workers³. The authors found that excess currency intervention increased the trade surpluses of intervening countries by \$400 to \$800 billion per year, resulting in 1 million to 5 million job losses in the US alone.
 - o The most widely discussed analysis is "The China Shock"⁴, which found that from 1999 to 2011, import competition accounted for 2.4 million job losses, 1 million of which in manufacturing. **The authors agree that these concentrated job losses need to be understood within the broader context of the diffuse gains from trade**. However, as the lead author notes, "It is incumbent on the literature to more convincingly estimate the gains from trade".
 - o In the five years after China joined the WTO, foreign demand for Chinese goods may have accounted for as much as 70 million new Chinese jobs according to economists at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands⁵
- It's also worth noting that analyses of the 2016 US election found that the change in Republican voting was highly related to manufacturing job losses in predominantly Caucasian counties, and that import competition from China was related to more GOP votes as well⁶
- The 2017 IP Commission Report from the National Bureau of Asian Research cites **\$250-\$600 billion of annual losses to the US economy** from counterfeit goods, pirated software and theft of trade secrets, and describes **China** as "the world's principal intellectual property infringer"

Investment products: Not FDIC insured • No bank guarantee • May lose value

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¹ Cheap imports and the loss of US manufacturing jobs", Cooke, Kemeny and Rigby, Center for Economic Studies (Census Bureau), January 2016.

² A 2015 paper by Hicks and Devaraj (Ball State) found that 80% of US manufacturing job losses were related to technological advancement, and 20% resulted from import competition. However, our sense is that this paper is more of an accounting exercise than other peer-reviewed papers that perform treatment-control contrasts; it's also odd that their paper primary focuses on post-2006 when more manufacturing job losses occurred before then.

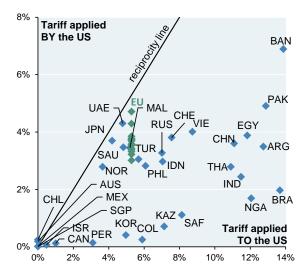
³ "Currency manipulation, the US Economy and the Global Economic Order", Petersen Institute for International Economics, C Fred Bergsten and Joseph Gagnon, December 2012.

⁴ "The China Shock", Autor, Dorn and Hanson, Annual Review of Economics, 2016.

⁵ "How much do we really know about global trade's impacts?", NYT, September 6, 2016.

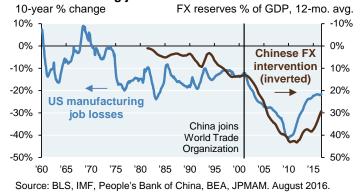
⁶ "Manufacturing and the 2016 election", Petersen Institute, Freund and Sidhu, 2017; and "A Note on the Effect of Rising Trade Exposure on the 2016 Presidential Election", Autor, Dorn, Hanson and Majlesi, 2017.

A general lack of tariff reciprocity

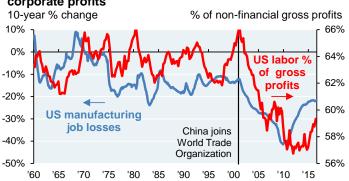


Source: WTO, World Bank, JPMAM. 2015, or most recent available. Tariff is simple average of tariffs on traded goods.

After China joins the WTO, its FX intervention rises and US manufacturing job losses accelerate...



...coinciding with a sharp decline in US labor's share of corporate profits

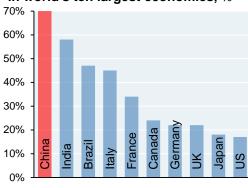


• The charts below show the degree of counterfeit goods exported to the US from China, the degree of Chinese pirated software and the very poor ranking China has with regards to inbound foreign direct investment

Source of counterfeit goods entering the US, % 90% 80% -70% -60% -50% 40% -30% -0% China All other countries

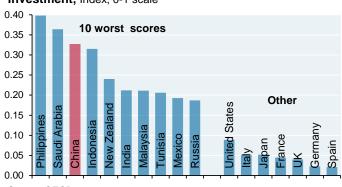
Source: IP Commission Report. 2017.

Unlicensed software installation rate in world's ten largest economies, %



Source: BSA Global Software Survey. 2016.

Regulatory restrictions on inbound Foreign Direct Investment, Index, 0-1 scale



Source: OECD, 2016.

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