The dissolution of the USSR is particularly puzzling because China -- also a Marxist-Leninist autocracy -- managed to ditch its centrally-planned economy while maintaining an authoritarian political structure. Christopher Miller’s research in Soviet archives has found that Soviet officials closely followed Chinese policy, and directly copied many Chinese reforms. In his talk, Miller will describe how the problem was not Gorbachev’s policies as much as the immense power of economic interest groups within Soviet society. Christopher Miller is a Ph.D. candidate at Yale University and an associate scholar at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.