

WILLIAM M. COCKRIEL

(913)653-6304 ◊ wcockri0@chicagobooth.edu

EDUCATION

University of Chicago

Ph.D. in Business Economics
Booth School of Business

August 2019 - Present

Brigham Young University

Bachelor of Science, Mathematics
Bachelor of Arts, Economics
Brigham Young University Presidential Scholar, Graduated with Honors

June 2017

GPA: 3.9, Cum Laude

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

Research Professional, Booth School of Business, Chicago

July 2017-August 2019

Research Assistant, Brigham Young University, Provo

April 2016-July 2017

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Economic History Association Dissertation Fellowship

2023 - 2024

Katherine-Dusak-Miller Fellowship

2019 - 2021

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Research Interests: Economic History, Trade and Spatial Economics, Labor, Innovation

Teaching Interests: Economic History, Trade and Spatial Economics, Innovation

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Machines Eating Men: Shoemakers and their Children After the McKay Stitcher”

Abstract: I examine the long-run generational impacts on workers from technological displacement. The McKay Stitcher dramatically changed shoe production in the late 19th century by replacing skilled workers with machines and less-skilled workers, but it was licensed in a few counties and impacted workers in counties unevenly through the transportation network. The return to traditional shoemaking dropped substantially, in a model of occupation selection, with higher losses in future earnings in counties with higher ex ante import exposure to the counties that received licenses. For the first generation, incumbent shoemakers left traditional shoemaking and many took on new shoe factory positions for lower wages. There was no substantial adjustment through migration, however, despite opportunities for geographic mobility. For the second generation, after technological displacement, the children of more-exposed shoemakers did not pursue traditional shoemaking but were more likely to end up in shoe factory work. The children of shoemakers continued in lower income occupations and had lower wealth, relative to the children of craftsmen in similar ex ante labor market positions. There were enduring long-run impacts on shoemakers and their children, despite substantial geographic mobility and occupational mobility that might otherwise suggest long-run mitigation of technological displacement.

WORKING PAPERS

“Futures Contracts and the Spot Market Response,” with Martin Rotemberg and Anne Schick

Abstract. On October 14, 1868, the Chicago Board of Trade began hosting and regulating a futures market for a variety of commodities. The previously unannounced introduction of a formal, regulated market enables a regression discontinuity design can help us understand how the introduction of a formalized futures exchange can affect the spot market. Through a model with risk averse farmers, we demonstrate how the introduction of futures can lead to lower spot prices, lower spot price volatility, and less variability in storage levels. Regression discontinuity estimates support this hypothesis.

“Clean Air Act Regulation and Political Polarization,” with Olivier Kooi and Josh Higbee

Abstract. The Clean Air Act has been well studied for its effect on employment, workers, and air pollution. Far less is known about the direct political effects of this policy. We consider the distributional response of political contributions in areas directly impacted by the Clean Air Act. We find regulations caused by the Clean Air Act led to higher per capita political contributions, but with limited evidence of distributional adjustments.

“Manufacturing Establishments and Market Access,” with Richard Hornbeck, Anders Humlum, and Martin Rotemberg.

Abstract. We examine economic adjustments at the establishment level caused by the rapid expansion of the railroad system in the 19th century United States. Using recently digitized establishment level data from the Census of Manufacturers in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880, we find that greater market access did not lead to industry specialization but did lead to establishment-level specialization at the product level. Establishments produced fewer products and used correspondingly fewer inputs in production.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

“Industry Structure and Lobbying Behavior” with Olivier Kooi and Josh Higbee.

“Occupation Destruction” with Joseph Price

PUBLICATIONS

“The influence of dispersion on journal impact measures,” with James McDonald. *Scientometrics* 116 no. 1 (2018): 609-622. (Undergraduate)

“Two multivariate generalized beta families,” with James B. McDonald. *Communications in Statistics-Theory and Methods* 47, no. 23 (2018): 5688-5701. (Undergraduate)

TEACHING

Business in the Historical Perspective, Teaching Assistant

Winter 2023

Introduction to Economics, Teaching Assistant

Fall 2015-Winter 2016