WILLIAM M. COCKRIEL

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EDUCATION

University of Chicago **August 2019 - June 2024**
Ph.D. in Business Economics
Booth School of Business

Brigham Young University **June 2017**
Bachelor of Science, Mathematics GPA: 3.9, Cum Laude
Bachelor of Arts, Economics
Brigham Young University Presidential Scholar, Graduated with Honors

POSITIONS

Assistant Professor of Economics **August 2024 - Present**
Department of Economics
Florida State University

Research Professional **July 2017 - August 2019**
Booth School of Business
University of Chicago

Research Assistant **April 2016 - July 2017**
Department of Economics
Brigham Young University

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Economic History Association Dissertation Fellowship **2023 - 2024**

Katherine-Dusak-Miller Fellowship **2019 - 2021**

PRESENTATIONS

Nebraska Labor Summit (2024), Florida State University (2024), Harvard Business School, Entrepreneurial Management (2024), Utah State University (2023), Southern Economic Association Meeting (2023), Economic History Association Graduate Student Poster Session (2023), National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute: Development of the American Economy Graduate Student Seminar (2023), Mountain West Economic History Conference (2023)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Research Interests: Labor Economics, Economic History, Technology and Innovation

WORKING PAPERS

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

Abstract: I examine the long-run impacts of a deskilling technology on workers and their children. The McKay stitcher dramatically changed shoe production in the late 19th century by replacing skilled artisans with machines and less-skilled workers. It was licensed in only a few counties and impacted workers across counties unevenly through the transportation network. More-exposed shoemakers left traditional shoemaking for lower wage occupations and did not migrate. The transfer of occupation from father to son was disrupted, and the children of shoemakers entered lower income occupations. New entrants to shoe factories came from poorer and less literate families. Using a model of occupation selection, I infer the change in life-time earnings implied by the impact of the technology on occupation exit. I find that the most exposed shoemakers and their children lost 2.2 and 1.9 years of wages, respectively.

SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

"Medium Frequency Trading and the Chicago Telephone," with Martin Rotemberg

Abstract. When communication is slow in financial markets, traders may be unable to take advantage of (potential) arbitrage opportunities. This can lead to excess price dispersion both within commodities and across linked markets. We demonstrate the importance of communication speed by studying the installation of telephones around the Chicago Board of Trade in 1878. Consistent with theoretical predictions, we find a decline in price dispersion across a variety of markets.

"Occupation Destruction," with Joseph Price.

Abstract. The proliferation of automobiles in the early 20th century led to the rapid decline of occupations related to horse-driven transportation, including teamsters and drivers of wagons and buggies. Using newly digitized data on state highways in this period and data on motor vehicle registrations, we create a measure of exposure to automobiles to examine the long-run consequences for incumbent horse-related workers. We characterize the workers who adjusted best and who bore the largest burden.

"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.

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

Growth of the American Economy (Undergraduate), Florida State University — Fall 2024, Spring 2025

Analysis of Economic Data (Masters), Florida State University — Spring 2025

Microeconomics (MBA), Teaching Assistant — Fall 2024

Business in the Historical Perspective (MBA), Teaching Assistant — Winter 2023, 2024

Introduction to Economics (Undergraduate), Teaching Assistant — Fall 2015 - Winter 2016