

# 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**

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

---

Southern Economic Association Meeting (2023, planned), EHA Graduate Student Poster Session (2023), NBER Summer Institute: Development of the American Economy Graduate Student Seminar (2023), Mountain West Economic History Conference (2023)

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

---

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

**Teaching Interests:** Economic and Business History, Applied Microeconomics, Trade and Spatial Economics

## JOB MARKET PAPER

---

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

Abstract: I examine the long-run impacts of low-skill biased technologies on incumbent workers and their children. 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 unevenly through the transportation network. Incumbent shoemakers left traditional shoemaking for lower wages and did not migrate. The transfer of occupation from father to son was disrupted, and the children of shoemakers entered lower income occupations and had lower wealth as a result. Using a model of occupation selection, I document enduring long-run impacts on shoemakers and their children, despite the economy otherwise exhibiting substantial geographic mobility and occupational mobility that might have suggested long-run mitigation of those consequences.

## 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 the market suggests that 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 and greater spot price volatility. Regression discontinuity estimates support this hypothesis.

### **“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 use a measure of exposure to automobiles to examine the long-run consequences for incumbent horse-related workers and 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.

## SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

---

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

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

## 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

---

Microeconomics (MBA), Teaching Assistant	Fall 2024
Business in the Historical Perspective (MBA), Teaching Assistant	Winter 2023
Introduction to Economics (Undergraduate), Teaching Assistant	Fall 2015 - Winter 2016