

# JOHN ERIC HUMPHRIES

Yale University  
Department of Economics  
37 Hillhouse Ave  
New Haven, CT 06511

[www.johnerichumphries.com](http://www.johnerichumphries.com)  
john.humphries@yale.edu  
mobile: (773) 980-6575  
office: (203) 432-3521

## EMPLOYMENT

---

Cowles Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Economics, Yale University 2017 – 2018

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Yale University 2018 –

## EDUCATION

---

Ph.D., Economics, The University of Chicago, 2017

- Thesis: "The Causes and Consequences of Self-Employment over the Life Cycle"
- Committee: James J. Heckman, Magne Mogstad, Erik Hurst

## RESEARCH FIELDS

---

**Primary fields:** Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics.

**Secondary fields:** Entrepreneurship, Economics of Education.

## PUBLICATIONS

---

### Journal Articles:

- "Returns to Education: The Causal Effects of Education on Earnings, Health, and Smoking" (with James J. Heckman and Gregory Veramendi), *Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.
- "On the Interpretation of Non-cognitive Skills - what is being measured and why it matters" (with Fabian Kosse), *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 136, (2017): 174-185.
- "What Do Grades and Achievement Tests Measure" (with Lex Borghans, Bart H. H. Golsteyn, and James J. Heckman), *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, 113(45), (2016).
- "Dynamic Treatment Effects" (with James J. Heckman and Gregory Veramendi), *Journal of Econometrics*, 191(2), (2016): 276-292.
- "Taking the Easy Way Out: How the GED Testing Program Induces Students to Drop Out" (with James J. Heckman, Paul A. Lafontaine, and Pedro L. Rodriguez), *Journal of Labor Economics*, 30(3), (2012): 495-520.

- “Identification Problems in Personality Psychology” (with Lex Borghans, Bart H. H. Golsteyn, and James J. Heckman), *Personality and Individual Differences*, 51, (2011): 315-320.
- “Design and Implementation of a Privacy Preserving Electronic Health Record Linkage Tool in Chicago.” (with Abel N. Kho, John P. Cashy, Kathryn L. Jackson, Adam R. Pah, Satyender Goel, Jörn Boehnke, Scott Duke Kominers, Bala N. Hota, Shannon A. Sims, Brad A. Malin, Dustin D. French, Theresa L. Walunas, David O. Meltzer, Erin O. Kaleba, Roderick Jones, and William L. Galanter), *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association*, 22(5), (2015): 1072-1080.

### **Books:**

- *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (edited with James J. Heckman and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014).

### **Book Chapters:**

- “The GED” (with James J. Heckman and Nicholas S. Mader), *Elsevier: Handbook of Economics of Education*, Volume 3, (2011): 423-483.
- “Growth in GED Testing,” in *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (editors: James J. Heckman, John Eric Humphries, and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014): 109-136.
- “The Economic and Social Benefits of GED Certification” (with James J. Heckman and Tim Kautz), in *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (editors: James J. Heckman, John Eric Humphries, and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014): 171-267.
- “Who Are the GEDs” (with James J. Heckman and Tim Kautz), in *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (editors: James J. Heckman, John Eric Humphries, and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014): 139-170.
- “The GED Testing Program Induces Students to Drop Out” (with James J. Heckman, Paul A. Lafontaine, and Pedro L. Rodriguez), in *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (editors: James J. Heckman, John Eric Humphries, and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014): 293-317.
- “What Should Be Done?” (with James J. Heckman and Tim Kautz), in *The Myth of Achievement Tests, The GED and the Role of Character in American Life* (editors: James J. Heckman, John Eric Humphries, and Tim Kautz), The University of Chicago Press (2014): 431-435.

## WORKING PAPERS

---

- “The Causes and Consequences of Self-Employment over the Life Cycle”  
[\[latest draft\]](#)
- “The Non-Market Benefits of Abilities and Education” (with James J. Heckman and Gregory Veramendi), revise and resubmit at the *Journal of Human Capital*.  
[\[latest draft\]](#)

## WORK IN PROGRESS

---

- “Does Eviction Create Poverty? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Cook County, IL” (with Daniel Tannenbaum and Winnie van Dijk).

In Cook County, IL, more than 35,000 eviction cases appear before the circuit court every year, the majority involving tenants from the poorest areas in Chicago. Prior research suggests that eviction may not only be a symptom of poverty but may, in fact, cause or exacerbate poverty by contributing to circumstances that are adverse to economic mobility. Yet those facing eviction are likely to have recently faced negative economic shocks, which makes establishing the proposed causal relationship difficult. This paper proposes the first quasi-experimental design for evaluating the causal impact of eviction on employment, social, and schooling outcomes. Using over 400,000 eviction case histories, our research design leverages Cook County’s random assignment of eviction court cases to judges, where some judges are more lenient than others. This provides a source of exogenous variation in eviction outcomes, allowing us to study the effect of eviction on a wide range of short- and long-run household outcomes associated with poverty. *[This project has been selected as part of the “Using Linked Data to Advance Evidence-Based Policy making” initiative in partnership with the Census Bureau and the Arnold Foundation to facilitate policy evaluation through linking records to Census Bureau micro-data.]*

- “College Major Choice: Sorting and Differential Returns to Skills” (with Juanna Joensen and Greg Veramendi).

Does the college major premium reflect returns to innate abilities, prior skills, or college education? We decompose the college major premium into labor market returns to cognitive and non-cognitive abilities, and skills learned in college. This allows us to quantify how much of the college major premium is due to sorting on abilities and how much is due to the differential labor market value of major-specific skills. We find that sorting on abilities accounts for 10 – 50% of the college major premium. We also provide novel estimates of complementarities and interaction effects between abilities and skills, since both the returns to abilities and prior skills vary significantly across college majors. We document that 40% of students who enter STEM degrees change major or drop out. We evaluate counterfactual policies to promote STEM degrees, accounting for the fact that many who start STEM degrees do not finish.

- “The Dot-Com Bubble and the Redistribution of High-Skill Labor in Sweden.”

This paper studies the reallocation of highly skilled labor following the 2001 “dot-com” crash in Sweden. The crash resulted in bankruptcy or substantial downsizing in many technology and communication related businesses. Many

of these businesses were also subject to “last-in-first-out” hiring policies under Swedish law, requiring businesses to fire the most recently hired workers first. The companies affected by the dot-com crash disproportionately employed young high-skill individuals with STEM or engineering degrees. By studying the mass lay-offs and subsequent reallocation of young highly skilled workers, this paper jointly evaluates how labor market shocks impact the careers of high skill workers and how the reallocation of highly skilled labor affects industry growth and the creation of new businesses. The data allows this research to be conducted at the population level and provides rich information on education, IQ, non-cognitive skills, and leadership ability.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

### **Instructor:**

- Computational Methods in Economics (B.A.), The University of Chicago (spring 2014, spring 2015).
- Practical Computing for Economists (co-teaching, Ph.D.), The University of Chicago (spring 2014, winter 2015, winter 2016).
- Research Experience for Undergraduates (co-teaching, B.A.), The University of Chicago (summer 2014, summer 2015, summer 2016, summer 2017).

### **Teaching Assistant:**

- Price Theory I & II (Becker and Murphy, Ph.D.), The University of Chicago (fall 2013, winter 2014).
- Price Theory (Murphy, Ph.D.), University of Chicago (fall 2014).
- The Origins & Consequences of Inequality (Heckman, Ph.D.), The University of Chicago (winter 2014) .
- Microeconomics (Stole, Executive MBA), The University of Chicago Booth School of Business (summer 2014).
- Microeconomics (Gibbs, Executive MBA), The University of Chicago Booth School of Business (summer 2014).
- Honors Workshop in Economics (Lima and Tsiang, B.A.), The University of Chicago (2016).

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

---

- Review of Economic Studies Tour (2017)
- Theodore W. and Esther Schultz Economic Fellowship (2016-2017).
- Bradley Fellowship for Meritorious and Promising Graduate Students, The University of Chicago (2015).
- Outstanding Graduate Lecturer for an Economics Topics Course Award, The University of Chicago (2015).

- Finalist for the University of Chicago's Excellence in Course Design Award, The University of Chicago (2014).
- Division of the Social Sciences Summer Research Grant, The University of Chicago (2013).
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow (2012-2015).
- Division of the Social Sciences Fellowship, The University of Chicago (2011-2012, 2015-2016).
- The Lawrence G. Goldberg Honors Prize for Undergraduate Research in Economics, The University of Chicago (2009).

## ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

---

### Invited Seminars:

- **2017 (including scheduled):** Brown University; Cornell University; Duke University; Harvard Business School; Microsoft Research; Northwestern University; Princeton University; Rochester University Stanford Graduate School of Business; University College London; The University of Chicago; The University of Chicago Booth School of Business; University of Wisconsin, Yale University.
- **2016:** IZA at University of Bonn; The University of Chicago; ZEW at Mannheim University.
- **2015:** The University of Chicago; The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy.

### Conferences and Workshops:

- Japanese-American-German Kavli Frontiers of Science Symposium (2017)
- Workshop on Human Capital and Public Policy; Stockholm School of Economics; co-organizer (2017)
- Review of Economic Studies Tour (2017)
- IZA workshop: Education Interventions and Experiments; University of Bonn (2016)
- ZEW Summer Workshop; Mannheim University (2016)
- Co-organized and presented at the conference on the General Educational Development program; The University of Chicago (2011).
- The Handbook of the Economics of Education Conference, Munich Germany (2009).

### Refereeing:

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, Demography, Economics of Education Review, Industrial Relations, Journal of Applied Econometrics, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Public Economics, Labour Economics, Oxford Economic Papers, Review of Economic Studies, Sage Open, Scandinavian Journal of Economics, Quarterly Journal of Economics.

**Affiliations:**

- Member of the Human Capital and Economic Opportunity “Inequality: Measurement, Interpretation, and Policy” working group (MIP).