

EHA DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

Dan Li
Department of Economics
Boston University
<http://people.bu.edu/danli>
advisor, Robert Margo

Three Essays on the Economic History of Railroads in Pre-Communist China

The role of railroads in economic development has long been a central topic in economic history but with few exceptions previous studies have focused on the developed world. My dissertation examines various aspects of railroads and economic development in China between 1900 and 1949. Chapter One examines railroad profitability and investment, with a particular focus on the effects of civil wars and natural disasters that plagued China during this period. Chapter Two assesses the impact of railroads on agricultural productivity and Chapter Three studies the effects of rail on urbanization. The econometric analyses are based on a panel dataset of individual railroads newly collected from archival records and matched to geographic information on economic, social, and political variables. The results shed new light on the role of transportation improvements during a crucial phase of modern Chinese economic history.

The EHA fellowship provides funds for data collection and freeing me of teaching responsibilities during the year prior to my entry on the American job market.

Melinda Miller
Economics Department
University of Michigan
advisor, Ben Chabot

The Role of Race and Gender in Inequality and Intergenerational Mobility: New Evidence from the 1880 Cherokee Census

I have collected two new data sets—the 1880 Cherokee Census and a sample of men and women linked from this census to the 1900 United States Census—to examine the impact of race and gender on economic inequality and mobility. The first two chapters of my dissertation focus on the Cherokee freedmen, a group of former slaves who received access to free land after the Civil War. By comparing the Cherokee freedmen to United States' freedmen who did not receive any free land, I examine how African-Americans' economic and social outcomes could have differed if a comprehensive program to give former slaves “forty acres and a mule” had been implemented. My final chapter uses the linked sample to analyze the effect of gender on the transmission of status from parent to child.

The EHA Dissertation Fellowship will allow me to focus on research by providing a release from teaching

John Parman
Department of Economics
Northwestern University
advisor, Joseph Ferrie

American Mobility and the Expansion of Public Education

The introduction of modern public schools in early-twentieth century America drastically altered educational access constraints. However, while access to education became more egalitarian, intergenerational mobility rates declined. My dissertation examines this puzzling observation through an analysis of educational investment in Iowa during the peak of the transition from common schools to modern public schools. Linking school records and multiple censuses, I construct a dataset of father-son pairs containing intergenerational income, occupation and educational attainment information and data on school types and quality. With these data, I estimate intergenerational income elasticities conditional on local school characteristics and relate the decline in American mobility to the differing educational investment responses of low and high income families to expanding public education.

The EHA dissertation fellowship will fund additional school district data collection and transcription and allow for reduced teaching duties while I complete my dissertation.

EHA EXPLORATORY GRANT RECIPIENTS

Aaron Anderson
Department of History
University of Southern Mississippi
advisor, Louis M. Kyriakoudes

Natchez Merchants: Enterprise and Exploitation in the Postbellum South

While several economic historians and economists have displayed interest in the economic role of the furnishing merchant in the postbellum South (Woodman, 1968; Ransom and Sutch, 1977), no scholar has yet provided a detailed case study focused entirely upon the emergent merchant class that dominated the Southern agrarian economy. This research seeks to answer: by what economic mechanisms did the merchant class rise to prominence, did they exhibit territorial monopolies, and in the process did they supplant or meld with the dominant planter class in new Gilded Age business configurations that altered the socio-economic landscape of the emerging New South?

I will use the EHA exploratory grant to reveal the economic and social impact of postwar merchants in a new, intensive way through datasets constructed of thousands of chattel

mortgage, property, tax, probate, and chancery records contained in public archives located in the Natchez District of Mississippi and Louisiana.

Jessica Bean
Department of Economics
Cornell University
advisor, **George Boyer**

Married Women's Labor Force Participation in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain: New Data from Old Censuses

The late Victorian and Edwardian periods seem to be generally viewed as the nadir of married women's labor force participation in Britain. Though Horrell and Humphries (1995) calculated relatively high rates of employment for working-class married women in the mid nineteenth century, there has not yet been much rigorous analysis of married women's labor supply and its decline during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I plan to use census records and other survey data to investigate the extent to which working-class wives and mothers actually did retreat from paid labor during this period, the extent to which they were and were not able to supplement family earnings in times of financial crisis, and their changing role in the family economy.

The EHA exploratory grant will allow me to travel to archives in the UK in order to explore available sources, refine my research plans, and begin gathering data.

Davide Cantoni
Economics Department
Harvard University
advisors, **James Robinson**

Was Max Weber Right After All?

While Weber's hypothesis relating the Protestant "ethic" with the birth of modern capitalism is often considered a proposition proven to be false by too many counterexamples of successful industrializations, no attempt has yet been made to analyze its validity for German regions. In fact, the German lands of the Holy Roman Empire, with their endless number of territorial entities, represent an ideal field on which to measure quantitatively the "treatment effect" of the introduction of Protestantism. My plan is to analyse which factors drove different territories to embrace the Reformation, and what the long-term impact, measured through a variety of outcome variables, on economic development has been since then.

The EHA exploratory grant will fund a research travel to Germany, where I will collect data about economic activity in the Empire's cities, as well as about educational institutions.

Felipe Tâmega Fernandes
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advisor, Colin M. Lewis

Institutions & Commodities: Analysing the Rise and Decline of Rubber in Brazilian Amazon, 1860s-1910s

Despite some early contributions such as Santos (1980), Weinstein (1983), Barham & Coomes (1996), the economic history of rubber boom in Brazilian Amazon has not been thoroughly analysed yet. Attention has mostly been paid to labour relations and even though this thesis also tackles that issue, it takes a broader view, applying Institutions Theory to analyse each link of the rubber chain (1860s-1910s): from rubber tappers to consumers. That theoretical background is supported by new empirical evidence and the utilisation of econometric models. It is expected that contributions will be made not only to Brazilian economic history but also to Institutions Theory and Commodity Chain literature.

The EHA Exploratory Grant will allow me to delve into local sources and gather new archival data, essential to address the central question of the thesis, i.e., whether Institutions can explain the birth, development and collapse of rubber production in Brazilian Amazon.

Morten Jerven
Phd Student
Economic History Department
London School of Economics and Political Science
advisor, Gareth M. Austin

Dynamics of Growth in Post-Colonial Africa

This research examines economic growth and development in post-colonial Africa. The current project focuses on Gross Domestic Product estimates. Data on economic growth is analysed for reliability and accuracy. It is a comparative study of Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia 1960-2000. Evidence on economic growth is usually taken on face value in the literature on African development without regard for the potential poor quality of the estimates.

This research will amend this gap in the knowledge of economic growth in Africa. The data collection and analysis is undertaken with the support of the EHA.

Ulrike Krotscheck
Archaeology Department
Stanford University
advisor, Ian Morris

Production and Distribution of Archaic Pottery in the Western Mediterranean

My dissertation investigates modes of production and exchange in 6th – century BCE France. The Greek city of Marseille is commonly characterized as a wealthy city, and an important port of trade between northern Europe and the Mediterranean. This stands in contrast with the economies of other ancient cities, which operated within much smaller, unorganized networks of exchange. My goal is to explain this apparent contradiction by investigating the structure of Marseille's economy, specifically the production and exchange of a common type of drinking cup. Using chemical analysis, I will identify the origin of these cups, found both in Marseille and on an archaic merchant shipwreck which sunk on the way to this city, to determine the ratio of local production to import. With this I hope to enhance our understanding of how the urban economy of 6th c. BCE Marseille was organized.

The grant from the EHA will fund the chemical analyses and my travel to France.

Woong Lee
Economics Department
University of California, Irvine
advisor, Daniel Bogart

Public Employment Offices and the Labor Market in the United States between 1890 and 1940

Public employment offices (PEOs) are non-profit government organizations which match jobseekers and employers. In the U.S., PEOs were introduced in the late 19th century to resolve market failures as voluntary market institutions (e.g. informal networks or private employment agencies) did not function properly (Bogart, 1900). PEOs arose during the progressive era and continue to serve as a labor market intermediary up to this day. This paper will address the importance of PEOs in terms of the number and types of workers and firms who used the service. First, I will measure PEO usage by jobseekers as a percentage of labor force from 1890 to 1940 and relate this measure to the unemployment rate. Second, I will measure diffusion of offices over time and the evolution of usage per office. Third, I will document the occupations of workers and the industries of firms using PEOs.

The EHA exploratory grant will be used to fund travel to the Department of Labor Library and the National Archives to find data.

Andrew Nigrinis
Economics Department
Stanford University
advisor, Gavin Wright

The Rise of Corporate R&D Laboratories and Firm Strategy

This research will be focused on understanding the growth and implications of the rise of research and development laboratories in the U.S. The problem with patent data and most of the literature surrounding patents is that it is a censored variable. Firms do not choose to patent all their innovations. Often trade secrets, lead time or servicing are methods of protecting innovations. It happens that at Du Pont, to further spur innovation, the executive committee gave bonuses to researchers. These data will provide insights to whether the R&D laboratory was for the purpose of monitoring external technologies or generating new technologies. Combining Du Ponts' patent data with modern patent citation data will yield a firm level metric as to the relative importance of the innovations Du Pont patented and left unpatented.

The EHA Exploratory grant will allow me to work in the archives to create a new data set for this project.

Jessica Vechbanyongratana
Economics Department
University of Colorado, Boulder
advisor, Carol Shiue

Savings Behaviors among Antebellum Textile Workers

Little is understood about savings behaviors among the antebellum working class. It is clear from previous studies by Olmstead (1975) and Alter et al. (1994) that working class individuals held substantial deposits in nineteenth-century savings banks. What has not been satisfactorily determined is *why* working class individuals chose to save a portion of their earnings in formal financial institutions. Individual savings account histories linked with payroll records allow one to analyze complete earnings/savings profiles and to better identify savings motives. I propose to compile a new dataset linking Lowell, Massachusetts textile mill payroll records to savings account records over the period 1835 - 1853. I plan to utilize this new dataset to conduct research on savings rates among the working class, precautionary savings due to changing labor market conditions, and target savings behavior among textile workers during the antebellum period, especially among unmarried female migrant workers from rural New England.

I will use the EHA exploratory grant to fund travel to Lowell and Boston archives to compile the dataset.

