Conor Hughes

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Education:

University of Minnesota: Twin Cities
      Department of Economics   2015 – 2019
      Department of Applied Economics   2019 – Present
Honors: John S. Chipman Graduate Fellowship, Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award

University of Chicago: Chicago, IL   2011
BA Economics and Mathematics with General Honors
Honors: Dean's List 07-11, John Crerar Science Writing Prize

Experience:

National Bureau of Economic Research: *Research Analyst* 2014 – 2015
- ❖ Work with professors Pierre Azoulay and Joshua Zivin researching the effect of grant funding incentive structures on post-doctoral career paths.

Busara Center for Behavioral Economics   *Consultant* 2014 – Present
- ❖ Provide research support for projects in the Nairobi-based experimental lab.

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab: *Research Associate* 2013 – 2014
- ❖ Analyzed and managed data from randomized controlled trials and household surveys run in developing countries.
- ❖ Worked on evaluation of GiveDirectly's unconditional cash transfer program in Kenya.

Cornerstone Research: *Analyst* 2011 – 2013
- ❖ Economic consultant for financial litigation.

Fulbright Economics Teaching Program: *Research Intern* 2010
- ❖ Worked under professors in the Ho Chi Minh City headquarters, run jointly by the Fulbright Foundation and Harvard Kennedy School.
- ❖ Performed research on the "missing migrants" problem in Vietnam: marginalized groups excluded from World Bank surveys.

Analysis Group: *Analyst Intern* 2009
- ❖ Performed economic research for financial litigation.
- ❖ Worked on cases involving securities fraud, breach of contract, and intellectual property valuation.

University of Chicago: *Research Assistant* 2009 – 2010
- ❖ Worked in the Becker Center on Chicago Price Theory.
- ❖ Performed research on political media bias and consumer choice using large geographic datasets.

Publications:

Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia: Results from a Pilot Project in Vietnam
with Ngan Dinh et al
Journal of Human Trafficking (2019)

We present the results of a pilot study run in rural Vietnam with the aim of overcoming numerous data issues in human trafficking research. Rather than attempt to identify victims themselves, we rely on the form rural migration often takes in urbanizing developing countries to instead identify households that were sources of trafficking victims, allowing us to construct a viable sampling frame. Using novel techniques, we construct empirically valid estimates that can begin to shed light on the problem of human trafficking. This draft made SSRN Top Ten lists in the topics Labor: Human Capital, Human Resources in Developing Economies, International Political Economy: Migration.
IZA Discussion Paper 8686. A previous draft is available on SSRN
http://ssrn.com/abstract=2528778

Concomitant conformational dimorphism in 1,2-(bis-9-anthryl)acetlyene
with Rebecca I. Goldstein et al
CrystEngComm (2015)

Working Papers:
Good News For People Who Love Bad News: On the Sensitivity of Inferences in Regression Discontinuity Designs
Regression Discontinuity Designs (RDD) have become an increasingly important tool for making causal inferences from observational data. However, due to the relative newness of the technique, some key aspects may be applied in a somewhat ad hoc fashion. For example, how should the forcing variable be modeled? How should the bandwidth be chosen? This paper consists of two primary parts. In the first, a meta-analysis is conducted using data from 307 RDD papers published on SSRN between 1999 and 2016 to observe how RDD is being practiced. In the second part, I use sensitivity analyses to examine the stability of estimates and inferences of all applied RDD papers published in AEA journals. I find inferences to be very sensitive to over-leveraging, and suggest the jackknife and bootstrap as potential remedies.

Giving Now and Later: Discounting of Altruistic and Warm Glow Utility
with Jeremy Shapiro
Utility from charitable giving is understood to include purely altruistic and 'warm glow' components. The classic test to separate warm glow from altruism (incomplete crowd out), however, is sensitive to the level of giving by others and ignores the time dimension of utility from giving. This study proposes and tests a model where utility from giving consists of an altruistic component, warm glow from the act of giving and warm glow from the gift accomplishing its intent, each of which are appropriately discounted. Experimental results show that all three factors motivate donors' decisions, but with heterogeneity across the population. Approximately 30% of donors receive utility from all three sources, 30% are motivated by just altruism and the glow from the act of giving and 20% are pure altruists. Donors are differentially impatient for different types of utility from giving - they are most impatient to experience the glow from giving, and more patient for their gift to have an impact. Estimated structural parameters are shown to predict out of sample choices by donors.

A Methodology for Laboratory Experiments in Developing Countries: Examples from the Busara Center
with Johannes Haushofer et al.
While RCTs and lab-in-the-field experiments have become more common in development economics, the control of lab-based experiments has so far been difficult to access in developing countries. We discuss the need for such research in the context of the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, a state-of-the-art laboratory for experimental economics in Nairobi. In addition to basic results, we discuss the development of the lab itself, data on physical and technical setup, protocols for study administration, respondent and data flow, and subject recruitment, and outline how researchers can use the lab.
A previous draft available on SSRN http://ssrn.com/abstract=2155217

Heterogeneous Treatment Effects Using Segmentation Analysis: An Application to the GiveDirectly Evaluation
with Jeremy Shapiro
We propose using latent class analysis as a method for analyzing treatment effects varying over subgroups that would be difficult to identify otherwise. We present an outline of best practices, introduce the idea of cluster propensity weighting, and demonstrate these techniques using an evaluation of the NGO GiveDirectly.

An Ecological Approach to the Estimation of Populations Using Multiple Systems With An Application to African-American Jockeys Post-Reconstruction
By historical accounts, the majority of jockeys in the American horse racing industry were African-American, until approximately 1920. Today, African-American jockeys are essentially non-existent. There have been many theories as to why this transition occurred. However, jockeys are notoriously hard to track in surveys – they tend to be transient, jockeying may be a secondary or seasonal occupation, they may go by various names to skirt track regulations, and other difficulties. Using a novel dataset of jockeys from 1880-1930 compiled from three primary data sources (census data, Jockey Club records, and track records), I use techniques commonly employed in quantitative ecology to estimate the overall population of jockeys of various races, which I hope to be useful for those studying the history of African-American jockeys, and as an example for social scientists considering using these techniques in other contexts.

Finding the "Missing Migrants": Measurement Error and Vietnam's *Ho Khau*
Vietnam utilizes a system of urban-rural registration known as the *ho khau*. It was implemented primarily due to a concern that rapid urbanization would put a strain on public resources in cities. Those who do not have proper, permanent registration in their place of residence are denied access to various public services, such as public health insurance or education. The largest socoioeconomic survey in the country, the World Bank's Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS) effectively excludes households without proper *ho khau*, while the UN's Urban Poverty Survey (UPS), run in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, does not. Through a weighting and matching process, we use the UPS to adjust measurements from the VHLSS and come to a more complete understanding of the population of "missing migrants" in Vietnam.

Demand Under Imperfect Rationing: The Case of the California Water Crisis

Using micro data from California covering several years of the recent drought, I estimate the effect of various rationing and quota systems enacted across water districts on demand, and attempt to inform a more efficient system of rationing in times of disaster.

Computer Skills
Stata (highly proficient), SAS (proficient), Python (proficient), R (proficient), MATLAB (proficient), LaTeX (highly proficient), Microsoft Office (highly proficient)

Language Skills
English (native), French and Mandarin Chinese (proficient).