

# BENJAMIN HO

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## FIELDS OF INTEREST

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Applied Microeconomics, Behavioral and Experimental Economics, Environmental and Energy Economics, Political Economy, Labor Economics (Education and Personnel)

## EDUCATION

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**Stanford University Graduate School of Business** *2001-2006*

PhD in Economics

- Dissertation: “The Economics of Apologies: Theory, Experiment and Application”
- Committee: Ed Lazear (adviser), Doug Bernheim, John Roberts

**Stanford University** *2001-2004*

Master of Arts in Political Science

Master of Arts in Education (International and Comparative Education)  
(adviser: Myra Strober)

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology** *1996-2000*

Master of Engineering in Electrical Engineering/Computer Science

- Thesis: Open Source Innovation in Apache Web Server (adviser: Erik Von Hippel)
- Bachelor of Science in Economics  
Bachelor of Science in Mathematics  
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

## EMPLOYMENT

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**Vassar College**

- Associate Professor of Economics *2015-present*
- Assistant Professor of Economics *2011-2015*

**Columbia University**

- Adjunct Professor of Economics *2014-2018, 2020-present*
- Faculty Affiliate for Center for Global Energy Policy *2015-present*

**Cornell University, Johnson School of Management**

- Assistant Professor of Economics *2007-2011*
- Courtesy Lecturer in Economics *2006-2007*

**White House, Council of Economic Advisers**

- Lead Economist for Energy and Transportation *2006-2007*

**Stanford University, Department of Economics**

- Lecturer in Economics *Spring 2005*

**Stanford University, Graduate School of Business**

- Teaching and Research Assistant 2001-2006
- Morgan Stanley, Fixed Income Division**
- Analyst 2000-2001
- White House, Office of Management and Budget**
- Economist 1999
- Consultant 1999-2000
- Naidan**
- Founding member of e-commerce startup 1999-2000

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#### HONORS, GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS

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- Collins Research Fund – Vassar College “Trustonomics” 2018-2020
- Collins Research Fund – Vassar College “Energy Consumption and Habit Formation – Evidence from High Frequency Consumer Thermostat Usage Data” 2013-2015
- Elinor Nims Brink Fund Vassar Research Grant “Developing the Capacity of the Vassar Experimental Economics Lab for Online Experimentation” 2013-2014
- CKF Foundation Grant for “Opportunity and Mobility” 2013-2014
- Dyson Fellowship – University of Melbourne 2012
- Poets and Quants 40 Best B-School Profs Under 40 2011
- Cornell Institute for Soc Sci –Judgment and Decision Making - Faculty Fellow 2009-2012
- Cornell Institute for Soc Sci – Small Grant – “Novelty and Popularity in News” 2009
- Cornell Institute for Soc Sci – Small Grant - “Paying for Climate Change” 2008
- Nominee, Apple Teaching Award, Cornell Johnson School 2008, 2009, 2010
- NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Recipient 2003-2006
- Jaedicke Award - Stanford GSB 2003
- Recipient, 2005 Summer Research Fellowship, John M. Olin Program in Law and Economics, Stanford Law School. 2005
- Stanford GSB Human Subjects Grant 2005
- Stanford GSB Interdisciplinary Behavioral Research Grant 2004 and 2005
- Stanford GSB Departmental Fellowship 2001-2006
- Member of Sigma Xi, Tau Beta Pi, Eta Kappa Nu Honor Societies 1999-

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#### PEER REVIEWED PAPERS

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“Toward an Understanding of the Economics of Apologies: evidence from a large scale field experiment” NBER working paper <https://www.nber.org/papers/w25676> (with Basil Halperin, John List and Ian Muir) *conditionally accepted Economic Journal*.

- “Overhead and Efficiency of Non Profits” (with Yujie Feng and Baran Han) (2020) *Applied Economic Letters*.
- “Energy Use and Temperature Habituation: Evidence from High Frequency Thermostats” (with Qi Ge) (April 2019) *Economic Inquiry*
- “Ethno-Gender Outcomes in China’s Labour Market” (with H Cherng and R Hasmath) *Journal of Contemporary China*, 28 (2019)
- “Rank Reversal Aversion inhibits redistribution across societies” (with Stephan Meier and Zhou Xinyue and Wenwen Xie) July 2017 (*Nature Human Behavior*)
- “The Effects of Moral Licensing and Moral Cleansing: in Contingent Valuation and Laboratory Experiments on Willingness to Pay to Reduce Negative Externalities” (with Gregory Poe, John Taber, Antonio Bento) June 2016 (*Environmental and Resource Economics*, 64(2), 317-340)
- “The Cultural Transmission of Cooperative Norms” (with Xinyue Zhou and Yan Liu) 2015 6:1554 *Frontiers in Psychology : Cognitive Science*
- “Herd Journalism: Investment in Novelty and Popularity in Markets for News “ (with Peng Liu) (2015) *Information Economics and Policy* Volume 31, June, pg 33-46
- “Optimal Price Instruments in Voluntary Emission Markets” (with Antonio Bento, Mario Ramirez) (2015) (*Resource and Energy Economics* vol 41, August 2015, pg 202–223)
- “Heterogeneous Effects of Peer Informational Nudges on Pro-Social Behavior?” (2015) (with Jiayi Bao) (*BE Press Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy* April 2015)
- “Job Acquisition, Retention, and Outcomes for Ethnic Minorities in Urban China?” (with Hasmath, R) (2015) (*Eurasian Geography and Economics* June 2015)
- "An Alternative Perspective on Inequality and Health" (with Sita Slavov) *Economics Bulletin*, Vol. 32 No. 4 pp. 3182-3196 (2012)
- “Apologies as Signals: With Evidence from a Trust Game” *Management Science* - Special issue for behavioral economics. January 2012 58:141-158
- “What is the Value of an Apology: An Empirical Analysis of Apology Laws for Medical Malpractice” (with Elaine Liu) *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies* (2011) Vol 8, s1, pp179-199.
- “Does Sorry Work? The Impact of Apology Laws on Medical Malpractice” (with Elaine Liu) *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* (2011) Volume 43, Number 2, 141-167
- “Focal points in coordinated divergence” (with Chip Heath and Jonah Berger) *Journal of Economic Psychology* 27 (2006) 635-647

## BOOKS

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*Why we Trust: an Economist’s Guide to the Ties that Bind Us* forthcoming with Columbia University Press 2021

## BOOK CHAPTERS AND DISCUSSION PAPERS

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Testimony for *Inspire To Serve*, Congressional Commission on Military, National and Public Service <https://inspire2serve.gov/hearings/creating-expectation-service-hearing-infrastructure-serve-america> (2019)

"Trust and the Law" (with David Huffman) for the *Handbook of Behavioral Economics and the Law*. (2018)

"Internal Carbon Accounting at a Small Liberal Arts College" (w A Hall, B Ernst, J. Falino, J. Miller, N. Garafola, E Norell, M. Cunningham) (2015)

"Understanding Energy Efficiency Benefits from Smart Thermostats in Southern California" *EnergyHub White Paper* (April 2014)

"Measuring Inequality: One Size does not fit all" (with Sita Slavov) *AEI Perspectives* (April 28, 2014)

"Identity Signaling with Social Capital: A Model of Symbolic Consumption" (with Jonah Berger and Yogesh Joshi) *Marketing Science Institute Report* 11-104. (April 2011)

"Energy in the Transportation Sector" (with Ann Wolverton) in *Economic Report of the President 2007* (Government Printing Office, 2007)

"Divergence in Cultural Practices: Tastes as Signals of Identity" Unpublished manuscript Stanford GSB (with Jonah Berger and Chip Heath) May 2005

#### WORKING PAPERS

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"Fear and Favoritism in the Age of Covid-19" (with Baran Han, Inbok Rhee, and Chris Tabakis ).

"Do investors care about corporate apologies? Evidence from chemical disasters." (with Sijia Fan, Qi Ge, Lirong Ma) under review.

"Non-profit Partisanship" (with Baran Han and Zizhe Xia) August 2020 under review.

Hasmath, R., Ho. B. and Kay-Reid, S. (2020) "State Apologies and the Rehumanization of Social Groups", Presented at Workshop on Ethics, Rights, Culture and the Humanization of Refugees (Edmonton, Canada), February 7-8.

"The Present Value of Future Explanations" July 2015 (with Sean McCoy)

"Contracts and Trust: Is Trustworthiness a Substitute or Complement for the Law?" (with Evsen Turkay) Jan 2014

"The Effect of Financial Status on Political Views?" (with Sita Slavov) August 2015 (under review)

#### WORK IN PROGRESS

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"Fool me once shame on you..." (with David Ong) — pilot completed

"Conscientiousness" (with Elaine Liu and Michael Price) – pilot completed

"Legitimacy and Trust" (with Reza Hasmath) – pilot completed

"The effect of Kinked and Notched tax schedules on Charitable Giving: A Lab

Experiment” (with Joel Slemrod, Jim Sallee and John Taber) – pilot completed

## TEACHING

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Energy and Environmental Economics Cornell University and Online MOOC for Udemey’s <a href="http://facultyproject.org">facultyproject.org</a>	2009, 2010, 2012
Political Economy Vassar College, Cornell University	2008-2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019
Research Methods in Economics Vassar College, Columbia University	2016, 2020
Ethics of Environmental Economics Vassar College	2017, 2019, 2020
Behavioral and Experimental Vassar College	2011-2020
Intermediate Microeconomics Vassar College, Cornell University	2008-2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016
Principles Microeconomics Vassar College	2012
Game Theory Columbia University	2014, 2015, 2017, 2018
Public Economics Stanford University	2005
Authored Supplemental Course Material for David Just’s <i>Introduction to Behavioral Economics</i> US Academic Decathlon	2012 2012
Teaching Assistant for Macroeconomics (undergrad), Cost-Benefit Analysis (undergrad), Microeconomics (MBA), Personnel Economics (MBA) Stanford University	2003-2005

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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### **Campus Service (Vassar College):**

Research Committee	2020-
Committee on Climate Action and Sustainability	2020-
Environmental Research Institute Steering Committee	2012-2020
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee	2012
Committee for Academic Technologies	2014-2019
Independent Program Committee	2016
Equity Advisor	2018-
Faculty Advisory Council for Liberal Arts Consortium for Online Learning	2015-

**Seminar Co-Organizer:** Cornell Behavioral Economics Seminar, 2007-2010, Cornell Applied Microeconomics Seminar, 2009-2010; Vassar Economics Seminar 2011-

**Seminar Presentations:**

MIT Sloan School, 2006; Cornell Johnson School 2006; UC Santa Cruz, Econ Dept 2006.; Pomona, Econ Dept 2006; Williams, Econ Dept 2006; Haverford, Econ Dept 2006; U Illinois – Urbana Champagne, Econ Dept 2006; Case-Western Reserve, Econ Dept., 2006; Vanderbilt Econ Dept 2007; University of Sydney, 2009; University of Melbourne, 2009; Peking University HSBC School of Business, 2010 ; University of Sydney, 2012; University of East Anglia, 2012; Monash University, 2012; KIEP, Seoul, 2012; UT Dallas, 2013; Texas A&M 2013; UT Houston, 2013; UCSD 2013; Hamilton College, 2014; Bowdoin College 2014; Haverford College (2016); Columbia University Sustainable Development (2016)

**Conference Co-Organizer:** Cornell University Meaning of Consumption Conference (with Bob Frank, Ori Heffetz, Leaf Van Boven), 2008

**Conference Participation:**

American Economic Association Annual Meeting	2008; 2010; 2019; 2021
CIFAR Energy Roundtable at MIT	2017
LAC-DEV Liberal Arts College Development Conference	2016
Behavioral Econ Annual Meeting (BEAM)	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
LACOL Teaching and Learning with Technology	2014, 2016, 2017
Stanford Institute of Theoretical Economics (SITE)	2011, 2013, 2018
Economic Science Association Meetings	2006, 2007, 2008; 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014
Economic Science Association (ESA) International Meeting,	2012
Haverford Behavioral and Experimental Econ Mid Atlantic (BEEMA)	2013, 2014
Stanford Precourt: Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change	2008, 2010, 2014
Behavioral Environmental Economics Conference, Toulouse, France,	2012
DOE Sunshot Market Transformation Workshop, LBL National Labs	2012
Utah Business Economics	2013
Silvaplana Workshop for Political Economics	2013
Gas Drilling and Sustainability, Cornell University Law School	2011
Judgment by the Numbers, Cornell University	2010
American Society of Health Economists	2010
Yale SOM Student Conf. on Behavioral Finance, Economics and Marketing	2005
European Science Days, Steyr (Austria) in Organizations/Personnel	2003, 2004
Workshop in Institutional, Behavioral Economics, Trento (Italy)	2003, 2004

**Referee:** American Economic Review, Games and Economic Behavior, Journal of Human Resources, International Economic Review, Journal of Law Economics and Organization, Journal of Public Economic Theory, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, Economic Inquiry, Psychological Science, Evolution and Human Behavior, Economics Bulletin, Management Science, Berkeley Electronic Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy; National Science Foundation; Journal of Environmental Economics and Management; Journal of Empirical Legal Studies; Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Journal of Economic Education;

Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics; Evolution and Human Biology; Journal of Economic Psychology; Cambridge University Press; Journal of the Economic Science Association; Economics; Resource and Energy Economics; Journal of Policy Analysis and Management; Columbia University Press; Journal of Institutional Economics; Journal of Environmental Management; Academy of Management Journal; Routledge Press; Columbia University Press; Southern Economics Journal; Transactions on Social Computing; Eastern Economics Journal; Stanford Law Review; Environment and Resource Economics; Oxford University Press; Judgment and Decision Management; Routledge Press; Journal of Health Economics; Ecological Economics

**Editorial Board:** Cogent OA Social Sciences

**Member:** American Economics Association, Economic Science Association.

**PhD Advising:** Committee Member for Baran Han (KDI School of Public Policy), 2009; Fernanda Leon (University of East Anglia), 2010, John Taber (FERC), 2011, Mario Ramirez (PWC) 2011

**Consulting:** Coherent Research Institute, 2015; Charity Navigator, 2014; Energy Hub 2013-2014; Bloomberg Government, 2011; Acadia Consulting Group, 2009; Conservation Services Group 2009; Government of Singapore, 2002; White House Office of Management and Budget, 1999-2000;

**International/Government Service:** CIFAR Workshop on Climate Change at MIT 2017; Delegate to the US-China Strategic Economic Dialogue 2007; NGO Observer to the Copenhagen COP15 United Nations Climate Negotiations, 2009; Department of Energy Sunshot Solar Power workshop participant, 2012

**Security Clearance:** Top Secret (expired)

### **Popular Writing and Speaking:**

The Problem with Pandemic Shaming. AEI Blog. Sept 2020

Why Has Trust in Expert Declined. AEI Blog. Sept 2020

How Firms Should Apologize. Vox EU. Oct 2019

Lifhacker “How I Work” Jan 23, 2019 and “How Successful People Deal with Rejection” Feb 13, 2019

Contributor for *Quartz*, The Atlantic Publishing Group

- “Storytellers are the future of the economy” July 21, 2017

- “How Hollywood manipulates you by using your childhood memories” Nov 8, 2017

“More Spending Won’t Solve Anything” Letter - *Technology Review*, July 2017

Keynote Address, Fall Forum for the Institute for Private Investors, Oct 5, 2016

Op-Ed “The Conservative Case for Solar Subsidies” *New York Times* Jan 5, 2016

Karma, Cause Effect and Illusion, at Rubin Museum of Art Oct 23, 2015

Guest Columnist, US News And World Reports, Feb – May 2014

- “American Manufacturing Jobs Are a Thing of the Past”,

- “Higher College Tuition Costs Don’t Actually Spell Disaster for Students”

“The Science of Apologies with Experimental Evidence” *VOX EU*, May 13, 2014

Guest Columnist, Nerd Wallet.com 2012

“Social Science and Climate Change” *Cornell Enterprise Magazine (Fall 2009)*

“What Should We Really Be Doing About Global Warming” *New York Times FREAKONOMICS Blog* (September 2007)  
Chronicle Careers Columnist for *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2005-2006)

**Selected Media Mentions:**

Why Cheap Solar Could Save the World. *NPR Planet Money*. Feb 11, 2020  
When Apologizing Proceed with Caution. *Harvard Business Review* Nov-Dec 2019  
How to Optimize Your Apology. *Freakonomics*. Ep 353 Oct 10, 2018  
The Economics of Apologies. *NPR All Things Considered and Planet Money Indicator*. Oct 12, 2018  
Why Saying Sorry Isn't as easy as it seems. *NPR All Things Considered* Oct 17, 2018.  
Select Media Mentions for Rank Reversal Aversion paper in *Nature Human behavior*

- “Let Them be Equal but not too equal” *Taipei Times*
- “Intriguing experiment reveals a fundamental conflict in human culture” *Ars Technica*
- “Humans want equality, researchers found, so long as the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor” *Quartz*
- “Help thy neighbor but only so much” *Public Radio International and Yahoo News*
- Radio Interview *Singapore 938Live*

“Finally in Sight, \$1 a watt Solar milestone shows long road ahead” *Technology Review* June 2016  
“What’s it really worth? A behavioral economist on values in art” Interview for *Boilerplate Magazine* Oct 2014  
“NSF Grants to Bolster Science and Humanities Research” *Vassar Quarterly*. Winter 2015  
“Vassar College Awarded more than \$600,000” - *Hudson Valley Press* Nov 26, 2014  
“Game Change” *Science for the People* - Radio Interview. August 2014  
“Will apology cause patients to sue?” *Physician Risk Management* July 2014  
“What will the GM Recalls Really Cost?” *America Weekend* - Radio Interview – June 2014  
“Economics of Apologies” Cory Doctorow. *Boing Boing*. May 13, 2014  
“Well-Heeled Student Loan Borrowers Are the Most Cautious Home Buyers” *The Street* (Sept 2013)  
“Overall health inequality seems to be down” *Marginal Revolution* (March 2013)  
“Free Courses, Elite Colleges” *Insider Higher Ed*, Jan 27, 2012  
“Free Online Classes May Help MBA Students” *US News and World Reports* Feb 27, 2012.  
“Company unveils line of free online courses from elite colleges” *Insider Higher Ed* Jan 27, 2012.  
“States Cut Malpractice Payouts by Encouraging Doctors to Apologize” *Harvard Business Review*, September 22, 2011.  
“Week in Ideas” *Wall Street Journal*, August 27, 2011.  
“Please accept my apologies for bringing this sorry subject to your attention” *Chicago Tribune* (May 10, 2011)  
“The World’s Best B-School Profs Under the Age of 40” *Poets and Quants* (February 15,



2011)

“Public Policy Gains a Foothold at B-School” *BusinessWeek* (March 1, 2010)

“Why It’s Not Easy Being Green” Radio Interview for Public Radio’s *The Takeaway* (December 7, 2009)

“The Last Experiment” *Seed Magazine*, (April 22, 2009)

“For fallen bankers, sorry may be the hardest, and smartest, word” *International Herald Tribune, CNBC, Straits Times* (Oct 23, 2008)

Interviewed on *BBC World* (June 22, 2007)

“Dear Economist...” *Financial Times*, (June 8, 2007)

“The Tao of Job Searches” *Stanford Business Magazine* (February 2007)