

# Helen Roberts

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Center for Economic Education  
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**Primary Fields:** Economic Education, Industrial Organization, and International Trade  
**Secondary Fields:** Financial Economics, Econometrics, and Macroeconomics

## **Current Research**

*Donations under Declining Average Costs* (June 2000) considers effects of cost conditions on efficient solicitation, organization, and delivery of philanthropic donations

*Contributions of Laspeyres*. (February 2001) describes the man, his work (his famous formula and other topics), and corrects some common misconceptions.

## **Education**

University of Chicago: Ph.D. 1995 in Economics  
M.A. 1985 in Economics  
Oberlin College: M.M.T. 1978 (Master of Music in Teaching)  
A.B. 1975 in German  
Mus.B. 1975 in Oboe Performance

## **Experience**

University of Illinois at Chicago 1996-present, Department of Economics, Clinical Assistant Professor and Associate Director, UIC Center for Economic Education.

Taught International Trade Theory and Policy, Probability and Statistics, Teaching Methods in Economics, and Microeconomics (graduate-level courses), Econometrics, Development Economics, and Macroeconomics (undergraduate-level courses).

Associate Director of the UIC Center for Economic Education from its founding in 2000 to the present.

University of Chicago 1995-1997, Lecturer, Department of Economics.

Taught Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Finance, Social Sciences Core Course (Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim), 1980-1984, Lecturer, Research Assistant, and Teaching Assistant. Taught Intermediate Macroeconomics and Money and Banking (1983-1984)  
Graded for Industrial Organization, Sam Peltzman, (1983)  
Graded for Economics 200: Intermediate Microeconomics, Sam Peltzman, (1980)  
Research assistant for Jacob Frenkel, Robert Topel, and Martin Dooley (1980-1984)  
Data archivist, NORC, under Robert Michael (1981)

First National Bank of Chicago 1984-1991, Senior Financial Economist and Assistant Vice President.

Forecasted interest rates and financial markets  
Conducted industry studies  
Produced research for CEO and other senior management  
Contributed to First Chicago publications

Member of the Interest Rate Committee

Rosary College 1983-1984, Instructor. Taught Macroeconomics  
Chicago Public Schools/PTA 1979-80, Music Teacher. Taught flute and recorder classes in elementary school classrooms.

University of Chicago Laboratory Schools 1976-1979, Teacher. Taught kindergarten, nursery school, oboe classes, long-term substitute orchestra director.

### **Publications**

"Is the World Headed for Another Great Depression?" Economic Issue Backgrounder, (joint author), First Chicago Corporation, October 1987 analyzes similarities and differences between the 1980s and the Great Depression period. The answer was "no".

"How to Price Bonds," Economic Issue Backgrounder, First Chicago Corporation, August 1988 describes expectations models of the yield curve and issues in forecasting the interest rate term structure.

"How to Price Stocks," Economic Issue Backgrounder, First Chicago Corporation, May 1989 develops a simple model of the effects of corporate cash flow, bond yields, business cycles, the international value of the dollar, inflation, and liquidity on stock market prices.

Competition, Cost Theories and Trade under Declining Average Costs: The U.S. Market for Small Cars, 1995, University of Chicago Dissertation, shows how declining average costs influenced which company produced at which output levels in the 1970s and 1980s.

"Jewish Donations to Israel," in *Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 20, 1999, pp. 201-213, examines the contrasting trends in donations -- fewer through umbrella organizations but more contributions directly from individuals and investigates economic causes.

### **Manuscripts**

"Are Chicago Home Prices Heading for a Fall?" (March 1990) compares the housing prices/income and inflation relationships for Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Boston, and Houston and concludes that temporary home price declines in the Chicago area.

"Looking for the Credit Crunch" (March 1991) analyzes housing, consumer, and business credit supply and demand.

"Prices, Profits and Exchange Rates for Japanese Autos in the U.S. Market, 1977-1989" (October 1992) compares price and profits behavior over time of U.S. and Japanese-built cars sold in the U.S.

"The U.S. Market for Automobiles: Increasing Returns to Scale and the Sensitivity of Price to Exchange Rates and Other Costs" (May 1993) shows how declining average costs and cost indivisibilities can render tariffs ineffective, though not quotas, and result in prices in separable markets being lower in the importing market than the exporting market or differing by less than the shipping costs between these markets, and make prices less sensitive to cost changes.

"Increasing Returns to Scale and Implications for Market Structure In the U.S. Market for Small Cars" (April 1994) models the U.S. small-car market and calibrates the model with data from 1977-1989.

### **Awards:**

2001 National Association of Economic Educators Rookie of the Year

2002 Money \$mart Award (Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and Illinois State Treasurer's Office)