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Econ 496/895

HW #1 *(please **type**)*

Undergraduates: Answer any FIVE questions.

Grad Students: Answer any FOUR questions, plus the Graduate-Level Question.

All-Level Questions (*answers should be 1 page, double-spaced*)

1. Name a *non-educational* industry where you think signaling is important. Who's signaling, what are they trying to signal, and how do they do it?

2. Use conformity signaling to explain the long-run persistence of a specific, seemingly dysfunctional practice.

3. Pick one of the main reasons why "Signaling 'Simply Doesn't Make Sense" (chapter 1). Argue that the reason is more compelling than Caplan claims.

4. Pick one of the main puzzles from "Riddle Me This" (chapter 1). Argue that the puzzle is less informative than Caplan claims.

5. List all the classes you took in the last two semesters. Rate them by "usefulness" using Caplan's classifications, and explain your rationale, class-by-class.

6. If you were a human capital purist, how would you respond to Caplan's evidence on measured learning? Be specific.

7. Pick one class you've taken. How much of what you learned in this class have you transferred to real life? What specific factors prevented you from transferring more? How could you start doing better?

8. How much does education genuinely increase human intelligence? Whatever your answer, reference the evidence in "Making You Smarter" when you make your case.

9. "Caplan ignores the effects of education on discipline and socialization." Why would someone believe this? How would Caplan respond?

10. By most measures, college is now really easy. Why then does graduation remain so lucrative?

Graduate-Level Question (*answer should be 2 pages, double-spaced*)

Pick one research literature Caplan builds upon in Chapter 2. Read any three of the papers Caplan cites in this area. Based on your reading, carefully assess the fairness and accuracy of Caplan's use of the evidence.