

DANIELLE GRAVES WILLIAMSON

264 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215 USA
Cell: (251) 654-1146
Email: dcgw@bu.edu
Web site: daniellecgw.github.io

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, May 2026 (expected)
Dissertation Committee: James Feigenbaum, Robert Margo, Kevin Lang, Joshua Goodman, Martin Fiszbein

M.A., Political Economy, Boston University, Boston, MA, 2023

B.A., Economics (*Cum Laude*), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 2014

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Labor Economics, Economic History, Economics of Education, Public Economics

WORKING PAPERS

“[Southern Academies: The Proliferation of All-White Private Schools after *Brown* and Their Legacy for Students](#),” (with Jennifer Withrow), October 2025. Job Market paper.
“[How Backlash in Schools Shaped the Political Evolution of People and Places: Evidence from All-White Private Schools](#),” (with Michael Holcomb), September 2025.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Immigration Policy and Party” (joint with James Feigenbaum, Maxwell Palmer, and Benjamin Schmeer)
“Divorce and Retirement” (joint with Rachel Vogt)
“The Women’s Ku Klux Klan and Education in the 1920s” (joint with Peter Nencka)
“A Key to the Schoolroom Door: Race and Gender in the School Segregation Movement”
“LLM-inating the Past: Historical Directory Digitization at Scale” (joint with Peter Nencka)

PRIOR PUBLICATIONS

“A Model of a Firm’s Decision to Invert,” *Journal of Undergraduate Research in Finance*, (2018) 7.

PRESENTATIONS

American Economics Association, 2026*
Economic History Association Conference, 2023, 2025
Southern Economic Association Conference, 2023, 2024, 2025*
Association for Public Policy and Management, 2024, 2025*
NBER Summer Institute: Development of the American Economy (poster), 2025
Association for Education Finance and Policy, 2025
Vanderbilt Economic History Research Network, 2024
NBER Race and Stratification Working Group, 2024
Bowdoin College (invited seminar), 2025*
Economic History Lunch (Yale), 2023, 2025
Graduate Workshop in Economic History (BU-Harvard), 2023, 2024, 2025

Financial Management Association Annual Meeting, 2018

**scheduled*

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Dissertation Fellowship, NAEd/Spencer Foundation, 2025-2026

Early Stage Dissertation Grant, Economic History Association, 2024

Stone Research Grant,* Stone Program, 2024

Institute for Economic Development Research Grant, Boston University, 2023, 2025

Best Second Year Paper Award, Boston University, 2022-2023

Mark J. Bertus Prize for Best Paper, Journal of Undergraduate Research in Finance, 2018

Phi Beta Kappa, Vanderbilt University, 2018

Cornelius Vanderbilt Scholarship, Vanderbilt University, 2014-2018

**awarded to coauthor for joint project*

APPOINTMENTS

Staff Economist, Council of Economic Advisers, August 2024-February 2025

WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for James Feigenbaum, Boston University, 2021-2022, 2023

Research Assistant for Olivia Chi and Andrew Bacher-Hicks, Boston University, 2023

Research Assistant for Trevon Logan, NBER, 2023

Data Scientist, Red Ventures, 2019-2020

Data Analyst, Red Ventures, 2018-2019

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Tutorial Leader, The Evolution of Segregation and Education, Department of Economics,
Boston University, Spring 2024

CLEARANCES

U.S. Census Bureau Special Sworn Status

CITIZENSHIP: United States

COMPUTER SKILLS: R, STATA, SQL, LaTeX, QGIS, Python

REFERENCES

Professor James Feigenbaum

Department of Economics

Boston University

Phone: (617) 353-4396

Email: jamesf@bu.edu

Professor Kevin Lang

Department of Economics

Boston University

Phone: (617) 353-5694

Email: lang@bu.edu

Professor Robert Margo

Department of Economics

Boston University

Phone: (617) 358-6819

Email: margora@bu.edu

Professor Joshua Goodman

Department of Economics

Boston University

Phone: (917) 439-7907

Email: edecjosh@bu.edu

DANIELLE GRAVES WILLIAMSON

Southern Academies: The Proliferation of All-White Private Schools After Brown and Their Legacy for Students (Job Market Paper)

(with Jennifer Withrow)

We examine the consequences of White backlash to the public school integration movement. White segregationists responded to the erosion of the *de jure* racial hierarchy by organizing private academies to enforce *de facto* segregation. We create a novel data set to describe the growth of these schools, identifying over 650 schools established in the 1960s and 70s in the Southeastern United States. We estimate that the establishment of a segregation academy caused large and persistent declines in White public school enrollment, decreased public school integration, and eroded local and state funding for public education. However, federal funding backstopped these declines; ultimately, per pupil public school funding increased for remaining public school students. To measure the long-run impacts on educational attainment and employment, we combine our data set of segregation academies with large-scale restricted survey and administrative data. Using a cohort identification strategy, we find no effects on the educational attainment and employment of Black students, but negative effects on White students. This evidence suggests White families may have sacrificed educational quality in order to maintain racial segregation.

How Backlash in Schools Shaped the Political Evolution of People and Places: Evidence from All-White Private Schools

(with Michael Holcomb)

Institutionalized backlash may mediate social progress by preserving cultural norms among a younger generation. We study the impact of exposure to all-White private schools, which were established to circumvent school integration, on party affiliation and racial attitudes in adulthood. We link a newly-digitized, state-wide data set of yearbooks to voter registration records and find exposure to a segregation academy significantly increases the likelihood of that a White male will register as a Republican (conditional on registering to vote). Using survey data, we find no accompanying shift in conservative racial attitudes, but an increase in racism. Turning to the impact of segregation academies on places, we use difference-in-differences designs around the openings of segregation academies, we find a suggestive contemporaneous shift away from the Democratic party in treated counties emerging in the medium-run. We conclude that segregation academies entrenched a culture of racial division in places that otherwise would have made steps toward integration.

Immigration Policy and Party

(with James Feigenbaum, Maxwell Palmer, and Benjamin Schneer)

We use a regression discontinuity design that compares narrowly-elected Democrats and Republicans across congressional districts from the 51st to 116th Congress to identify the causal effect of party on congressional action on immigration. We measure immigration positions through two channels: roll call votes on legislation that concerns immigration and the sentiment tone of immigration-related floor speeches from Card et al. 2022. Our results reveal substantial and growing partisan polarization on immigration policy. Democrats are 12.5 to 15 percentage points more likely than Republicans to vote in favor of pro-immigration legislation, with this gap widening significantly over time.