

William Walker Hanlon

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January 18, 2026

Professional positions:

Gerald F. and Marjorie G. Fitzgerald Associate Professor of Economics, *Northwestern University and Harvey Kapnick Associate Professor of Business Institutions* 2023-
Associate Professor of History (by courtesy), *Northwestern University* 2023-
Co-Director, *Northwestern Center for Economic History* 2021-
Research Associate, *NBER* 2023-
Research Associate, *CEPR* 2019-

Previous positions:

Associate Professor, *Northwestern University Economics Dept. (without tenure)* 2021-2023
Assistant Professor, *NYU Stern School of Business* 2017-2021
Kenen Fellow/Visiting Assistant Professor, *Princeton University* 2016-2017
Assistant Professor, *UCLA Department of Economics* 2012-2017
Faculty Research Fellow, *NBER* 2013-2023
Research Associate, *California Center for Population Research* 2012-2017

Education:

Ph.D. Economics (*with distinction*) Columbia University 2012
M.Phil. Economics Columbia University 2009
M.A. Economics Columbia University 2008
B.A. Economics Stanford University 2004

Research fields:

Primary: Economic History
Secondary: Gender, Political Economy, Urban Economics, Innovation/Growth, Environmental

Citizenship: United States of America

Books:

The Laissez-Faire Experiment, September 2024. Princeton: *Princeton University Press*.

Published and accepted papers:

“The Rise of the Engineer: Inventing the Professional Inventor During the Industrial Revolution,” (2025), *Economic Journal*, 135(670), 1749-1781. Editor’s Choice article.

“London Fog: A Century of Pollution and Mortality, 1866-1965,” (2024), *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 106(4), 910-923.

“Historical Newspaper Data: A Researcher’s Guide and Toolkit,” (2023) with Brian Beach. *Explorations in Economic History*, vol. 90.

- “Culture and the Historical Fertility Transition,” (2023), with Brian Beach. *Review of Economic Studies*, 90(4), 1669-1700.
- “Spillover Effects of IP Protection in the Interwar Aircraft Industry,” (2022), with Taylor Jaworski. *Economic Journal*, 132(645), 1824-1851.
- “Recessions, Mortality and Migration Bias: Evidence from the Lancashire Cotton Famine,” (2022) with Vellore Arthi and Brian Beach. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 14(2), 228-55.
- “History and Urban Economics,” (2022), with Stephan Heblich. *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, vol. 94.
- “Temperature, Disease, and Death in London: Analyzing Weekly Data for the Century from 1866-1965,” 2021, with Casper Worm Hansen and Jake Kantor. *Journal of Economic History*, 81(1), 40-80.
- “The Persistent Effect of Temporary Input Cost Advantages in Shipbuilding, 1850-1911,” December, 2020. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 18(6), 3137-3209.
- “Coal Smoke, City Growth, and the Costs of the Industrial Revolution,” February 2020, *Economic Journal*, 130(626), 462-488.
- “Skilled Immigrants and American Industrialization: Lessons from the Shipyards,” *Business History Review*, 2018, 92(4), 605-632.
- “Coal Smoke and Mortality in an Early Industrial Economy,” November 2018, with Brian Beach *Economic Journal*, 128(615), 2652-2675.
- “Agglomeration: A Long-Run Panel Data Approach,” May 2017, with Antonio Miscio *Journal of Urban Economics*, 99, 1-14.
- “Temporary Shocks and Persistent Effects in Urban Economies: Evidence from British Cities after the U.S. Civil War”, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, March 2017, 99(1), 67-79.
- “Necessity is the Mother of Invention: Input Supplies and Directed Technical Change,” *Econometrica*, January 2015, 83(1), 67-100.
- “Killer Cities: Past and Present,” with Yuan Tian. *American Economic Review: Paper & Proceedings*, 2015, 105(5), pp. 570-575.
- “Do Better Monitoring Institutions Increase Leadership Quality in Community Organizations? Evidence from Uganda,” with Guy Grossman, *American Journal of Political Science*, 2014, 58(3), pp. 669-686.

Working papers:

- “Politician Profits in Turbulent Times: Evidence from MP Returns During Britain’s Return to the Gold Standard” with Pamfili Antipa, December 2025.
- “A Penny for Your Thoughts,” with Stephan Heblich, Ferdinando Monte and Martin Schmitz, December 2021.

“How Much Influence Does Government Have Over the Legislative Agenda? Evidence from the U.K., 1810-2004,” January 2023.

“Innovation Networks in the Industrial Revolution,” July 2024, with Carl Hallmann and Lukas Rosenberger.

“Prostitution Regulation and the Fight Against Sexually Transmitted Infections Before Modern Medicine,” with Grant Goehring, May 2025. R&R at **Review of Economics and Statistics**.

“Constituent-Representative Interaction Outside of Elections: Theory and Evidence from the Early U.K. Women's Rights Movement,” with Grant Goehring, May 2025.

“Imagined Communities? Print Media and Identity in the Age of Nation-State Formation,” with Netanel Ben-Porath, May 2024.

Other Writing:

“Economic Warfare: The American Civil War” with Paul Rhode and Hugh Rockoff, in *Economic Warfare and Sanctions Since 1688*, Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, eds. Cambridge University Press, December 2025.

“Suffrage,” in *Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*, Jeffrey A. Jenkins and Jared Rubin eds. Oxford University Press, April 2024.

Book review of *The Pox of Liberty: How the Constitution Left America Rich, Free, and Prone to Infection*. by Werner Troesken. Dec. 2016. *Journal of Economic History*, v. 76, no. 4, pp. 1240-1242.

“Scarcity and Innovation: Lessons from the British Cotton Textile Industry in the U.S. Civil War,” in *Scarcity in the Modern World*, edited by J. Brewer, N. Fromer, FA Jonsson and F Trentman. Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Research grants:

NSF CAREER grant (\$416,435)	2016-2022
California Center for Population Research Seed Grant	2014-2015
UCLA COR Faculty Research Grant	2013-2014
UCLA Center for Economic History Research Grant	2013-2014
PEDL Exploratory Grant (CEPR)	2013-2014
UCLA Ziman Center Research Fellowships	2012, 13, 14, 15
Columbia University CIBER Research Grant	2011
Economic History Association Exploratory Data and Travel Grant	2010
NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant	2010-2011

Department and University Service:

Junior Hiring Committee Member, Northwestern	2023-5
Senior Applied Hiring Committee Member, Northwestern	2023-5
Posner Fellow Mentor, Northwestern	Summer 2023
NYU Stern First Generation Student Mentor	2019, 2020
Ph.D. Admissions, NYU Stern	2017, 2018, 2019
Ph.D. Admissions, UCLA	2013, 2014, 2015
NYU First Generation Student Mentor	2019-

Teaching:

Topics in Economic History (PhD), Northwestern University	2025-
Western Economic History (undergraduate), Northwestern University	2021-
Microeconomics (undergraduate), NYU Stern	2018, 19, 20
Urban Economics, Princeton	Spring 2016
Introduction to Urban Economics, UCLA	2013 (x2), 14, 15
European Economic History (PhD Level), UCLA	2012, 13, 14, 15
<i>Fiat Lux</i> Seminar “A History of Health in Cities” UCLA	2015
<i>Fiat Lux</i> Seminar “Is the Patent System Working?” UCLA	2013
<i>*Won UCLA Economics Department’s Warren C. Scoville Distinguished Teaching Award (Spring 2013)</i>	

Professional service:

Journal of Economic History editor search committee	2025
Associate Editor, Journal of Economic History	2024-
NBER DAE Group Steering Committee	2025-
Economic History Association nominations committee	2023
Economic History Association conference program committee	2023
Urban Economics Association at-large board member	2022-
NBER Summer Institute Organizer, DAE Program	2018, 2019
Urban Economics Association Conference Organizing Committee	2018, 2019, 2020
Urban Economics Association Graduate Student Prize Committee	2018, 2019, 2020

Fellowships:

UCLA Hellman Fellow	2014-2015
Kauffman Dissertation Fellowship	2011-2012
Economic History Association Graduate Dissertation Fellowship	2011-2012
AMID Fellowship, London School of Economics	Spring 2011
Mellon Graduate Fellowship	2009-2011
Columbia Institute of Latin American Studies Travel Fellowship	Summer 2009
National Science Foundation IGERT Fellowship	2007-2009
Columbia University Faculty Fellowship	2006-2007

Referee service:

Journal of Economic History, Refereeing Award, 2018
Economic Journal, Refereeing Award, 2020

Aerosol and Air Quality Research	Journal of Economic Geography
American Economic Review	Journal of Economic History
AEJ Applied	Journal of Industrial Economics
AEJ Microeconomics	Journal of International Economics
AEJ Macroeconomics	Journal of Political Economy
American Journal of Agricultural Economics	JPE: Micro
American Journal of Political Science	Journal of Public Economics
Econometrica	Journal of the European Economic Assoc.
Economics and Human Biology	Journal of Urban Economics
Economic History Review	Quarterly Journal of Economics
Economic Journal	Quarterly Journal of Political Science
European Review of Economic History	Review of Economics and Statistics
Explorations in Economic History	Review of Economic Studies
International Economic Review	RAND Journal of Economics
Journal of Cultural Economics	Regional Science and Urban Economics
Journal of Development Economics	Review of World Economics

Past experience:

Intern, United Nations ECLAC, Mexico City Office	<i>Summer 2009</i>
Research Assistant, Prof. Eric Verhoogen, Columbia University	<i>Summer 2008</i>
Economic Consultant, Bates White, LLC	<i>2004 - 2006</i>
Intern, World Bank, Bangkok, Thailand Office	<i>Summer 2003</i>
Research Assistant, Prof. Bruce Blonigen, University of Oregon	<i>2001- 2002</i>

Presentations (completed and scheduled):

2026: UCLA, Uppsala University, Stockholm University, Tor Vergata University of Rome, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (Pisa), CERGE-EI Prague, Mountain West Conference (Utah State University)

2025: Paris School of Economics (book talk), University of Mannheim/CEPR Conference (Heidelberg), University of Toronto, NBER SI Political Economy Meeting, Historical Political Economy Conference (USC)

2024: Harvard (book talk), CEPR Economic History Symposium (Dublin), CAGE Venice Frontiers in Economic History Conference, LSE Workshop on Institutions and Political Economy in Historical Perspective, NBER Summer Institute DAE Meeting, NBER Summer Institute Gender Meeting, Vanderbilt University, Nicolas Crafts Memorial Seminar (Warwick)

2023: University of Mannheim, Chicago Federal Reserve, MIT Sloan, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Econometric Society Winter Meeting

2022: NBER Summer Institute (DAE group), Stanford (Economics), Stanford (Hoover Institute), Notre Dame, University of Wisconsin, University of Arizona, Washington Area Economic History Seminar, International Macro History Online Seminar

2021: Brown, Clark University, Harvard Business School (BGIE group), Economic History Society Annual Conference, LSE Economic History, Marquette University

2020: NBER Summer Institute (DAE)

2019: Colorado, McGill, Norwegian School of Economics, Philadelphia Federal Reserve, University of Buffalo, Vanderbilt

2018: Chicago Booth, CITE, Colgate, Columbia Economic History Seminar, ITAM, George Mason, George Washington, Georgetown, LSE, Michigan, Lund University, Oxford, Simon Fraser, University of Victoria, University of Virginia, Williams College, UCLA, Harvard Cities and Development Conference, Economic History Society Annual Conference, World Economic History Congress, Urban Economics Association Conference

2017: Auburn, Berkeley, CEMFI, Chicago, Copenhagen, Essex, Florida State, Michigan State, Paris School of Economics, Princeton, UIUC, All-UC Economic History Conference, CAGE Summer School (Warwick), NBER DAE Spring Meeting, UEA European Meeting, SED Conference

2016: Yale, NYU Marron Institute, NBER Summer Institute (Urban), University of Toronto, Queens University (Canada), Arizona, Arizona State, Boston University, Brown, NYU Stern, Wharton Real Estate, Warwick, LSE Economic History, Bristol, Cambridge, University of Southern Denmark, University of Montreal, USC, ASSA Annual Meeting, World Bank/GWU Conference on Urbanization and Poverty Reduction

2015: Princeton, Duke, Caltech, Carnegie Mellon, Toulouse School of Economics, Grantham Institute (LSE), NBER Summer Institute (DAE), SITE Conference (Stanford), Rensselaer Polytechnic, SED Annual Conference, Population Association of America Meetings, ASSA Meetings, Economic History Society Meetings, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Economic History Association Annual Meeting, World Economic History Congress, UC Irvine Urban Economics Day

2014: Stanford, UC Davis, Harvard, UC Merced, UC San Diego, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, NBER Productivity Spring Meeting, NBER Summer Institute (Urban), Urban Economics Association

2013: Vanderbilt, Philadelphia Federal Reserve Bank, UC Berkeley, LSE, Trinity College Dublin, Oxford, UC Riverside, UC Irvine, Caltech, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, NBER Summer Institute (DAE group), EIT Conference

2012: USC, Wisconsin, Yale, Stanford, Northwestern, Penn State New Faces in International Trade Conference, University of Michigan, Harvard Business School, Brown, Johns Hopkins SAIS, University of British Columbia, UC Berkeley Haas Business School, UCLA, IIES, CREI/Pompeu Fabra, University of Warwick, Rimini Conference in Economics and Finance, NBER Summer Institute (ITI and IPE groups)

2011: Sciences Po, Paris School of Economics, London School of Economics EOPP Seminar, LSE Economic History Seminar, Urban Economics Association Annual Conference, Economic History Association Annual Conference, MOOD Conference at EIEF Rome, LSE Spatial Economics Research Center Conference, Royal Economic Society Annual Meeting, Brooks World Poverty Center Manchester Graduate Summer School

Doctoral awards:

Wueller Pre-dissertation Award for best proposal by a 4 th year student Columbia University Economics Department	<i>December 2009</i>
Vickery Award for best paper by a 3 rd year student Columbia University Economics Department	<i>July 2009</i>
Wueller Award (runner-up) for best research proposal by a 3 rd year student Columbia University Economics Department	<i>January 2009</i>
Sobieski Honors Thesis Award for Creative Thinking in Economics Stanford Economics Department	<i>June 2004</i>

Graduate students with first placement

Carlos Hernandez (UCLA) – Universidad de los Andes, Assistant professor
Bang Nguyen (NYU Stern) – University of Bayreuth, Post-doc
Jake Kantor (NYU Stern) – SEC
Youn Baek (NYU Stern) – NYU Stern Finance, Post-doc
Carl Hallmann (Northwestern) – Jane Street
Kelly Gail Strada (Northwestern) – Uber
Megumi Murakami (Northwestern) – University of Tokyo (teaching track)

Current students (3rd year and above)

Micah Villarreal

Chris Sims

Sergio Eduardo Lopez-Ariaza Bejar

Myera Rashid

Michael Giordano

Nicole Saito

Netanel Ben-Porath

Franco Malpasi

Yifan Mao

Davis Kedrosky

Center for Economic History Post-doc

Northwestern Econ, 6th year

Northwestern Kellogg MECS, 5th year

Northwestern Econ, 5th year

Northwestern Kellogg MECS, 4th year

Northwestern Econ, 4th year

Northwestern Econ, 4th year

Northwestern Econ, 4th year

Northwestern Econ, 3rd year

Northwestern Econ, 3rd year