



CURRICULUM VITAE

Deborah Lynn Guber

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Deborah Lynn Guber
Associate Professor of Political Science
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EDUCATION

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Ph.D. in Political Science, May 1996

M.Phil., November 1992

M.A., May 1992

Dissertation: "Rethinking Environmentalism: Ecology, Public Opinion, and Mass Political Behavior" (Donald P. Green and John P. Wargo, advisors)

Ph.D. Examination Fields:

- American Politics
- Empirical Analysis and Research Methodology, with distinction
- Public Policy, with distinction

Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts

A.B. in Government and Economics, *magna cum laude*, May 1990

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont

Associate Professor (with tenure), Department of Political Science, 2004-present

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, 1998-2004

Affiliate, Gund Institute for Environment, 2019-present

Introductory classes: The American Political System (including a writing intensive seminar and a version taught solely online)

100-level classes: Political Parties and Elections

200-level seminars: Topics in Public Opinion
Public Opinion and Voting Behavior
Environmentalism and Its Critics
Senior Honors Seminar

Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Government and Legal Studies, 1996-1998

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Teaching Fellow, 1992-1996

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Public opinion, political behavior, U.S. elections, and environmental politics.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Up and Down with Climate: Extreme Weather Events and the Issue-Attention Cycle
Deborah Lynn Guber, Meredith T. Niles and Thomas Wentworth

Despite an accumulation of scientific evidence on both the causes and consequences of climate change, public opinion has shifted little over time. A majority of Americans believe that the problem is real, that its effects will happen within their lifetime, and that human activity is the dominant cause, but those attitudes are neither strong nor salient—likened by some to water sloshing in a shallow pan. As David Leonhardt wrote recently in *The New York Times*: “If vast amounts of scientific evidence—and a consensus in nearly every other country—have not persuaded Americans to take on climate change, maybe the grim march of extreme weather finally will.” In this paper, we use organic data drawn from Google Trends as an alternative to

conventional measures of issue salience in polls to see whether or not internet search queries related to climate change increase in volume during (and after) extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, heat waves, and droughts, and use those results to explore implications for climate policy and communication. Despite a surge in media attention in recent years attributing the frequency and intensity of storms to broader changes in climate, we find little evidence that average citizens connect the two. Instead, the issue-attention cycle on climate continues to be dictated largely by political events—from Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth” to the infamous “climategate” memos and President Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement—in short, events that do little to bridge, and often deepen, the partisan divide.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

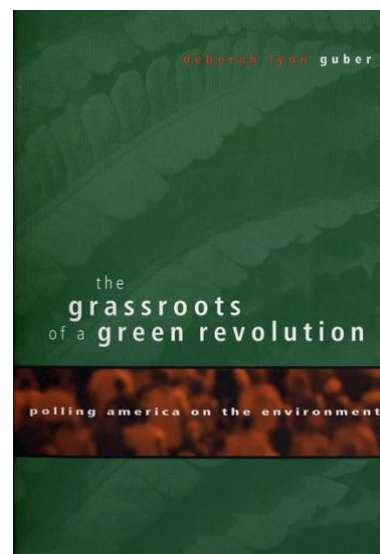
Deborah Lynn Guber. 2003. *The Grassroots of a Green Revolution: Polling America on the Environment*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 279 pages.

Peer-reviewed

SUMMARY: Since the first Earth Day in 1970, environmentalism has become woven into the fabric of American life. Concern for environmental quality has spawned extraordinary changes in how we think, work, and recreate, in what we buy, and how we govern. But popular consensus on the environment is more complicated than it appears. The real question is no longer whether Americans side with environmentalism, but rather what kind of commitment they bring to the table. This book argues that understanding public opinion—the grassroots of the “green” revolution—is essential to sustaining genuine environmental progress. The long-term success of the environmental movement will be measured not only by its legislative achievements, but by its ability to persuade average Americans to back up their words with action, and to further alter their voting patterns, buying habits, and lifestyles.

The Grassroots of a Green Revolution uses polling data from a wide variety of sources to explore the myths, inconsistencies and tensions that characterize public thinking on environmental issues. The book defines and describes key characteristics of public opinion—including direction, strength, stability, distribution, and consistency—and traces the way in which those qualities influence the behavior of citizens and consumers alike. In the end, that body of evidence is used to weigh the significance of environmental concern within the arena of U.S. politics and policymaking, and to provide pragmatic advice for decisionmakers in their efforts to motivate Americans to act in an environmentally responsible way.

Reviews of this book were published in the following journals: *Perspectives on Politics*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Journal of Environment and Development*, *Society and Natural Resources*, *Rural Sociology*, *Environmental Politics*, *Political Science*, and *Quarterly Review of Biology*.



Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2021. "Public Opinion and the Classical Tradition: Redux in the Digital Age," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 85 (4): forthcoming.

ABSTRACT: In the 21st century, digital trace data has the potential to offer rich insight into complex behaviors that were once out of reach, but its use raises vital questions about what is—or is not—public opinion. Inspired by a seminal article by Paul Lazarsfeld, published in *Public Opinion Quarterly* in 1957, this essay revisits the discipline's historical roots and finds that there is much to gain in reading the work of early scholars such as James Bryce, Lindsay Rogers, Herbert Blumer and more. Prior to the advent of survey research, public opinion was conceived as something inherently social and conversational. The summation of individual attitudes, especially those weighted equally and expressed anonymously in polls, was precisely what public opinion was *not*. In the digital age, the insights of this earlier "classical tradition" offer two pathways forward. First, for those who criticize computational social science as poorly theorized, it provides a strong justification for the work that data scientists do in text mining and sentiment analysis. And second, it offers clues for how emerging technologies might be used most effectively in the future. Ultimately, digital trace data work best, not when it attempts to reproduce the representative qualities of a poll, but when it is used to gain leverage over questions that polls are ill-suited to address.

Deborah Lynn Guber, Jeremiah Bohr, and Riley E. Dunlap. 2021. "'Time to Wake Up': Climate Change Advocacy in a Polarized Congress, 1996-2015." *Environmental Politics*, 30 (4): 538-558. DOI: 10.1080/09644016.2020.1786333. Published online: July 7, 2020.

ABSTRACT: Scholars who study the failure of climate change policy in the United States tend to focus on the mechanics of denial and the coordinated efforts of political operatives, conservative think tanks, and partisan news outlets to cast doubt on what has become overwhelming scientific consensus. In contrast, this work seeks to address a factor that has been understudied until now—the role of climate change advocacy in the U.S. Congress. Using quantitative text analysis on a corpus of floor speeches published in the Congressional Record between 1996 and 2015, we find notable differences in the language partisans use. Democrats communicate in ways that are message-based, emphasizing the weight of scientific evidence, while Republicans tend towards a softer, cue-based narrative based on anecdotes and storytelling. We end with a discussion of what climate change advocates can hope to accomplish through the "politics of talk," especially in an age of heightened polarization.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2013. "A Cooling Climate for Change? Party Polarization and the Politics of Global Warming." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57 (1): 93-115. doi:10.1177/0002764212463361

ABSTRACT: Analysis of three cross-sectional polls administered by the Gallup Organization at 10-year intervals—in 1990, 2000, and 2010—demonstrates that partisan identification has become an increasingly important determinant of environmental concern within the American mass public. Polarization on global warming is especially clear, even when compared to a variety of other social, economic, and political problems, but party sorting seems to occur only as citizens acquire information and become familiar with elite cues. The implications of this for the U.S. environmental movement and the strategies it employs are discussed.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2010. "'Make of Them Grand Parks, Owned in Common': The Role of Newspaper Editorials in Promoting the Adirondack Park, 1864-1894." *Journal of Policy History*, 22 (4): 423-449. doi:10.1017/S0898030610000217

ABSTRACT: Scholars have long viewed the creation of public parks in the 19th century as a reflection of American democratic ideals. A commitment to egalitarianism on the one hand meant that natural wonders could be set aside for the use and enjoyment of all people, not just for the wealthy few, or for royalty. Meanwhile, institutions governed by popular sovereignty reminded lawmakers that growing public demands for forest preservation should be heeded. Yet according to some environmental historians (such as Roderick Nash), parks and democracy are more than compatible ideas; they connect in ways that are explicitly causal. This paper explores what might be called the “democracy thesis” through a narrative case study of the Adirondack Park. A content analysis of 19th century newspaper editorials published in New York between 1864 and 1894 reveals that democratic rhetoric was frequently invoked in support of the creation of a public park in the Adirondacks, but that argument ultimately had little influence on state legislators. Not only does Nash overemphasize consensus on democratic norms and traditions, he overlooks important class and regional conflicts that continue to shape the tension between conservation and preservation today.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2001. “Voting Preferences and the Environment in the American Electorate.” *Society & Natural Resources*, 14 (6): 455-469. doi:10.1080/08941920119043

ABSTRACT: Despite evidence of a growing environmental consensus in the United States, students of electoral politics have long debated the political significance of environmentalism by noting the near absence of this issue from national political campaigns. Unfortunately, with only limited survey data available in the past, the few studies to address environmental voting did more to report a deficiency than to explain why it should be the case. In this study I use 1996 National Election Study (NES) data to examine the impact of environmental concern on attitudes toward American political parties and their candidates. Data results on issue positions and proximities confirm that while environmental issues represent a strength of the Democratic ticket, those issues seldom shape individual vote preferences for three reasons: (1) low issue salience; (2) small perceived differences between candidates on matters of environmental policy; and (3) the tendency of environmental concern to cut across traditional (and more powerful) cleavages, including partisan identification.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2001. “Environmental Voting in the American States: A Tale of Two Initiatives.” *State & Local Government Review*, 33 (2): 120-132. doi:10.1177/0160323X0103300204

ABSTRACT: Students of electoral behavior on statewide ballot propositions have long suspected that in the absence of typical cues and informational shortcuts, voters are more dependent on political campaigns to simplify choice and shape electoral decisions. This article uses survey data from two prominent and contrasting case studies in California and Massachusetts to test that hypothesis by examining the importance of issue framing in initiative campaigns. In the end, results suggest that while factors such as campaign spending may be important in understanding the broad conditions under which these measures succeed or fail, it is sometimes the content of the message that matters most.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1999. “Getting What You Pay For: The Debate Over Equity in Public School Expenditures.” *Journal of Statistics Education*, 7 (2).

ABSTRACT: Using data from the 1997 *Digest of Education Statistics*, this teaching case addresses the relationship between public school expenditures and academic performance, as measured by the SAT. While an initial scatterplot shows that SAT performance is lower, on average, in high-spending states than in low-spending states, this statistical relationship is misleading because of an omitted variable. Once the percentage of students taking the exam is controlled for, the relationship between spending and

performance reverses to become both positive and statistically significant. This exercise is ideally suited for classroom discussion in an elementary statistics or research methods course, giving students an opportunity to test common assumptions made in the news media regarding equity in public school expenditures.

NOTE: The dataset I developed for this article has been reprinted in the following texts: *Statistical Methods for Psychology*, 5th ed., by David C. Howell (Duxbury/Thomson Learning, 2002); *A Visual Approach to SPSS for Windows: A Guide to SPSS 15.0*, by Leonard Stern (Allyn & Bacon, 2007); and *Applied Statistics: Regression and Analysis of Variance* by H.B. Lawal and F. Famoye (University Press of America, 2013).

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1996. "Environmental Concern and the Dimensionality Problem: A New Approach to an Old Predicament." *Social Science Quarterly*, 77 (3): 644-662.

ABSTRACT: Objective. Much previous work in the field of survey research has puzzled over modest bivariate correlations between different environmental measures, suggesting that public attitudes on the environment are rather crude, disconnected, and narrowly focused. Using 1991 Gallup data, the purpose of this research is to present a methodological critique and reevaluation of the literature on the dimensionality of environmental concern. Methods. Given the frequent, yet problematic, use of environmental batteries that ask respondents to express opinions using a common response format, this paper uses confirmatory factor analysis to correct for both random and nonrandom sources of measurement error. Results. Data results suggest that not only can the standard environmental battery used by Gallup be reduced to relatively few latent factors, those factors are themselves strongly correlated across a diverse set of environmental issues, as well as among several broad idea elements thought to define environmental concern. Conclusions. While current results offer compelling evidence of the near unidimensionality of environmental attitudes, and of the willingness of many Americans to express concern for environmental quality, ultimately dimensionality alone may be insufficient proof that public attitudes on the environment have matured into a sophisticated and constrained social paradigm or belief system.

Chapters in Edited Volumes

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2017. "Partisan Cueing and Polarization in Public Opinion about Climate Change." In, *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science*. New York: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.306.

Invited contribution; peer-reviewed; 45 pages

ABSTRACT: Despite an accumulation of scientific evidence on both the causes and consequences of climate change, U.S. public opinion on the subject has splintered sharply along party lines. While a vast majority of Democrats now believe that global warming is real, that its effects will happen within their lifetime, and that human activity is the dominant cause, Republicans have grown increasingly skeptical, creating a yawning gap that complicates efforts to communicate the urgency of the problem and the need for aggressive action.

When attitudes harden and diverge, it is often driven by the behavior of political elites, who shape the frames and mental models that people use to interpret events. Scholars have long observed that people resort instinctively to heuristics to ease the burden of making decisions, especially on issues like climate, where there is an obvious disconnect between scientific understanding and mass competence. Those cues, however, are often unreliable and prone to cognitive bias. When voters act upon signals provided by their

preferred political party and by selective exposure to preferred media outlets, they may do so mechanically, with little regard for the accuracy of the evidence that they receive, or they may ignore and distort information in a way that reinforces preexisting assumptions.

In the end, beliefs about climate change are as complex as the issue itself, which suggests that awareness of the problem and an understanding of its effects will not translate automatically—or even easily—into increased concern, issue salience, or policy preferences. The “pictures in our heads,” to borrow Walter Lippmann’s famous phrase, are shaped less by factual knowledge than by a variety of other factors more difficult to control—by personal experience and assorted real-world cues (such as the weather), but also by opinion leaders, media narratives, and political rhetoric, each of which provides a competing frame of reference with the power to filter and mislead. Because climate change has become so heavily laden with values and so absorbed into partisan identity, it will be nearly impossible to build social consensus through conventional means. Once a “hard” issue for all, which seemed to demand sophisticated calculation or technical expertise, it has now become an “easy” one for many, where the reactions that it prompts are familiar, stable, and symbolic, increasingly polarized, immune to rational argument, and vulnerable to manipulation by elites.

Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso. 2012. “Issue Framing, Agenda-Setting, and Environmental Discourse.” In *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Environmental Policy*, Michael E. Kraft and Sheldon Kamieniecki, editors. New York: Oxford University Press, 437-460.

Invited contribution

Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso. 2012. “High Hopes and Bitter Disappointment: Public Discourse and the Limits of the Environmental Movement in Climate Change Politics.” In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 8th edition. Norman J. Vig, and Michael E. Kraft, eds. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 54-82.

Invited contribution

Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso. 2009. “Past the Tipping Point: Debating the Future of Public Discourse on the Environment.” In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 7th edition. Norman J. Vig, and Michael E. Kraft, eds. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 51-74.

Invited contribution

Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso. 2007. “Framing ANWR: Citizens, Consumers, and the Privileged Position of Business.” In *Business and Environmental Policy: Corporate Interests in the American Political System*. Michael E. Kraft and Sheldon Kamieniecki, editors. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 35-60.

Invited contribution; peer-reviewed

Christopher J. Bosso and Deborah Lynn Guber. 2005. “Maintaining Presence: Environmental Advocacy and the Permanent Campaign.” In *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the*

Twenty-First Century, 6th edition. Norman J. Vig, and Michael E. Kraft, eds. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 78-99.

Invited contribution

Christopher J. Bosso and Deborah Lynn Guber. 2003. "The Boundaries and Contours of American Environmental Activism." In, *Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty-First Century*, 5th edition. Norman J. Vig, and Michael E. Kraft, eds. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 79-101.

Invited contribution

Working Papers

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1995. "Economic Voting in U.S. Elections: An Annotated Bibliography." *Institution for Social and Policy Studies Working Paper 95-01*. New Haven, CT: Yale University.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Deborah Lynn Guber, Meredith T. Niles, and Thomas Wentworth. 2019. "Up and Down with Climate: Extreme Weather Events and the Issue-Attention Cycle." *Annual Conference of the Northeast Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 7-9.

Deborah Lynn Guber, Jeremiah Bohr, and Riley E. Dunlap. 2019. "'Time to Wake Up!' Climate Advocacy in a Polarized Congress, 1996-2015." *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Washington, D.C., August 29 - September 1.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2019. "Public Opinion and the Classical Tradition: Redux in an Age of Big Data." *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portland, Maine, April 25-27.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2012. "Can Americans be Persuaded to Care about Climate Change?" *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, April 26-28.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2010. "A Cooling Climate for Change? Party Polarization and the Politics of Global Warming," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Washington, D.C., September 2-5.

Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso. 2005. "Framing ANWR: Citizens, Consumers and the Privileged Position of Business," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Washington, D.C., September 1-4.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2003. "Make of Them Grand Parks, Owned in Common': Public Opinion and the Democratic Ideal in the Adirondacks, 1864-1894," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, August 28-31.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 2001. "Up and Down With Ecology Revisited: The Stability of Public Attitudes Toward Environmental Spending, 1973-1998," *33rd Annual Conference of the Northeastern Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 8-10.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1999. "Issue Voting and the Environment in the American Electorate," *31st Annual Conference of the Northeastern Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 11-13.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1999. "Motivating the Citizen-Consumer: Environmental Values in the Voting Booth and the Marketplace," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*, Atlanta, Georgia, September 2-5.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1996. "Greenbacks or 'Green' Ballots? Environmental Voting on Statewide Ballot Propositions, 1964-1993," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Springfield, Massachusetts, May 3-4.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1995. "The Environment's Bottom Line: Evaluating 'Green' Voting Behavior in U.S. Elections," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portland, Maine, May 5-6.

Deborah Lynn Guber. 1995. "Measuring Environmentalism: Survey Research and the Dimensionality Problem," *49th Annual Conference of the New York State Political Science Association*, New York, New York, April 28-29.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Manuscript referee: *Oxford University Press, The MIT Press, American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, Environmental Politics, Journal of Politics, Nature Climate Change, Political Behavior, Political Research Quarterly, Public Opinion Quarterly, Social Forces, Social Science Quarterly, Society & Natural Resources, The Sociological Quarterly.*

External peer review committee member, Department of Political Science, The University of New Hampshire, 2018.

Workshop participant (by invitation), "Building Public & Political Will for Climate Action," Yale University, October 15-17, 2015.

Chapter delegate, Phi Beta Kappa Society's 44th Triennial Council, Denver, Colorado, October 8-10, 2015.

Advisory board member, Cengage Learning, 2014.

External peer review committee member, Department of Government, Smith College, 2014.

Roundtable panelist (by invitation), "Author Meets Critics: Zygmunt Plater's *The Snail Darter and the Dam*," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Woodstock, VT, April 24-26, 2014.

Grant proposal referee, Decision, Risk and Management Sciences Program, National Science Foundation, Washington, DC, 2004-2013.

Member of the Executive Council (elected), New England Political Science Association, 2010-2012.

Chair, committees to award the John C. Donovan prize for the best faculty paper, and the Robert C. Wood prize for the best graduate student paper at the New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2010-2011.

Chair, "The Politics of Economic Development, Public Policy, and Public Space," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Newport, RI, April 23-25, 2010.

Chair, committee to award the Robert C. Wood prize for the best graduate student paper at the New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 2009-2010.

Chair and discussant, "Urban Politics," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portland, Maine, May 7-9, 2009.

Consultant to the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 2005.

Workshop participant (by invitation), *Communicating Urgency, Facilitating Social Change: New Strategies for Climate Change*, sponsored by the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colorado, June 8-11, 2004.

Discussant, "Issues and Character in Elections," *35th Annual Conference of the Northeastern Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 6-8, 2003.

Chair, "Presidential Elections," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portland, Maine, May 3-4, 2002.

Chair and Discussant, "Issues in Legislative Politics," *33rd Annual Conference of the Northeastern Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 8-10, 2001.

Chair, "Public Opinion, Third Parties, and Political Speech," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, May 4-5, 2001.

Discussant, "New Perspectives on Voter Turnout," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, May 4-5, 2001.

Discussant, "Partisan Leadership and Scandal in the House of Representatives," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, Providence, Rhode Island, April 29-May 1, 1999.

Chair and Discussant, "Perspectives on Congressional Elections," *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, New London, Connecticut, May 2-3, 1997.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Member, Academic Integrity Council, The University of Vermont, 2014-present.

President, Alpha of Vermont chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, 2015-2017.

Register, Alpha of Vermont chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, 2013-2015.

Member, Educational and Research Technologies Committee of the Faculty Senate, The University of Vermont, 2009-2011.

Member, Honors College Scholarship Committee, The University of Vermont, 2006-2008.

Member, Academic Standing Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences, The University of Vermont, 2005-2008.

Member, Admissions Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences, The University of Vermont, 2001-2004.

Member, Academic Affairs Committee, The University of Vermont, Fall 2000.

ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS

Recipient, Robert C. Wood prize for best graduate student paper, *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, New London, Connecticut, May 2-3, 1997.

Recipient, Samuel Bowles prize, Smith College, 1990, for best thesis on an economics subject.

- Thesis topic: “Job Displacement and Labor Market Readjustment: An Analysis of the Cann & Saul Steel Company.”

Co-recipient, Sidney S. Cohen prize, Smith College, 1990, for outstanding work in the field of economics.

Recipient, Smith College Alumnae Association scholarship for graduate study, 1990.

Member, *Phi Beta Kappa*, Smith College, inducted 1989.

Participant, Jean Picker Semester-in-Washington Program, Smith College, 1988.

- Thesis topic: “Democracy and Foreign Policy: Power, the President, and Public Opinion.”
- Internship: Office of Congressman William H. Gray, III (D-PA), Washington, D.C.