



Northwestern University

news

# INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

INTERDISCIPLINARY • NONPARTISAN • POLICY RELEVANT

## White House, AAAS, Others Honor Faculty

Ten faculty recognized for scholarship and leadership

Ten IPR faculty have received distinguished awards and honors recently, including three who were elected to one of the nation's oldest and most distinguished societies of "thinkers and doers" and two who were recognized by President Barack Obama.



Six of the faculty honorees gather at IPR for an end-of-year celebration.

"These IPR faculty are all extraordinary researchers, mentors, and teachers," said IPR Director **Fay Lomax Cook**, professor of human development and social policy. "They have all made superb contributions to their particular fields within the social sciences and are richly deserving of these honors."

### New AAAS Fellows

The three IPR faculty most recently elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) are political

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Inside this Issue

- Faculty Grants & Books ... 2
- A Voice on Vouchers ... 3
- Research in Brief ... 4-5
- Working Papers ... 8-10
- Political Behavior .... 14-15

## Housing, Desegregation, and Opportunity

IPR briefing examines housing policies and outcomes



The policy research briefing panel takes questions from attendees: (from l.) Dorothy Roberts, Lincoln Quillian, Susan Popkin, Wesley Skogan, and Stefanie DeLuca.

At an IPR policy research briefing on April 30, four national experts weighed in on the persistence of segregation and the effects of housing policies that can be traced back to a series of court orders stemming from the 1966 *Gautreaux* lawsuit, including the 1976 Supreme Court decision that led to attempts to end racially discriminatory policies in Chicago public housing.

"So how has it all panned out? How have these families fared? Have these

programs really reduced segregation? Is concentrated poverty lower now than when the policies began?" asked IPR legal scholar **Dorothy Roberts**, who moderated the event.

### Why Segregation Still Matters

"People sometimes think that racial segregation has plummeted or disappeared," said IPR sociologist **Lincoln Quillian**, pointing to the gradual

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Sixteen Years of 'Onward & Upward'

Director Fay Lomax Cook to step down in August

As one of her first acts when she became director in 1996, **Fay Lomax Cook** changed the organization's name from the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, or CUAPR, to the shorter Institute for Policy Research, or IPR.

"As you can imagine, it was not an easy task," Cook recalled. "Because many people—especially the estab-



David Figlio (r.) presents Fay Lomax Cook with a trophy to mark her tenure.

lished faculty—liked that name, CUAPR. But eventually they came to see that the Institute for Policy Research was memorable, and it fully captured what we were doing here."

Like most of the decisions that took place under Cook's leadership, this one was not unilateral, but rather a product of consensus building and tenacity—

*(Continued on page 11)*

## New Grants for Faculty Research

Developmental psychologist **Lindsay Chase-Lansdale** received a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to expand a large, mixed-method longitudinal study of CareerAdvance®, a dual-generation intervention program.

The National Science Foundation is supporting political scientist **James Druckman's** ongoing analysis of candidates' websites in congressional and presidential campaigns.

The Smith Richardson Foundation is providing funding for education economist **David Figlio's** research on the consequences of tenure reform in public schools, which has implications for teacher quality. Through the American Institutes for Research, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Smith Richardson are supporting Figlio's research at the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research to examine the kinds of postsecondary certifications and degrees the labor market rewards, and how education policies can yield more of them for disadvantaged youth.

Support from the William T. Grant Foundation supplements funding from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) for a project led by economist

**Jonathan Guryan** to assess the impact of Check & Connect, an intervention program that aims to reduce chronic absenteeism and improve school engagement by pairing a mentor with students at risk for dropping out.

Education researcher and statistician **Larry Hedges** received an IES grant to continue a summer training institute that builds the capacity of education researchers to carry out cluster-randomized field experiments.

The National Institute on Aging is providing funding for anthropologist **Thomas McDade's** research project on the multidimensional pathways that lead to healthy aging among Filipino women.

With support from the Russell Sage Foundation, economist **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach** is building and comparing comprehensive profiles on food-insecure households to understand the changing relationship between poverty and food insecurity since the recession and housing crisis.



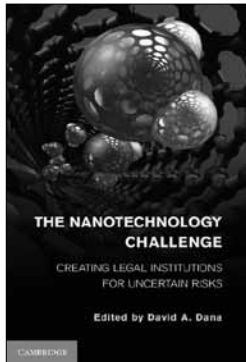
Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach

## Recent Faculty Books

### The Nanotechnology Challenge: Creating Legal Institutions for Uncertain Risks

Edited by David Dana

Cambridge University Press, 2011, 438 pages



As development of nanotechnology zooms ahead, research on its effects on health and the environment lags. *The Nanotechnology Challenge*, edited by Northwestern law professor and IPR associate **David Dana**, attempts to address this gap.

The book offers views by legal scholars and scientists on how to assess the potential unknowns and risks of nanotechnology. It also examines the public perception of

these risks and its influence on regulatory trends.

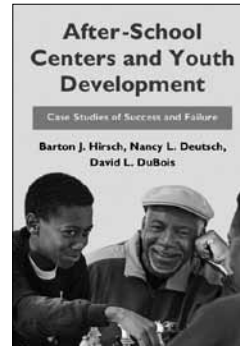
Research in a chapter by **Daniel Diermeier**, an IPR associate and professor of managerial economics and decision sciences, suggests that the public is largely ignorant about nanotechnology but nevertheless holds increasingly firm attitudes about it. IPR political scientist **James Druckman** and co-author Toby Bolsen of Georgia State University examine how scientific evidence links attitudes to behaviors using an experiment to survey perceptions of carbon nanotubes.

"The extraordinary thing about nanomaterials is that they exhibit unusual behaviors and can do unusual things," said Dana, who also authored several chapters. "The flip side is because they are so unusual, they may do things to the human body and the environment that we didn't anticipate. The upside is potentially the downside."

### After-School Centers and Youth Development: Case Studies of Success and Failure

By Barton Hirsch, Nancy Deutsch, and David DuBois

Cambridge University Press, 2011, 368 pages



In light of the explosive growth of after-school programs in recent years, education and social policy professor and IPR associate **Barton Hirsch** and his colleagues explore the impact these programs have on youth. They also clarify those interactions that lead to success and how to achieve it.

The three co-authors present findings from an intensive study of three after-school centers that differed dramatically in quality. Drawing from 233 site visits, the co-authors examine how—and why—young people thrive in good programs and suffer in weak ones.

The book features in-depth case studies and is written for academics, youth workers, after-school program leaders, and policymakers. It highlights the importance of factors such as collective mentoring, synergies among different programs and activities, and organizational culture and practices.

The Society for Research on Adolescence recognized the book as the recipient of its 2012 Social Policy Book Award for best multi-authored volume. It was awarded on March 8 at the society's biennial meeting in Vancouver.

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: David Figlio, A Voice on Vouchers

If 2011 was *The Wall Street Journal's* “Year of School Choice,” with 13 states passing some form of school choice-related legislation, 2012 seems to be just as busy. Recent state bills on school vouchers have been signed into law in Louisiana, struck down in Arizona, expanded in Wisconsin, and are being put up for a vote in Illinois. In the thick of it has been IPR education economist **David Figlio**, a leading expert on school vouchers and their effects.

Figlio has studied one of the nation’s largest and most expansive school voucher programs, the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program. His resulting studies have been cited in school choice and voucher debates from New Hampshire and Pennsylvania to Virginia and Washington, D.C.—and even as far afield as Sweden and Australia.

“It’s been more than 20 years since the first U.S. school voucher program was launched in Milwaukee,” Figlio said. “Yet it has only been in the past few years that we have started to glean solid, quantifiable evidence from more scientifically rigorous studies of voucher programs in other places.”

Figlio got his start when Florida put him in charge of independently evaluating its landmark school voucher program launched in 2002 under then-Governor Jeb Bush. The state began offering vouchers worth nearly 90 percent of tuition and fees for a typical religious elementary school, or two-thirds of a religious high school, to children in families eligible to receive subsidized school lunches (185 percent of the federal poverty threshold, or currently about \$41,000 for a family of four). While the program is among the country’s largest, it is still small: Only around 30,000 students (representing 3 percent of eligible students in the state) are able to participate in the program.

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**“The public school test score improvements are modest, not revolutionary. Much research remains to be done...”**

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Figlio told a Louisiana reporter recently that had he been asked in 2000 about how the data might play out, he would have anticipated seeing resources drained away from public schools. But research results are only now beginning to temper some deep-set fears about the negative effects of school vouchers for low-income students.

He published a study in 2010 with Cassandra Hart and Molly Metzger that documents which students left public schools for private schools under Florida’s voucher program. Contrary to many fears, they show that vouchers attracted the lowest-performing students, rather than the highest fliers in a school. Hart was then an IPR graduate research assistant and is now a faculty member at the University of California, Davis. Metzger is a fellow IPR graduate research assistant who is joining the faculty of Washington University in St. Louis this summer.

In a soon-to-be published journal article, Figlio and Hart also find that increased access to private schools through the use of vouchers puts more competitive pressure on the public schools. In turn, this leads to improvements in the test scores of public students.



David Figlio

This positive competition has reassured Figlio that there was not any evidence that “public schools were hurting,” he told the reporter. Yet before rushing to judgment, Figlio noted that the overall results do not mean that vouchers are a “silver bullet” to achieve better education outcomes, particularly for low-income students.

“The public school test score improvements are modest, not revolutionary,” Figlio said. “Much research remains to be done, particularly in looking at voucher effects in much bigger programs.”

His advice to other states that might be looking at voucher programs? “Start small—and measure thoroughly.”

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*David Figlio is Orrington Lunt Professor of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern, an IPR fellow, and the Institute’s associate director. He also directs the Florida Research Team at the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research, or CALDER, a partnership of researchers and organizations.*

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## IPR Research Notes

### Women in Power Can Help Girls Dream Bigger



Lori Beaman

A recent study suggests that an affirmative action law in India is putting cracks in the glass ceiling for the country's women. The study focused on the long-term outcomes of a law that reserved leadership positions for women in randomly selected village councils.

The law has led to a direct role model effect, changing the way the girls as well as their parents think about female roles

of leadership, and has improved their attitudes toward higher career aspirations and education goals for women, said IPR economist **Lori Beaman**. Results from the study, published in *Science* 335(6068): 582–6, show that affirmative action laws can help create positive role models by opening opportunities.

"India is definitely a place where women are constrained in their opportunities," said Beaman, the study's lead author. "This law gave Indian women, at the village level, a chance to demonstrate that they are capable leaders."

Beaman's research team collected data in West Bengal between 2006 and 2007 on 8,453 male and female teenagers and their parents in 495 villages. The law was implemented there in 1998. From that time, a village council spot could

have been reserved for a female leader once, twice, or never.

In a change of behavior, adolescent Indian girls were more likely to attend school and spent less time on household chores in the villages that reserved political positions for women.

"There weren't any concurrent changes in education infrastructure or career options for young women during this time," Beaman said. "The changes in behavior among adolescents can be attributed to the role model effect of the women leaders."

The randomized process in which the government implemented the policy allowed the researchers to cleanly compare survey results of parents and teens in villages with a female leader for one term and two terms versus parents and teens in villages that had never had a female leader.

The positive effect of the exposure to capable female leaders seemed to allay the perception that the female leaders' achievements were not due to merit, Beaman said.

The results support the idea that quotas and affirmative action in response to the underrepresentation of women in politics and perhaps in other areas, such as science and business, is a positive action that creates influential role models and pays off in the long run, Beaman said.



### Are Single-Sex Schools Better at Educating Students?



Kirabo Jackson

Amendments to Title IX regulations banning sex discrimination in education have made it easier to provide single-sex education in the United States since 2006. Since then, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, among others, have experimented with single-sex education. Yet little credible evidence exists on how such schools affect achievement.

Enter IPR labor economist **Kirabo Jackson**. Unlike the thousands of previous studies on the topic, his is the first to use a quasi-experimental design on a unique data set from Trinidad and Tobago. It was published in the *Journal of Public Economics* 96(1-2): 173–87.

What makes this tiny Caribbean republic so interesting is that almost all of its 123 secondary schools, including the most selective, are public, and approximately one-quarter of the secondary schools are single sex. In contrast, most single-sex schools in the United States are private.

"So we really can make apples-to-apples comparisons," Jackson said.

Jackson compares scores from two nationwide tests to evaluate outcomes. The first, the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA), is taken in the final year of primary school,

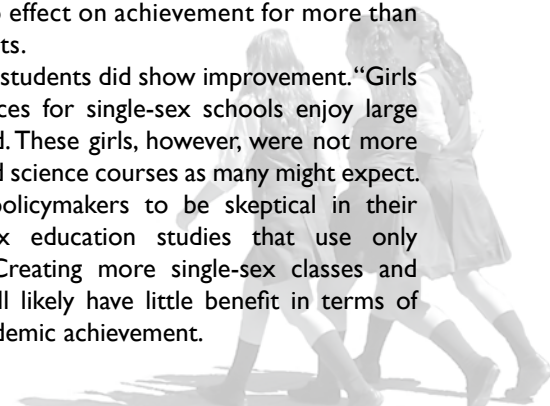
the equivalent of U.S. fifth grade. Getting into a secondary school, which runs from sixth to tenth grade, is competitive. The Ministry of Education uses an algorithm to assign students to one of their top secondary school choices based on their SEA scores. This results in an assignment to a school, eliminating bias due to self-selection.

Jackson tracked students' scores on the second national test taken in students' final year of secondary school.

In naive comparisons, students with similar incoming characteristics at single-sex schools appeared to perform better on the second exam. However, Jackson notes it was due to being admitted to the student's preferred school rather than a single-sex school per se. Once he accounted for this, there was no effect on achievement for more than 85 percent of students.

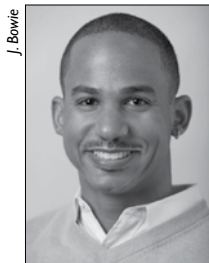
Only one subset of students did show improvement. "Girls with strong preferences for single-sex schools enjoy large benefits," Jackson said. These girls, however, were not more likely to take math and science courses as many might expect.

Jackson cautions policymakers to be skeptical in their reading of single-sex education studies that use only observational data. Creating more single-sex classes and schools, he notes, will likely have little benefit in terms of increasing overall academic achievement.



## IPR Research Notes

### Better Measure for Racial Disparities in Causes of Death



Quincy Stewart

Currently, causal decomposition is the most common method used to estimate and compare death rates between groups of people. This method, however, harbors a major flaw, according to IPR social demographer **Quincy Thomas Stewart**.

“Causal decomposition does not account for the fact that underprivileged groups are more likely to die from nearly all other possible causes of death, skewing the results,” he said.

To correct this, Stewart developed the “cause-deleted index.” In it, he deletes each individual cause and then evaluates the impact of the missing data on the survival rates of blacks relative to whites. It tries to answer the question, “How much would the relative survival rates of blacks improve if deaths from cause X were eliminated?”

Stewart tested the method by compiling 2,000 unique pairs of hypothetical mortality profiles from vital statistics collected between 1940 and 2000 and then comparing the estimates both methods generated.

In certain cases, results from both the causal decomposition method and cause-deleted index (CDI) agreed. So, for

example, both identified heart disease as the leading cause in death disparities for women in 2000. However, they diverged on secondary causes. The CDI suggests that diabetes, AIDS, and strokes are the next leading contributors to disparities, while causal decomposition fingered cancer and diabetes.

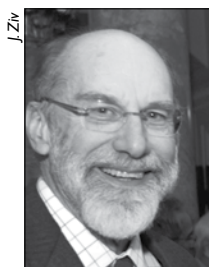
Running the CDI for cancer, Stewart found a 35 percent increase in disparities between black and white women when it was eliminated as a cause of death. This means that in the real world, where cancer does exist, it operates to reduce the overall racial difference in female death rates.

In cases like cancer, which have a high prevalence, higher overall death rates among blacks are driving the causal decomposition estimates, which leads to inaccurate results about the contributions of these causes to racial differences in health, Stewart said. The CDI provides additional information that, when used with causal decomposition, can pinpoint the major causes of death behind health disparities.

“Using both methods would give us a better understanding of the causes driving the racial gap in death rates,” Stewart said. “And it would also provide a more accurate map for future research and policies to reduce these differences.”

The study was published in *Mathematical Population Studies* 18(4): 234–57.

### Examining America’s Elite Lawyers



John Heinz

Recent research by IPR legal scholar **John Heinz** and his co-authors indicates that lawyers active in conservative politics are better organized to seek legislative goals than are liberal lawyers. Republican-leaning Super PACs attract more money than Democratic ones, of course, but money is not the whole story. Networks and organizations matter.

In the study, the three researchers examined the organizational and professional ties for 1,149 lawyers in 119 organizations between 2004 and 2005. The lawyers occupied prominent posts in the organizations and were involved in legislation or litigation on 14 national policy issues ranging from guns and judicial nominations to abortion and gay rights.

The analysis revealed a “donut-shaped” network sharply divided by party, with the conservatives packed together on one side and the liberals spread out on the other. Also notable is the big hole in the middle of the network.

“I think a lot of people believe there are actors in politics who are at the center of things, and these people are pulling all of the strings and calling all the shots,” Heinz said. “We don’t see that.”

What the researchers do see, however, is how the density of network ties and connections matter.

“The greater integration on the conservative side of the network means they are better able to coordinate their agenda so that they can have concerted action on a particular strategy,” Heinz explained.

He noted that conservative umbrella groups like the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation serve to increase interactions among those lawyers. Coalitions like this are less effective on the left.

“The Democrats tend to pursue their own, individual issues instead of cooperating with other organizations in a broader liberal agenda,” Heinz said. “In this analysis, you can see that the Republicans have a much more integrated political structure than the Democrats.”

Money is another game changer.

“There’s more money on the Republican side. That’s where business is,” Heinz pointed out. “There are financial stakes riding on the outcomes of the legislation and policies that the business community is seeking. They have a considerable incentive to organize and elect public officials who will be sympathetic to their views. One of the things that money will buy is organization.” The study was published in *Law & Social Inquiry* 36(4): 892–918.

## White House, AAAS, and Others Honor Faculty *(Continued from page 1)*

scientist James Druckman and social psychologists Alice Eagly and Shari Seidman Diamond, who is also a legal scholar. They join an incoming class of 220 fellows, who include Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, rock legend Paul McCartney, actor/director Clint Eastwood, and Amazon.com founder and CEO Jeff Bezos.

Designated for their groundbreaking research, these three social scientists will contribute to the Academy, an independent center for policy research, in the areas of social policy, American institutions, the humanities, and education. They will be inducted on October 6 in Washington, D.C., bringing the number of IPR faculty who are Academy fellows to 12.

**James Druckman** is a specialist in public opinion, political communication, and experimental methodology. His recent work examines how citizens make political, economic, and social decisions, in particular through the use of framing, and he has been a leading voice for the use of experiments and better methodology in the field of political science.

In prior work, this IPR political scientist explored the relationship between citizens' preferences and public policy, and how political elites make decisions under varying institutional conditions. He currently edits *Public Opinion Quarterly*, one of the field's leading journals, and the Chicago Studies in American Politics series by the University of Chicago Press.

Druckman, who is Payson S. Wild Professor of Political Science, was also awarded a 2012 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship to expand research exploring how public opinion shapes energy policy and technology. He has published more than 70 articles and book chapters in leading political science, communication, economic, and psychology journals. Numerous awards have recognized his scholarship, including 12 best paper awards. A Northwestern alumnus himself, he has also been honored for his efforts as a teacher and adviser to the University's undergraduates.

IPR social psychologist **Alice Eagly**'s research examines gender and social behavior. She has contributed to theories of sex differences and similarities and of the origins of sex differences in social behavior. She also studies the psychology of attitudes.

A recent stream of her research examines women leaders and leadership roles. It was the subject of her seventh book, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Harvard Business School Press, 2007) with Linda Carli. Eagly also authored the seminal *The Psychology of Attitudes* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993) with Shelly Chaiken, in addition

to co-editing two widely cited books, *The Social Psychology of Group Identity and Social Conflict* (APA Books, 2004) and *The Psychology of Gender* (Guilford Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2004).

Eagly, who holds the James Padilla Chair of Arts and Sciences, is the recipient of many awards, including the 2009 Gold Medal Award for Life Achievement in the Science of Social Psychology from the American Psychological Foundation and most recently, the 2011 Raymond A. Katzell Award from the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

**Shari Seidman Diamond**, an IPR associate and Howard J. Trienens Professor of Law, is one of the foremost empirical researchers on jury process and legal decision making, including the use of science by the courts.

The author and co-author of more than 100 articles and essays in law reviews and behavioral science journals, her publications on juries and surveys have been cited by the U.S. Supreme Court and federal and state courts.

Diamond has lectured widely to scholarly and judicial audiences and has served as an expert witness in American and Canadian courts. Among her other honors are the 2010 Harry Kalven Jr. Prize from the Law and Society Association for her contributions to research in law and society and the 1991 American Psychological Association's Award for Distinguished Contributions to Research in Public Policy. As a research professor and member of the American Bar Association's American Jury Project, she helped draft *Principles for Juries and Jury Trials* adopted in 2005. She currently serves on the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Committee on Pattern Criminal Jury Instructions.

### Guggenheim Fellows

Sociologist and IPR associate **Steven Epstein**, John C. Shaffer Professor in the Humanities, was named a 2012 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellow, a mid-career fellowship that recognizes scholars for their prolific scholarship, as was James Druckman (see his bio above). Epstein studies the "politics of knowledge"—more specifically, the contested production of expert knowledge, especially biomedical knowledge, with an emphasis on the interplay of social movements, experts, and health institutions. He leads Northwestern's Science in Human Culture Program and co-convenes the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN). The fellowship will allow him to continue work on his book project, "Sexual Health as Buzzword," which will detail the origins of the term "sexual health" and the effects of its various uses.



James Druckman



Shari Diamond



Alice Eagly



Steven Epstein



### Russell Sage Foundation Fellow



Lincoln Quillian

IPR social demographer **Lincoln Quillian** has been awarded a Russell Sage Foundation Fellowship. He will join 20 other fellows at the foundation's headquarters in New York as a visiting scholar in the fall. Most of Quillian's research focuses on how social structure and group demography influence inequality and intergroup attitudes, with special emphasis on race and ethnicity. While in New York, he will work on a research

project that examines the causes of racial and economic segregation in American cities. The project aims to develop models to better understand the forces that guide individual residential decisions related to neighborhoods and how these decisions aggregate to produce neighborhoods with specific economic and racial compositions.

### Hastings Center Fellow

**Dorothy Roberts**, Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law, is one of 40 scholars in the humanities elected as a Hastings Center Fellow. This IPR fellow studies the influence of gender, race, and class in legal issues related to bioethics, reproduction, and child welfare. Her most recent book, *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century* (The New Press, 2011), examines how race is a political, not biological, category with significant biological consequences because of the impact of social inequality on people's health.



Dorothy Roberts

### Ascend Fellow



Lindsay Chase-Lansdale

**Lindsay Chase-Lansdale** was recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of 20 inaugural Ascend Fellows. An IPR developmental psychologist and expert on the interface between research and social policy for children and families, she joins a select group of leaders and researchers around the nation who are pioneering dual-generation approaches to move families out of poverty. She and her colleagues are rolling out a \$2 million longitudinal study of

CareerAdvance®, a healthcare work force development program designed to aid low-income parents with young children who are enrolled in early childhood education centers.

### Radcliffe Institute Fellow



Héctor Carrillo

Sociology and gender studies professor and IPR associate **Héctor Carrillo** has been named a 2012-13 fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. Carrillo's research focuses on the ethnographic study of sexuality and HIV prevention in Latino populations in the United States and Mexico. He co-convenes the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (SPAN) and is the author of *The Night is Young: Sexuality in*

*Mexico in the Time of AIDS* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), which received the Ruth Benedict Prize from the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists of the American Anthropological Association. While at the institute, he will work on a book project examining social context, sexual migration, and the Mexican gay diaspora.

### White House Honors

**Larry Hedges**, an IPR statistician and education researcher, has been nominated to the National Board for Education Sciences. This board is part of the Institute of Education Sciences and consists of 15 voting members selected by the president of the United States. Hedges is a leading researcher in educational statistics and evaluation, best known for his work developing statistical methods for meta-analysis in the social, medical, and biological sciences. He is Board of Trustees Professor in Statistics and Social Policy.



Larry Hedges



Teresa Woodruff

Oncofertility specialist and IPR associate **Teresa Woodruff** received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring at a White House ceremony on December 12. This award recognizes Woodruff for her efforts to encourage and mentor Chicago high school girls, particularly disadvantaged African Americans and Latinas, to pursue careers in science and health. The

young women can study at four different Northwestern-sponsored academies: cardiology, physical science, infectious disease, and oncofertility. She is Thomas J. Watkins Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Chief of the Division of Fertility Preservation.

## Recent IPR Working Papers

### EDUCATION POLICY

#### **Adequate (or Adipose?) Yearly Progress: Assessing the Effect of ‘No Child Left Behind’ on Children’s Obesity** (WP-12-04)

Patricia Anderson, Dartmouth College; Kristin Butcher, Wellesley College; and Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach (IPR/Human Development & Social Policy), Northwestern University

This working paper investigates how accountability pressures under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) might affect children’s rate of obesity. Schools facing increased pressures to produce academic outcomes might reallocate their efforts in ways that have unintended consequences for children’s health. For example, schools might cut back on recess and physical education in favor of increasing time on tested subjects. To examine the impact of school accountability programs, the researchers create a unique panel data set of schools in Arkansas that allows them to test the impact of NCLB rules on students’ weight outcomes. The researchers’ main approach is to consider schools to be facing increased pressures if they are on the margin of passing—that is, if any subgroup at the school has a passing rate that is close to the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) passing threshold, where they define close as being 5 percentage points above or below the threshold. They find evidence of small effects of accountability pressures on the percent of students at a school that are overweight. A follow-up survey of school principals points to reductions in physical activity and worsening of the food environment as potential mechanisms.

#### **Experimental Evidence on the Effect of Childhood Investments on Postsecondary Attainment and Degree Completion** (WP-12-03)

Susan Dynarski and Joshua Hyman, University of Michigan; and Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach (IPR/Human Development & Social Policy), Northwestern University

The researchers use the random assignment in the Project STAR experiment to estimate the effect of smaller classes in primary school on college entry, college choice, and degree completion. This study improves on existing work in this area with unusually detailed data on college enrollment spells and the previously unexplored outcome of college degree completion. Their findings show that assignment to a small class increases the probability of attending college by 2.7 percentage points, with effects more than twice as large among blacks. Among those with the lowest ex ante probability of attending college, the effect is 11 percentage points. Smaller classes increase the likelihood of earning a college degree by 1.6 percentage points, and they shift students towards high-earning fields such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and medicine), business, and economics. The researchers confirm the standard finding that test score effects fade out by middle school, but show that test score effects at the time of the experiment are an excellent predictor of long-term improvements in postsecondary outcomes. They compare the costs and impacts of this intervention with other tools for increasing postsecondary attainment, such as Head Start and financial aid. The researchers conclude that early investments are no more cost effective than later investments in boosting adult educational attainment.

#### **Instructional Advice and Information-Seeking Behavior in Elementary Schools: Exploring Tie Formation as a Building Block in Social Capital Development** (WP-11-14)

James Spillane (IPR/Education & Social Policy) and Chong Min Kim, Northwestern University; and Kenneth Frank, Michigan State University

Education research consistently points to the importance of social capital in enabling instructional reform and school improvement. In schools and school districts, social relations can be a source of various resources including trust, expertise, opportunities for joint sensemaking, and incentives for innovation through peer pressure or sense of obligation. In this working paper, the researchers use data from 30 elementary schools in a midsized, urban U.S. school district to investigate social tie formation for advice and information-seeking regarding instruction in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. The study’s findings from multilevel p2 models suggest that while individuals’ personal characteristics (e.g., race, gender) are significantly associated with tie formation, the formal organization in terms of grade-level assignment and formal position is also significant—having a larger effect than personal characteristics. The authors conclude by discussing their findings and possible entailments for research, policy, and practice.



## **Politics, Institutions, and Public Policy**

### **A Source of Bias in Public Opinion Stability (WP-12-07)**

James Druckman (IPR/Political Science), Jordan Fein, and Thomas Leeper, Northwestern University

A long acknowledged, but seldom addressed, problem with political communication experiments concerns the use of captive participants. Study participants rarely have the opportunity to choose information themselves, instead receiving whatever information the experimenter provides. Druckman and his co-authors relax this assumption in the context of an over-time framing experiment focused on opinions about healthcare policy. Their results dramatically deviate from extant understandings of over-time communication effects. Allowing individuals to choose information for themselves—a common situation on many political issues—leads to the preeminence of early frames and the rejection of later frames. Instead of opinion decay, they find dogmatic adherence to opinions formed in response to the first frame to which participants were exposed (i.e., staunch opinion stability). The effects match those that occur when early frames are repeated multiple times. The results suggest that opinion stability might often reflect biased information seeking. Moreover, the findings have implications for a range of topics including the micro-macro disconnect in studies of public opinion, political polarization, normative evaluations of public opinion, the role of inequality considerations in the debate about healthcare, and perhaps most importantly, the design of experimental studies of public opinion.

### **Is Public Opinion Stable? Resolving the Micro-Macro Disconnect in Studies of Public Opinion (WP-12-06)**

James Druckman (IPR/Political Science) and Thomas Leeper, Northwestern University

Public opinion matters, both as a central element of democratic theory and as a substantive foundation for political representation. The origins and nature of public opinion have long attracted the attention of social science. Yet a number of questions remain, and the more perplexing ask whether—and under what conditions—public opinion is stable. Druckman and Leeper argue that an answer to this debate depends in large part on whether one looks at aggregations of individual opinions (i.e., macro public opinion) or at the individual opinions themselves (i.e., micro public opinion). In this working paper, the researchers explore the macro-micro divide and offer a framework for when opinions are likely to be stable, or volatile, that reflects both the content of the political environment and the nature of individuals' opinions. With reference to research on public opinion dynamics surrounding the USA Patriot Act, they discuss the implications of opinion stability for interpreting public opinion and for understanding the normative implications of public preferences.

### **Identification of Preferences and Evaluation of Income Tax Policy (WP-12-02)**

Charles F. Manski (IPR/Economics), Northwestern University

The merits of alternative income tax policies depend on the population distribution of preferences for income, leisure, and public goods. Standard theory, which supposes that people want more income and more leisure, does not predict how they resolve the tension between these desires. Empirical studies of labor supply have been numerous but have not shed much light on the matter. A persistent problem is that empirical researchers have imposed strong preference assumptions that lack foundation. This working paper examines anew the problem of inference on preferences and considers the implications for comparison of tax policies. Manski first performs a basic revealed-preference analysis that imposes no assumptions on the preference distribution beyond the presumption that people prefer more income and leisure. This shows that observation of a person's labor supply under a status quo tax policy might bound his labor supply under a proposed policy or might have no implications, depending on the shapes of the two tax schedules and the location of status quo labor supply. He next explores the identifying power of two assumptions restricting the population distribution of income-leisure preferences. One assumes that groups of people who face different choice sets have the same distribution of preferences, while the other adds restrictions on the shape of this distribution. Manski then addresses utilitarian policy comparison with partial knowledge of preferences. Partial knowledge of preferences implies partial knowledge of the welfare function. Hence, it might not be possible to rank policies.

*(Continued on page 10)*

## **Recent IPR Working Papers** *(Continued from page 9)*

### **Wealthy Americans, Philanthropy, and the Common Good** (WP-11-13)

Benjamin Page (IPR/Political Science), Fay Lomax Cook (IPR/Human Development & Social Policy), and Rachel Moskowitz, Northwestern University

Using a new data set from a pilot study of the top 1 percent of U.S. wealth holders, this working paper investigates how wealthy Americans think about the common good and what they do about it. The researchers find that the wealthy respondents cite many potential problems facing the country as important and offer serious ideas about how to address them. Very active in politics, they initiate many contacts with high-level federal officials. Most of these contacts concern problems of broad common interest rather than narrow self-interest. The researchers also find high levels of volunteerism and contributions to charitable causes. At the same time, the study suggests that improvements could be made in the quality and, in particular, quantity of U.S. charitable giving. The paper also discusses various aspects of wealthy charitable activity, including personal characteristics and political attitudes and orientations.

### **Congressional Campaign Communications in an Internet Age** (WP-11-11)

James Druckman (IPR/Political Science), Northwestern University

The Internet provides new opportunities for candidates to engage with voters and present information in ways that could enhance the nature of candidate-voter interactions. Yet candidates have to think carefully about using these opportunities, as they could be costly under certain circumstances. In this paper, Druckman explores the conditions that lead congressional candidates to capitalize on these opportunities using data from the 2008 campaign. He finds that candidates do not uniformly embrace new communication and interactive features; instead, their use is driven by practical (e.g., campaign funds) and political (e.g., incumbency status, race competitiveness) considerations that are in line with more general campaign strategies. Far from being a panacea promoting candidate-voter interaction, the candidates' use of website technology reflects practical realities and strategic decision making.

### **Counter-Framing Effects** (WP-11-10)

Dennis Chong (IPR/Political Science) and James Druckman (IPR/Political Science), Northwestern University

In the contest for public opinion in electoral campaigns, each side tries to frame issues to its advantage, but success also depends on developing effective responses to opposition frames. This working paper explores how the timing and repetition of counter-frames affect their success. Using an over-time experiment, the researchers show that the best counter-framing strategy is contingent on the nature of audiences. Individuals who are motivated to form strong opinions in response to initial frames tend to defend those positions against counter-frames, as long as the initial opinion remains accessible. Paradoxically, repetition of the counter-frame can backfire if it continually reinforces initial opinions by stimulating motivated reasoning. Therefore, extending the time lag between frame and counter-frame can increase the impact of the counter-frame by allowing initially strong opinions to decay. Given these moderating effects, a uniformly successful communications strategy might be impossible as tactics that are effective on those with weak attitudes might be counterproductive on those with stronger viewpoints.

### **What Affluent Americans Want from Politics** (WP-11-08)

Benjamin Page (IPR/Political Science) and Cari Lynn Hennessy, Northwestern University

Recent empirical evidence indicates that higher-income Americans have considerably more influence on national policy decisions than lower-income citizens do. But the implications of these findings depend on what the affluent want from politics. Current survey data based on samples of the general population generally include too few highly affluent respondents to draw inferences with any confidence. In this working paper, the authors take advantage of three General Social Surveys that can be combined to identify roughly the top 4 percent of U.S. income earners. The political views of these affluent Americans turn out to be quite distinctive: They are much more socially liberal or libertarian, and more economically conservative, than those of the average American. They are more distinctive than the opinions of the previously studied top one-third of income earners.

## Sixteen Years of ‘Onward & Upward’ *(Continued from page 1)*

two of the traits that have served her well during her 16 years as IPR’s longest-acting director to date.

At a May 10 reception to honor her tenure as director, Northwestern University Provost **Daniel Linzer** singled Cook out for her “glass-half-full sense of optimism,” her “tireless cheerleading” and championing of IPR in the upper echelons of University administration, and her dogged persistence.

More than 80 current and former IPR faculty, students, and staff, in addition to Northwestern colleagues and friends, turned out for the event. Several spoke about working with her over the years, in particular regarding her efforts to recruit and retain the most promising social scientists for IPR and the University.

### Hiring the Best and the Brightest

Two deans of the schools that IPR works most closely with recalled their dealings on faculty recruitment with Cook and how the Mississippi native’s soft-spoken Southern demeanor masked a resolute recruiter—or as one dean put it, “her *Steel Magnolia* part.”

“She was really positive and engaging when she wanted to woo, but then she’s a tough negotiator,” said **Penelope Peterson**, dean of the School of Education and Social Policy. “She never gave up. She would always bounce right up.”

**Sarah Mangelsdorf**, dean of the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, listed the names of the 14 faculty that she and Cook had worked together to either recruit or retain over the past four years.

“Can you imagine this University without those people?” Mangelsdorf quizzed. “She always had a clear sense of what she thought was best for the Institution and worked tirelessly to achieve it.”

Another innovation under Cook’s leadership has been the creation of a small number of permanent IPR fellow positions, in addition to term fellows, who are appointed for three years and can be renewed. “Though representing a very small number of the overall faculty, these positions ensure continuity in our faculty and research leadership,” Cook said.

### Expanding Dissemination

Cook has not only presided over an expansion of IPR faculty but has also worked to push forward the Institute’s mission to “stimulate and support excellent social science research on significant public policy issues and to disseminate the findings widely—to students, scholars, policymakers, and the public.”

She is particularly proud of the IPR policy research briefings, which were initially supported with a grant from the Joyce Foundation and always organized by an IPR fellow. The briefings were seen as a way to connect academics, policymakers, and the public, and to act as a conduit to “carry to a broad audience our evidence-based perspectives on crafting policy solutions for pressing social issues,” Cook said.

Featuring IPR researchers, 15 of these have been held in Chicago and Washington, D.C., since 2003 on a wide variety of topics, from No Child Left Behind and the social safety net to state fiscal crises and housing policy outcomes.



*IPR’s five directors reunited: (from l.) Raymond Mack, Burton Weisbrod, Louis Masotti, Fay Lomax Cook, and Margaret Gordon.*

### Enhancing Research Programs

In addition to bringing policy-relevant research to the greater public, Cook was also instrumental in launching a program to increase the involvement of undergraduates in research. IPR started its Summer Undergraduate Research Assistants Program in 1998, giving Northwestern undergraduates a real experience in the conceptualization and conduct of policy-relevant social science research. Beginning its 15<sup>th</sup> year, the program welcomes between 20 and 25 undergraduates annually.

“The whole project has really changed my perspective on how research is done,” said Northwestern alumnus **Bill Russell** (BA ‘12, Economics/Philosophy), who was in the program last summer, “but it also helped me learn more about what I’m interested in and how I can find a job doing something I enjoy, which is really what’s most important.”

Part of the Institute’s success in remaining relevant and forward-looking in terms of its research over the years has been Cook’s willingness to critically re-examine the Institute’s research programs and end, combine, or start new ones as needed. Besides the undergraduate research program, two major new research areas were launched in the last eight years: IPR’s Cells to Society (C2S):The Center on Social Disparities and Health in 2005, and IPR’s Center for Improving Methods for Quantitative Policy Research, or the Q-Center, in 2006.

“We saw a need to link the life, biomedical, and social sciences to chart new directions in understanding the origins and consequences of disparities in physical and psychological health,” said IPR developmental psychologist **Lindsay Chase-Lansdale**, who was C2S’ founding director. “Fay was instrumental in getting C2S off the ground, not just in providing funding but also by supporting an entirely new vision of how we, as researchers, can examine inequality and deliver policy-relevant solutions.”

### Celebrating 40 Years of IPR Research

Much of the research that IPR faculty carry out still falls under programs created one or two decades ago—or even at the Institute’s founding in 1968—though they have evolved to meet changing research priorities of funders, policymakers, the academy, and the public.

Nowhere was this more evident than at the IPR 40<sup>th</sup>

*(Continued on page 13)*



## Housing, Desegregation, and Opportunity *(Continued from page 1)*

decline of racial segregation since the civil rights era. Most Americans, however, still live next to neighbors who look the same, racially and ethnically, as they do—especially whites.

“Black and Hispanic families earning over \$75,000 a year actually live in poorer neighborhoods than whites who are earning less than \$40,000 a year,” Quillian said.

This explains why segregation is still a grave concern today. It “exacerbates inequality” on the basis of race, he explained, almost “automatically concentrating poverty” in African American and Latino neighborhoods, which are four times more likely to be high poverty than white ones.

Reviewing a wide variety of findings on segregation’s effects, Quillian distilled the most robust: Higher rates of violent crime in areas of concentrated poverty are linked to poor health and depression for adults and lower test scores for children. These outcomes then ripple out over time across a variety of social contexts, compounding disparities in economic opportunities, access to resources, and schools.

Take schools, for instance. Those in high-poverty areas are often cited as low performing—frequently blamed as the source of the nation’s dropout problem. But you have to look beyond the schools to the larger environment, Quillian said. These schools are overwhelmed with poor students who have problems that extend beyond the classroom, who lack the advantages of their middle-class peers, and who, in turn, overwhelm the school’s capacity to function effectively.

Quillian cautioned that policies to end segregation are no “silver bullet” for tackling racial inequality or other social problems. “It might be one contributing factor certainly—but not the only one,” he emphasized.

He advised policymakers to pay attention to how they combat racial segregation, as some evidence suggests that a higher level of economic segregation is replacing declining racial segregation.

“Segregation really still matters ... because it generates this kind of financial inequality and inability to access major resources, which are significantly linked to socioeconomic and attainment outcomes later in life,” Quillian ended.

### Are Housing Policies Linked to Crime?

Following publication of a 2008 *Atlantic* article in which the journalist fingered the relocation of public housing tenants

to Memphis’ mostly white suburbs as the source of a violent crime wave, researcher **Susan Popkin** recalled the ensuing media “brouhaha.”

“I would get calls from places like Cedar Rapids, Iowa, telling me that their one homicide is due to the fact that Chicago tore down its public housing,” said Popkin, now a senior research fellow at the Urban Institute and a former IPR research associate.

Much to its credit, Popkin said, the Chicago Housing Authority asked her to conduct a reputable study on a tough question: “Do public housing relocatees have a significant impact on crime in the neighborhoods they move to when using vouchers?”

Popkin and her research team, with IPR political scientist **Wesley G. Skogan**, examined the moves of Plan for Transformation housing voucher recipients between 1999 and 2008.

“The idea was to compare what actually happened in the city of Chicago against a counterfactual, a kind of ‘what-if world’ where there had been no Plan for Transformation and places like the Robert Taylor Homes were still standing,” Skogan said.

The researchers collected 25,000 data points from 813 different census tracts—tracking those who moved in or out of a census tract on a quarterly basis. They then looked at crime in the same tract in the ensuing quarter and plugged this information into a regression model.

In Chicago, like Atlanta, they found citywide decreases in violent, gun, and property crime. Crime in neighborhoods where the public housing projects once stood dropped dramatically—a 60 percent drop in violent crime, 70 percent in gun crime, and 49 percent in property crime.

Crime also decreased in the areas where voucher residents resettled; however, not as much as predicted had these voucher families stayed where they were.

“So while in the Transformation tract crime was 60 percent below—in the destination tract, it’s 5.5 percent above—what we would have anticipated,” Skogan said. “Still down, but the decrease was less than anticipated.” This was especially true for tracts with high concentrations of voucher movers.

The researchers cited possible reasons for this, including higher rates of victimization of relocated young men, disrupted social controls, and displacement.

Overall, the city experienced a crime decline of 1 percent. While this might look like a “tiny number,” the take-

*(Continued on page 13)*



University of Chicago sociologist Charles Payne (r.) talks to IPR’s Lincoln Quillian following his presentation on segregation.

## Housing, Desegregation, and Opportunity

(Continued from page 12)

home point is that “crime on Chicago Housing Authority property has never played a huge role in citywide crime rates,” Skogan said.

Concluded Popkin, “Nowhere in the city is crime as high or as dangerous now as it was when the public housing projects were standing.”

### Lessons from Mobility Programs

In addressing “how we house the poor,” sociologist **Stefanie DeLuca** presented an unbalanced financial portrait, where for every \$4 in federal money spent on a homeowner, just \$1 is spent on a renter. And the most significant change over the past decades has been a shift from building public housing units to providing housing vouchers.

“This means that a large chunk of our public housing is moving to the private rental market,” she pointed out. Currently at Johns Hopkins University, DeLuca got her start studying such issues as an IPR graduate research assistant.

In theory, housing choice voucher programs should allow low-income renters to move to better areas because they are not tied to specific developments or neighborhoods. In reality, however, many voucher families experience the opposite.

In Chicago, more than 75 percent of black voucher holders live in areas with poverty rates above 20 percent, with almost two-thirds of them in areas that are 90 percent African American.

“We know that there are more neighborhoods of opportunity in the suburbs, but African American families have trouble accessing these neighborhoods,” DeLuca said.

She ticked off several reasons why voucher families tend to wind up in such blighted areas: discrimination by landlords; unexpected moves in dire circumstances; little information about better neighborhoods; prioritizing a bigger, less expensive unit over a smaller, more expensive one in a better neighborhood; and finally, an “I can handle this” attitude, born of decades without assistance.

“It’s difficult for them to leave without a lot of help,” DeLuca added.

Better assistance is what the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program is trying to provide. To date, some 1,800 families have received pre- and post-move counseling, which includes tours of neighborhoods and information about better opportunities, including schools.

Some housing mobility programs have “shown more promise” than public housing in moving families to lower poverty areas, DeLuca said. But structural and organizational barriers have prevented them from breaking the ongoing cycle of segregation and concentrated poverty.

She called on researchers to address the “vacuum of research on landlords,” and “to support families in efforts to desegregate and deconcentrate poverty.”

For videos and slides from the event, go to  
[www.ipr.northwestern.edu/events/briefing/2012/4\\_30\\_12.html](http://www.ipr.northwestern.edu/events/briefing/2012/4_30_12.html).

## Sixteen Years of ‘Onward & Upward’

(Continued from page 11)

anniversary conference, “Dynamics of Inequality in America from 1968 to Today,” which Cook took the lead in organizing in April 2009.

“Inequality has remained a major theme woven through much of our faculty research over the years,” Cook said at the time. While some progress had been made, she noted that much more remains to be done to reduce inequality in the United States. “The IPR model of rigorous, interdisciplinary, and policy-relevant research is critical to understanding inequality and forging creative and coherent policies to tackle disparities,” she said.

The two-day conference welcomed more than 200 participants and 20 national experts who examined a variety of themes, including housing, social disparities and health, political participation, race, urban studies, and education. Many of those who spoke were either current or former IPR fellows, such as sociologist **Sandy Jencks** and political scientist **Jane Mansbridge** of Harvard, U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce **Rebecca Blank**, and University of Chicago sociologist **Charles Payne**.

Another one of the former faculty members who returned for IPR’s 40th, and also for the reception to honor Cook, was Yale economist **Joseph Altonji**.

“Very few people are able to lead a complex institution like IPR,” said Altonji, who was Cook’s first associate director from 1996 to 1998. He enumerated some of the reasons for her success, including her mentoring of graduate students and faculty, her “leading by example” with her scholarship, her ability to listen and recognize opportunities, her genuine interest in social processes, and finally, her “off-the-charts” ability as a “kind, caring, and skillful people person.”

Cook, who is also a professor of human development and social policy, continued to teach and research while director. She broadened her areas of expertise in public opinion and Social Security, which included publishing two books and more than 30 journal articles and chapters while leading IPR. She will carry on with these scholarly pursuits once she steps down, in addition to teaching graduates and undergraduates.

### Fay Lomax Cook Monday Colloquium Series

At the end of the reception, IPR education economist **David Figlio**—who will succeed Cook as director—announced that the Institute’s signature Monday colloquium series will be renamed the “Fay Lomax Cook Monday Colloquium Series.”

“Since she instituted it, the series has become one of the great IPR traditions,” Figlio stated.

In thanking him for the honor, Cook noted, “The foundation that we all stand on at IPR was put into place by the people who directed IPR before me,” citing Raymond Mack, Louis Masotti, Margaret Gordon, and Burton Weisbrod.

“To repeat my mantra, as I go ‘onward and upward,’ I could not be happier to be leaving IPR to my dear friend and wonderful colleague, David Figlio,” Cook said. “I have no doubt that he will surpass me in every way in leading IPR ‘onward and upward.’”

## Scrutinizing Views and the Vote

Workshop looks at influences on political behavior

On May 11, more than 100 social scientists and graduate students gathered at the sixth annual Chicago Area Political and Social Behavior Workshop to examine research on how race, personality, affluence, scientific literacy, and social groupings can steer voters' decisions one way or the other. IPR co-sponsored the event.

### Views on DNA and the Law

In "DNA and Criminal Justice: Public Opinion on a New Policy," Harvard University's **Jennifer Hochschild** described a national FBI database of nearly 10 million DNA samples. Collected in all 50 states, these samples come from many different populations—some controversial—including arrestees and people convicted of felonies and, in a few states, misdemeanors. A disproportionate number come from Latinos and African Americans. Yet no national policy governs how samples are collected or retained.

To find out what the public thinks about such databases, Hochschild and her colleague Maya Sen surveyed 4,300 U.S. adults, including similar numbers of whites, blacks, and Hispanics. The two researchers asked how much respondents knew about DNA collection and whether they supported government funding and regulation of such databases. More scientifically literate respondents were more likely to support DNA collection, they show. They also reveal that minorities, especially African Americans, have mixed views: Though they tend to oppose funding, they endorse strong regulation but are less willing to provide their own DNA. As the larger project moves forward, Hochschild expects that if the extremely strong effect of scientific literacy holds up, and the more people learn about legal biobanks, then "the more we expect people to approve of the use of DNA for law enforcement purposes."

### Personality and Politics

**Jeffery Mondak** of the University of Illinois discussed the resurgence of the study of personality in psychology and a wide array of possible applications of it to models of political behavior. He said he was drawn to the subject because in the past, most political scientists assumed a "blank-slate" view of political behavior, in which social and political awareness do not emerge until young adulthood, and this seemed inadequate. Mondak presented the "Big Five," or the five core clusters of traits in psychology that constitute the bulk of one's personality—openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (OCEAN). The argument, he underscores, is that to pull together a full account of political behavior, political scientists need to think carefully about how to piece together the various elements,

including heritability, environmental, and biological factors. In particular, he pointed to a need for "theory building" on this topic in the field.

### Social Groups and Political Behavior

Presenting the results of two randomized experiments, **Betsy Sinclair** of the University of Chicago discussed how one's social group might influence political behavior and opinion. In both the field and survey experiment, the treatment groups received a "like-you" message, containing similar characteristics like gender and state. Finding statistically significant effects in both, she also points to the group effect as being distinct from other effects, such as electoral cues, social networks, or information needs. Sinclair likens what might be happening to marketing—or buying a product because "you see someone who you aspire to be." She pondered the implications for voters, who, in an increasingly digital world, can observe others' political choices in real time, online.



Jennifer Hochschild

### Politics of the Top 1 Percent

What political attitudes do the very wealthy hold? Political scientist and IPR associate **Benjamin Page** presented findings from a pilot study, which randomly surveyed 104 Chicagoans with a median household wealth of \$7.5 million. "As it turns out," Page said, "there are some pretty big differences between what these people want and what average Americans want." Marked differences

were found on questions of tax policy, economic regulation, and social welfare policy. Particularly stark were contrasting attitudes toward federal government programs, with the wealthy tilting toward cutbacks and the public generally preferring their expansion. Page and his colleagues are currently expanding the pilot study into a nationwide survey.

### Race and Politics

Political scientist and IPR associate **Traci Burch** discussed the need for greater consideration of the criminal justice system in current research on race politics, particularly regarding its unequal application and unintended effects on minorities, their communities, and voting. **John Griffin** of Notre Dame pointed to the dearth of research on the specific role executives and the judicial system play in terms of either reducing or perpetuating racial inequalities. Northwestern's **Reuel Rogers** considered the emergence of a growing political moderation in black politics over the last two decades, which suggests more ideological convergence between blacks and whites in the future.

(Continued on page 15)



## Death Penalty Studies *(Continued from page 16)*

began to re-examine the topic. They asserted that their studies relied on better data and were methodologically superior to those of the past.

"Instead of just one paper, there have been dozens of studies that were getting results all over the place," Manski said. Some of these contradictory studies found that "executions save large numbers of lives; others conclude that executions actually increase homicides; and still others conclude that executions have no effect on the homicide rate," the 2012 report stated. They also led to a lot of "acrimonious" scientific debate about their validity.

Taking up the issue were the eight members of the NRC Committee on Deterrence and the Death Penalty. In addition to Manski, they included criminologist Daniel Nagin, the 2012 chair who had also worked on the 1978 report as a staff member; a sitting federal judge, Gerard Lynch; and the late, influential criminologist, James Q. Wilson, an originator of the "broken windows" theory.

The committee met intensively starting in October 2010. Avoiding questions of morality and equal justice, the members zeroed in on a simple assessment: Have these empirical studies provided "scientifically valid evidence" to determine if the death penalty affects murder rates?

While the two reports came to similar conclusions on the lack of evidence for or against a deterrent effect, Manski said, the primary difference between the two was that the 1978 report basically declared the issue "insolvable." The final chapter of the 2012 report, however, concludes by offering a path forward for researchers.

The first point is that the failings of studies on the topic stem in part from performing statistical analyses of the death penalty and murder rates without inquiring about how other possible noncapital deterrents, such as a sentence of life without parole, might affect murder rates, Manski said. To help remedy this, a national database is needed that would detail alternatives to capital punishment state by state.

The second, he continued, concerns our lack of knowledge of how a criminal might form expectations of committing a crime against the risk of getting caught, or, "What is the chance that I will be given the death penalty if I murder someone?"

The final recommendation deals with another research area "near and dear" to Manski—partial identification analysis, an area that he has done much to develop since the 1990s.

To date, most death penalty studies have combined available data with strong assumptions in order to reach strong conclusions, he said. Like the report, Manski urges researchers to "face up" to the likelihood that getting such definite results requires "assumptions so strong as not to be believable." Although using weaker assumptions would lead to weaker results, it would also generate more believable ones, he said.

"Despite the lack of empirical evidence, society still has to make decisions about what is the right thing to do," said Manski, who is Board of Trustees Professor in Economics. Therefore, judgment about whether there is a deterrent effect is still relevant to policymakers, as are other moral and legal arguments, the current report states, but this "judgment should not be justified based on evidence from existing research on capital punishment's effect on homicide."



Charles F. Manski

P. Reese

The summary and complete report are available at [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu).

Read Manski's related working paper with John Pepper on "Deterrence and the Death Penalty: Partial Identification Analysis Using Repeated Cross Sections" at <http://bit.ly/iprwp12>

## Scrutinizing Views and the Vote

*(Continued from page 14)*

Each year the workshop has "exceeded expectations" and has led to countless collaborations and numerous publications, said its organizer, IPR political scientist **James Druckman**. This year's workshop took place in a particular climate—an election year and also one in which the House of Representatives recently passed a spending bill that would cut all National Science Foundation funding for political scientists in 2013. "This could have dire consequences for all our work," Druckman warned, encouraging his colleagues to follow up with their representatives.

The next CAB workshop will be May 10, 2013. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/cab2013>.



CAB panelists (from l.) Traci Burch, John Griffin, and Reuel Rogers prepare to discuss their research on race and politics.

P. Reese

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### Death Penalty Studies: Three Decades Later, Still Fundamental Flaws

Most recent report points to  
path forward for researchers

Does the death penalty deter homicides?

Two separate reports, published 34 years apart by the National Research Council (NRC), both came to the same conclusion: Studies of the death penalty are so flawed that they cannot determine “whether the death penalty increases, decreases, or has no effect on homicide rates,” as cited in the 2012 report.

IPR economist **Charles F. Manski** was a member of the most recent NRC committee that took up this “incredibly hard and value-laden” question again.

Looking back, the first report was prompted by a “highly controversial” 1975 *American Economic Review* article, in which researcher Isaac Ehrlich concluded that each execution deters eight murders, Manski said. The article appeared at the same time that the U.S. Supreme Court was considering the constitutionality of the death penalty, ruling a year later in the 1976 *Gregg v. Georgia* decision that it was. This ended the four-year moratorium on executions.

Following the court ruling, the number of executions started to grow again—and following publication of the 1978 NRC report, empirical research on the subject dried up. By the mid-1990s, however, a new generation of researchers

(Continued on page 15)

### 2012 IPR Distinguished Public Policy Lecture Monday, October 8

## Alan Krueger

IPR is pleased to announce its 2012 Distinguished Public Policy Lecturer, Alan Krueger, chairman of President Obama’s Council of Economic Advisers and one of the nation’s leading labor economists. As the council’s chairman, Krueger provides the president with objective economic analysis and advice on the development and implementation of both domestic and international economic policy.



Courtesy of the White House

“It is a great honor to have Alan Krueger give IPR’s Distinguished Public Policy Lecture. Krueger is one of the most distinguished scholars of his generation and has made path-breaking contributions on many different public policy research fronts,” said IPR education economist and incoming director **David Figlio**. “His scholarly mettle and policy experience combined with his exceptional public speaking skills will make this a can’t-miss event.”

An expert on unemployment, job markets, income inequality, and the economics of education, Krueger is currently on leave from Princeton University, where he is Bendheim Professor of Economics and Public Affairs. The lecture will be held on Monday, October 8, on Northwestern University’s Evanston campus. Details will be forthcoming on IPR’s website.