methods that matter
Institute trains education researchers

Thanks to a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences’s National Center for Education Research, Larry Hedges, an IPR faculty fellow, and Mark Lipsey and David Cordray of Vanderbilt University launched a summer institute on randomized cluster trials in education research. Thirty researchers from around the country attended an intensive two-week, hands-on training session from July 7 to 17 at Northwestern.

“On the whole, medical researchers have far more experience in conducting randomized-controlled trials (RCTs) in health research, researchers do,” Hedges observed. “After teaching a workshop on how to conduct better randomized-controlled trials (RCTs) in health research, I realized that if well-established medical researchers had a need for such workshops, then education researchers had an even greater need for the same kind of experimental training.” Hedges is Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy at Northwestern.

Researchers leave their academic programs schooled in methodological (continued on page 10)

A Higher Level for Education Research
IPR elevates program, capitalizes on recent arrivals

The stakes for education research have never been higher. Failing public schools, tumbling rates of U.S. student achievement, drops in funding for schools, the persistence of the black-white achievement gap, and retention of effective teachers are just a few of the critical issues that school districts across the nation face every day. More often than not, the path to a sound policy solution is either littered with flawed studies—or worse, completely washed out by a lack of reliable data.

This is why the Institute for Policy Research is elevating its longstanding education policy research area to a full-fledged research (continued on page 12)
Faculty Recognition

Honors and Presentations of Note

Faculty Fellows

Larry Hedges, Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy, is serving as president of the Society for Research Synthesis Methodology for 2008–09.

Thomas McDade, an anthropologist, was named Weinberg College Board of Visitors Research and Teaching Professor.

Therese McGuire was elected to the board of directors of the Illinois Tax Foundation. She is ConAgra Foods Research Professor of Management and Strategy.

Law professor Dorothy Roberts, Kirkland & Ellis Professor, was a visiting fellow at Stanford University’s Research Institute of Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity in 2007–08.

James Rosenbaum, professor of human development and social policy, was appointed to the U.S. Department of Education’s Technical Review Panel on the design of the 2009 National High School Longitudinal Study.

The journal PS: Political Science and Politics named political science professor Wesley G. Skogan among the 25 most-cited political scientists.

Kathleen Thelen, Payson S. Wild Professor of Political Science, is president of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics for 2008–09. She is also a member of the Transatlantic Academy’s 2008 advisory committee.

Faculty Associates

Eszter Hargittai, associate professor of communication studies, is a fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University Law School in 2008–09.

Peter Miller, associate professor of communication studies, was elected president of the American Association for Public Opinion Research for 2009–10. He is serving as the association’s vice president this academic year.

Brian Uzzi received the 2008 W. Richard Scott Award for best paper from the American Sociological Association. He is Richard L. Thomas Professor of Leadership and Organizational Change at Kellogg.

Sandra Waxman, professor of cognitive psychology, delivered the Ann L. Brown lecture on “Conceptual Consequences of Word-Learning in the First Two Years of Life” on October 16 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Recent Faculty Fellow Grants

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awarded Thomas D. Cook, Joan and Sarepta Harrison Chair of Ethics and Justice, a grant for “Planning a Possible Network on Housing and Families with Children.” In addition, the Spencer Foundation renewed its support for “Workshops on Quasi-Experimental Design and Analysis in Education,” which Cook co-organizes annually with William Shadish of UC-Merced.

James Druckman, associate professor of political science, received a grant for collaborative research on “Campaigns in a New Media Age: How Candidates Use the World Wide Web” from the National Science Foundation.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation is supporting a study on “The Long-Term Effects of Neighborhoods on Low-Income Youth,” based on the results of the federal Moving to Opportunity program. IPR faculty Greg Duncan, Thomas McDade, and Emma Adam are on the research team.

The Institute of Education Sciences awarded Larry Hedges, Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy, a grant for “The Continued Development of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness,” of which Hedges is a founding member and past president.

Christopher Kuzawa, associate professor of anthropology, will study “Fetal Growth and a Cue of Matrilineal Nutrition History in the Philippines” with a grant from the National Science Foundation.

The Joyce Foundation is supporting a project by Michelle Reininger, assistant professor of human development and social policy, on “Targeting Recruitment Efforts at Promising Student Teachers: A New Approach for Teacher Recruitment in the Chicago Public School System.”

Dorothy Roberts, Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law, received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study “Race Consciousness in Biomedicine, Law, and Social Policy.”

With a grant from the Council of Great City Schools, James Rosenbaum, professor of human development and social policy, will conduct a new study to examine “Does Post-Secondary Advising Improve Student Motivation and Progress in High School?” as part of his research on college readiness.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded Wesley G. Skogan, professor of political science, a grant for “Continuing Analysis of CeaseFire-Chicago, 2008–09.”
Fresh Faces
IPR welcomes three new faculty fellows this year

**Ryan A. Brown**
*Assistant Professor of Human Development and Social Policy*
*PhD, Anthropology, Emory University, 2006*

Anthropologist Ryan A. Brown integrates evolutionary, biological, psychological, and cultural perspectives in the study of human health, with a focus on violent and risk-taking behaviors.

Currently, Brown is creating a mobile psychophysiology laboratory that will record emotional, biological, and behavioral responses to social stimuli in home settings for population studies. Brown will explore how culture and socialization determine emotional responses to social situations, and, in turn, how variation in emotional responses leads to differences in health outcomes.

Brown is working on several research projects, including the Great Smoky Mountains Study, a large-scale longitudinal study of families and health in North Carolina’s Appalachian Mountains. For three years, he lived and worked in the field, where he developed the Life Trajectory Interview for Youth, one of the first attempts at large-scale, ethnographically based quantitative data collection of youths’ views on their life prospects.

For the past two years, Brown was a Robert Woods Johnson Health & Society Scholar at the University of California in Berkeley and San Francisco.

**Lori Beaman**
*Assistant Professor of Economics*
*PhD, Economics, Yale University, 2007*

Lori Beaman’s primary fields of interest are development and labor economics, with a focus on how social networks facilitate information transmission. Her previous work has looked at the ways job information spread through social networks among political refugees in the United States. She also has evaluated how a political affirmative action program affected gender bias and electoral outcomes in rural India by providing information on female leadership ability.

Currently, Beaman is looking at how social networks affect household and individual decision making. These projects include the role social networks play in dietary assimilation and obesity among immigrants in the United States; how social ties can heighten or hinder an irrigation project’s success and alleviate poverty through savings-led microfinance in Mali; and the importance of information asymmetries, particularly advantageous selection, in informal labor markets in India.

Beaman is currently a Robert Woods Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research at the University of California, Berkeley. She will join IPR and Northwestern in January 2009.

**David Figlio**
*Orrington Lunt Professor of Education and Social Policy; Professor of Human Development and Social Policy and Economics*
*PhD, Economics, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1995*

A leading scholar on education policies and interventions, David Figlio explores issues from school accountability and standards to welfare policy and policy design. His current research projects involve evaluating the Florida Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program, the largest school voucher program in the United States; conducting a large-scale study of school accountability in Florida, using a state survey of public school principals; and following children from birth throughout their school careers to study key questions regarding early childhood policy and inequality.

Figlio’s work has been published in numerous leading journals, including the *American Economic Review, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Law and Economics,* and *Journal of Human Resources.* Organizations supporting his research include the National Science Foundation, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and U.S. Department of Education, as well as many foundations.

Figlio is a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and a member of the executive board of the National Center for the Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research. He serves as the inaugural editor of the *American Education Finance Association’s journal, Education Finance and Policy (MIT Press).* He has been a member of many national education task forces and panels, such as the National Research Council’s Panel on K-12 Science Assessment, and has advised several U.S. states, as well as foreign countries, on the design, implementation, and evaluation of education policies.

Figlio joined Northwestern from the University of Florida, where he was Knight-Ridder Professor of Economics. He will direct IPR’s new program on Education Policy. (See the *Education Research* cover story.)

For more information about these and other IPR faculty, please visit [www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/faculty.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/faculty.html)
**IPR RESEARCH NOTES**

**“Conservative Egalitarians”—Americans on Inequality**

In explaining the absence of “class war” in the United States, many observers argue that most Americans are not aware of economic inequality or don’t care about it, oppose egalitarian government programs, and are unwilling to pay taxes for such programs. Yet political scientists **Benjamin Page** and **Larry Jacobs** tell a very different story after conducting a new national survey on attitudes toward inequality.

Their data, combined with an exhaustive review of past surveys, reveal that most Americans consider themselves philosophical conservatives who cherish opportunity, favor individual initiative, and remain skeptical of government. But Americans are also pragmatic liberals, looking to government to enhance equal opportunity and to provide economic security. Additionally, they are willing to pay taxes for egalitarian programs.

Page, Gordon S. Fulcher Professor of Decision Making and IPR faculty associate at Northwestern, and Jacobs, Walter F. and Joan Mondale Professor for Political Studies at the University of Minnesota, coined the term “conservative egalitarians” to describe the phenomenon.

Most Americans are aware of highly unequal pay across occupations and extreme inequality in the distribution of wealth, and most favor reducing those inequalities. Large majorities support government programs to expand opportunity and security, ensuring that jobs are available to everyone at good wages; providing high-quality education to all from preschool through college; ensuring that everyone has healthcare; ensuring that seniors have decent retirement pensions; and providing food, clothing, and shelter to the poor.

Not only do most Americans approve of spending precious tax dollars for such purposes, but they are willing to pay more taxes to those ends. Most also prefer progressive tax policies, with heavy taxes on the rich.

These attitudes among citizens, together with the failure so far of policymakers to enact many of the policies they favor, raise questions about the nature of representation and the quality of democracy in the United States. They also suggest that American exceptionalism with respect to social welfare policies might be more of an elite than a mass-level phenomenon.

The book, **Class War? What Americans Really Think About Economic Inequality**, will be published by the University of Chicago Press in spring 2009.

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**Latino Political Advertising: Bulls-eye or Bomb?**

In heavily contested states with large Latino populations, such as Florida and Nevada, both of the 2008 presidential candidates courted Latino voters using English- and Spanish-language advertising and Latino spokespeople. New research by political scientist **Victoria DeFrancesco Soto**, an IPR faculty fellow, asks if such strategies can effectively woo Latino voters—or backfire politically with non-Latinos.

DeFrancesco Soto and her collaborators have launched a new survey to take stock of these ethnically targeted political ads. Having studied the partisan mobilization of Latino voters since the 2000 election, she finds that such efforts have increased with each subsequent presidential election, with all of the 2008 presidential candidates having formulated a specific Latino-targeted strategy in both the Democratic and Republican presidential primaries and in the general election.

The project examines how different levels of Latino ethnic targeting for both Democratic and Republican candidates—in this case, Barack Obama and John McCain, respectively—influence vote choice. Past research has disproved the assumption that all Latinos respond similarly to the same messages or even prefer such targeted messages in the first place. DeFrancesco Soto will study this, plus whether ethnically angled advertising has led to “ricochet” or unintended effects.

A cornerstone of her study is the idea that Latinos’ political behavior depends on the breadth and depth of their experiences in the United States. DeFrancesco Soto hypothesizes that ethnically targeted ads will draw in Latinos who positively identify with their ethnic heritage and Latino peers.

Yet using this heritage appeal also runs a risk of hurting a candidate’s overall campaign strategy. Candidates who use this tactic could also turn off those Latinos who are more interested in assimilating to mainstream U.S. culture. Furthermore, the ads could alienate non-Latino voters who view them.

To test for ricochet effects, the survey is exposing 3,000 Latino and non-Latino voters to general and Latino-targeted ads. The researchers are varying the participants’ exposure to party sponsor, language of the ad, and the appearance of a Latino endorser. The participants are drawn from 250,000 electors in Los Angeles County. For more information about DeFrancesco Soto and her work, visit [www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/soto.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/soto.html).
Governments around the world have been intervening in unprecedented ways to help stabilize markets in the wake of the global credit crunch. The causes behind the crisis are complex and still poorly understood, but one of the biggest factors has been market uncertainty. What can governments do to rapidly restore market confidence?

In a new working paper, economists Charles F. Manski, an IPR faculty fellow, and William Brock of the University of Wisconsin–Madison conclude that guaranteeing skittish lenders a minimum return on loans could be one way that governments could—almost immediately—help restore stability and transparency in credit markets.

Most economic models assume that lenders and borrowers have probabilistic expectations that they update as they receive new information following a shock or crisis. Manski and Brock posit, however, that following a large and unexpected shock, market participants may not be sure how to react. In particular, lenders may find it difficult to predict future repayment rates.

Incorporating lenders’ behavior under ambiguity into their model, the economists used various rules—Bayesian, maximin, and minimax-regret—to determine loan supply and credit market equilibrium. Their calculations show that lenders, not being able to determine whether a shock is temporary, reduce loan supply as investors move toward safe assets in a “flight to liquidity.”

The researchers confirm that following a financial shock, government intervention can help to stabilize financial markets by reducing lender doubts about loan repayments and thus preventing the pool of available loans from shrinking further. Loan guarantees are preferable to government manipulation of returns on safe investments, which requires in-depth knowledge of lender behavior.

While acknowledging that their model relies on idealized assumptions and cannot cover all of the complexities of the current credit crisis, Manski and Brock suggest that policymakers might find their analysis pertinent as they seek to create effective stabilization policies.

To download “Competitive Lending with Partial Knowledge of Loan Repayment,” go to www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/workingpapers/wpW08.html.
Many American neighborhoods continue to display evidence of the nation’s ongoing housing crisis—an abundance of for-sale and foreclosure signs. Yet these signs also point to another equally grave crisis—the lack of a coherent national housing policy, in particular for the nation’s poor.

“The current crisis has had an impact on many Americans, but those hardest hit are America’s low-income families and their children,” said IPR Faculty Fellow Thomas D. Cook, a social psychologist. “Housing policy in America has reached a crossroads, and fresh ideas are needed.”

Supported by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Cook has put together an interdisciplinary team comprising some of the nation’s top researchers in housing, poverty, and child development, including IPR sociologist Mary Pattillo. They will spend 18 months designing a major new longitudinal study on housing and families. If successful, the group will evolve into a new MacArthur research network that will carry out the study.

Members of the MacArthur planning group review plans for launching a major study of housing effects on families.

According to Cook, past housing policy has relied on a patchwork of studies where success was often measured by the number of bricks laid, the amount of mortar poured, or the number of apartments built. Past studies of housing effects have also been mainly one-dimensional, for example, assessing children in a sole area like cognitive performance or mental or physical health. The proposed study will take a broader, multidimensional perspective of how housing and the surrounding social, institutional, and family environment can affect a child’s health, education, behavior, and—most importantly—his or her life outcome.

“We hope this study will serve as the basis for a coherent, long-term federal housing policy,” Cook said, “one that will prove its worth by helping children to become productive members of society and successful parents, enabling them to bypass the all-too-frequent pitfalls of America’s disadvantaged youth—from going on welfare to becoming teenage parents or going to jail.”

MacArthur Planning Group on Housing and Families with Children

**Thomas D. Cook, Chair**
Joan and Sarepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice and Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University. Research on randomized experiments and contexts of poverty and child development; Moving to Opportunity technical adviser.

**Greg Duncan**
Distinguished Professor of Education, University of California, Irvine. Research on the Gautreaux program, Moving to Opportunity experiment, and Milwaukee’s New Hope Project.

**Kathryn Edin**
Professor of Public Policy and Management, Kennedy School, Harvard University. Research on how poor families with children adapt to the limitations in their physical and social environments.

**Jens Ludwig**
McCormick Foundation Professor of Social Service Administration, Law, and Public Policy, University of Chicago. Research on housing policy and the Moving to Opportunity experiment.

**Sandra Newman**
Professor of Policy Studies and Director, Institute for Policy Studies, Johns Hopkins University. Research on housing affordability and the role of housing in the lives of children, families, and people with disabilities.

**Mary Pattillo**
Professor of Sociology and African American Studies and Faculty Associate, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University. Ethnographic research on housing and neighborhoods, particularly African American neighborhoods.

**Stephen Raudenbush**
Lewis-Sebring Professor, Department of Sociology, and Chair, Committee on Education, University of Chicago. Research on the effects of neighborhoods and schools on families and children.

**Cybele Raver**
Associate Professor of Applied Psychology and Director, Institute for Human Development and Social Change, New York University. Research on welfare reform and early childhood interventions.
The College Affordability Crisis and Endowments

By Burton Weisbrod, Evelyn Asch, and Jeffrey Ballou

Not only are Americans faced with the most severe global financial crisis since the Great Depression, they are also faced with a college affordability crisis. With shrinking home values, 401(k)s, and 529 plans, Americans are more worried than ever about how they will pay for their children’s college education. During the campaign, both presidential candidates addressed the importance of ensuring college affordability for future generations.

These concerns about college affordability and rapidly rising costs have focused attention on fat university endowments. For the past 10 years, tuition and fees have risen annually 5.6 percent at private and 7.1 percent at public four-year universities. This rate has outpaced the inflation rate for consumer prices, which averaged just 2.7 percent per year. At the same time, student debt loads jumped 58 percent after inflation.

Lawmakers are all too aware of the political ramifications of rising tuition. In January 2008, the Senate Finance Committee sent a lengthy questionnaire to the 136 American schools with endowments that top $500 million. According to Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), “Something’s not right when tuition heads sky-high alongside college endowment funds. In fact, billion-dollar, tax-free endowments should help mean affordable education for more students, rather than only a security blanket for colleges.”

On September 8, Sen. Grassley and Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) took a further step and convened a Capitol Hill roundtable on college endowments. This meeting was most likely the beginning of a move to regulate how colleges spend their endowments. This is a dangerous direction to go.

Our research into the relationship between universities’ activities and their missions shows that while it would be easy to mandate minimum payouts from college and university endowments, it would be exceedingly difficult to ensure that such a mandate translates into a more affordable undergraduate degree. We acknowledge the government’s right—and responsibility—to examine whether nonprofit schools are providing socially valuable benefits that justify their favorable tax treatment; however, we also believe that the politically popular call for mandating minimum payout rates is a dangerous solution—one that is likely to do more harm than good. We have laid out a number of reasons for this.

First, a mandate applied simply to “large” endowments targets the wrong institutions. Endowments are meant to ensure a school’s future viability in the face of adverse financial circumstances. When ranked by the number of years a school could fund its current expenditures with endowment payouts alone, only two of the largest-endowment schools—Princeton at no. 4 and Harvard at no. 16—break into the top 20.

Second, mandated payouts would not necessarily translate into more aid for needy students. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, any new financial aid might flow to wealthier students as merit aid. Indeed, the extra payout might not fund financial aid at all, but rather administrators’ salaries or a new swimming pool. Preventing this would require even more federal oversight, with the government stipulating how a school can and cannot spend its endowment payout.

Third, endowment payouts are only one source of financing for universities. If schools are compelled to spend money that they prefer to save, they might seek to bolster those savings through other channels—spending more on fundraising or even reducing financial aid.

Fourth, mandated minimum payouts might lead to creative accounting that renames assets something other than an “endowment” so as to exclude them from payout regulation. Such an unintended consequence of regulation could result in overall lower payouts than exist now.

Fifth, targeting large endowments could affect at most a small percentage of undergraduates: The overwhelming majority of college students attend schools with endowments under $500 million. And with endowment earnings sharply down—wealthy little Grinnell College, for example, lost 12 percent in its total endowment in the last year—even fewer students will be possible beneficiaries.

It is appropriate for legislatures to consider when an endowment is “too large” and so should be either taxed or discouraged in some other way. Moreover, we applaud the legislators’ emphasis on increasing the affordability of higher education. Nevertheless, endowment regulation is not the solution.

Burton Weisbrod is John Evans Professor of Economics and an IPR faculty fellow. Evelyn Asch is an IPR research coordinator. Jeffrey Ballou is an economist at Mathematica Policy Research in Cambridge, Mass. Their book, Mission and Money: Understanding the University, was published by Cambridge University Press this fall.
In the midst of this social and political maelstrom, the Kerner Commission, led by then Illinois Gov. Otto Kerner, released its report, punctuated by a stark conclusion: “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.” Forty years later, to what extent has inequality changed in America?

This question encapsulates the theme of a two-day conference in April to mark the 40th anniversary of the Institute for Policy Research’s founding. Titled the “Dynamics of Inequality in America from 1968 to Today,” the conference will discuss the latest research findings on inequality in the areas of race, gender, health, cities, and politics.

From early—and ongoing—research on crime and poverty to later studies on housing, welfare, education, and health, IPR faculty have charted continuity and change in the various forms of inequality. They have shown how it operates, the ways in which it affects people’s lives, and the types of policies that can address it.

Fay Lomax Cook, the Institute’s fifth director, noted, “IPR’s 40th anniversary offers a unique moment to take stock of what we know about inequality. It will also demonstrate how IPR research has contributed to that knowledge base and chart a course for studying it in the years to come.” She is professor of human development and social policy at Northwestern.

Conference speakers are some of the nation’s leading scholars in their respective fields and include former and current IPR faculty members. Among the confirmed speakers are Harvard sociologists Lawrence Bobo and Christopher “Sandy” Jencks, Brookings fellow Rebecca Blank, and Princeton political scientist Larry Bartels.

Five sessions will address various aspects of inequality research, with an eye to comparing what inequality looked like in the United States in 1968 and the progress—or lack thereof—made since, what current research has to say, and where the nation needs to go next in terms of research and policy. (See p. 9 for the conference agenda.)

A Brief History of the Institute
IPR was founded in October of the 1968–69 academic year as the Center for Urban Affairs. With sociologist Raymond Mack, one of three faculty members, at the helm, the Institute quickly applied for, and received, the Ford Foundation grant that helped to launch it. Since then, the Institute has evolved into a center where 34 faculty fellows and 54 faculty associates from the departments of economics and sociology to law, medicine, and psychology join across two campuses to produce compelling, interdisciplinary research with practical applications on important policy issues. Grants have increased from the first Ford grant to 58 research grants from federal, state, and regional agencies and organizations in 2008.

The original Ford grant was a part of the foundation’s emphasis in the 1960s on funding research, training, and services to counter urban problems. In all, around a dozen research centers were established to study the major problems endemic to many cities—poverty, housing inequities, discrimination, and crime—at universities around the country, including the University of California, Berkeley, University of Chicago, Princeton University, University of Texas, and a joint center between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. Of those, only Northwestern’s center survives with its original mission intact.

Noted Cook, “While other Ford-funded centers have since vanished or changed their focus, IPR has remained committed to conducting and disseminating policy research on social issues, in part, thanks to the University contributing annual support to the center that the Ford Foundation grant launched. “IPR continues to flourish as a politically and socially relevant research center due in large measure to our commitment to producing nonpartisan, interdisciplinary research,” Cook continued, “and to Northwestern’s unwavering support for excellence in social science research.”

The conference is free of charge and open to the public, but registration is required. For more information, please contact Ellen Whittingham, h-whittingham@northwestern.edu, 847-491-8704, or visit www.northwestern.edu/ipr/iprat40.
IPR’s 40th Anniversary Conference, April 16–17, 2009
“Dynamics of Inequality in America from 1968 to Today”

Inequality has been one of the major themes of interdisciplinary faculty research at the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) since it was founded in the 1968–69 academic year. IPR’s 40th anniversary offers a unique moment to take stock of what we know about inequality, to look at how IPR research has contributed to that knowledge base, and to chart a course for where we need to go next in terms of research and policy.

Thursday, April 16

2:00 – 3:15 p.m.
• Welcome: Fay Lomax Cook, Director of the Institute for Policy Research and Professor of Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University

• Keynote: “Economic Inequality: How Much Is Too Much?”
  Christopher “Sandy” Jencks, Malcolm Wiener Professor of Social Policy, Harvard University

3:15 – 5:00 p.m.
• Race and the Dynamics of Inequality
  Mary Pattillo, Professor of Sociology and African American Studies and IPR Faculty Associate, Northwestern University
  Lawrence Bobo, W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of the Social Sciences, Harvard University
  Ronald Angel, Professor of Sociology, University of Texas at Austin

Friday, April 17

8:30 – 10:15 a.m.
• The City and the Dynamics of Inequality
  Wesley G. Skogan, Professor of Political Science and IPR Associate Director, Northwestern University
  John Mollenkopf, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Sociology and Director, Center for Urban Research, City University of New York (CUNY)
  Robert Sampson, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences, Harvard University

10:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
• Health and the Dynamics of Inequality
  P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, Professor of Developmental Psychology, Director of Cells to Society at IPR, and IPR Faculty Fellow, Northwestern University

12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
• Politics, Public Opinion, and Inequality Lecture: “Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age”
  Larry Bartels, Donald Stokes Professor of Public and International Affairs and Director, Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Princeton University
  Benjamin Page (Discussant), Gordon S. Fulcher Professor of Decision Making and Political Science and IPR Faculty Associate, Northwestern University

2:00 – 3:45 p.m.
• Gender and the Dynamics of Inequality
  Alice Eagly, James Padilla Chair of Arts and Sciences, Professor of Psychology, and IPR Faculty Fellow, Northwestern University
  Paula England, Professor of Sociology, Stanford University
  Jane Mansbridge, Adams Professor of Political Leadership and Democratic Values, Kennedy School, Harvard University

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
• 2009 Distinguished Public Policy Lecture: “Why Does Inequality Matter, and What Should We Do About It?”
  Rebecca Blank, Robert V. Kerr Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution; former Dean, Ford School of Public Policy, and former Co-Director, National Poverty Center, University of Michigan
best practices for that time, Hedges continued. But these practices change over time, and little exists in the way of training for those who want to keep abreast of current best practices—especially for midcareer researchers. So Hedges, a national leader in the fields of education statistics and evaluation, set out with colleagues at Vanderbilt and the Institute of Education Sciences to create such an program.

Bonnie Doren, a senior research associate and assistant professor at the University of Oregon who participated in the workshop, said, “Over the years, education researchers have been struggling to figure out how to do more rigorous evaluations in education settings, and we have been struggling with that as well.”

Doren has spent the last 10 years developing programs for high school students with disabilities and conducting research in secondary special education. She said she decided to apply for the two-week workshop instead of shorter, regional workshops because she felt it was important to step away from a local focus for a broader, more national one “and really get immersed in the topic.” She also wanted to learn from those who had faced some of the same research issues that she had.

The program was very intense, Doren said, but she appreciated how the instructors covered not only theoretical elements but practical elements as well, such as what reviewers look for in grant applications.

Felix Fernandez, a consultant with ICF International for the past two years, said the “big names” first drew him to the institute. “These are the foremost experts in the field of RCTs,” he said.

Fernandez said he appreciated that the instructors used actual examples in explaining how to do power calculations, supplying him with knowledge that he could use right away. Back on the job, he was able to quickly and correctly calculate the statistical power for the second year of a randomized trial on which he was working.

Fernandez also found it enriching to interact with a wide variety of people who came to the institute, from academics to research consultants and graduate students. The faculty organizers did an “excellent job” of pairing people who typically do not work together, he said, noting this served to enhance the instruction.

The topics included describing and quantifying outcomes, specifying conceptual and operational models, basic experimental designs for education studies, sampling size and statistical power, and using software like HLM to conduct hierarchical data modeling. Participants also worked on a group project, in which they had to conceptualize and submit a funding application for an education experiment.

“The workshop blew away all my expectations,” Fernandez concluded. “It was a lot more thoughtful and well put together than I would have expected, and it was one of the best trainings I’ve ever attended.”

IES Director Distributes Certificates and Advice

At the end of the workshop on July 17, each of the participants received a certificate of completion from IES founding Director Grover “Russ” Whitehurst, who flew in from Washington, D.C., to make the presentations. He has been at the helm of IES since it was founded in 2002 to provide rigorous evidence on which to ground education practice and policy.

Whitehurst explained that IES “is enthusiastically invested in the summer institute” because of a tremendous deficiency of methodologically rigorous experiments in the field of education.

“There’s much more important work that desperately needs to be done than there are people well trained to do that work,” he said. “You are sharpening your skills to be able to provide answers that policymakers can stand on.”

The IES director, whose six-year appointment is ending this fall, also spoke of his struggle to make Washington policymakers understand why methods matter and encouraged participants to be just as vigilant about convincing others of the importance of conducting research the right way.

“How can we be sure that social programs are having their intended impact? It’s when you are looking for that answer that methods matter,” Whitehurst said. “We want to provide answers that are the right answers.” Everyone from foundations to policymakers and the public needs to know whether, for example, smaller high schools or smaller classes provide a better education, he said.

Whitehurst reminded participants of what hangs in the balance between a right answer and a wrong answer—the lives of those whom the programs and policies are supposed to serve.

“People who are struggling need education and social programs that work,” he continued. “They don’t need an education industry that continues to provide pseudoservices that, in fact, don’t provide them with the help that they need. So we need to focus on things that matter and utilize methods that can give us right answers,” Whitehurst concluded.

The institute will be held again next summer at Vanderbilt University. For more information, please visit the Q-Center’s Web page at www.northwestern.edu/ipr/qcenter.
More than a Summer Job
Undergraduates gain valuable experience as IPR research assistants

For college students, the gold standard of summer jobs is landing one that (a) pays and (b) is relevant to one’s academic and career aspirations. IPR’s Summer Undergraduate Research Assistants program offers students both—and more.

“This is not just a summer job,” said program director Emma Adam, a developmental psychobiologist and IPR faculty fellow. “We’re interested in getting people into policy-related research early in their careers.”

The program this year hosted 23 undergraduates, who worked side-by-side with 18 IPR faculty members on their research projects. The program can be as valuable to faculty as it is to students, especially junior faculty who might not come to Northwestern with other means to fund research assistance for new projects, Adam said.

This summer Jeanette Colyvas, assistant professor of human development, social policy, and learning sciences and an IPR faculty associate, was able to jumpstart a new project with her research assistant, Stan Polit, a junior in learning and organizational change.

“What I was really pleased about is that it was an opportunity for an undergraduate to get involved in the beginning of a research project and the primary data collection,” Colyvas said. As a first step in researching the new paradigm of intellectual property disputes between universities and businesses, Polit collected hundreds of legal proceedings related to the topic, preparing the data for advanced text analysis tools.

“It was a nice intersection between what I learn about in my [learning and organizational change] classes and the legal field,” said Polit, who plans to attend law school after graduation.

Many research assistants experience the program as a test run for their future careers in the social sciences and the graduate work needed to follow that path. Faye Zheng, a senior in mathematical methods in the social sciences, decided to pursue a PhD in statistics after working with IPR Faculty Fellow Larry Hedges, Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy. In addition to the practical skills she gained, Zheng said she appreciated the contact with other researchers.

“I have a better picture of what researchers do, from the project and just talking to the professor and graduate students in my office,” she said.

The program assumes that undergraduates have little or no previous research experience, so the research assistants attend a three-day workshop to learn about statistical methods and software, such as SPSS and Stata, and resources like the University’s social science data banks. Polit said he appreciated the training and the chance to use the new software in his summer research because manipulating the data and drawing conclusions validates all the work that goes into coding.

“The data don’t really come alive until you see it in SPSS and Stata,” Polit said. “It really makes it worthwhile to see what you can learn from analyses using those sets.”

For more information, see www.northwestern.edu/ipr/ugradresearch.html.

IPR Serves as Methodological Training Grounds

Over the summer, more than 150 researchers from around the country participated in one of four sessions on methodological training offered by five IPR faculty organizers. In addition to the two-week workshop on randomized controlled trials for education researchers (see the p. 1 story on Methods), there were two weeklong sessions on quasi-experimental methods and another on biomarker training.

The sessions on quasi-experimental methods were run by Thomas D. Cook, Joan and Sarepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice and IPR faculty fellow, and William Shadish of the University of California, Merced. The Spencer Foundation provided support for the workshops, which aim to share best practices on quasi-experimental design and analysis, especially in the field of education.

The Summer Biomarker Institute, sponsored by IPR’s Cells to Society (C2S): The Center on Social Disparities and Health, was held from June 9 to 11 at Northwestern. Three IPR faculty fellows and associate professors—Thomas McDade and Christopher Kuzawa in anthropology and Emma Adam in human development and social policy—organize the annual summer institute. Through a series of hands-on activities and workshops, participants learn state-of-the-art methods for integrating biomarkers into population-based social science research.

The workshop also seeks to develop a community of scholars around these objective measures of health.
program. The new program area will regroup nine faculty fellows, representing the fields of education and social policy, psychology, statistics, sociology, economics, and management and strategy.

Over the past three years, four researchers with an education focus have arrived at the Institute. David Figlio, Michelle Reininger, Sergio Urzúa, and Larry Hedges have joined fellow IPR researchers Thomas D. Cook, James Rosenbaum, James Spillane, and others. Figlio, Orrington Lunt Professor of Education and Social Policy, will lead the new program.

“There is too little information about which education interventions are most effective in terms of student achievement and even costs,” Figlio noted. “By nurturing IPR’s vibrant and multidisciplinary community of education researchers, we hope to create an even larger pool of rigorous research and policy-relevant solutions to address the pressing problems faced by teachers, students, and parents.”

IPR Director Fay Lomax Cook said, “From some of the first studies of Comer schools and evaluations of urban school reforms to a current push to understand the effects of No Child Left Behind, teacher effectiveness, and high school-to-college transitions, IPR faculty have been at the forefront of a broad range of education issues.”

IPR Fellows and Research
The nine IPR faculty fellows who are part of the new program on education research share interests with other IPR research programs, such as Child, Adolescent, and Family Studies; Poverty, Race, and Inequality; Nonprofits and Philanthropy; and the Center for Improving Methods for Quantitative Policy Research, or Q-Center, which Cook and Hedges co-direct.

David Figlio
Orrington Lunt Professor of Education and Social Policy; Professor of Human Development and Social Policy and Economics

Figlio, who came to Northwestern from the University of Florida, is one of IPR’s newest faculty fellows and will be leading its education research program. He is currently directing the evaluation of Florida’s Corporate Tax Credit Scholarships Program, the largest school voucher program in the United States, with more than 20,000 recipients across the state. He also studies the effects of school accountability design on student achievement and school policies and practices, showing, for example, how accountability affects principals’ performance and the teacher labor market. He is one of the founding editors of the American Education Finance Association’s journal, Education Finance and Policy, published by MIT Press. (See the related article on p. 16.)

Thomas D. Cook
Joan and Sarepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice; Professor of Sociology, Psychology, and Education and Social Policy

As an independent reviewer of the national study of Title I (No Child Left Behind), Cook is at the forefront of evaluating the most significant change to U.S. education policy in recent years. He is also a leading scholar in the area of quasi-experimental methodology, organizing an annual summer workshop for practitioners and researchers in education (see p. 11). Cook’s research covers a wide variety of issues, including a comprehensive evaluation of Comer schools, the achievement gap and “Sesame Street,” the effectiveness of state pre-K programs and Head Start, and the use of randomized experiments in education. He is also leading a MacArthur working group on housing and families with children (see p. 6). Cook is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a former chair of the Russell Sage Foundation board.

Larry Hedges
Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy

A national leader in the fields of education statistics and evaluation, Hedges is best known for his work on meta-analysis that includes co-writing Statistical Methods for Meta-Analysis with Ingram Olkin. He has conducted studies on the black-white achievement gap, teacher effectiveness using Tennessee STAR data, and frameworks for international comparative studies in education. He is a co-organizer of the summer institute supported by the Institute of Education Sciences on randomized cluster trials (see the p. 1 story on Methods). Hedges is a founder of the Society for Research Synthesis Methodology and the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE) and the founding editor of SREE’s new journal. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Education.

For more information about these and other IPR faculty, please visit www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/faculty.html.
A Higher Level for Education Research
(continued from page 12)

James Spillane
Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Chair in Learning and Organizational Change

Spillane’s work explores the policy implementation process at the state, school district, school, and classroom levels. His current research focuses on relations between policy, school administrative structures, and teaching. He is principal investigator of the Distributed Leadership Study, which investigates school leadership and management in urban schools. He is also studying principal preparation, recruitment, retention, and career paths with Michelle Reininger. He is author of Standards Deviation: How Schools Misunderstand Policy (Harvard University, 2004), Distributed Leadership (Jossey-Bass, 2006), Distributed Leadership in Practice (Teachers College Record, 2007), and numerous journal articles and book chapters.

Charles F. Manski
Board of Trustees Professor in Economics

Manski’s research spans econometrics, judgment and decision making, and analysis of social policy. He has written several books on methodology for empirical research in the social sciences. He has also co-authored books on postsecondary schooling choice and on evaluation of welfare and training programs. His studies on education have investigated many topics, including perceptions of the returns to schooling, vouchers and social mobility, factors that influence college-going behavior, and the decision to become a teacher. He is a fellow of the Econometric Society, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Therese McGuire
ConAgra Foods Research Professor; Professor of Management and Strategy

McGuire’s areas of expertise include state and local public finance, fiscal decentralization, property tax limitations, education finance, and regional economic development. She has written about and advised various governments on state tax reform and on the impact of taxes on economic growth. Her work on education finance has looked at the effects of using property taxes as funding for local schools and possible alternatives to property taxes, in addition to how tax limitations affect student performance. She is currently editor of the National Tax Journal.

James Rosenbaum
Professor of Human Development and Social Policy

Rosenbaum has an extensive body of research looking into public housing and mobility programs, including Chicago’s Gautreaux Program. As part of his studies of Gautreaux, Rosenbaum has examined the effects of moving poor black families to white middle-class suburbs—in particular, how the moves affect children’s educational outcomes. More recently, Rosenbaum has focused on college for all and the high school-to-work transition. He currently is studying the barriers to college access faced by disadvantaged students. Rosenbaum serves as an adviser to Education Week, the National Assessment of Career and Technical Education, the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, and New York Mayor Bloomberg’s Task Force on Career and Technical Education.

Michelle Reininger
Assistant Professor of Human Development and Social Policy

Reininger’s broad research agenda is aimed at gaining a better understanding of the dynamics of teacher labor markets, including preparation, recruitment, and retention. Specifically, she studies the importance of geography in the occupational decision making of teachers as well as the role of community colleges in the supply of teachers in areas with hard-to-staff schools. She has launched a two-year study of how to identify and target promising student teachers in the Chicago Public School system. She is also studying principal preparation, recruitment, retention, and career paths with James Spillane.

Sergio Urzúa
Assistant Professor of Economics

Urzúa’s research has focused on the role of cognitive and socioemotional skills and health as determinants of schooling decisions, labor market outcomes, and social behavior. His research has found socioemotional skills such as motivation, persistence, and self-esteem can influence schooling decisions and labor market outcomes as much as cognitive ability. Urzúa’s research has also examined the economic channels through which family and school environments can affect schooling decisions and labor market outcomes. Recently, he has also studied the effects of early childhood interventions in Latin America.
Recently Published Books

**Mission and Money: Understanding the University**  
By Burton Weisbrod, Jeffrey Ballou, and Evelyn Asch  
Cambridge University Press, 2008, 356 pages

Moving beyond the traditional focus on elite schools, this book examines sources of revenue for the entire higher education industry from nondegree-granting career academies to major research universities. Many of these institutions pursue activities related to their mission that are often unprofitable, yet they also engage in profitable revenue-related activities to finance them. Sometimes the pursuit of finances can conflict with the central mission of higher learning, however. The authors address the rapid growth of for-profit schools and consider the role of advertising, branding, and reputation, as well as competitive factors, such as distance education, intercollegiate athletics, and lobbying. Economist Burton Weisbrod, an IPR faculty fellow, and his co-authors, Jeff Ballou and Evelyn Asch, also discuss the general policy implications of their analyses.

**The American Women’s Movement, 1945–2000: A Brief History With Documents**  
By Nancy MacLean  
Bedford/St. Martins, 2009, 224 pages

The American women’s movement was one of the most influential social movements of the 20th century. MacLean’s textbook engages students with the most up-to-date scholarship in U.S. women’s history. Her introduction traces the deep roots of the women’s movement and illustrates the continuity from women’s activism in the labor movement and New Deal networks, black civil rights movement, and peace movement to the height of Second Wave feminism and into the Third Wave. Including primary sources that reflect the movement’s social breadth and depth, MacLean, a historian and IPR faculty associate, addresses a range of topics, including wage discrimination, peace activism, housework and childcare, sexuality, reproductive rights, welfare, education, socialism, and violence against women.

**Code Red: An Economist Explains How to Revive the Healthcare System Without Destroying It**  
By David Dranove  
Princeton University Press, 2008, 281 pages

With $2 trillion at stake, the U.S. healthcare system remains in critical condition. Still, most of the proposed solutions to date have had little chance of becoming law, and even less of succeeding afterward. In his recent book, Dranove, a healthcare economist and IPR faculty associate, addresses the failures of previous reforms and proposals and offers a fresh set of feasible healthcare policies that address access, quality, and efficiency. Setting his story against the backdrop of healthcare in the United States since the early 20th century, he identifies the root causes of rising costs and diminishing access to quality care, such as inadequate information, perverse incentives, and malfunctioning insurance markets. Evaluating the various movements to reform the U.S. healthcare system—including the rise of consumerism, the quality movement, and initiatives to expand access—he ultimately argues for the necessity of more systemic, market-based reforms.

**Inside the Presidential Debates: Their Improbable Past and Promising Future**  
By Newton Minow and Craig LaMay  
University of Chicago Press, 2008, 240 pages

The U.S. presidential debates were once unique in the democratic world, providing the public the only real chance to hear candidates respond directly to each other in a discussion of social, economic, and foreign policy issues. Minow contributes an inside look at the origins of the debates as a former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission and assistant counsel to former Illinois Gov. Adlai Stevenson when Stevenson first proposed the debates in 1960. Written with longtime collaborator Craig LaMay, associate professor of journalism and an IPR faculty fellow, this book offers a history of the legal and personal battles that determined which candidates were allowed to debate and under what circumstances. The authors make recommendations for the future, calling for the debates to become less formal and more interactive, and they also explore the myriad ways in which the Internet might serve to broaden the debates’ appeal and informative power.
Recently Published Books
(continued from page 14)

Getting Saved in America: Taiwanese Immigration and Religious Experience
By Carolyn Chen
Princeton University Press, 2008, 248 pages

Like many other immigrants, Taiwanese Americans often become more religious after coming to the United States. But how does religion interact with the process of becoming “American”? In this book, Chen argues that many Taiwanese Americans turn to religion as a way to deal with the great challenges they face in their new home. Even though Buddhism is a dominant religion in Taiwan, she found that a number of Taiwanese Americans actually converted to Buddhism after immigrating, and many others convert to Christianity. As she examines the dual processes of cultural and religious transformation, Chen, a sociologist and IPR faculty associate, also compares how these two different religions shape the immigration experiences of one ethnic group.

New Landscapes of Inequality: Neoliberalism and the Erosion of Democracy in America
Edited by Jane Collins, Micaela di Leonardo, and Brett Williams
SAR Press, 2008, 304 pages

Behind the growing global problems of the 21st century—endemic warfare, natural disasters, global epidemics, climate change—lies a series of closely connected, long-term political-economic processes, often glossed over as the rise of neoliberal capitalism. Despite the presumption that capitalist-style “liberalization” will lead inevitably to market growth and optimal social ends, often the results have not been positive. Focusing on the United States, the contributors to this volume—including IPR faculty members Micaela di Leonardo, who co-edited the book, Nancy MacLean, and Dorothy Roberts—examine such controversial topics as how this policy agenda has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and how recurrent moral panics misrepresent class, race, gendered, and sexual realities on the ground.

For more information about IPR faculty publications, see www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications.

Workshop Examines Political and Social Behavior

More than 70 social scientists and graduate students from across the Midwest came to discuss innovative research on political participation, public opinion, and public policy in May. Political scientist and IPR Faculty Fellow James Druckman, with graduate student Cari Hennessy, organized the second Chicago Area Political and Social Behavior Workshop, which included the presentations below. IPR was a co-sponsor.

Political Participation and Housing Mobility
Scholars have long questioned whether poor neighborhoods lack the institutions and social networks that encourage and enable voter registration and turnout. Claudine Gay of Harvard University challenged this assumption. Using data from the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) study—a national randomized housing mobility experiment—she was able to isolate neighborhood effects on voting. She found that—contrary to popular wisdom—voter participation actually decreased among low-income families who moved to wealthier areas with MTO vouchers. “Being poor in a neighborhood of plenty can be a demobilizing experience,” she noted.

Political Ads and Online Discursive Participation
There is a perception that the media exert a powerful influence on civic engagement and participation, and “attack ads” can turn off voters. But research by Dhavan Shah of the University of Wisconsin–Madison and his colleagues finds that people reflect on information, whether from traditional or online sources, before restructuring their attitudes and opinions. In addition, online messaging seems to provide a promising new outlet for citizen deliberation. The researchers have created a new model, O-S-R-O-R (orientations-stimuli-reasoning-orientations-responses), as an alternative to the longstanding O-S-O-R communication model.

War Reporting and Censorship
Does the tone of news about America’s wars respond more to government spin or battleground events? Political scientist Scott Althaus and his colleagues at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign examined war reporting in The New York Times from World War I to the Iraq War. They find that neither a high number of casualties nor dissensus among elites significantly influenced coverage. These results suggest that government censorship in wartime might have less impact on the tone of coverage than is commonly supposed.

For more information, see www.northwestern.edu/ipr/events/workshops/cabmay08.htm.
Accept, Reject, Revise and Resubmit
IPR faculty involvement in editing academic journals

Over the years, IPR faculty have edited some of academia’s most prestigious journals, including Econometrica, Psychological Bulletin, Demography, American Sociological Review—to name a few. Three journals recently named IPR faculty fellows as lead editors.

Political scientist James Druckman took over as co-editor of Public Opinion Quarterly this fall; education economist David Figlio helped launch and edits Education Finance and Policy, now in its third year; and methodologist and statistician Larry Hedges and social psychologist Thomas D. Cook worked on the launch of the Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, which published its first issue in January 2008. Hedges currently serves as its co-editor.

Opinion Leader
Public Opinion Quarterly (POQ)
Published since 1937, POQ is the leading journal in the field of communication and ranks fourth in political science and second in interdisciplinary social sciences, according to the 2007 Institute for Scientific Information rankings. Overseen by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the journal publishes research on opinion and communication theories, polls, and survey methodology and validity.

“It is nerve-racking—but rewarding—to be involved in shaping the intellectual direction of public opinion research by being involved in the production of one of the key journals,” Druckman said.

As the first political scientist to be at the top of the journal’s masthead, Druckman and his co-editor, sociologist Nancy Mathiowetz of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee work to ensure the coherency of each issue.

Another big draw for Druckman is the journal’s emphasis on “critically important” questions of methodology. “Due to technological innovations, political science—and the social sciences in general—are relying more on primary data collection and less on secondary sources,” Druckman said. “As a result, questions of sampling and survey design are becoming increasingly important, and this is why one of my hopes is to highlight these types of issues—especially for political scientists, who generally tend to be behind the curve on methodology.”

Journal Launch Pad
Apart from editing well-established journals, some IPR faculty have helped establish new journals. Yet with more than 7,000 academic journals by some counts, why bother? More often than not, it is to create a research outlet for a particular field. This is the case for two relatively recent journals in the field of education: Education Finance and Policy (EFP) and the Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness (JREE).

Education Finance and Policy
EFP published its first issue in 2006 during a decade in which interest in the field of education has “exploded,” Figlio noted. There has been a pointed increase in the number of faculty publishing papers on education finance and policy, he said.

Until EFP came along, however, many education economists were often not good fits for research on education finance. Figlio, who has co-edited the journal from the start, pointed to this as a major reason for his involvement in launching it. “We needed a dedicated forum to discuss issues related to the economics of education,” he said.

Through the journal, Figlio and his co-editor, David Monk of Penn State University, have sought to frame the intellectual discourse on education policy and practice. Past issues have dealt with higher education finance, the fiscal burden of school accountability, and charter school effectiveness, among other topics.

A joint venture between the American Education Finance Association and MIT Press, the quarterly EFP is quickly cementing itself as the “go-to journal” in the field, Figlio said, publishing papers by some of the nation’s most promising young academics in the field of education finance.

Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness
The flagship publication for the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, JREE publishes multidisciplinary articles on studies of interventions, evaluations, and methodology in education four times per year. As two of the leaders in the field, Hedges and Cook collaborated on the launch of the society and its journal.

“To do justice to publishing empirical research about large education studies, you need to devote a substantial amount of space to explanations of study designs and procedures,” said Hedges, who currently serves as co-editor with Barbara Foorman of Florida State University.

JREE does this, whereas most other journals only include very small methodological descriptions—if any at all.

JREE seeks to foster strong connections between scientific evidence and education practice by publishing studies on the educational challenges that schools face, such as the effectiveness of interventions in reading, math, and science. To help achieve this goal, an editorial board that includes some of the pre-eminent names in education research and methodology oversees the journal. Members include Cook, David Francis of the University of Houston, Howard Bloom of MDRC, and Catherine Snow of Harvard.
Fall 2008

The Institute for Policy Research (IPR) is an interdisciplinary social science research center at Northwestern University that stimulates and supports research on significant public policy issues.

IPR’s working paper series seeks to disseminate the results of its faculty’s research in advanced stages prior to publication in academic journals and books. Comments, which are encouraged, should be communicated directly to the author or authors.
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Abstracts of New Working Papers

**Education Policy**

**Permeability and Transparency in the High School-College Transition** (WP-08-07)
Jennifer Stephan, Doctoral Student, Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University; and James Rosenbaum, Human Development and Social Policy and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

Dramatic changes have taken place in the who, where, and how of higher education. Colleges are no longer dominated by traditional undergraduates attending traditional colleges. Now there is great variety in the types of students who attend college, the institutions they attend, and their attendance patterns. This working paper proposes a conceptual framework for thinking about how higher education policies shape students' pathways through higher education. The authors present evidence about the operation of American higher education in terms of this framework and then use the framework to consider three policy areas: high school counseling policies; community college policies, including open-admissions; and financial aid policies. Stephan and Rosenbaum argue that while the current policies have increased accessibility and choice in higher education, they also obscure the pathway to completion.

**Quantitative Methods for Policy Research (Q-Center)**

**When Do Latent Class Models Overstate Accuracy for Binary Classifiers? With Applications to Jury Accuracy, Survey Response Error, and Diagnostic Error** (WP-08-10)
Bruce Spencer, Statistics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

Latent class models (LCMs) are increasingly used to assess the accuracy of binary classifiers, such as medical diagnostic tests for the presence of a condition, when there is no “gold standard” available and hence the true classification is unknown. LCMs are also used in nonmedical contexts, e.g., for assessing the accuracy of verdicts in criminal cases and the accuracy of responses to survey questions about drug use and employment status. An LCM posits a relation between observed classifications and unobserved latent classes. When the latent class is treated as the true class, the LCMs provide measures of components of accuracy including (i) specificity and its complement, the conditional probability of a false positive or equivalently the type I error rate, and (ii) sensitivity and its complement, the conditional probability of a false negative or the type II error rate. In practice, however, the latent class will differ from the true class. Under some conditions, the accuracy measures from the LCM overstate the accuracy defined in terms of the truth. Specifically, under the usual LCM models when covariates are not present, the type I and type II error rates according to the LCM do not exceed those defined relative to the true classification. The results do not require that the true class be known. Under analogous assumptions—but when the classification probabilities depend on covariates—accuracy measures from the LCM again overstate the accuracy defined in terms of the truth, provided that Simpson's Paradox does not occur. Unfortunately, empirically assessing whether Simpson's Paradox occurs might not be possible in application.

**Philanthropy and Nonprofit Organizations**

**Donations and the Pursuit of Mission in Higher Education** (WP-08-04)
Burton Weisbrod, Economics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University; Jeffrey Ballou, Mathematica Policy Research; and Evelyn Asch, Coordinator, Higher Education Research Project, Northwestern University

Private donations—from individuals, corporations, and foundations—are a major revenue source for colleges and universities in the United States, but little is known about the sources of the great variation among schools. The research reported here estimates the influence of such variables as its public or private nonprofit status, its solicitation efforts, the size of its endowment, and the publicity it receives for its achievements. Their research distinguishes between the effects of achievements in athletics and in academics; the effects of each of those on various donor groups, including the disaggregation of individuals into alumni, parents, and other individuals; and the effects not only on total donations, but on giving to athletic and to academic programs.
PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, cont.

Public-Goods Provision in the Hospital Industry: Does Ownership Form Affect Provision of Charity Care, Research, and Education? (WP-08-09)
Burton Weisbrod, Economics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

State and local legislatures are increasingly questioning what the public is getting back for its property tax and sales tax exemptions of nonprofit hospitals. While the focus has generally been on a particular public-type service, charity care, this working paper examines two other forms of public-good outputs—research and education—to determine whether subsidized nonprofit hospitals provide more than for-profit hospitals. Using data reported by all California hospitals to the state over time, the author also distinguishes between the reported provision of charity care and bad debt, a distinction that provides hospitals with some measure of reporting discretion. A major finding is that the effect of ownership form on public-goods provision is strongly associated with the differential sizes of hospitals, with for-profits averaging far fewer beds per hospital.

HEALTH POLICY

Measuring Change in the Markets for Brand-Name and Generic Drugs, 1970–2004 (WP-08-02)
Burton Weisbrod, Economics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

Few industries have exhibited as much change as pharmaceuticals. Quantitative measurement of change in the menu of the most-dispensed pharmaceuticals can be valuable for analysis of the causes of new drug development in this increasingly important industry. This working paper presents a new measure of change to examine the time-pattern of appearance of new drugs over a 35-year period from 1970 to 2004 separately for brand-name and generic drugs. Results show that the number of new brand-name drugs entering the most-dispensed lists has increased substantially. Between 1970 and 1981, about 6 to 8 percent of all brand-name drugs on the most-dispensed list were new each year, but this increased to more than 10 percent over the past decade. The quantitative importance of new generic drugs increased even more sharply, particularly since about 1985. The author concludes that this new measure of change in the pharmaceutical industry provides a step toward understanding the process of innovation in an industry characterized by rapid change.

POVERTY, RACE, AND INEQUALITY

The Social and Economic Context of Black Women Living with HIV/AIDS in the United States: Implications for Research (WP-08-06)
Celeste Watkins-Hayes, Sociology, African American Studies, and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

The author argues for increased analyses of the social consequences of HIV/AIDS for infected black women in the United States, including examinations of the various ways in which the interplay of their health, race, gender, and class has an impact on their social and economic experiences. She frames the discussion by chronicling and assessing the body of work highlighting multiple explanations for the increased infection rates among black women, revealing the relative dearth of work that focuses on the everyday lives of women who are currently living with the disease. To address this lacuna, Watkins-Hayes considers how researchers might tease out the various ways in which HIV-infected black women formulate, sustain, and interweave their economic survival strategies and intimate relationships. First, Watkins-Hayes recommends bridging the gap between the U.S.-based HIV/AIDS scholarship, which focuses primarily on men’s labor market experiences, and social policy and employment research, which has gleaned critical insights about black women’s work lives. Second, the author cautions against constructing the intimate lives of HIV-positive black women solely in a context of risk or against the backdrop of the highly publicized “down-low” debate about black men who fail to disclose
same-sex sexual behaviors to their female partners. These foci have shaped the conversation about black women living with HIV/AIDS in distinct ways, hampering fuller portraits of how they create, maintain, or go without intimate relationships. Third, she explores new ways of thinking about the intersection of women's economic and intimate lives using three case studies. Social scientific approaches can help explain how HIV/AIDS is not simply a medical epidemic but also a social and economic phenomenon that shapes a variety of outcomes for individuals, families, and the community.

**Labor Markets and Employment**

**Labor Market Fluctuations and On-the-Job Search** (WP-08-05)
Éva Nagypál, Economics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

This working paper argues that a model of the aggregate labor market that incorporates the observed extent of job-to-job transitions can explain all of the cyclical volatility in vacancy and unemployment rates in U.S. data in response to shocks of the observed magnitude. The key to this result is the complementarity between on-the-job search and costly hiring that leads employers to expect a higher payoff from recruiting employed searchers. This higher expected payoff explains why firms recruit more when the number of employed searchers is high during periods of low unemployment.

**Politics, Institutions, and Public Policy**

**Competitive Lending with Partial Knowledge of Loan Repayment** (WP-08-11)
by William Brock, Economics, University of Wisconsin–Madison; and Charles F. Manski, Economics and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

The authors study a competitive credit market in which lenders, having partial knowledge of loan repayment, use a Bayesian, maximin, or minimax-regret criterion to make lending decisions. Lenders allocate endowments between loans and a safe investment, while borrowers demand loans to undertake investments. Borrowers may incompletely repay their loans when investment productivity turns out to be low ex post. The authors characterize market equilibrium, the contracted repayment rate being the price variable that equilibrates loan supply and demand. They explore market dynamics when a credit market that is initially in a steady state experiences an unanticipated shock that temporarily lowers the productivity of borrower investments. The shock reduces loan repayment, and lenders—not knowing whether the shock is temporary—then reduce loan supply. The authors study two forms of government intervention to restore the steady state. One policy manipulates the return on the safe investment, and the other guarantees a minimum loan return to lenders. Manski and Brock conclude that the minimum-return guarantee is preferable. This policy directly reduces lender ambiguity in a transparent manner.

**Can Electoral Laws Increase Women’s Representation?** (WP-08-08)
Andrew Roberts, Political Science and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University; and Jason Seawright, Political Science, Northwestern University

Numerous studies have found that proportional electoral rules significantly increase women’s representation in national parliaments relative to majoritarian and mixed rules. These studies, however, suffer from serious methodological problems, including the endogeneity of electoral laws, poor measures of cultural variables, and neglect of time trends. This paper attempts to produce more accurate estimates of the effect of electoral rules on women’s representation by using within-country comparisons of electoral rule changes and bicameral systems, as well as matching methods. The main finding is that the effect of electoral laws is not as strong as in previous studies and varies across cases. Changes in electoral laws are unlikely to provide a quick and consistent fix to the problem of women’s low representation.
Public Opinion and Social Insurance: The American Experience (WP-08-03)
Fay Lomax Cook, Human Development and Social Policy and Director, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University; and Meredith Czaplewski, Doctoral Student, Political Science, Northwestern University

Although both Social Security and Medicare have experienced enormous public support in the past, over the last decade critics have called the programs into question as bad investments, financially unsustainable, and ready for major reforms. At the policy-elite level, the discussion about Social Security and Medicare has gone from a politics of consensus, in which there was widespread support and relatively few publicly expressed differences of opinion, to what might be called a politics of dissensus, where disagreement has been heated. At a time when the debates about Social Security and Medicare are likely to continue and when various reform proposals are being discussed, the purpose of this working paper is to step back and assess where the public’s views of the two programs stand and what reforms, if any, the public favors. To what extent do the two “pillars of public opinion” on which the programs rest—commitment to the purpose of the programs and belief that they are affordable public expenditures—remain strong? Using dozens of public opinion polls over a number of years, the authors find that members of the public are highly committed to the two programs but have concerns about the programs’ financial situations. To address their financial concerns, members of the public have voiced support for a few incremental changes and opposition to others. Cook and Czaplewski conclude by suggesting that policymakers should look carefully at where the public stands and build on that support to overcome the current politics of dissensus.

The Embodiment of Race: Health Disparities in the Age of Epigenetics (WP-08-01)
Christopher Kuzawa, Anthropology and Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University; and Elizabeth Sweet, Doctoral Student, Anthropology, Northwestern University

The role of genetic and environmental influences on race-based health disparities has been a source of heated debate among the public health and clinical medical communities. In this working paper, the authors review new evidence for developmental and epigenetic origins of common adult metabolic diseases and argue that this field sheds new light on the origins of racial health disparities. African Americans not only suffer from a disproportionate burden of adult chronic diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, but they also have higher rates of the perinatal health disparities that are now known to be the antecedents of these conditions. There is extensive evidence for a social origin to prematurity and low birth weight in African Americans, working through pathways such as the effects of discrimination on maternal stress physiology. In light of the inverse relationship between birth weight and adult metabolic diseases, there is now a strong rationale to consider developmental and epigenetic mechanisms as links between social and environmental factors and adult race-based health disparities in conditions like hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Their model builds upon classic social constructivist perspectives by highlighting an important set of mechanisms by which social influences can become embodied, having durable and even transgenerational influences on the most pressing health disparities in the United States.
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Linking Adult Outcomes to Early Life Experiences
Conference promotes interdisciplinary models of health and attainment

A person’s late-life outcomes can be measured in myriad ways; income, social status, physical health, and mental and emotional well-being are just a few. Researchers and policymakers have only recently begun to investigate how these outcomes are related.

To explore how such diverse factors interact and reinforce each other to produce later life outcomes, experts, advocates, and policymakers gathered on May 16 in Chicago for a conference on “Health and Attainment over the Lifecourse: Reciprocal Influences from Before Birth to Old Age.”

“Part of what I’ve spent my time at CPS doing over the last 18 months is trying to build a consensus within this public school system that these are related,” said Bryan Samuels, chief of staff at Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

Samuels was the keynote speaker at the conference, which was co-sponsored by IPR’s Cells to Society (C2S): The Center on Social Disparities and Health. Three University of Chicago research centers—including the Harris School’s Center for Human Potential and Public Policy, which coordinated the conference—were also co-sponsors.

“We’re hoping to build interdisciplinary bridges to get a better idea of exactly how early experiences and childhood health affect adult outcomes,” said developmental psychologist and IPR Faculty Fellow Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, who directs C2S.

By using integrated disciplinary models such as those found in psychology, researchers might be able to better explain the interactions of diverse factors and their significance on health and attainment in old age.

Social demographer Alberto Palloni discussed the large and pervasive effects of education on mortality and adult health. Using data from the National Health Interview Survey, Palloni showed that the mortality rates for people at age 50 without a high school diploma equal the rates for those at 60 with a college education. His findings mirror those of other researchers, signaling a disturbing trend of persistent health and mortality disparities in the United States. The socioeconomic (SES) health and mortality gradient reflects growing inequality and the enduring intergenerational correlation of adult SES, Palloni said. He called for more research on early childhood health effects to see how they could act as a mechanism that might reproduce inequalities in adult health, SES, and mortality rates. He is Board of Trustees Professor in Sociology and an IPR faculty fellow at Northwestern.

Another researcher, Andrea Danese, matched childhood stress to modifications in developmental trajectories, showing a long-term effect on disease risk. Using data from New Zealand’s Dunedin Study, he measured inflammatory responses in adults who faced adverse experiences in early childhood, such as harsh discipline or abuse.

While inflammation helps the body cope with tissue damage or infection, chronic elevation in inflammation levels can be detrimental to health. Danese found that maltreated children show elevated inflammation levels in adulthood and thus are at high risk of cardiovascular disease. Up to 10 percent of cases with elevated inflammation levels in adulthood might be attributed to childhood stress, he said. Danese is Wellcome Trust Research Fellow at the University of London’s Institute of Psychiatry.

Additional presentations were made on sex differences in obesity rates in poor countries; mental health in childhood and human capital; early-life health disadvantages and adult social status; and early childhood poverty and adult attainment, behavior, and health.

“The presentations demonstrated the positive associations between health and education at different stages of life from preconception to old age, including how socioeconomic status, physical and mental health, and educational attainment can affect life outcomes,” said Ariel Kalil, Harris School associate professor, who directs the Center for Human Potential and Public Policy and who co-organized the conference.

One lesson for public schools is that effective change requires integrated models and evidence-based standards, such as those presented at the conference, Samuels said. So CPS is trying out a new public health approach to its policies at every level. While improving academic performance is still the district’s chief responsibility, he said, “I think we’ve built an understanding that we need to reduce the behavioral health barriers to learning as a means to get at that initial goal.”

To view the videos and presentations, visit the Web page, www.northwestern.edu/ipr/c2s/events/healthattain-info.html.
Honored Fellows
Two IPR fellows garner national recognition

Two IPR faculty fellows were recently recognized for their substantial contributions to their respective fields.

Hedges Elected to Prestigious Academy

A national leader in the fields of education statistics and evaluation, Larry Hedges is the latest IPR faculty member to be elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Founded in 1780 by John Adams, John Hancock, and others, the Academy is one of the nation’s oldest and most prestigious honorary societies and independent policy research centers.

Hedges is best known for his work to develop statistical methods for meta-analysis—a statistical analysis that pools the results of multiple comparable studies—in the social, medical, and biological sciences. Widely published, he has authored or co-authored more than 150 journal articles and eight books, including the second edition of *The Handbook of Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis* (forthcoming, Russell Sage Foundation Press) with Harris Cooper.

Hedges was one of eight American academics elected to the Academy’s social science section on social and developmental psychology and education this year. In all, 212 new members were inducted in 2008, including U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, Nobel Prize winners Linda Buck and Craig Mello, and blues guitarist B. B. King.

Five other IPR faculty have been inducted into the Academy: Thomas D. Cook, Joan and Sarepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice; Charles F. Manski, Board of Trustees Professor in Economics; Alberto Palloni, Board of Trustees Professor in Sociology; Benjamin Page, Fulcher Professor of Decision Making; and Robert Porter, Kenan Professor of Economics.

Hedges has been Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Social Policy and an IPR faculty fellow since 2005 at Northwestern. He co-directs IPR’s Center for Improving Methods for Quantitative Policy Research, or Q-Center.

Eagly Receives Life Achievement Award

For her contributions as a scholar and mentor, the American Psychological Foundation awarded psychologist Alice Eagly the 2008 Gold Medal for Life Achievement in the Science of Psychology. The foundation, part of the American Psychological Association, has bestowed these awards annually since 1956 “in recognition of a distinguished career and enduring contribution to psychology.”

A professor at Northwestern University and an IPR faculty fellow since 1995, Eagly is best known for her innovative and careful scholarship in the psychology of gender, her groundbreaking work on the study of attitudes and persuasion, and her innovation in the use of meta-analytic techniques.

Her work on gender has also led her to venture into the field of leadership to study how women become leaders. This work recently culminated in the publication of *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Harvard Business School Press, 2007) with Linda Carli.

Over the course of her career, she has co-authored or co-edited seven books, including *The Psychology of Attitudes* with Shelly Chaiken (1993, Harcourt, Brace & Janovich), and more than 85 journal articles. Eagly is James Padilla Chair of Arts and Sciences and professor of psychology.