

Larry Hedges Wins Yidan Prize

World's largest prize for education research honors IPR fellow, a first-generation college student

Courtesy of SREE



Larry Hedges speaks with Jacqueline Jones, a then-member of the board of directors for the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness co-founded by Hedges, at a 2014 conference.

IPR fellow and statistician **Larry Hedges**, a pre-eminent scholar and global heavyweight in education research, received the 2018 Yidan Prize for Education Research, the world's largest prize in the field of education, in December.

The 2018 Yidan Prize for Education Research, which comes with \$3.9 million in support, was announced by the Yidan Prize Foundation in September, and a related conference will be held in May (see p. 4). The prize recognized Hedges for his ground-breaking statistical methods for meta-analysis, which serve as a foundation for rigorous, evidence-based education policy across the country and the globe. At

Northwestern, Hedges chairs the department of statistics and is a professor of education and social policy, psychology, and medical social sciences. Among the most influential applied statisticians in the world, Hedges' work allows policymakers, educators, and the public to see the evidence for "what works" in education, and makes it possible to take a scientific approach to improving education for future generations.

As a first-generation college student, Hedges' accomplishments and contributions are particularly inspiring.

"I was a kid from a poor family. We didn't know anybody who went to college," Hedges said.

"The reason I am passionate about education is precisely that it was a life-changing thing for me in terms of mobility, and I would like everybody else to have that chance."

Hedges' father worked for minimum wage until he retired, and his mother was a dishwasher at the local college.

"As an 11-year-old boy wandering about the Fresno State College campus, where his mother worked as a dishwasher at the college's cafeteria, Larry literally saw an open door and stepped inside a chemistry lab," said **Morton Schapiro**, Northwestern University president, professor, and an IPR economist, who nominated Hedges for the Yidan Prize. "He encountered a talkative graduate student testing food samples for pesticides, and they had a conversation. For the first time, Larry could see the possibilities for a future unknown to his parents, neither of whom attended college."

Hedges earned a Regents Scholarship at the University of California, San Diego, where he studied mathematics and physics. He became deeply involved in peer tutoring and mentoring minority students. He discovered his path and passion, making such an impact that the university invited him to continue his work after graduation.

In the three years that followed, Hedges put together a summer bridge program for underrepresented students and a mathematics clinic. When Hedges entered graduate school in 1976, education research was in a state of disarray. While much research had been

(Continued on page 4)

IN THIS ISSUE



Four IPR Faculty Receive Major Accolades

(p. 2)



Meet IPR's Newest Fellows

(p. 3)



Join Us to Celebrate IPR@50, June 6-7

(p. 5)



IPR Policy Research Brief: Predicting Police Misconduct

(p. 8)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

IPR NEWS AND RESEARCH

- Accolades and Newest Fellows 2–3
- An Undergraduate Reflects on Research4
- IPR@50 Conference.....5
- Research News and Events..... 6–7, 17–20

POLICY RESEARCH BRIEF

- Predicting Police Misconduct 8–9

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

- Andrew Papachristos (Sociology)..... 10
- Ofer Malamud (Social Policy) 11
- Mary Pattillo (Sociology/Af. Am. Studies) 11
- Sera Young (Anthropology) 11

FACULTY OPINION

- Wealth Gap Hits Families the Hardest 12
- Faculty Soundbites..... 13

PUBLICATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

- IPR Working Papers and Books 14–15
- Faculty Recognition 16

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IPR Fellows Receive National Recognition

Major academic accolades underscore research talent



M. Wnuk, J. Ziv, and S. Drey

From left: Christopher Kuzawa, Sera Young, Lincoln Quillian, and Simone Ispa-Landa

Four IPR fellows—anthropologists **Christopher Kuzawa** and **Sera Young**, sociologist **Lincoln Quillian**, and education sociologist **Simone Ispa-Landa**—have recently received major recognition and awards. Kuzawa was elected to the National Academy of Sciences and to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Quillian received a Guggenheim Fellowship, Young was named a Carnegie Fellow, and Ispa-Landa became a William T. Grant Scholar.

“These well-deserved honors highlight the research excellence that our IPR faculty aspire to and achieve,” said IPR Director and economist **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach**. “We at IPR are so very proud to be associated with these outstanding researchers—Chris, Sera, Lincoln, and Simone—and to have them as part of our intellectual community.”

Christopher Kuzawa

Kuzawa has been elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences, as well as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, two of the nation’s most prestigious honorary societies. Kuzawa uses principles from anthropology and evolutionary biology to gain insights into the biological and health impacts of human developmental plasticity. As a biological anthropologist with training in epidemiology, Kuzawa focuses on the roles that the intrauterine and early postnatal environments have on development and long-term health. This work shows that when a woman experiences nutritional or psychosocial stress during or even prior to pregnancy, this can have long-lasting effects on the biology and health of her offspring.

Simone Ispa-Landa

Ispa-Landa was named a 2018 William T. Grant Scholar, one of six early career researchers to receive the honor in November. Her research tackles the processes that reproduce and magnify social exclusion. Under the program, she will receive \$350,000 over five years to investigate how school discipline can be modified to reduce racial inequality and be more developmentally appropriate for adolescents.

Lincoln Quillian

The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation selected Quillian as one of its 168 fellows in April from 3,000 applicants. He has studied neighborhood poverty concentration, internal migration, racial residential segregation, and racial attitudes. Recently, he conducted a meta-analysis of studies of racial and ethnic discrimination in labor markets around the world. He also examines residential segregation in U.S. cities.

Sera Young

Young is one of 32 scholars joining the fifth class of Andrew Carnegie Fellows in April. Each recipient of the so-called “brainy award” will receive a two-year grant of up to \$200,000. Young focuses on three main research areas related to maternal and child health: food insecurity, pica (the craving and consumption of non-food items such as earth, charcoal, and ice) and, most recently, household-level water insecurity (see p. 11).

For more information on these and other IPR faculty, see: ipr.northwestern.edu/faculty-experts/.

Meet IPR's Newest Fellows

Researchers add expertise in statistics, political science, psychology, and economics

Five faculty fellows joined the Institute in September, adding their expertise in statistics, political science, psychology, and economics to IPR's rigorous research output.

Robin Nusslock, Terri Sabol, Hannes Schwandt, Chloe Thurston, and Elizabeth Tipton joined IPR's more than 150 faculty researchers, representing 33 departments across the University. Sociologist **Julia Behrman** arrived in September after a sabbatical at the University of Oxford.

"IPR has a uniquely interdisciplinary approach to policy research, so we are thrilled to welcome these fellows into the IPR community," said IPR Director and economist **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach**. "Our newest colleagues are working on exciting, innovative research in diverse areas with clear policy impact, and we look forward to collaborating with them."



N. Keitley

Robin Nusslock

A psychologist, Nusslock uses neuroscientific methods to investigate the brain systems underlying human thought and emotion. He strives to understand the

relationship between the brain and mental and physical wellbeing, whether by examining how emotion guides our decisions or by developing a "brain stress test" to determine one's risk for psychiatric illness. Nusslock is working with IPR health psychologists **Greg Miller** and **Edith Chen** to examine how stress and poverty "get under the skin" to affect mental and physical health. His work suggests that the brain and the immune system create a feedback loop that, when dysregulated, puts individuals at risk for illnesses across the lifespan. He is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science and holds joint appointments in the medical social sciences, neurobiology, and psychiatry.

J. Prisching



Terri Sabol

Terri Sabol

Sabol, a developmental psychologist, seeks to identify ways to maximize investment in early childhood education in the 21st century. Her research seeks to reduce disparities and

maximize the potential of young children living in economic hardship. At Northwestern's School of Education and Social Policy (SESP), Sabol directs the Development, Early Education, and Policy (DEEP) lab. The lab is conducting a study to define and measure how early childhood education centers engage and support families (see p. 4). Another study seeks to determine how professional development programs improve early childhood classroom quality and child learning outcomes. In 2017, Sabol was named an Early Career Fellow by the American Educational Research Association and the Society for Research on Child Development.

Courtesy of H. Schwandt



Hannes Schwandt

Hannes Schwandt

An economist, Schwandt focuses on health and economic inequality. In a branch of his research, he looks at society-wide shocks, such as stock market fluctuations,

unemployment, trade shocks, and epidemic disease, exploring their impact on health, human capital, and fertility. In one project, Schwandt examines seasonal influenza, commonly known as the flu, which causes strong inflammatory responses in pregnant women. Using Danish data, he finds maternal influenza leads to a doubling of prematurity and low birth weight in newborns; in utero exposure also affects their job prospects as adults. He joins IPR as an assistant professor in SESP from the University of Zurich. He is on leave this academic year.

C. Gall



Chloe Thurston

Chloe Thurston

Thurston, a political scientist, studies American political development and political economy, with a focus on social and economic policy, organized interests and social movements, and

historical analysis. She recently published *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination, and the American State* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), which focuses on how government policies have locked women, minorities, and low-income people out of homeownership (see p. 15). The book also examines how advocacy groups, including the NAACP and Women's Equity Action League, fought back against discriminatory practices such as restrictive covenants. In other research with IPR political scientist **Daniel Galvin**, Thurston is studying the limited ability of policy feedback processes to cement partisan loyalties.

S. Schumacher



Elizabeth Tipton

Elizabeth Tipton

Tipton returned to Northwestern—she completed her PhD here in 2011—from Columbia University's Teachers College. Her research focuses on methods for causal generalization,

including methods for making generalizations from field experiments to policy relevant populations. A statistician, Tipton is currently working on a web tool that will enable education researchers to design cluster randomized trials in K-12 schools with both adequate statistical power and generalizability. Tipton has received early career awards from the American Psychological Association, the Society for Research Synthesis Methods, and the American Education Research Association.

Mapping Student Environments

by Alex Carther, IPR Summer Undergraduate Researcher

Under IPR developmental psychologist **Terri Sabol**, the Development, Early Education, and Policy (DEEP) lab continues to conduct research into factors—both inside and outside of school walls—that impact children’s performance in school [see p. 3].

As an economics major, joining a project centered on education and human development felt daunting—I wasn’t sure if any of my previous research skills would apply. However, within the first week, I began to understand that the breadth of knowledge applied to research projects extends far beyond their central focus. Although the DEEP lab’s goals lie in understanding how contexts around schools impact the effectiveness of children’s early education, those contexts lend themselves to a variety of disciplines. Though the list of factors—such as gentrification, green

space, and walkability—might seem unrelated, each part is vital to building the big picture of school contexts. We use these data to answer questions about how environments impact children. For example, as they walk to and from school, do they feel safe? Is gentrification disrupting their community? All of these things can affect a child’s development and performance at school. An integral part of my work with the DEEP lab is collecting data on these subjects so we can build up a bigger picture of the environment our students live and learn in. Then, we’ll be able to use that data to analyze which factors have the greatest impact on student’s learning environments, which can be used to inform public policy and make education more effective.

So far, I’m most excited about the maps we’ve been creating for each of our school sites using



S. Schumacher

Alex Carther works in Terri Sabol’s DEEP lab, a program called ArcGIS to study our factors geographically. In ArcMap, we can take our data and represent it visually, creating a new and unique perspective to understand our work. This is especially helpful given the heavy emphasis on geographic contexts in our study. As an aspiring academic, I love being able to not only observe but also participate in the process of developing new knowledge.

For more SURA stories, see ipr.northwestern.edu.

Hedges, Yidan Prize (Continued from page 1)

done, it lacked standards and rigor. He saw an opportunity to develop more rigorous methods for synthesizing research findings across studies through meta-analysis. This work would occupy much of his early career.

By 1980, when he left graduate school for his first academic job at the University of Chicago, he was traveling to apartheid South Africa, where he helped start supplementary academic preparation programs—illegal, under South African law at the time—to help nonwhite students gain admission to white universities.

“Larry’s vision and commitment to education as a vehicle to promote opportunity have boosted the prospects for a generation of students, and his impact on the field of education research is absolutely immeasurable,” Schapiro said.

Charles Chen Yidan established the Yidan Prize in 2016, aiming to make the world a better place through education. Yidan co-founded Chinese Internet giant Tencent in 1998. Hedges shares the 2018 honor with

Anant Agarwal, founder and CEO of edX, an online learning destination offering high-quality education to learners around the world.

Working over six months, an independent committee selected the two laureates from almost 1,000 nominees.

“Larry Hedges has made extraordinary contributions to education research and policy in the United States and the world,” said **David Figlio**, dean of the School of Education and Social Policy and an IPR economist.

“The Yidan prize honors a researcher who has made outstanding accomplishments in education research, with an ultimate goal of creating long-lasting impacts on the entire world,” said IPR Director and economist **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach**. “I can think of no one who better reflects these values than our own Larry Hedges.”



Courtesy of the Yidan Foundation

Carrie Lam, chief executive of the Hong Kong government, presents Larry Hedges with the Yidan Prize at the ceremony in Hong Kong.

Yidan Prize Conference Series, The Americas
featuring the 2018 Laureates

Larry Hedges Board of Trustees Professor, Northwestern	Anant Agarwal Founder and CEO, edX
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Hosted by **Northwestern University** on its Evanston campus

Thursday, May 23, 1:00-6:00 p.m.
Friday, May 24, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For the complete schedule and to register:
www.northwestern.edu/yidan-conference-2019

Celebrating IPR@50

Conference will highlight research excellence



While many things have changed since our founding as an urban research institute in the social and political turmoil of 1968–69, our mission at Northwestern University’s Institute for Policy Research has not: We conduct rigorous social science research and disseminate our findings widely.

IPR’s brand of interdisciplinary research is as needed today as it was in 1968, and our award-winning faculty researchers continue to forge ahead, exemplifying our motto of “Research Excellence. Policy Impact.”

We have planned an exciting conference on June 6–7 to celebrate our 50th, and I would like to thank IPR political scientist **Laurel Harbridge-Yong**, IPR labor and education economist **Kirabo Jackson**, and our faculty committee members for planning it. Please join us for this robust line-up and engaging discussions.

~**Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach**, IPR Director and Margaret Walker Alexander Professor

“The Next 50 Years of Policy Research,” June 6–7, Evanston

Neighborhood Inequality: What Does the Research Tell Us? • Thursday, June 6, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

- **Jonathan Guryan**, SESP* and IPR
- **Andrew Papachristos**, Sociology and IPR
- **Celeste Watkins-Hayes**, Sociology, African American Studies, and IPR
- **Odette Yousef**, WBEZ (Moderator)

Causes and Consequences of Government Spending • Thursday, June 6, 2:45–4:00 p.m.

- **Kirabo Jackson**, SESP* and IPR
- **Matthew Notowidigdo**, Economics and IPR
- **Monica Prasad**, Sociology and IPR
- **Sarah Karp**, WBEZ (Moderator)

IPR@50 Distinguished Public Policy Lecture: “Evictions in America”

Thursday, June 6, 4:30–5:45 p.m.

Matthew Desmond, Princeton University
Author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning
Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City

Community Partnerships Yield Better Services and Research • Friday, June 7, 9:00–10:15 a.m.

- **Lori Beaman**, Economics and IPR Fellow
- **Penny Bender Sebring**, University of Chicago
- **Lindsay Chase-Lansdale**, SESP* and IPR
- **David Figlio**, SESP* and IPR
- **Paul Goren**, Evanston/Skokie D65 (Moderator)

*School of Education and Social Policy

Breakthroughs in Policy Measurement

Friday, June 7, 10:30–11:45 a.m.

- **Emma Adam**, SESP* and IPR
- **Bruce Spencer**, Statistics and IPR
- **Burton Weisbrod**, Economics and IPR
- **Sera Young**, Anthropology and IPR
- **Diane Schanzenbach**, SESP* and IPR (Moderator)

From Cells to Society: How Experience Becomes Biology • Friday, June 7, 12:45–2:00 p.m.

- **Edith Chen**, Psychology and IPR
- **Christopher Kuzawa**, Anthropology and IPR
- **Thomas McDade**, Anthropology and IPR
- **Greg Miller**, Psychology and IPR (Moderator)

American Democracy and its Discontents: What Ails Our Politics and What to Do About It

Friday, June 7, 2:15–3:30 p.m.

- **James Druckman**, Political Science and IPR
- **Laurel Harbridge-Yong**, Political Science and IPR
- **Rachel Davis Mersey**, Journalism and IPR
- **Jennifer Richeson**, Psychology, Yale University
- **Peter Slevin**, Journalism (Moderator)

Closing Remarks and IPR Founders’ Reception

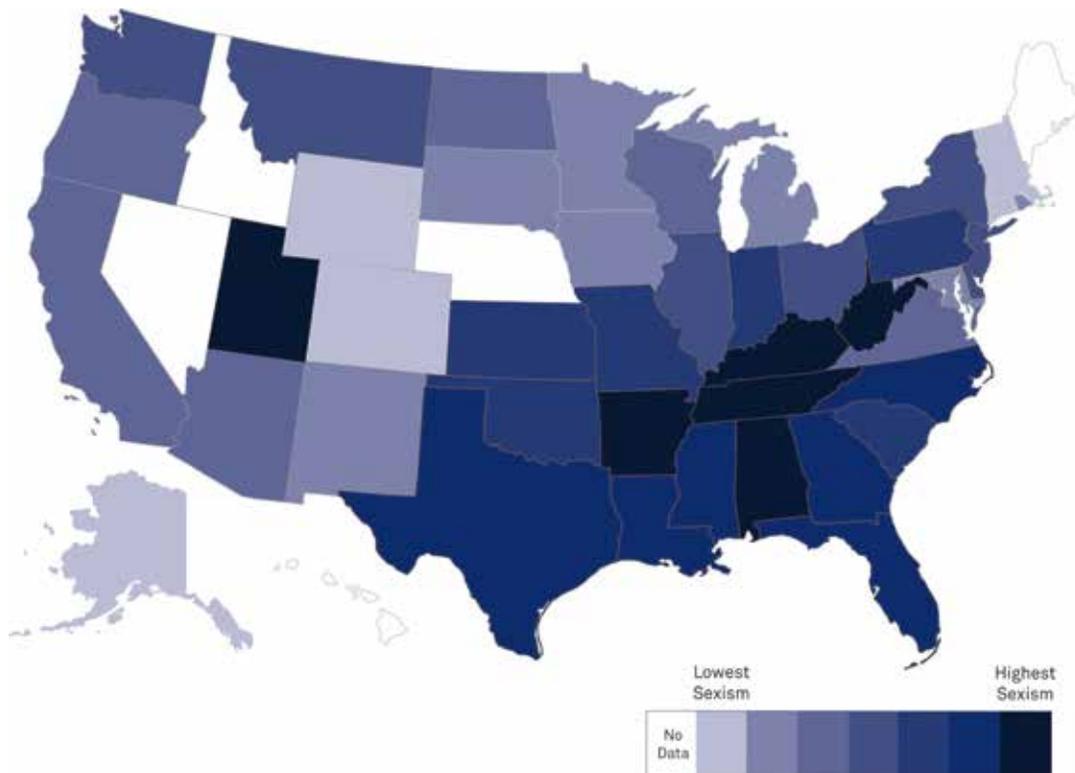
Friday, June 7, Immediately following the conference’s end

IPR@50

Research Excellence • Policy Impact

Register by Friday, May 31 at www.ipr.northwestern.edu/events/ipr-at-50-conference

Sexism Follows Women Across States—and Their Lives



Source: Charles, K., J. Guryan, and J. Pan. 2018. The effects of sexism on American women: The role of norms vs. discrimination. IPR Working Paper 18-19.

While American women’s job and life prospects have changed dramatically over the last 50 years, a recent study finds the amount of sexism in the state where a woman was born can take a toll on her earnings and career prospects—even if she later moves to a less sexist state.

The IPR working paper, co-authored by IPR economist **Jonathan Guryan**, is the first to document a persistent gap in women’s socioeconomic outcomes across U.S. job markets. To avoid mixing gender issues with equally complicated racial ones, the working paper only includes data on white adults.

The research shows the level of sexist beliefs both in the state where a woman was born and the one where she currently lives affects her beliefs about who she is. That has an impact on her decisions about what she can or cannot do. These levels differ widely from state to state, and even vary within the same geographic region.

Guryan, Kerwin Charles of the University of Chicago, and Jessica Pan of the National University of Singapore measure sexism across the nation using nationally representative survey and census data from 1970–2017 that

questioned respondents’ beliefs about women’s capacities, roles, and places in society.

States with more sexist attitudes had more respondents who believed that women should take care of the home and family, and that men should be the achiever outside the home.

They find that white women born in more sexist states experience larger gender gaps in wages and employment, even after they move to a less sexist state. These women also marry and have their first child at a younger age. This is because norms that women are exposed to as children, and internalize, continue to affect their life outcomes as adults, even after they move. For example, a woman born in Alabama who later lives in Massachusetts makes less money and works fewer hours when compared with a man who makes the same move.

Additionally, women who move to more sexist states also marry and have their first child at a younger age and are less likely to work. Guryan and his colleagues also break sexism down by where women experienced it across their lives. What they call “background sexism” is the level in the state where a woman grew up, where she

internalized gender norms and obtained certain skills. “Residential sexism” refers to the norms she currently confronts, along with sex-based discrimination in her current job market.

The researchers discover that women internalizing the gender role norms of other women in the area drives how residential sexism affects these women’s marriage and childbearing. But the effect of such norms on labor outcomes is almost entirely due to discrimination from men. Guryan says this provides evidence that prejudice-based discrimination is likely an important factor in American women’s labor and family outcomes.

“It’s important to understand the sources of gaps in earnings and employment between men and women because it helps to guide where policy might effectively focus,” Guryan said.

Jonathan Guryan is professor of human development and social policy and an IPR fellow.



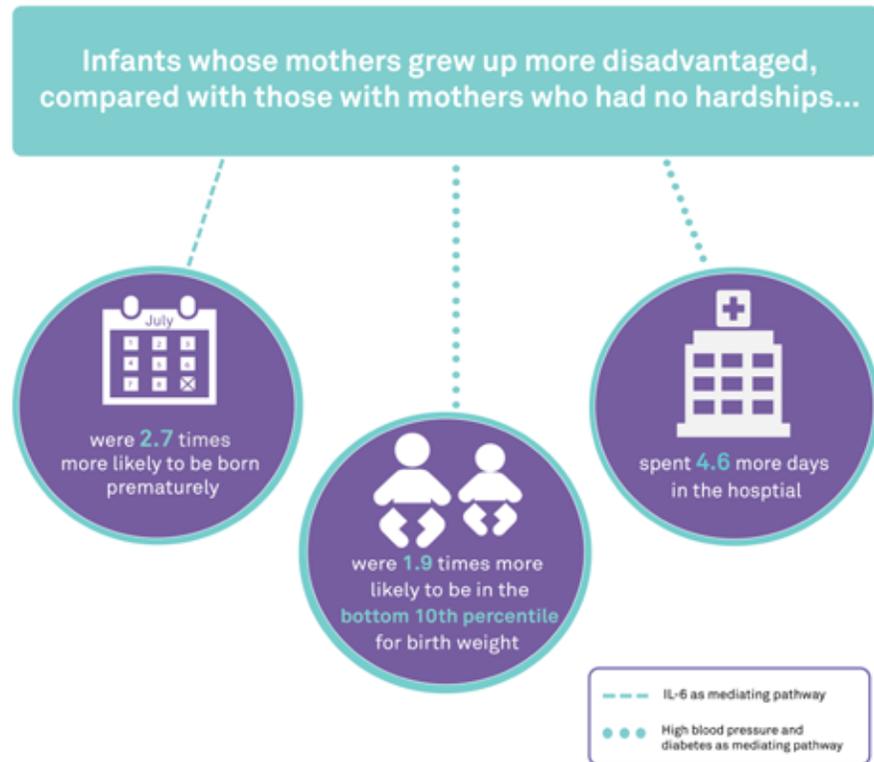
Jonathan Guryan

S. Drey

The Legacy of Hardship: Mothers to Babies

IPR-led study suggests a mother's disadvantage might be transmitted to her baby in utero

In a study of 673 recent mothers from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, an IPR-led research team found mothers who grew up in poor homes had, on average, more premature babies with more serious health issues than babies born to mothers with more financially secure childhoods. After investigating multiple pathways, the researchers identified that a marker of inflammation (IL-6), low levels of education, and pregnancy complications could help explain how a mother's disadvantage as a child is transmitted to the next generation.



Source: Miller, G., J. Culhane, W. Grobman, H. Simhan, D. Williamson, E. Adam ... T. McDade, P. Wadhwa, and A. Borders. 2017. Mothers' childhood hardship forecasts adverse pregnancy outcomes: Role of inflammatory, lifestyle, and psychosocial pathways. *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity* 65: 11–19.

Can poverty affect health across generations? In *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*, IPR health psychologist **Greg Miller** and his colleagues find that a mother's economic hardship during childhood can lead to negative birth outcomes for her children.

Miller, IPR psychobiologist **Emma Adam**, IPR anthropologist **Thomas McDade**, and obstetrician and IPR associate **Ann Borders** surveyed 673 recent mothers about their family's financial situation when they were growing up.

The researchers then assigned each subject a "disadvantage score," with a higher score meaning her family had struggled more with money.

The researchers found multiple negative effects associated with a mother's childhood disadvantage. A higher disadvantage score increased the likelihood

of an infant being born preterm, being small for its gestational age, and being underweight. In addition, infants whose mothers grew up disadvantaged stayed in the hospital longer and were more likely to require admission to a special care nursery.

"For each additional type of disadvantage, a woman's odds of adverse pregnancy outcomes increased by 20–40 percent," the researchers wrote. The negative effects persisted even when the researchers controlled for demographic variables, maternal education, and obstetrical factors.

This suggests that "childhood hardships leave an imprint that is not simply explained by continued exposure to disadvantage," the researchers explained.

So how exactly are mothers passing on the effects of economic hardship to their children? Miller and his colleagues find that inflammation—in particular the biomarker

interleukin-6 (IL-6)—could serve as a link between childhood disadvantage and future birth problems.

However, IL-6 did not explain why infants born to mothers with higher disadvantage scores were more likely to be underweight and stay in the hospital longer.

These effects seem to be driven more by pregnancy complications, such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

Whatever the cause, the results highlight pregnancy as a sensitive period during which health disparities can be transmitted across generations.

Greg Miller is the Louis W. Menk Professor of Psychology. Emma Adam is professor of human development and social policy. Thomas McDade is the Carlos Montezuma Professor of Anthropology. Ann Borders is adjunct assistant professor of medical social sciences. All are IPR faculty.

Predicting Police Misconduct

OVERVIEW

Police shootings have captured the public's attention in recent years, leading to protests and a lack of trust in the police. A recent study by IPR associate **Max Schanzenbach**, the Seigle Family Professor at Northwestern's Pritzker School of Law, and **Kyle Rozema**, the Wachtell Lipton Fellow in Behavioral Law and Economics at the University of Chicago Law School, identifies how civilian allegations can help reduce the gravest incidents of police misconduct by identifying which police officers pose the highest risk.

FINDINGS

A small number of police officers account for a disproportionate number of misconduct cases.

The 1 percent of police officers with the most allegations generate almost five times the number of payouts and four times the total damage payouts in civil rights litigation than the average police officer. Civil rights litigation is a strong indicator that serious misconduct occurred.

Using civilian allegations as an early warning system could reduce misconduct and save cities money. The researchers linked personnel, allegation,

POLICY TAKEAWAYS

- Civilian allegations can predict which police officers pose the highest risk for serious misconduct.
- Cities should take civil allegations seriously, especially when there is a consistent pattern of allegations against particular officers.
- Police departments should use civilian allegations as part of an early warning system to target officers for intervention.



Courtesy of Northwestern Law

IPR associate **Max Schanzenbach** is the Seigle Family Professor of Law. In addition to police misconduct, he has examined criminal sentencing and police union contracts.

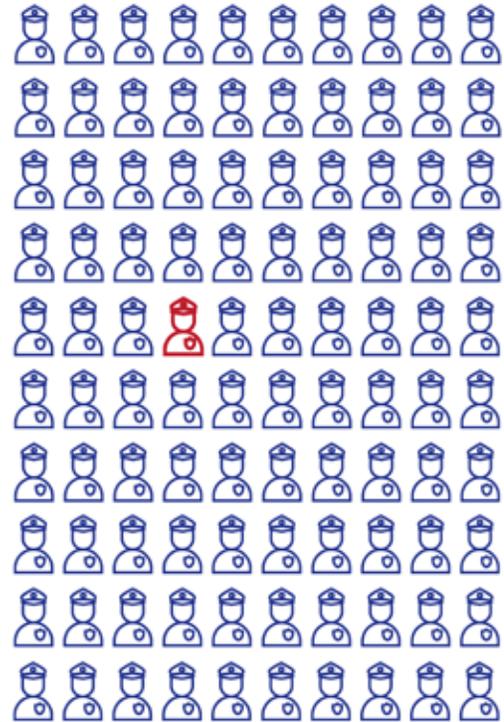
litigation, and payout data to outline the predictive power of civilian allegations. They estimate that removing the worst 1 percent of police officers in Chicago from regular civilian contact—either by reassignment or termination—and replacing them with another officer would have saved Chicago more than \$6 million in payouts between 2009 and 2014.

The number of allegations against officers did not change when they switched districts. This contradicts those who say some police officers collect more civilian allegations because they are either patrolling more dangerous beats or conducting more stops or arrests.

Allegations without a sworn affidavit have the same predictive power as allegations with an affidavit. During the period under study, just over half of all civil allegations in Chicago were dismissed for failing to have a sworn affidavit from the accuser. Schanzenbach and Rozema find that allegations without affidavits are as strong a predictor of misconduct as those with affidavits, suggesting the affidavit requirement should be dropped.

Good Cop, Bad Cop: Civilian Allegations Predict Serious Police Misconduct

The **1%**
of Chicago
police officers
with the most
civilian allegations
generated almost
five times
the number of payouts
in **civil rights lawsuits**.



Over a six-year period, other officers had only a **10%** chance of causing a paying out in a lawsuit, compared with **50%** for the worst 1–5% of officers.

Graphic courtesy of vecteezy.com

METHODOLOGY

Using an empirical Bayes framework, the study links personnel data on individual police officers with a dataset of 50,000 civilian allegations of police officer misconduct, as well as 28,000 internal allegations and 5,000 off-duty allegations, from 2002–14. The researchers also examine the federal and state lawsuits in which Chicago police officers are named and the lawsuit payments made on behalf of these officers by the city of Chicago.

REFERENCE

Rozema, K., and M. Schanzenbach. 2019. Good cop, bad cop: Using civilian allegations to predict police misconduct. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 11(2): 225–68.

For more information, see:

www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/pol.20160573

FACTS AND FIGURES

- The worst 5 percent of officers—and especially the worst 1 percent—in civilian allegations are also much more likely to have lawsuits, supervisor allegations, and off-duty misconduct.
- Chicago's total payments in police officer misconduct cases have averaged nearly \$50 million each year from 2009–14.
- Jason Van Dyke, the officer convicted for murder in the death of Laquan McDonald, was in the worst 3 percent of Chicago's officers, with more than 20 civilian allegations lodged against him since 2000.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

Andrew Papachristos

For IPR sociologist, networks matter in understanding crime and violence

Growing up at the height of Chicago's homicide epidemic, IPR sociologist **Andrew Papachristos** witnessed gang violence, crime, and policing first-hand in the Greek diner his parents owned in Rogers Park.

"A lot of the stuff from the street sort of spilled into the diner," Papachristos said. "Whether it was the politicians, the gang members, or the cops, all of that was playing out in front of me."

Papachristos said he came to criminology and sociology "late" in his college career as a junior in college. After graduating, Papachristos had an offer to become a police officer.

As the son of Greek immigrants and a first-generation college student, it made sense to get a practical job, and being a police officer aligned with his interests at the time.

But instead of becoming a cop, Papachristos is now studying how network science—the study of how social relationships affect what people feel, think, and do—can be used to understand the spread of crime and gun violence.

After 10 years away from Chicago working at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Yale University, Papachristos has moved home to join Northwestern and the Institute for Policy Research to continue his work on network science and crime.

Understanding Gun Violence as an Epidemic

According to Papachristos, gun violence is a lot like an epidemic: It concentrates within networks of people, it transmits from person to person, and it is socially "contagious."

In other words, if a person is around someone who has been exposed to gun violence, he or she is at a higher risk of becoming a victim, too.

In one study, Papachristos and his co-authors found that almost 90 percent of shootings were within a single, large network made up of just 6 percent of the city's population.



M. Wnuk

Andrew Papachristos

Papachristos pointed to the shooting death of a 6-month-old girl in 2013 as an example. In the three years prior to the girl's death, her father, the intended target, was arrested 23 times with 17 different people. Of those 17 people, 40 percent were shot.

Papachristos said though shootings might seem random, who someone is with at a given time can increase his or her risk of being shot.

"You can be pulled into a dispute just because you're at a party as a plus-one," he said. So how do we treat the epidemic?

Papachristos said communities need to reach out to the right people in the community to help reduce trauma and retaliation immediately after an incident—not just law enforcement, but also educators, outreach workers, public health professionals, and service providers.

"I'm talking about trauma-care specialists, violence interrupters, outreach workers, case managers, priests, football coaches, teachers—everybody we need, we can direct them in this network context," Papachristos said.

He added that cities also need to address the issues that create these networks in the first place, like poverty, segregation, over-policing, and struggling schools.

In Chicago, a Gun Is Just "2.5 Handshakes" Away

Papachristos is also examining how guns move throughout these networks. He is the senior author of a recent study that found that in a network of 188,000 people arrested in Chicago, any individual was just "2.5 handshakes" away from a gun.

"If you're in a gang, you're about 20 percent closer," he added.

According to Papachristos, most people do not regularly carry guns, but only do so when there is a perceived need to protect oneself.

"It doesn't matter if you're on the South Side of Chicago or in rural Louisiana, the idea that guns afford protection is deep-seated in the American psyche," Papachristos said.

But in addition to the demand for guns in Chicago, there is an important supply side, he said.

"It's really easy to go not so far to get a gun in Chicago," Papachristos said, noting the proximity of suburban gun shops, and those in nearby Indiana, which has fewer gun control laws than Illinois.

Papachristos is now bringing this kind of work to IPR, where he said he is excited about working with professors from other disciplines.

"True interdisciplinary work is rare," Papachristos said. "That's where good work happens."

He is also launching the Northwestern Neighborhood and Network (N3) Initiative, where he plans to promote creative research projects to leverage the idea that networks matter in improving cities.

"I'm ready for the next step," he said. "I'm ready to come home."

Andrew Papachristos is professor of sociology and an IPR fellow.

Ofer Malamud



J. Ziv

A global outlook on decision making comes naturally to IPR economist **Ofer Malamud**. Born in Israel, his family moved to Japan when he was 6 years old, and then three years later to Hong Kong, where he attended a British secondary school.

After debating whether to attend university in England, where he would need to declare his major immediately, or in America, he opted for Harvard University. This turned out to be prescient for two reasons: His initial leanings to declare a major in computer science or applied mathematics eventually gave way to economics and philosophy, Malamud recounted. And second: His switch in majors also would lead him to become a labor economist and to study the exact same problem he faced when choosing where to go to college.

His international upbringing is also reflected in his investigations of different policies and interventions outside of the United States.

“There are big advantages to looking at similar policies across countries, and also learning from their different policies,” he explained.

Throughout his work, he brings a rigorous quantitative approach to issues of wide impact and importance across the world.

Ofer Malamud is associate professor of human development and social policy and an IPR fellow.

Mary Pattillo



J. Jones

Chicago is IPR associate **Mary Pattillo's** home and also her research subject. A sociologist and African American studies researcher, she found a city where she could investigate questions that fascinated her, first as a PhD student at the University of Chicago, and now as a professor at Northwestern University.

“It’s similar to Milwaukee, where I grew up, and where my sociological imagination and curiosity were born,” she recalled.

Her all-black neighborhood in Milwaukee, one of the most racially segregated cities in the United States—like Chicago—included middle-class residents, such as her own family.

After attending an all-black elementary school, she attended high school in a wealthy, white suburb through a busing desegregation program. It allowed her to observe racial and class inequalities close up.

Since then, Pattillo’s imagination and curiosity have led her to delve into “race in the city” in Chicago and beyond throughout her research career. This concept imbues her pioneering work on the role of the black middle class, urban housing issues, public education, and the criminal justice system—all of which provide insights into inequality.

Mary Pattillo is the Harold Washington Professor of Sociology and African American Studies and an IPR associate.

Sera Young



J. Ziv

Whether attending an international high school in Wales or learning Swahili while living with a Zanzibari family, IPR anthropologist **Sera Young** has found immersing herself in different cultures is the way to think differently.

In Mali, Young got first-hand experience in understanding cultural differences. She was the undergraduate member of a research team that measured the health and growth of children under 5, examining if there was a link between polygamy and child mortality.

“The mortality rate was just incredibly high,” Young said. “I had gone there to study a question about the anthropology of religion, and I left being motivated to work on reducing health disparities.”

She now focuses on maternal and child health issues, closely examining the causes and consequences of food and water insecurity.

Young has brought together a group of interdisciplinary researchers, practitioners, and on-the-ground collaborators in more than 24 sites globally. They have launched the first cross-culturally validated household water insecurity scale. It considers various aspects of water use, including how frequently anyone has consumed unsafe water or gone to bed thirsty in the last month.

Sera Young is assistant professor of anthropology and an IPR fellow.

To read full versions of these and other faculty spotlights, visit ipr.northwestern.edu.

FACULTY OPINION

Why the Wealth Gap Hits Families the Hardest

By Christina Gibson-Davis and Christine Percheski

What does economic inequality really look like? Income alone doesn't give a complete picture. Income inequality describes the gap between a six-figure salary and minimum wage. But the more alarming gap occurs in wealth—a household's total assets minus debts. To understand how inequality is playing out in the United States, we need to look more closely at the wealth gap.

In a recent paper, we examined wealth among families with children and among the elderly. We focused on children and the elderly because they are considered the most vulnerable in our society and because so much social policy is geared to help them. According to our research, wealth inequality is much worse among families with children, and the gap has widened greatly over the past two decades, with consequences that may cascade through generations.

The extreme wealth inequality we have identified is a result of years of policies that have eroded both public spending and private income for families with children.

The demographer Samuel Preston warned in 1984 that the United States had made “a set of private and public choices that have dramatically altered the age profile of well-being,” by devoting resources toward improving conditions for the elderly while neglecting to do the same for families with children. “The constituency for children in public decisions simply appears too feeble to fight back,” he wrote.

We are seeing the consequences of these policies now, and they will follow today's children throughout their lives.

Unlike income, which can change quickly because of a booming economy or a rise in the minimum wage, changes in wealth usually happen slowly. The recently passed tax law, for example, may increase your take-home pay, but it's unlikely to increase the value of your house.



C. Gall

Christine Percheski

Wealth also matters because it has profound long-term effects. Parental wealth, in addition to parental income, plays an important role in college attendance and graduation. Bachelor's degree holders earn 56 percent more than high school graduates, the largest gap on record. So a parent's ability to, say, pay for college tuition may be crucial to enabling children to become economically self-sufficient.

Parental wealth is also a critical determinant of where children live and the quality of the schools they attend. It can affect the kind of job they have, if and when they marry, and whether they own their homes.

To understand how wealth and wealth inequality have changed among families with children and elderly households, we examined data from the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances, a large survey conducted approximately every three years that catalogs the total assets and debt of American households.

The data we used comes from several thousand representative households in each of the nine survey years between 1989 and 2013. We examined the wealth of households headed by someone age 65 or older, and families headed by someone under age 65 and with children under age 18. Our research shows that in terms of wealth, those over 65

have weathered the past quarter-century much better than families with children, despite two major recessions. The net worth of older people's households increased by 45 percent from 1989–2013.

And for the past 25 years, the distance between the rich elderly and the poor elderly remained stable. The very wealthiest elderly households grew richer, but so did those of working-class and middle-class older people.

Families with children fared worse as a group. Overall, their wealth declined by 56 percent in the same period. More important, they also faced a wide and growing divide: Wealth inequality for these households grew significantly from 1989–2013. The top 1 percent saw their wealth increase by 156 percent, while parents in the bottom half saw their wealth shrink by 260 percent. About a third of all families with children in 2013 had no wealth, only debt.

In 2013, the top 1 percent of these families had a median wealth of \$5.1 million, thanks to skyrocketing incomes, increasing home values, and strong returns on stocks and investments. They have millions in savings and generous trust funds for their children.

Families on the bottom rungs live very differently. They may not even own a home, and if they face an unexpected expense, like a medical emergency, they don't have a cushion of savings or other assets to draw on. And when their children start college, some of these parents may still be paying off their own student loans.

Why are so many parents with children faring so poorly? In part, it's a result of long-term changes in employment. Over the period we studied, employment became more unstable, as companies replaced full-time jobs with part-time work and short-term contracts. These employment changes affected families with children more than the elderly, who are mostly

(Continued on page 13)

FACULTY SOUNDBITES



C. Galt

“But lost in all the legal and political hubbub is a sound understanding of how and why colleges and universities came to value diversity in the first place—especially racial diversity. This lack of attention to history fuels needless suspicion and derision of policies aimed at creating a richer student experience and a better-educated population.”

Anthony Chen and Lisa Stulberg, “What Opponents of Affirmative Action Get Wrong,” *The Washington Post*, October 23



J. Tampas

“[C]ommunities have norms, behaviors, and rules and they all have the right to enforce rules related to the type of speech event out there. And I think that’s where this becomes a sticky conversation. Conflating that difference between a rule against hate speech and the right to free speech are two very different things.”

Rachel Davis Mersey, “Banning Alex Jones: A Dangerous Move for Free Speech?” *WTTW’s “Chicago Tonight,”* August 8



J. Prisching

“I was shocked. I’ve been disadvantaged my entire career and didn’t really know it. ... If you’re not able to train that graduate student, if you’re not able to buy that piece of equipment, you’re hampered from the very beginning. Your trajectory is always going to be steeper.”

Teresa Woodruff, “Female Scientists Receive on Average About \$40,000 Less in Federal Funding,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 5

Wealth Gap (Continued from page 12)

retired. That means not only less income but also less money to save or invest in homes or other wealth-producing assets.

The other problem for families with children is debt: not credit card or car loan debt, which hasn’t changed much since the late 1980s, but student loan and mortgage debt.

Education debt has been rising throughout the period in our study, in part because federal Pell Grants failed to keep up with rising tuition costs. Pell Grants now cover only 29 percent of the cost of a four-year degree at a public college, the lowest percentage on record. Even earning a two-year degree at a community college usually means taking on debt.

In the mid-2000s, housing debt also started to rise, especially as subprime lenders opened the housing market to more first-time buyers.

After the collapse of the housing market, home prices were down one-third from their pre-recession peak. For many families, that wiped out the value of their main asset.

Why did older households fare better? First, older Americans’ incomes were largely stable. Their primary source of income, Social Security, is indexed to inflation. With stable income, fewer older people dipped into savings to pay their bills, and they had more money to invest.

Second, most of them bought their homes before the housing bubble, and third, they graduated from college before the era of high student loan debt. Thanks to these three factors, the median net worth of poor and middle-class older people rose by 70 percent from 1989–2013.

There are a few policy changes that may help. Increasing the purchasing power of Pell

Grants and then indexing it to rising tuition costs would be a start. The government could also expand tax credits that benefit families, and compensate families who were victims of predatory lending practices.

But the magnitude of the problem is so great that these measures are not enough. The United States needs a fundamental rethinking of public policy priorities to improve the lives of the next generation of children.

Christine Percheski is associate professor of sociology and an IPR fellow at Northwestern University. Christina Gibson-Davis is associate professor of public policy at Duke University.

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RECENT IPR WORKING PAPERS

Passing the Buck in Congress: The Extent and Effectiveness of Blaming Others for Inaction (WP-17-14)

David Doherty, Loyola University; and **Laurel Harbridge-Yong** (IPR/Political Science), Northwestern University

What Does (Formal) Health Insurance Do, and for Whom? (WP-17-15)

Amy Finkelstein, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Neale Mahoney, University of Chicago; and **Matthew Notowidigdo** (IPR/Economics), Northwestern University
Published in the Annual Review of Economics 10:261–86

School Starting Age and Cognitive Development (WP-17-16)

Elizabeth Dhuey, University of Toronto; **David Figlio** (IPR/Education and Social Policy), Northwestern University; **Krzysztof Karbownik** (IPR Research Associate), Northwestern University; and Jeffrey Roth, University of Florida

Group Identification and the Collaboration Effect (WP-17-17)

Mary McGrath (IPR/Political Science), Northwestern University

Electoral Campaigns and the Incumbency Advantage: How Institutions Generate Competitive Inequities (WP-17-18)

James Druckman (IPR/Political Science), Northwestern University; Martin Kifer, High Point University; and Michael Parkin, Oberlin College

The Effect of Court-Ordered Hiring Guidelines on Teacher Composition and Student Achievement (WP-17-19)

Cynthia (CC) DuBois (PhD 18; Former IPR Graduate Research Assistant), Northwestern University; and **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach** (IPR/Education and Social Policy), Northwestern University

Reducing Bureaucratic Corruption: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on What Works (WP-17-20)

Jordan Gans-Morse (Political Science/IPR), Northwestern University; Mariana Borges, Northwestern University; Alexey Makarin (IPR Graduate Research Assistant), Northwestern University; Theresa Mannah Blankson, University of Massachusetts Amherst; Andre Nickow, Northwestern University; and Dong Zhang, Lingnan University
Published in World Development 105:171–88

Reasonable Patient Care Under Uncertainty (WP-17-21)

Charles F. Manski (IPR/Economics), Northwestern University
Published in Health Economics 27(10): 1397–1421

The Economics of Scale-Up (WP-17-22)

Jonathan M. V. Davis, University of Chicago; **Jonathan Guryan** (IPR/Education and Social Policy), Northwestern University; Kelly

Hallberg (PhD 13; Former IPR Graduate Research Assistant), University of Chicago; and Jens Ludwig, University of Chicago

Escaping the Abdication Trap When Cooperative Federalism Fails: Legal Reform After Flint (WP-17-23)

David Dana (Law/IPR), Northwestern University
Published in the Fordham Urban Law Journal 44:1329–62

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Nicola Bianchi (Kellogg/IPR), Northwestern University; and Michela Giorcelli, University of California, Los Angeles

Environmental Externalities and Free-Riding in the Household (WP-18-01)

Kelsey Jack, Tufts University; **Seema Jayachandran** (IPR/Economics), Northwestern University; and Sarojini Rao, University of Chicago

Do School Spending Cuts Matter? (WP-18-02)

Kirabo Jackson, (IPR/Human Development and Social Policy), Northwestern University; Cora Wigger, Northwestern University; and Heyu Xiong, Northwestern University

The Effects of Information and Application Assistance on Take-Up, Targeting, and Welfare: Experimental Evidence from SNAP (WP-18-03)

Amy Finkelstein, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and **Matthew Notowidigdo** (IPR/Economics), Northwestern University

Unpacking a Multi-Faceted Program to Build Sustainable Income for the Very Poor (WP-18-04)

Abhijit Banerjee, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; **Dean Karlan** (Finance and Economics/IPR), Northwestern University; Robert Darko Osei, University of Ghana; Hannah Trachtman, Yale University; and **Christopher Udry** (Economics/IPR), Northwestern University

Debt Traps? Market Vendors and Moneylender Debt in India and the Philippines (WP-18-05)

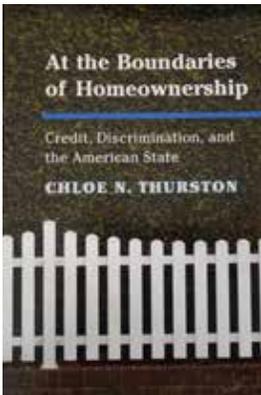
Dean Karlan (Finance and Economics/IPR), Northwestern University; Sendhil Mullainathan, Harvard University; and Benjamin Roth, Harvard University

The Effect of Education on Mortality and Health: Evidence from a Schooling Expansion in Romania (WP-18-06)

Ofer Malamud (IPR/Education and Social Policy), Northwestern University; Andreea Mitrut, University of Gothenburg; and Cristian Pop-Eleches, Columbia University

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RECENT FACULTY BOOKS



At the Boundaries of Homeownership Credit, Discrimination, and the American State

Cambridge University Press, 2018

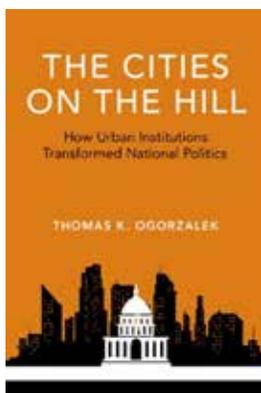
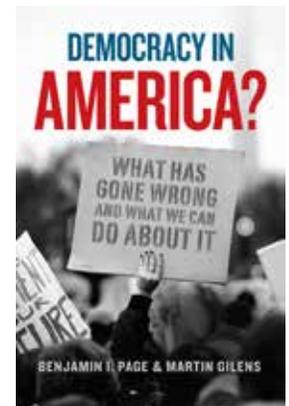
IPR political scientist **Chloe Thurston** shows how the same programs that opened the door to a home for many Americans often served to lock women and minorities out of homeownership. The book uncovers a “substantial social policy system” in the United States for homeownership. Thurston’s investigation begins with the creation of two pieces of housing policy: the Federal Housing Administration following the Great Depression and the GI Bill following World War II. Lenders at the time believed that houses in racially diverse neighborhoods were riskier investments due to more volatile housing values. Government mortgage underwriters viewed restrictive covenants as one way for neighborhoods to retain their housing values, preventing owners from selling their house to racial and religious minorities. Women also had difficulty obtaining loans. In the 1960s and ’70s, lenders assumed that women’s incomes were temporary—despite data showing that women worked to contribute to their household income.

Democracy in America

What Has Gone Wrong and What We Can Do About It

University of Chicago Press, 2018

In their latest book, political scientist and IPR associate **Benjamin Page** and Martin Gilens of Princeton University present an indictment of today’s politics, pointing specifically to how the American public has little say in policy decisions. After analyzing approximately 2,000 federal policy decisions over 20 years, Page and Gilens found that affluent Americans, corporations, and organized interest groups have been much more successful than ordinary Americans at getting their preferred policies passed. Page and Gilens particularly point to the issue of money in politics: In 2012, .001 percent of Americans provided almost half of all the money spent in federal elections. Big-money donors also keep candidates and issues that they disagree with off the ballots. The authors call for giving citizens more power to shape what their government does, by enfranchising all citizens, reforming governing institutions, curbing the power of money in politics, and changing the way we choose candidates and conduct elections.



The Cities on the Hill

How Urban Institutions Transformed National Politics

Oxford University Press, 2018

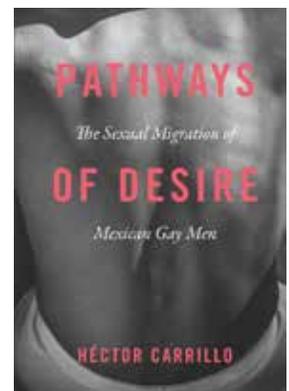
Over the second half of the 20th century, American politics was reorganized around race as the tenuous New Deal coalition frayed and eventually collapsed. What drove this change? Political scientist and IPR associate **Thomas Ogorzalek** argues that the answer lies not in the divide between North and South, but in the differences between how cities and rural areas govern themselves and pursue their interests on the national stage. Using a wide range of evidence from Congress and an original dataset measuring the “urbanicity” of districts over time, he shows how the trajectory of partisan politics in America today was set in the very beginning of the New Deal. Both rural and urban America experienced local racial conflict, but beginning in the 1930s, city leaders became increasingly unified in national politics and supportive of civil rights—changes that sowed the seeds of modern liberalism.

Pathways of Desire

The Sexual Migration of Mexican Gay Men

University of Chicago Press, 2018

In his award-winning book, sociologist and IPR associate **Héctor Carrillo** shows us the lives of Mexican gay men who have left their home country to pursue greater sexual autonomy and sexual freedom in the United States. The ethnographic study brings attention to the full arc of these men’s migration experiences, from their upbringing in Mexican cities and towns, to their cross-border journeys, to their incorporation into urban, gay communities in American cities, and their sexual and romantic relationships with American men. These men’s diverse stories demonstrate the intertwining of sexual, economic, and familial motivations for migration. Carrillo also provides a helpful analytical framework for the simultaneous consideration of structural and cultural factors in social scientific studies of sexuality.



Recent Awards and Honors

Faculty, students recognized for research contributions and achievements

IPR political scientist **James Druckman** and social policy professor and IPR associate **Cynthia Coburn** were appointed to the National Academies' Standing Committee on Advancing Science Communication Research and Practice in November 2018.

In November 2018, the Education Lab at the University of Chicago Urban Labs, co-directed by IPR economist **Jonathan Guryan**, received \$15 million from AbbVie for more resources to expand programs like Becoming a Man (BAM).

Sheridan Fuller, an IPR graduate research assistant, was named a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholar in October 2018.



Sheridan Fuller

S. Drey

In October 2018, oncofertility specialist and IPR

associate **Teresa Woodruff** was elected to the National Academy of Medicine, one of the highest honors in health and medicine.

Health disparities scholar and IPR associate **Melissa Simon** received the Award for Excellence from the American Public Health Association in October 2018. She also received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science Foundation in June 2018.

Dean Karlan, development economist and IPR associate, received the 2018 Terry McAdam Book Award for *The Goldilocks Challenge* (Oxford University Press, 2018) in October.

The European Economic Association awarded the Hicks-Tinbergen medal to finance professor and IPR associate **Paola Sapienza** and her co-authors for their paper on long-term persistence in August 2018.

IPR psychologist **Alice Eagly** was awarded the 2018 SAGE Award for Scholarly Contribution from the Academy of Management, Division

of Gender and Diversity in Organizations in August. Eagly also won the 2018 Kurt Lewin Award for Distinguished Research on Social Issues from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. In April 2018, she received the Legacy Award from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

In August 2018, the American Statistical Association presented the Statistical Partnerships Among Academe, Industry, and Government Award to IPR statistician **Bruce Spencer** and his colleagues for their work in the National Science Foundation—Census Research Network.

In August 2018, sociologist and IPR associate **Héctor Carrillo** was awarded a Distinguished Contribution to Research Book Award from the Latina/o Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association for his book, *Pathways of Desire* (University of Chicago Press, 2018). The book also won in the Sex and Gender Section (see p. 15).

In August 2018, the National Tax Association recognized public finance economist and IPR associate **Therese McGuire** with the Stephen D. Gold Award.

IPR economist **Seema Jayachandran** received the Sustainability Science Award from the Ecological Society of America in August 2018.

IPR political scientist **Rachel Beatty Riedl** was appointed director of Northwestern's Program of African Studies in July 2018.

Professor of medical social sciences and IPR associate **Brian Mustanski** was elected president of the International Academy of Sex Researchers in July 2018.

Ellen Wartella, communications studies researcher and IPR associate, received the Dorothy Ann and Clarence L. Ver Steeg



Rachel Beatty Riedl

J. Ziv

Distinguished Research Fellowship Award in June 2018. A month earlier, Wartella was also elected a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science.

IPR labor and education economist **Kirabo Jackson** was named the 17th recipient of the Martin E. and Gertrude G. Walder Award for Research Excellence in June 2018.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem awarded IPR economist **Charles F. Manski** an honorary doctorate in June 2018 for his "pathbreaking" methodological contributions and for his role in founding the field of partial identification.

Communications studies researcher and IPR associate **Daniel O'Keefe** was elected to be a fellow of the International Communication Association in June 2018.



Mesmin Destin

IPR social psychologist **Mesmin Destin** was awarded the American Psychological Association Committee on Socioeconomic Status Emerging

Leadership Award in June 2018. He was also named a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science.

In May 2018, political scientist and IPR associate **Ana Arjona** received the 2018 Conflict Research Society Book of the Year Prize for *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Design For America, founded by mechanical engineer and IPR associate **Elizabeth Gerber**, was recognized with Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum's National Design Award for corporate and institutional achievement in May 2018.

The College of Law Practice Management named **Daniel Rodriguez**, law professor and IPR associate, a fellow in its 2018 class.

Overcoming Barriers to Safety Net Sign-Ups

J. Ziv



Matthew Notowidigdo

Millions of Americans rely on social safety net programs like unemployment insurance, housing assistance, Medicaid, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP)—formerly known as food stamps. But enrollment in these programs is not automatic and requires people to apply and demonstrate their eligibility. So why do people fail to sign up for social safety net programs like SNAP, despite being eligible?

IPR economist **Matthew Notowidigdo** and his MIT colleague Amy Finkelstein seek to understand this issue by examining how to improve outreach methods to low-income households not participating in social safety net programs. A number of barriers prevent eligible people from signing up for SNAP, Notowidigdo said.

Given that people must apply for enrollment, they might not know about the program or even that they are eligible. Additionally, the

stigma surrounding food assistance or receiving other government aid could prevent eligible low-income people from applying.

Notowidigdo and Finkelstein wanted to see if having additional information would increase SNAP enrollment. The researchers conducted a randomized experiment in 2016, contacting 30,000 elderly Pennsylvanians who were likely eligible for SNAP but were not enrolled.

They divided this population of potential SNAP enrollees into three groups, mailing two of them information about the program. One of these groups also received additional assistance—a toll-free number run by a nonprofit—with their application process. A third group, the control group, received neither the information nor assistance.

Over the next nine months, only 6 percent of the control group enrolled in SNAP. However, 11 percent of the information-only group and 18 percent of the information-plus-assistance group enrolled. Those who called in and talked to someone at the nonprofit were more likely to sign up for SNAP, too.

Of the options examined, the information-only method might be the more cost-effective one, Notowidigdo said. The cost per enrollee was \$20, compared with \$65 for those who received information plus assistance.

Matthew Notowidigdo is associate professor of economics and an IPR fellow.

Spreading the (Partisan) Word

Only 10–15 percent of the American public watches partisan news outlets such as MSNBC and Fox News, but their polarizing impact reaches beyond the viewers of their broadcasts, according to research by IPR political scientist **James Druckman**.

Someone who watches MSNBC or Fox News discusses the partisan media's slant on issues with friends or colleagues, which can influence them even if they are not directly consuming the partisan media.

In fact, talking with viewers might have more effect on individuals' opinions than actually watching the partisan media.

To test this network effect, Druckman and his co-authors, University of Pennsylvania's Matthew Levendusky and Temple University's Audrey McLain, a former IPR assistant editor, created an experiment using video clips about the Keystone XL pipeline from Fox and MSNBC.

The researchers put two people who had watched the media segment and two who had not into discussion groups. In half of the experimental discussion groups, participants identified with the same political party, and in the other half, participants belonged to both parties.

The researchers identified clear “two-step communication flows” between individuals who were exposed to partisan media and those who were not. The communication flow occurred in both same and mixed-party groups.

In the same-party groups, the partisanship of opinions was amplified. The members of these groups demonstrated even more polarized opinions than those who viewed partisan segments but did not discuss them with others.

In the mixed groups, discussion moderated polarized opinions. However, even in these groups, people's opinions were more polarized than in the group that did not view the partisan media clips at all.

James Druckman is the Payson S. Wild Professor of Political Science and IPR associate director and fellow.

Rosenbaum Receives Career Award

J. Ziv



James Rosenbaum

IPR education sociologist **James Rosenbaum**'s ability to cultivate talented researchers, such as Johns Hopkins associate professor Stephanie DeLuca (PhD 02), and his passion for tackling pressing social issues earned him the Elizabeth G. Cohen Distinguished Career in Applied Sociology of Education Award from the American Education Research Association in April 2019. “Sociology of education [SOE] offers a powerful vision,” Rosenbaum said at the ceremony. “While other disciplines blame individuals for bad outcomes, SOE identifies context influences, which can be redesigned by institutions or policies. One of the greatest gratifications of sociological research comes if sociological insights can be used to redesign schools to improve student success.”

The Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier

Former IPR director Fay Lomax Cook discusses National Science Foundation's 'Big Ideas'



J. Brown

Fay Lomax Cook, then-assistant director of the National Science Foundation, described “how the world of work is undergoing a major transformation.”

With the rise of artificial intelligence, machine learning, robots, and other technologies, how will workplaces—and workers themselves—have to adapt?

Former IPR director **Fay Lomax Cook** returned to Northwestern University in April 2018 to address the future of work at the human-technology frontier as IPR's Distinguished Public Policy Lecturer. At the time, Cook was assistant director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the head of its Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorate.

As IPR director from 1996–2012, Cook played a key role in recruiting and retaining top policy researchers, expanding IPR's program areas, and launching a Monday colloquium series—which has since been named after her—where faculty are able to discuss their research in an interdisciplinary setting.

Given the difficult funding environment at the NSF in recent years, Cook explained that the foundation decided to launch “10 Big Ideas” to drive its long-term research agenda, spark innovation in science and engineering research, and lead to discoveries.

Among the Big Ideas are harnessing the data revolution, dealing with rising sea levels,

understanding how environments and genomes interact to predict and explain human traits, and promoting diversity and inclusion in science. Additionally, as new technologies emerge and concerns about worker displacement grow, the NSF is also investigating the future of work at the human-technology frontier.

“The world of work is undergoing a major transformation and it is going to continue changing in the future,” Cook said.

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics are driving major workplace changes.

“What we really don't know enough about is how emerging technologies are affecting our lives,” Cook said. “The impacts are crucial: employment, opportunity, productivity, economic growth, competitiveness, national security, and U.S. global leadership.”

The NSF believes that the initiative will generate more research proposals that will help explore and build the partnership between humans and technology.

For example, engineers and computer scientists need to work together with behavioral scientists to improve computers' ability to read facial expressions. Using robots

and artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace could lead to new industries, higher economic growth, and improved quality of life.

However, it might also result in lost jobs and growing disparities in access to new technologies. The evidence so far is not very optimistic for labor productivity.

“You would think with all of these amazing emerging technologies, labor productivity would go up dramatically,” Cook said.

“But in the last 10 years, it's been about 1.3 percent in comparison to the 10 years before, where it was 2.8 percent. Is this one of the risks as some have claimed, or will the new technologies lead to increased productivity?”

Though technology is often blamed for the loss of jobs, with robots taking over in manufacturing or self-driving cars poised to replace taxi drivers and truck drivers, technology can also be a way for workers to gain new skills, and NSF wants to promote research on lifelong learning.

Cook pointed to a program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that is training people who lost their jobs in mining to write computer code.

Cook said that all of these research questions require cross-disciplinary or “convergence” research, driven by a specific and compelling problem and featuring deep integration across fields.

She advised researchers from different areas of study to question each other about how best to approach a problem.

“What we're urging is to get scientists together from the very beginning,” Cook said. “Those ideas come together, and something brand new comes out of it.”

Fay Lomax Cook was assistant director of the National Science Foundation and head of its Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorate from 2014–18. She is currently professor of human development and social policy (on leave) and an IPR fellow.

Decision Making in a ‘Broken Political System’

Former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin discusses current U.S. challenges, public service

As an economic advisor to President Bill Clinton and a secretary of the U.S. Treasury in the 1990s, **Robert Rubin** faced many tough decisions, from the economic maelstrom of the Mexican peso crisis to passing government budgets and debating tax cuts.

The former Goldman Sachs co-chair and chair emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations took part in a conversation with IPR Director and economist **Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach** in April 2018. The two tackled a number of current economic and political topics, including the state of the economy, foreign policy, congressional dysfunction, and White House decision making.

“We are facing some serious complexity and uncertainty, both in the short and long term,” Schanzenbach began, “so what do you have to say about the outlook for the economy?”

“In the short term, who the hell knows?” quipped Rubin.

Rubin compared America to other industrialized countries, highlighting its key structural strengths, including rule of law, natural resources, flexible labor and capital markets, and its dynamic society.

“I would rather be engaged in economic activity here than any other country, subject to one huge caveat: If we’re going to realize that potential, we’re going to have to meet hugely consequential policy challenges,” Rubin said. He cited mass incarceration and systemic poverty as some of the challenges, but he pointed to partisan polarization as the major roadblock.

“Independent of our current president, you go back over the last decade and Congress has fundamentally been dysfunctional,” he said.

Despite the seemingly insurmountable odds against fixing the nation’s political system, he noted that America could quickly get back on track.

“We have had a history of political resilience, and politics can change very, very rapidly in America,” Rubin said. Still, even American



J. Brown

Robert Rubin spoke to IPR Director and economist Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach about making tough policy decisions and his experiences dealing with uncertainties in government and business.

resilience might fail to help the nation confront what he sees as two of the most pressing global issues, climate change and nuclear proliferation.

“I think we live in a very dangerous world,” Rubin said.

According to Rubin, after World War II, the U.S. was the lone source of global stability, and no country or international organization is currently capable of taking up that mantle. “Now, at a time when the world needs it more than ever, we’re withdrawing,” he said.

“The heart of your experience both at Goldman Sachs and in government was making good decisions,” Schanzenbach asked. “So how do you go about [it]?”

Rubin replied his best training for decision making was not, perhaps surprisingly, a finance or economics course, but an introductory philosophy class that he took as a Harvard sophomore. His revelatory take away? “There are no provable certainties.”

“When you think about it in terms of decision making,” Rubin said, “it means all decisions are about probabilities, and that fashioned the

mindset with which I approached everything I have ever done.”

This mindset is what helped him to manage the volatility of Goldman Sachs’ arbitrage department, as well as national and global uncertainty in the Clinton White House.

As the director of the inaugural National Economic Council (NEC), Rubin gathered a team of advisers to determine the probabilities of the outcomes of decisions and events using the best information available.

“We would debate it out,” Rubin said, describing the NEC as “an honest broker” that advised President Clinton on trade, fiscal, human capital, or other economic issues. He also pointed out that every president since Clinton has had an NEC.

“We brought all of the perspectives together at the same time,” Rubin said about the process. He noted that doing so conferred several advantages: First, it gave the president multiple perspectives that allowed him to make an informed decision, and second, even when some of the parties disagreed, they publicly supported the decision, which prevented disagreements that others could exploit.

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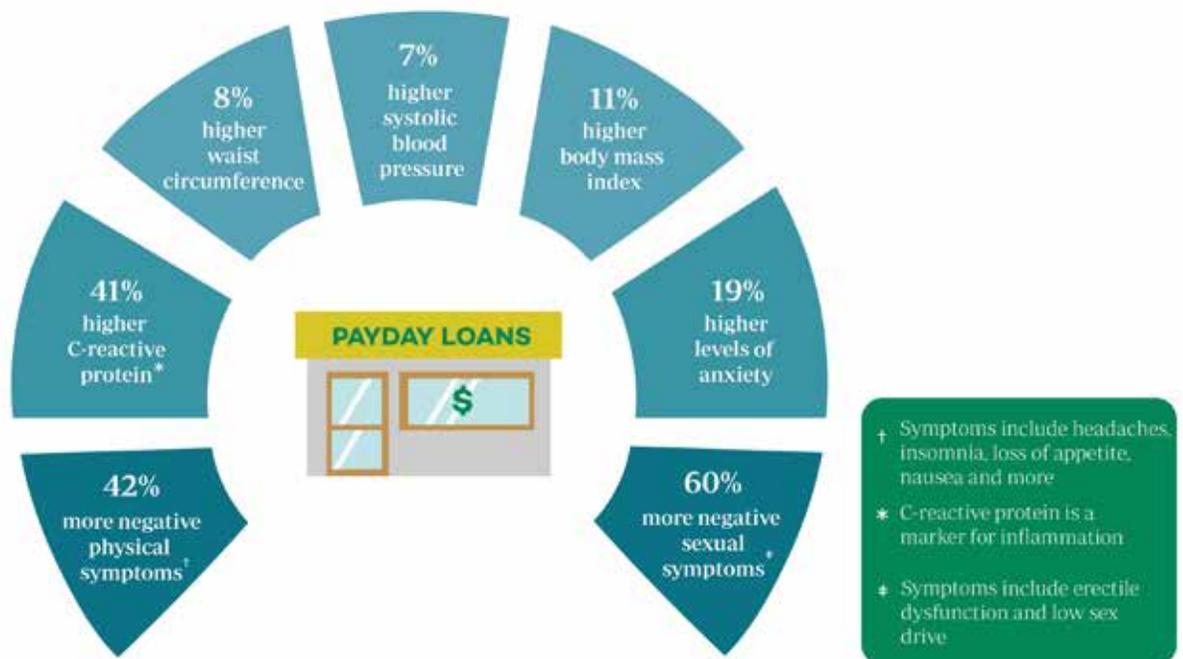


Payday Loans Tied to Health Risks

IPR anthropologists find short-term lending is associated with risk factors for poor health

IPR anthropologists Christopher Kuzawa and Thomas McDade find that individuals who had a history of using payday loans had worse health across a range of health indicators.

Compared to non-borrowers, short-term loan borrowers had, on average...



Source: Sweet, E., C. Kuzawa, and T. McDade. 2018. Short-term lending: Payday loans as risk factors for anxiety, inflammation, and poor health. *SSM-Population Health* 5: 112-21.