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Dear Friends,

2015-2016 was a spectacular year for the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences. In the pages that follow, we hope you’ll get a sense of some of the strides forward made by more than 300 faculty and students who are now working with the Institute and our research centers. Of special note this year are these milestones:

- Two new Stanford IRiSS research centers were added to our roster, tackling the challenges of immigration and online learning. Meanwhile, we welcomed five faculty as new directors of our centers and programs – Jeff Hancock, Jens Hainmuller, Shanto Iyengar, David Laitin, and Mitchell Stevens.
- Our data science initiatives have made important progress, strengthened by Stanford’s institutional commitments that recognize the centrality of computationally intensive research for the social sciences.
- The Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (PACS) launched a $9 million endowment campaign to support its work.
- And the Center on Poverty and Inequality (CPI) completed its strategic plan, working closely with our advisory board, led by Roger Clay.

This is not to say there were not one or two bumps along the road. Most significant of these was the loss of two of our faculty center directors. As they head away from campus, we send our thanks and best wishes to Gary Segura and Simon Jackman, who served as the founding co-directors for our Center for American Democracy and Principal Investigators on the NSF-sponsored American National Election Studies. We also note that CPI’s core funding took a large hit as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services cut its support for national poverty research centers. We are nonetheless well-positioned and are already hard at work to overcome each of these challenges.

We approach the new year with a profound mix of promise and concern. Continued federal support for the social sciences, which has long been at risk, is a great unknown in the year ahead. This could have a momentous impact on major grants like the American National Election Studies, and a more widespread and profound impact across all areas that depend upon evidence-based research—much as we have been warned by Ken Prewitt in his comments to our board and in published commentaries. At the same time, there is much enthusiasm for the opportunity to work with Stanford’s new leadership team, and inform them about the promising social science research we see every day at the Institute.

For now, we invite you to take a look at last year’s progress, as outlined in the pages that follow. It sets a high baseline for the work of tomorrow to exceed.

We are grateful for your continued interest, enthusiasm, and support.

Best,

John Sandy Smith
Board Chair

Karen Cook
Director

Chris Thomsen
Executive Director
About

Our Mission

Founded in 2004 with the broad goal of advancing social science research, the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) trains social scientists in advanced and innovative research methods, undertakes high-quality interdisciplinary research, and disseminates research findings that address significant global challenges.

At the core of our activity, Stanford IRiSS:

- Invests in new core research infrastructure for the social science community, including the development of advanced technology systems;
- Creates a collaborative research community to strengthen Stanford’s ability to attract and retain top-tier faculty and students;
- Offers seed grants and sponsors a faculty fellows program to encourage innovative and interdisciplinary research;
- Teaches graduate and undergraduate students state-of-the-art methods for data acquisition and analysis;
- Convenes conferences of leading scholars and students to further the debate on large-scale societal problems;
- Collaborates with leading universities to disseminate information and leverage research worldwide.

Data Driven Discovery for the Social Sciences

Democracy, poverty and inequality, philanthropy, immigration, online learning, and big data are the current foci of the Institute’s six research centers. This work includes direction of the National Science Foundation sponsored American National Election Studies (shared with Michigan). Additionally, Stanford IRiSS hosts a branch of the U.S. Census Bureau’s Research Data Center.
Center for Advanced Research through Online Learning

How can we improve online learning?

Mission

The Center for Advanced Research through Online Learning (CAROL) stewards data from online learning environments to support scientific inquiry. CAROL also articulates standards for ethical governance of research through digital learning environments at Stanford and worldwide. CAROL manages data from digital instruction conveyed on multiple platforms, curates these data for purposes of research, and maintains computational tools for their analysis by experts in many fields.

To date CAROL has carried out over one hundred data shares with professional researchers worldwide, sustaining a truly international and multidisciplinary scientific community.

Featured Project: Bay Area Human Capital Project

Lifelong learning for a vibrant regional economy

The San Francisco Bay Area is one of the world's regional economic miracles. Yet even while "Silicon Valley" is synonymous with innovation worldwide, it faces substantial challenges in sustaining its economic resilience and making opportunity widely available to all of those who live there. Neither the state of California nor the Bay Area’s regional governments have built additional capacity for higher/adult education in over a generation – even while the region’s population has swelled and its dynamic industries are constantly seeking new talent. The Bay Area Human Capital Project is drawing a portrait of adult workforce needs and building a vision for how the region’s hundreds of education providers – colleges, universities, and educational technology firms of all kinds – might work in tandem to ensure that viable economic opportunity is broadly shared by all those who call the Bay Area home.
Featured Event: Asilomar II

Student Data and Records in the Digital Era

On June 16th and 17th, CAROL hosted a two day event for a group of academic leaders to consider how data describing adult students might be managed in ways that enable the improvement of educational experience, the progress of science, and the integrity of information describing human beings. The objectives of the conference were to:

- Enable a national peer review of how data describing adult students are produced and deployed at a wide range of academic institutions
- Synthesize current best practices to specify norms for the ethical use of student data
- Draft succinct statements to inform institutional, national, and global policies regarding the research, application, and representation of adult student data

From that event they launched a new website, "Responsible Use of Student Data in Higher Education." In partnership with Ithaka S&R, this website outlines ethical guidelines for using student data to build knowledge that would improve educational achievement while increasing transparency about data usage.

Other Projects

- **MOOC Item Lab** - What makes a good question?
- **MOOC Survey Lab** - Building truly global social sciences
- **Remaking College** - Understanding change in higher education
- **Responsible Use** - Setting standards for student data in higher education
- **Statlets Design Lab** - Digital tools to improve math learning

About

- **Director:** Mitchell Stevens (Graduate School of Education)
- **Associate Director for Analytics:** Andreas Paepcke
- **Data Analyst:** Kathy Mirzaei
- **Graduate Students:** Aashna Garg (Computer Science), David Lang (Graduate School of Education)
- **Contact:** Carolyn Ybarra, Program Coordinator, ybarra@stanford.edu
- **More information:** https://carol.stanford.edu
What do Americans really think of politics?

Mission
The Stanford Center for American Democracy (SCAD) brings the tools of multi-mode survey research and sophisticated statistical analysis to the examination of American elections and voters. SCAD began in 2010 as the home of the American National Election Studies (ANES), but is envisioned as an ongoing enterprise housing a variety of research programs and student training focused on parties and party coalitions, candidates and campaigns, and the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of ordinary citizens in order to advance a broader understanding of the merits and challenges of American electoral democracy.

Research Highlight: Politically Invisible in America
It's hard enough to get political information to registered voters during elections, let alone people who aren't registered or who can't be reached because of outdated information. These two groups are of particular interest to political parties, campaigns, and interest groups because they represent a significant portion of the adult population that can vote but can't be reached.

Simon Jackman, former Director of the Center, and Bradley Spahn, graduate student in political science, matched the 2012 ANES time series respondents to several national voter file vendors to analyze these lists of voters and potential voters. People on these lists fall into four categories: (1) registered voters with correct address; (2) unregistered people with correct address; (3) people with incorrect address; (4) people not listed. These last two groups represent a sizable group that isn't being reached. Based on Simon and Brad's research, 40% of Black and Hispanic citizens are unreachable, compared to just 18% of...
Whites. The unreachable are poorer than the reachable population, have significantly lower levels of political engagement, and are much less likely to report contact with candidates and campaigns. However, that doesn't mean that they don't have strong political opinions. The vast majority lean Democrat, favoring Obama over Romney 73-27. This "invisibility" has strong implications for political representation, election outcomes, and public policy and should be considered when using voter lists as a tool for American democracy.

Publications


Funding
The American National Election Studies received $830,997 in supplemental funding from the National Science Foundation to improve the online survey of public opinion and voting behavior in the 2016 presidential election. The funding will allow improved response rate and evaluation of the data quality of the online probability sample.

About
Faculty PI: Shanto Iyengar (Communication)

Professional Staff: Matthew DeBell, Director of Stanford Operations for ANES; Natalya Maisel, Social Scientist for ANES

Researchers:
Christopher Ojeda (Postdoctoral fellow)
Bradley Spahn (Political Science Graduate Student)

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More information:
https://iriss.stanford.edu/centers-programs/center-american-democracy
Using data science to understand changes in human interaction

Mission
The center supports social science research by using computational techniques to analyze big data. Today, huge amounts of data are available for research on human behavior: website clicks, medical records, and social media data. This data can be used to address larger societal issues of inequality, healthcare, education, democracy, and more. The center supports these endeavors by hosting conferences, training students, offering a certificate program, and funding interdisciplinary student projects.

Research highlight: Democrats and Republicans speak two different languages

Turn on C-SPAN and listen for one minute. Without looking at the name on the screen, you probably already know whether the person speaking is a Democrat or Republican.

According to research from Stanford economist and CSS Executive Committee member Matt Gentzkow, political speech is more partisan and polarizing than ever before. America's two political parties practically speak different languages. Democrats are more likely to talk about "undocumented workers," "estate taxes," and "tax breaks for the wealthy," while Republicans refer to "death taxes," "illegal aliens," and "tax reform."

Gentzkow and coauthors applied tools from structural estimation and machine learning to study the partisanship of language in the U.S. Congress from 1873 to 2009. They found that partisanship of language has exploded in recent decades. From 1873 to the early 1990’s, the probability of correctly guessing a speaker's party based on a one-minute speech was 54%. That climbed to 83% between 2007 and 2009.

They suggest two reasons for this dramatic increase: (1) innovation in political persuasion coinciding with the 1994 Republican takeover of the House of Representatives, and (2) changes in the media
environment including the introduction of live broadcasts of congressional proceedings on the C-SPAN cable network. So while political polarization itself hasn't changed drastically, language has. And that language can have profound impacts on public opinion across a wide range of domains including free speech, immigration, climate change, and taxation.

Event Series
The Human-Computer Interaction Seminar is a seminar on people, computers, and design held every Friday and coordinated by Michael Bernstein.

Network Forum is a seminar series that helps researchers to conceptualize theories and concepts in relational terms, create research designs which link relational theories to relational data, and analyze relational data using network methods.

Publications


Featured Projects

The Future of How We Work

Work no longer happens just at the office but in “flash teams” of highly skilled professionals who work together on complex projects from remote locations. Daniela Retelny, 2015 CSS fellow and PhD Candidate in Management Science and Engineering, Michael Bernstein, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, and Melissa Valentine, Assistant Professor of Management Science and Engineering, created a computerized system called Foundry to create flash teams. Their system pulls from an international pool of two million highly skilled professionals available on-demand from Upwork and then provides the organization and communication tools needed so that the teams can complete complex tasks like developing mobile and web applications, online courses, or even video animations. Their platform builds upon more traditional platforms like Mechanical Turk and TaskRabbit.

How Public Opinion Shapes Policy Outcomes in China

To prevent rebellions and coups, autocrats implement policies that the majority of people favor. Because autocratic regimes have trouble understanding the public’s true opinion, this project uses computational methods to examine how governments strategically release feelers of policy ideas to the public, monitor discussion about the feelers on social media, and choose to confirm, deny, or adjust the policies based on the public discussion. This project is being conducted by Tongtong Zhang, graduate student in Political Science, and advised by Justin Grimmer, Professor of Political Science, and Jennifer Pan, Assistant Professor of Communication.

Other Student Projects

René Kizilcec (Communication), Social Psychological Causes of Global Inequalities in MOOCs and Beyond; Advisers: Jeremey Bailenson & Geoffrey Cohen

Desmond Ong (Psychology), Continuous Multimodal Emotion Inference; Advisers: Noah Goodman, Jamil Zaki, & Chris Potts

Hatim Rahman (Management Science & Engineering), Understanding Social Dynamics in the ‘Gig’ Economy; Advisers: Michael Bernstein & Melissa Valentine

Bradley Spahn (Political Science), Uncovering Political History using the Complete California Voter Records, 1900 – 1968; Advisers: Shanto Iyengar & Simon Jackman

Executive Committee

Michael Bernstein (Computer Science)

Matt Gentzkow (Economics)

Sharad Goel (Management Science & Engineering)

Amir Goldberg (Graduate School of Business)
Justin Grimmer (Political Science)
Jeff Hancock (Communication)
Paolo Parigi (Sociology & Uber)
Meghan Sumner (Linguistics)

About
Director: Jeff Hancock (Communication)
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What role does philanthropy play in a democracy?

Mission
The Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society is a research center for students, scholars, and practitioners to explore and share ideas that create social change. Its primary participants are Stanford faculty, visiting scholars, postdoctoral scholars, graduate and undergraduate students, and nonprofit and foundation practitioners. As publisher of the Stanford Social Innovation Review, Stanford PACS informs policy and social innovation, philanthropic investment, and nonprofit practice.

Research Highlight: Digital Civil Society Lab
The rapid adoption of digital tools for social and political action has resulted in a complicated new sphere we refer to as “digital civil society.”

Digital civil society includes all the ways people and organizations voluntarily use private resources for public benefit in a digital age. We see digital civil society emerging at the intersection of several domains: nonprofits, associations, and philanthropy; market solutions for social good; political action; and digital data and infrastructure.

These once-distinct spheres now overlap in ways that require the invention of a new framework rooted in the unique characteristics of digital resources and the unique values of civil society. The Lab envisions an independent civil society that thrives through the safe, ethical, and effective use of private digital resources for public benefit.

The Digital Civil Society Lab aims to shape the future of civil society globally by fostering the creation of new mechanisms for using, governing, and donating digital assets for public benefit. The Lab is an initiative of the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS). The Lab is led by Lucy Bernholz, senior research scholar at Stanford PACS, and Rob Reich, faculty co-director of Stanford PACS.
Other research initiatives

The goal of Stanford PACS Digital Civil Society Lab is to define the software, organizational, and legal codes needed for private action for public benefit to thrive in the digital age. The Lab is the world's first research and policy program dedicated to understanding and informing digital civil society.

The Effective Philanthropy Lab is a research and design group committed to learning better ways to help philanthropists increase the effectiveness of their giving by designing and testing a range of tools and resources, and sharing lessons learned with the broader philanthropic field.

The Stanford Project on the Evolution of Nonprofits (SPEN) is a comprehensive study of the Bay Area’s nonprofit sector, which is then compared to the Los Angeles region, the State of California, and the United States, across a variety of basic organizational characteristics. Bringing an organizational perspective to the management of nonprofits, the study explores the circulation of management ideas within and across sector boundaries.

Organizational Capacity for Continuous Innovation (OCCI) is a research project directed by Johanna Mair and Christian Seelos. Social innovation as a field of practice continues to flourish and expand. Yet central questions of how innovation in social enterprises creates impact are underexplored. OCCI focuses on refining diagnostic tools to support strategic decision making; understanding failure and learning as integral parts of innovation efforts; and determining conditions for successful innovation archetypes and strategies in specific problem spaces.

Publication: Stanford Social Innovation Review

The mission of Stanford PACS is to develop and share knowledge to improve philanthropy, strengthen civil society, and effect social change. One of the principal ways Stanford PACS does that is by publishing the Stanford Social Innovation Review.

SSIR is a shared intellectual space where scholars and practitioners publish inter-disciplinary and cross sector research and ideas to advance social change. SSIR creates thought-leading content on a wide range of topics ranging from human rights and health, to impact investing and nonprofit business models. The flagship quarterly magazine and website is complemented by podcasts, webinars, conferences, e-newsletters, and social media. Every year, more than two million people around the world read SSIR articles, listen to podcasts and webinars, or attend events.

About

Faculty Directors: Paul Brest (Law School), Walter W. Powell (Education), and Rob Reich (Political Science)

Contact: Kim Meredith, Executive Director, kim.meredith@stanford.edu

More information: http://pacscenter.stanford.edu/
Is being born into a well-off family the ticket to success in the U.S.?

Mission
The Center on Poverty and Inequality (CPI) has five objectives: to monitor trends in poverty and inequality, to support scientific analysis of poverty and inequality, to develop science-based policy on poverty and inequality, to disseminate data and research on poverty and inequality, and to train the next generation of scholars, policy analysts, and politicians.

Research Highlight: Big Data for Solving Poverty
The Center on Poverty and Inequality aims to improve the country’s infrastructure for evaluating and developing evidence-based policy for reducing poverty and inequality. The California Longitudinal Administrative Database (“CLAD”) is a key component in this initiative. Partly supported by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and the James Irvine Foundation, the CLAD will link decennial Census data, American Community Survey data, and California tax return data. It will also grow California’s capacity to monitor trends in poverty and labor market outcomes, evaluate federal, state, and local poverty and mobility policies, and develop new poverty and mobility policies by simulating their effects on key outcomes of interest. The CPI is leading four research projects that will use the CLAD to produce new evidence on poverty, inequality, and policy reforms in California and strengthen the relationship among government experts, university scholars, and nonprofit organizations.
Featured Course
It’s a noteworthy moment in U.S. history in which income inequality has reached unprecedented levels, poverty remains extreme, and racial and gender inequalities are intransigent. Why is there so much inequality and poverty? How might they be reduced? Find out from the country’s top scholars in America’s Poverty Course, a new course on poverty and inequality developed by the CPI and offered through Stanford Online. The course is free and open to the public.

Center Projects
- National Poverty Study
- Pay for Success Administrative Data Program
- Poverty and Technology Lab
- Stanford Education Data Archive

Publication
State of the Union: The Poverty and Inequality Report
Is the U.S. truly an outlier when it comes to poverty and inequality outcomes? Does it fare roughly the same as other liberal welfare regimes? Are there particular domains in which the U.S. stands out as especially equal or unequal? We answered these questions in our annual State of the Union Report, which examines how the U.S. is doing on poverty, inequality, and labor market outcomes. The report was presented at our annual State of the Union Conference.

Other Publications


Research Group Leaders

- Sanjay Basu, Health Disparities
- Nicholas Bloom, Income and Wealth
- Raj Chetty, Income and Wealth and Social Mobility
- Shelley Correll, Discrimination
- Mark Cullen, Health Disparities
- Rebecca Diamond, Housing
- Mark Duggan, Safety Net
- Jeremy Freese, Health Disparities
- Tomás Jiménez, Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration
- Karen Jusko, Safety Net
- Hazel Markus, Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration
- Arnold Milstein, Life Course
- David Pedulla, Discrimination
- Joan Petersilia, Incarceration
- Luigi Pistaferri, Consumption
- Sean Reardon, Life Course and Education
- David Rehkopf, Health Disparities
- Cecilia Ridgeway, Discrimination
- C. Matthew Snipp, Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration
- Florencia Torche, Social Mobility
- David Rehkopf, Health Disparities
- Gregory Walton, Life Course

About

**Faculty Director:** David Grusky (Sociology)

**Contact:** Charles Varner, Associate Director, cvarner@stanford.edu

**More information:** http://inequality.stanford.edu/
Immigration Policy Lab

How does the asylum process impact refugee integration?

Mission
The lab’s team of researchers conducts rigorous evaluation of immigration and integration policy in receiving countries throughout the world using data-driven experimental and quasi-experimental methods to understand the impact of policy on immigrants and their host societies. The Lab’s goal is to create a deeper and more balanced understanding of immigrant integration to help inform and advance policy with the goal of improving immigrants’ lives and our communities.

Featured Project: Naturalize New York
Many New Yorkers can’t become U.S. citizens, not because of lack of desire, but because they can’t afford the $680 application fee. The Immigration Policy Lab has teamed up with the New York State Office for New Americans, the Robin Hood Foundation, New York Community Trust, and CUNY Citizenship Now! to provide waivers and application assistance to individuals in New York interested in becoming citizens. Individuals whose household income is between 150% and 300% of the federal poverty guidelines can participate in a lottery for application fee vouchers. Immigrants can also receive naturalization application assistance, help studying for the naturalization exam, and English language classes through the Office for New Americans network of Opportunity Centers. The Lab will conduct several follow-up surveys to determine how naturalizing has impacted each individual’s social, economic and political integration. The goal of the study is to assess the poverty-fighting value of naturalization and the most effective means to encourage immigrants to apply for naturalization.

Featured Event
Improving Refugee Resettlement: Evaluation, Improved Outcomes, and Evidence-Based Policymaking

This workshop was hosted on August 30, 2016 by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and the Immigration Policy Lab in Washington, D.C. It convened U.S. government officials, leaders of resettlement programs, and scholars to better understand refugee
integration and how to design effective programs. Participants discussed current surveying methods, different methods of program evaluation, economic integration, resettlement location, case management, and cultural integration.

Publications


Contributing Faculty
Rafaela Dancygier, Assistant Professor of Politics and Public and International Affairs, Princeton University

Jeremy Ferwerda, Assistant Professor of Government, Dartmouth College

Vicky Fouka, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Stanford University

Dan Hopkins, Associate Professor, Georgetown University

Tomás Jiménez, Associate Professor of Sociology, Stanford University

Jeremy Weinstein, Professor of Political Science, Stanford University

Researchers
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Rachel Gillum (Stanford University)

Niklas Harder (Stanford University)
Linna Marten (Stanford University)

**Graduate Students:**

Ala' Alrababa'h (Political Science, Stanford University)

Kirk Bansak (Political Science, Stanford University)

Mathilde Emeriau (Political Science, Stanford University)

David Hausman (Political Science, Stanford University)

Hans Lueders (Political Science, Stanford University)

Moritz Marbach (Political Science, University of Mannheim)

Giuseppe Pietrantuono (Political Science, University of Zurich)

Judith Spring (Political Science, University of Zurich)

Tongtong Zhang (Political Science, Stanford University)

**About**

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**Executive Director:** Duncan Lawrence

**Staff:**

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Kylie Swall, Program Coordinator

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**More information:** http://www.immigrationlab.org
Laboratory for the Study of American Values

*The Survey Lab was on hiatus during the 2015-2016 academic year but will return for the 2016-2017 year.*

**Mission:**
The Laboratory for the Study of American Values supports graduate students who are writing dissertations about American public opinion by helping them conduct original surveys of nationally representative samples of adults. The lab’s goal is to enhance the research productivity and career success of graduate students and yield rich new insights about American values.

**Research Highlight: Mechanisms Explaining Perceptions Toward Individuals with Intermittent Labor Force Participation**

Taking time off to care for a family member or search for a new job can be a problem in today’s economy. When individuals experience lapses in employment, from unemployment or “opting out” to care for their families, they are perceived as less valuable workers on a number of dimensions. They also face disadvantages when regaining employment, as evidenced from cross-sectional survey data. In this project Kate Weisshaar, Stanford IRISS Survey Lab participant, explores the mechanisms surrounding these disadvantages. In a follow-up study she will look at why employment histories are sometimes manipulated. This survey experiment will help to assess which mechanisms are taking place to explain different perceptions by gender, parental status, and employment history, of potential workers. The project will be valuable in understanding what sources are contributing to disadvantages faced by those with employment lapses, and will expand upon our understanding of gender biases in the labor market.
Research Projects

Jonathan Chu (Political Science), International Organizations and Mobilizing Support for Humanitarian Intervention

Lucila Figueroa (Political Science), Norms, Latinos, and Political Attitudes in the United States

Glory Liu (Political Science), Poverty and Inequality in American Public Opinion

Craig Neuman (Political Science), Sanctions as Off-Ramps: Do Economic Sanctions Provide Leaders a Cheap Way Out of Military Threats?

Katharina Roesler (Sociology), Class Bias and Perceived Consensus in Moral Evaluations, or When Does it Pay to Be Rich?

Ariela Schachter (Sociology), One of us? Race, Immigration, and the Construction of Social Boundaries

Ken Shores (Center for Education Policy Analysis), Funding Education: Trading Income for Achievement Gap Closure

David Traven (Center for International Security and Cooperation), Perspective-Taking, Empathy, and the Morality of Killing in War

David Vannette (Communication), Does Data Visualization Influence the Effects of Polls on Political Attitudes?

Kate Weisshaar (Sociology), Mechanisms Explaining Perceptions Toward Individuals with Intermittent Labor Force Participation

Frannie Zlotnick (Political Science), Conditional Priming Effects in Interest Group Rhetoric

About

Faculty Directors: Michael Tomz (Political Science) and Paul Sniderman (Political Science)

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More information: https://iriss.stanford.edu/students/training-methods/survey-lab
Other Institute Programs
Mission:
This cross-disciplinary seminar series at Stanford University features speakers tackling social science questions with big data and cutting-edge computation, data analysis, and inference techniques. Seminars are videotaped and shared via the web.

Event Highlight
Can We Agree on Science? Measuring Ideological Alignment through Book Co-purchase Data and Other Tales of Collective Attention and Reasoning
James Evans

The large collection of documents that are now available in digital form gives us a rich view into how institutions and society as a whole select and process information. Evans explores the degree to which society can agree on science and come to evidence-driven resolutions using data from millions of online book co-purchases. One question he examined was whether science bridges or deepens political divides. Findings reveal a deep connection between politics and science, as well as the fact that science is highly polarized. The political left and right share an interest in science in general, but not science in particular.

2015-2016 Events
Tom Cook (Northwestern University), Three Neglected Issues in Current Thinking about Observational Study Design
Johan Ugander (Stanford University), A/B Testing on a Social Network
Neil Shephard (Harvard University), Moment Conditions and Bayesian Nonparametrics
Bradley Efron (Stanford University), A 250 Year Argument (Belief, Behavior, and the Bootstrap)
James Evans (University of Chicago), Can We Agree on Science?
Andrew Gelman (Columbia University), Little Data: How Traditional Statistical Ideas Remain Relevant in a Big-Data World

About
Organizers: Guido Imbens (Economics, Stanford) & Chris Thomsen (IRiSS, Stanford)
Contact: Afrooz Emami, afrooz@stanford.edu
Faculty Fellows Program

Mission
The Stanford IRiSS Faculty Fellows program brings Stanford faculty members from multiple departments together to explore cutting-edge research questions with the goal of creating and communicating new knowledge through research publications and in the classroom.

Research Highlight
White Like You: Racial fluidity in survey interviewer self-identification
Aliya Saperstein

If someone asks what race you are, do you have a ready answer? Can you imagine your answer changing, depending on the circumstance? Faculty fellow, Aliya Saperstein and co-author, Andrew Penner, Stanford IRiSS Visiting Fellow, recently published a paper detailing just this phenomena. Using data from the General Social Survey pool from 2004-2014, they looked at interviewer remarks completed after each interview, including their own self-identified race. They found that interviewers are 3.2% more likely to identify as white after interviewing a respondent who identifies as white. Saperstein and Penner explore this outcome as well as its implications for collecting data on survey interviewer characteristics, and for understanding the malleability of race in the U.S.

Research Projects
Jennifer Langer-Osuna (Graduate School of Education), The authority of ideas: Supporting equitable and productive student-led work in bilingual elementary mathematics classrooms

Francisco Ramirez (Graduate School of Education), International women's human rights

Aliya Saperstein (Sociology), Racial mobility: The dynamics of race and inequality in the United States

Barbara Voss (Anthropology), Burn layer: The archaeology of anti-immigrant violence

Cristobal Young (Sociology), Model uncertainty and robustness: A computational framework for multi-model analysis
About

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More information: https://iriss.stanford.edu/faculty/faculty-fellows
Faculty Seed Grants

Mission
The Stanford IRISS Seed Grants program supports proposal development, pilot research, and other activities that advance faculty projects to the point where they can attract external funding.

Research Highlight: The archaeology of transpacific migration: Wuyi Qiaoxiang archaeology project, Guangdong, China
Barbara Voss
The millions of people that migrated from southeastern China to America, Australia, and New Zealand in the 19th century often maintained strong connections with their hometowns in China. These hometowns were greatly influenced by this new connection to foreign cultures. Voss’s research will study the changes in daily life in these villages as well as the formation of transnational identities and cultures in China and the United States.

2015-2016 Seed Grants
Arun Chandrasekhar (Economics), Optimizing network referrals to identify and recruit creditworthy entrepreneurs

Brian Knutson (Psychology), Cultural neuroscience of trust: The role of emotion

Mitchell Stevens (Education), A fund for scientific research through online learning environments

Jeanne Tsai (Psychology), Cultural neuroscience of trust: The role of emotion

Barbara Voss (Anthropology), The archaeology of transpacific migration: Wuyi Qiaoxiang archaeology project, Guangdong, China
About

Contact: Carolyn Ybarra, Staff Director, ybarra@stanford.edu

More information: https://iriss.stanford.edu/faculty/seed-grants
Research Experience Program

Mission:
The Research Experience Program (REP), a collaborative, year-round program with local community colleges, creates a much-needed subject pool for Stanford researchers who are conducting experimental research. At the same time, REP provides an opportunity for community college students to experience Stanford social science experiments as a part of their introductory social science coursework in college.

In 2015-16, REP supported:
- 6378 subject hours
- 43 Stanford student or postdoc researchers
- 25 Stanford faculty PIs
- 2060 research subjects

Research Highlight: Embodying Media – The Connection Between Virtual Experiences and Cognition

Jakki O. Bailey, Jeremy N. Bailenson, & Daniel Casasanto

Can an avatar’s body movements change a person’s perception of good and bad? This project discusses virtual embodiment according to theories of embodied cognition (EC), and afferent and sensorimotor correspondences. The study uses virtual reality (VR) to test EC theory, and test the effect of altered virtual embodiment and perception. Participants either controlled an avatar whose arm movements were similar to their own or reflected the mirror opposite of their arm movements. Researchers then measured their associations of “good” and “bad” with the left and right. The results suggest that cognition is a multimodal integrated system in which the impact of hand/arm movements on perception is related to the body movement itself, not the space in which the body movement occurs. Conflicting visual feedback (i.e. mirrored arm movements) may introduce some shift in perception; however, other sensory components of media (i.e. sensorimotor feedback) may be necessary to influence cognition.
Alumni Research Experience Program

The Alumni Research Experience Program (AREP) is a unique and fun opportunity for Stanford alumni to volunteer as human subjects for non-medical, social science research. Alumni participants contribute to scholars’ research on important questions of political science, economics, sociology, communication, and psychology.

In Spring of 2016, AREP supported:

- 1696 subject hours
- 10 Stanford student or postdoc researchers
- 9 Stanford faculty PIs
- 684 research subjects

Research Assistant Intern Program

The Social Science Research Assistant Internship Program matches community college students interested in social science research and careers with volunteer internships at social science research labs at Stanford University. Community college students serve as research interns with graduate and postdoctoral researchers in psychology, sociology, psychophysiology, education, communications, and other social science related disciplines.

In 2015-16, the RA Intern program supported:

- 30 volunteer interns
- 3,540 hours of volunteer work
- 30 graduate and postdoctoral mentors

About

Contact: Carolyn Ybarra, Staff Coordinator, ybarra@stanford.edu

More information: https://iriss.stanford.edu/rep
Secure Data Center

Mission
The Stanford IRiSS Secure Data Center (SDC) has a three-part mission to:

- provide social science research infrastructure
- safeguard sensitive data at Stanford
- serve as a liaison between Stanford and providers of sensitive data

The Center also provides secure research facilities for a limited number of individual faculty and graduate student projects that need dedicated, secure space.

Research Highlight: Socio-economic background, educational attainment, and the power of performance

Michelle Jackson

Recent research has shown that the test-score gap between children of rich and poor families has substantially increased over the past century, while the black/white test-score gap has declined. Although these descriptive trends are well-established, we know far less about how much they matter in explaining subsequent educational outcomes. Michelle Jackson, Assistant Professor of Sociology and a user of Stanford IRiSS’ Secure Data Center, is conducting research to find out whether changes in the test-score gap are mirrored in other educational outcomes, specifically B.A. and selective college access.

Almost all of the data sources that might be analyzed to study inequalities in college access are available only in secure data enclaves. As Jackson says, “Data providers are understandably cautious about providing sensitive educational and socio-economic data on children and young adults. In this project I analyze multiple datasets containing sensitive data, and each dataset has stringent security restrictions. It would be simply impossible to carry out this project without access to a secure data room.”
The project is still in progress, but early findings suggest that inequalities in selective college access have in fact increased both for income and for race. A decomposition analysis shows that, over time, test score inequalities have become less important in explaining family income inequalities in selective college enrollment. Despite the decline in the black/white test score gap, test score inequalities have actually become more powerful in explaining race inequalities in selective college enrollment.

Available Datasets

**Federal Statistical Research Data Center**

The Federal Statistical Research Data Center provides access to non-public microdata from a growing number of federal agencies, including the Census Bureau, the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the National Center for Health Statistics in a secure facility at Stanford IRiSS.

**Add Health Data**

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (also known as Add Health) is a nationally representative study designed to examine how social contexts (such as families, friends, peers, schools, neighborhoods, and communities) influence teens' health and risk behaviors through early adulthood.

**Eurostat Microdata**

Microdata refers to records about individuals or businesses that are considered confidential and must be handled through different mechanisms than publicly available administrative data.

About

**Faculty Director:** C. Matthew Snipp (Sociology)

**Program Director:** Vijoy Abraham

**Contact:** Vijoy Abraham, vijoy@stanford.edu

**More Information:** [https://iriss.stanford.edu/centers-programs/sdc](https://iriss.stanford.edu/centers-programs/sdc)
IRiSS External Advisory Board

John F. Sandy Smith

*Board Chair, Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences; Partner in Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP*

Sandy Smith was previously a Partner at Womble Carlyle’s Corporate and Securities Practice Group. As a “deal attorney,” Sandy has a diverse national practice managing, negotiating, and completing corporate and financial transactions for both private and public businesses in various industries.

Karen Cook

*Director, Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences; Ray Lyman Wilbur Professor of Sociology & Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity, Stanford University*

Karen S. Cook conducts research on social interaction, social networks, social exchange, and trust. In 1996, she was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in 2007 she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, and in 2014 she was elected to the governing Council of the National Academy of Sciences. In 2004 she received the ASA Social Psychology Section’s Cooley-Mead Award for career contributions to social psychology.

Chris Thomsen

*Executive Director of the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences*

Chris Thomsen has been the Executive Director of IRiSS since its founding. He is perhaps most widely recognized for the ten years (1986-1995) he served as director of Stanford Sierra Camp. He also ran the President’s Commission on Technology, Teaching, and Learning (1995-2000) with an institutional planning focus on understanding how technology should serve the core mission of the University.

Henry Brady

*Dean of the Goldman School of Public Policy and Class of 1941 Monroe Deutsch Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley*

Henry E. Brady is a past president of the American Political Science Association and an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Political Methodology Society. Among his books is *Letting the People Decide: Dynamics of a Canadian Election* (1992) which won the Harold Innis Award for the best social science book published in Canada.
Kathy Chou  
**Vice President of Strategy and Operations Americas at VMWare**

Previously, Kathy Chou was Senior Vice President of Sales Strategy and Operations at Informatica and Intuit’s vice president of Sales Operations and Strategy. Kathy has more than 20 years of operations and management experience in the high-tech industry and the Silicon Valley Business Journal selected her as one of the Top 100 most influential women in 2011.

Roger Clay  
**Former President of the Insight Center for Community Economic Development**

Roger A. Clay Jr. is a visiting scholar at the Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences and its Center on Poverty and Inequality. He previously was the President of the Insight Center for Community Economic Development, the General Counsel of the California Housing Finance Agency, and a partner in the law firm of Goldfarb & Lipman. He has also been awarded the Gold Spike award, Stanford University’s highest award for volunteer leadership service.

Mary Dent  
**CEO of Green Dot Bank**

Mary Dent was previously General Counsel at Insikt, Inc.. She is also the founder of dcIQ, a consulting firm that is focused on the intersection of technology, innovation, and public policy. Mary is particularly focused on innovation in financial services and on the regulatory and public policy issues that affect whether, when, and how new business models and service offerings can be successful.

Craig Falkenhagen  
**The Stanford Fund, National Chair**

Craig Falkenhagen has served as Chair of the Alumni Committee on Trustee Nominations, co-Chair for a number of his class reunion homecoming campaigns, and has worked in various capacities in every Stanford capital campaign since 1980. From 1990 to 2000, he worked in Bank of America’s project finance group in San Francisco where he helped finance power plants, refineries, telecommunications systems, and oil and gas projects throughout the developing world.
Thomas Geiser

*Senior Advisor to TPG Capital*

Thomas C. Geiser has served as advisor and legal counsel to numerous health care organizations with a focus on health care financing and delivery. He also served as the Executive Vice President and General Counsel of WellPoint Health Networks Inc. from its inception in 1993 until 2005.

Matt Halprin

*Vice President of Business Operations & Strategy at Yelp*

Matt Halprin has more than 25 years of business experience and has served on an array of boards of directors, both non-profit and for-profit. He currently serves on the board of Management Leadership for Tomorrow which supports the next generation of minority leaders in the United States. He is also on the Advisory Board of the Wikimedia Foundation.

Rich Jaroslovsky

*Vice President for Content and Chief Journalist at SmartNews*

Rich Jaroslovsky was previously Executive Editor for Economy and Government and personal-technology columnist for Bloomberg News, and White House correspondent and National Political Editor of The Wall Street Journal. In early 1994, he helped create and launch The Wall Street Journal Online (WSJ.com) and became its first Managing Editor.

Roberta Katz

*Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning, Stanford University*

Roberta Reiff Katz has worked since 2004 in the Office of the President assisting with the development and implementation of a variety of new university-wide initiatives, as well as the ongoing strategic support of various interdisciplinary endeavors throughout the University. During 2009-10, Roberta took a leave from her work at Stanford to serve as a Special Advisor to the Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust, U.S. Department of Justice.

Donald Kennedy

*Former President of Stanford University*

Donald Kennedy is a scientist, public administrator, and academic who served as the President of Stanford University from 1980 until 1992. From 2000-2008, he was the editor-in-chief of Science, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a CESP senior fellow by courtesy. His present research program entails policy on major land-use changes, economically-driven changes in agricultural
practice, global climate change, and the development of regulatory policies.

Cindy Lang
Founder of Go To Girl Brazil

Prior to Go to Girl Brazil, Cindy honed her entrepreneurial and operations talent in traditional and non-traditional businesses. She acquired vast experience in innovation and development and managing multiple stakeholders. Cindy’s passion for the environment also includes a proven track record of incorporating sustainable practices in business including the eco-tourism sector. In addition, Cindy spent 30 years in nonprofit management and large gift fundraising.

Doyle McManus
Journalist and columnist for the Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is an American journalist who has reported from the Middle East, Europe, Latin America, and Washington D.C. After five years as a foreign correspondent in the Middle East, he moved to the Washington bureau of the Los Angeles Times in 1983, where he covered the U.S. State Department and White House. He served as the newspaper's Washington bureau chief from 1976 to 2008, when he became a columnist.

Gretchen Milligan
Retired founder and principal of Board Focus

Early in her career, Gretchen Milligan spent six years with Wells Fargo Bank in corporate and community lending. She is the past board chair of Cottage Health System in Santa Barbara. In addition, she sits on the boards of the Santa Barbara Foundation and the College Futures Foundation.

Stephen Peeps
Partner at Meng, Finseth, Peeps & Associates

Before joining Meng, Finseth, Peeps & Associates, Stephen began his executive search career as a Partner in Heidrick & Struggles’ Education and Nonprofit Practice. This followed a decade’s service as founding President and Chief Executive Officer of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health. He also served for two years as Chairman of its Board of Directors.
Kenneth Prewitt

Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs & School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Kenneth Prewitt taught political science at the University of Chicago from 1965-1982, and for shorter stints was on the faculty of Stanford University, Washington University, the University of Nairobi, Makerere University, and the Graduate Faculty at the New School University where he was also Dean. Kenneth was also Director of the U.S. Census Bureau, President of the Social Science Research Council, Senior Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Director of the National Opinion Research Center.

Donna Schweers

Independent Management Consulting Professional

Donna Schweers has been a lifelong supporter of higher education and has a particular interest in the social sciences because of her background working in the healthcare industry. She is a member of the advisory board for the Stanford Humanities Center and serves on the Board of Directors for the Center Theatre Group, Planned Parenthood of Los Angeles, Saint John’s Health Center Foundation, and the American Red Cross of the Santa Monica Bay Area.

Gary Segura

Professor of Political Science, Stanford University

Gary M. Segura is a Professor of American Politics and Chair of Chicano/a-Latina/o Studies at Stanford University. His work focuses on issues of political representation, and the politics of America’s growing Latino minority. Segura was one of three Principal Investigators of the 2012 American National Election Studies, and was one of the Principal Investigators of the Latino National Survey, in 2006. In 2010, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
Giving

Scientific Solutions to Social Issues

A combination of massive data sets and powerful new computing tools are opening up new frontiers in the social sciences. Stanford is leading the charge in developing this new social science domain, where Stanford faculty and students are increasingly interested in applying their research to social issues like poverty, inequality, immigration, and democratic stability.

The Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences was founded to provide a home for this research, to train the next generation of scholars and policy innovators, to equip social scientists with cutting-edge research tools, and to facilitate collaborations with each of Stanford’s professional schools (Medicine, Education, Business, Law, Engineering, and Earth, Energy and Environmental Sciences).

We are deeply grateful for the support of our board, the Dean of the Stanford School of Humanities and Sciences Richard Saller, the Geiser-Schweers Fund, the March Fong Eu Fund, and the President’s office. Their gifts contribute to our funds for seed grants, training workshops, undergraduate research opportunities, and more. To discuss these or other opportunities for partnering with the Institute, please contact:

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