



Poverty and welfare

Measuring progress in the fight against poverty	3
Family instability and the risk of material hardship	7
Work-exempt TANF participants	10

Children and families

The social contexts of adolescent romantic relationships	15
Racial and ethnic infant mortality gaps and socioeconomic status	18
Whose money matters?	21

Race and immigration

Immigrants balance local labor markets	25
The effect of affirmative action bans on the representation of students of color in medical schools	29
Traumatic loss in low-income communities of color	32

Inequality and mobility

Does incarceration affect inequality during old age?	35
Intergenerational transmission of well-being	39



Sheldon Danziger

This issue includes summary versions of cutting-edge research in four core areas: Poverty and Welfare, Children and Families, Race and Immigration, and Inequality and Mobility. As the articles address issues of central concern to poverty researchers, they include a rich diversity of disciplinary, theoretical, and methodological approaches—a remarkable tribute to Sheldon Danziger, who served as a mentor to all the papers’ authors. The papers were presented at the April 2014 conference “Poverty, Policy, and People: 25 Years of Research and Training at the University of Michigan.” The conference brought together students, colleagues, and friends of Danziger to celebrate the many contributions he has made to poverty research through his own scholarship, and as a mentor to over one hundred doctoral and postdoctoral students.

Danziger began his career as an IRP Postdoctoral Fellow in 1974 and served as IRP Director from 1983 to 1988, before moving to the University of Michigan. At Ann Arbor, with additional funding from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, he established the Research and Training Program in Poverty and Public Policy. Through the program Danziger made fundamental contributions to increasing the diversity of poverty research and of poverty researchers across race, ethnicity, and gender, as well as discipline, area of study, and methods. He also went on to be the founding director, with Rebecca Blank, of the National Poverty Center, before accepting his current position as President of the Russell Sage Foundation.

In these many roles, Danziger has established a reputation as a generative and generous scholar, teacher, and colleague, who sets a high standard for careful analysis, creative and original thinking, and clear writing, and makes critical investments to help others meet those same high standards as well. In these ways he has furthered our understanding of some of the most important issues facing this country today, and he has seeded and shaped a rich network of students and scholars for generations to come. The conference, and this issue of Focus, highlight the current research of some of these scholars, and underscore the strength and diversity of Danziger’s contributions to poverty research.

—Maria Cancian and Mary Pattillo, “Poverty, Policy, and People” conference organizers

Lawrence M. Berger assumed the directorship of the Institute for Research on Poverty on August 1. He is the twelfth director. Berger is a professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he chairs the doctoral program. His research interests include child and family policy; child development and well-being; child maltreatment; children’s living arrangements; family resources; and family structure. Much of his work focuses on the ways in which economic resources, sociodemographic characteristics, and public policies affect parental behaviors and child and family well-being.

Read his [Director’s Message](#) on IRP’s website.

<http://www.irk.wisc.edu/aboutirp/directormessage.htm>

FOCUS is a Newsletter put out twice a year by the

Institute for Research on Poverty
1180 Observatory Drive
3412 Social Science Building
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608) 262-6358
Fax (608) 265-3119

The Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, university-based research center. As such it takes no stand on public policy issues. Any opinions expressed in its publications are those of the authors and not of the Institute.

The purpose of *Focus* is to provide coverage of poverty-related research, events, and issues, and to acquaint a large audience with the work of the Institute by means of short essays on selected pieces of research. Full texts of Discussion Papers and Special Reports are available on the IRP Website.

Focus is free of charge, although contributions to the UW Foundation–IRP Fund sent to the above address in support of *Focus* are encouraged.

Edited by Emma Caspar

Copyright © 2014 by the Regents of the University of Wisconsin System on behalf of the Institute for Research on Poverty. All rights reserved.

This publication was supported by Grant Number AE000102 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), and awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of ASPE or SAMHSA.
