

# CHILDNEWS

*The Official Newsletter of the Sociology of Children Section  
The American Sociological Association*

*Spring 1995*

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**A Message from the Chair**

Been following the welfare debate? It is not hard to. Discussions and commentary on the welfare reform proposals detailed in the Republican "Contract with America" have dominated the news almost as much as the OJ trial. Well, maybe not that much. Nevertheless, from cover stories in Newsweek about orphanages to appearances of "real" welfare mothers on TV talk shows, welfare is on the public plate. Most of the media attention has been on the Republican plan, although the welfare reform proposals put out by the Clinton Administration last year, and reintroduced this winter, are equally revolutionary. Could this be the year that we witness major welfare reform? I suspect we will. Why? Because, despite attempts by both Republicans and members of the Clinton's Administration to highlight the differences between the two plans, they share several common themes. Both seek a balance between individual rights and responsibilities, both give states more latitude in managing welfare as they see fit, and both seek to move individuals off the welfare roles and into paid employment as soon as possible. My guess is that these commonalities will form the basis of a plan that will likely pass through Congress, become law, and thus truly change the way

we do welfare.

Children, of course, will be at the epicenter of this earthquake. They have the highest rates of poverty (around 20 percent) and the highest rates of participation in a means-tested assistance program like Food Stamps or AFDC (nearly 19 percent) of all the age groups. It goes without saying that major changes in our current welfare system will have a profound affect on the lives of a substantial number of American children. Some of us view some of the specific proposals with alarm, others may welcome these changes as long overdue. All of us, however, as social scientists with a passion and commitment to understanding children and their lives, are in for an intellectually challenging and exciting time. I encourage you to take advantage of the "natural experiments" that inevitably will take place in the coming months and years as changes come on-line to address some of the most critical and central questions surrounding the inter-connections of poverty, families, and intervention programs for the lives of children. David J. Eggebeen

**Section Sponsors Refereed Roundtables at ASA Meeting in Washington, D.C.**

*Refereed Roundtables (one hour)*

Organizer: Peter Adler, University of Denver

**1. Children's Culture and Social Worlds**

Transitions in the Lives of Young Children. *William A. Corsaro*, Indiana University

The Stratification of Children's Friendship Groups. *Patricia A. Adler*, University of Colorado and *Peter Adler*, University of

Denver

**2. Children in Poverty**

Family Structure, Private Transfers, and the Wealth of Families with Dependent Children. *Lingxin Hao*; Rand Corporation

AFDC and Emotional Outcomes for Children. *Jane Mosley*, University of Wisconsin

**3. Cross-Race and Cross-Gender Relations in Children**

Multi-Ethnic Play: The Construction of Play Groups among Vietnamese and Mexican Children. *Susan Blank*, University of California, Irvine

Cross-Gender Relations in First and Third Grade Children. *Laurie Scarborough*, Northwestern University

**4. New Methods for the Study of Children**

Using Autobiographies to Study Children. *Diane Bjorklund*, Queens College (CUNY)

The Use of Case Studies to Study Children's Learning Processes. *Kerina Chewing*, Los Angeles Unified School District

**5. Conflict with Children**

Through the Eyes of a Child: Defining Childhood Emotional Abuse. *Michele Lee Kozimor-King*, Pennsylvania State University

Threats to the Interaction Order: A Look at Adult-Child Conflict in Public Places. *Christine Horne*, *Kris McIlwaine*, and *Kristie Taylor*, University of Arizona

## 6. Countercultural Youth Groups

Some Notes of Youth Subcultural Forms This Time Around. *Kathryn J. Fox*, University of Vermont

Recent Advances in the Study of countercultural Youth Groups. *Simon Gottschalk*, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Runaway Teenagers and Emotional Capital: A New Look at Rebellion and 'Bad Attitude'. *Laurie Schaffner Montes*, Smith College

## 7. Program for Youth-at Risk

Neighborhood Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescent Problem Behavior.

*Elizabeth Michalak and Julie O'Donnell*, California State University, Long Beach, and *J. David Hawkins, Richard F. Catalano, and Robert Abbott*, Social Development Research Group

Treatment Programs for At-Risk Youth. *Seana Lowe*, University of Colorado

Risk Factors and Risk Behaviors among: Latino Youth: Implications for Prevention. *Pilar A. Parra*, Cornell University and *Marilyn Aguirre-Molina*, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

## 8. Children in Urban Context

Urban Children's After School Time. *Nancy L. Marshall, Cynthia Garcia Coll, and Fern Marx*, Wellesley College, and *Kathleen McCarthy*, University of New Hampshire

From the Mouth of Babes: Urban Children's Perceptions of their Social Worlds. *Sheryl R. Tynes*, Trinity

University (TX)

## 9. Children and Labor Issues

Understanding the Problem of Child Labor: How Children are Incorporated into the Informal Sector Economy. *Loretta Bass*, U.S. Embassy

Maternal Employment: Does It Really Matter to Children in the Long Run? *Loreen T. Wolfer*, Cornell University

**Section Sponsors Two Refereed Paper Sessions at ASA Meeting in Washington, D.C.**

**Session Title: Children in Context: Culture, Community, and Families**

Organizer: *Peter Adler*, University of Denver

Presider: *Donald J. Hernandez*, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Papers:

1. Adolescent Earnings and Relationships with Parents: The Work-Family Nexus in Urban and Rural Ecologies. *Michael J. Shanahan*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, *Glen H. Elder, Jr.*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, *Margaret Burchinal*, FPG Child Development Center, and *Rand D. Conger*, Iowa State University Research Park

2. The Wider Circle of Friends in Adolescence. *Peggy C. Giordano*, Bowling Green State University

3. Children's Well-Being: A Longitudinal Analysis of the Effects of Marital Characteristics and Parenting Patterns During Marriage on Children's Outcomes

Postdivorce. *Linda S. Stephens*, University of Washington

4. The Living Arrangements and Economic Well-Being of Children in Single Mother Families. *Wendy Manning*, Pennsylvania State University

Discussion: *Donald J. Hernandez*, U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Session Title: Children in Cross-Cultural Context**

Organizer: *Peter Adler*, University of Denver

Presider: *Sonalde Desai*, University of Maryland

**Papers:**

1. Third Culture Kids (TCKs) in Contexts: Third Cultures, Communities of Foreigners, and Mobile Nuclear Families. *Ruth Hill Useem*, Michigan State University and *Ann Baker Cottrell*, San Diego State University

2. Street Children in Honduras: A Case Study, *Martha Wittig*, Kenyon College

3. Household Resources and Child Labor: Survival Strategies in Rural Bangladesh. *Tulshi Saha*, Macro International, Inc.

4. Immigrant Legacies: The Socioeconomic Circumstances of Children by Ethnicity and Generation in the United States. *Sal Oropesa and Nancy S. Lansdale*, Pennsylvania State University

5. The Transformation of Childhood in Norway. *Ivar Frones*, University of Oslo

Discussion: *Sonalde Desai*, University of Maryland

**ASA also sponsors Regular Session on Children**

**Session Title: Children and Youth**

Organizer: *Brett V. Brown*, Child Trends, Inc.

Presider: *Brett V. Brown*, Child Trends, Inc.

**Papers:**

1. The Sense of Self-Determination as a Source of Self-Esteem in Adolescence. *Timothy Owens*, Indiana University; *Jeylan Mortimer and Michael Finch*, University of Minnesota.

2. The Differential Effects of Parental Depression and Alcoholism on Adolescent Self-Esteem. *Felicia Gray*, National Opinion Research Center (NORC).

3. Effect of Parental Divorce and Remarriage on Adolescent Entry into Sexual Activity. *Lawrence Wu and Elizabeth Thomson*, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

4. Reexamining the Consequences of Adolescent Emotional Autonomy on Academic Achievement and Deviant Behaviors: Gender Differences. *Zeng-yin Chen*, Texas A&M University.

**National Academy of Sciences,  
Board on Children and Families:  
An Update**

The Board on Children and Families has identified four priority areas to emphasize in its work. Among activities currently under way in those four areas are:

### Children in Precarious Family Circumstances

The Committee on the Assessment of *Family Violence Interventions* is working to provide a state-of-the-art assessment of what we now know, and what we need to learn, about the essential features of successful interventions in the area of family violence. The committee will integrate available knowledge about interventions based in the social services, health, and justice arenas; identify features of effective approaches; and make recommendations regarding future evaluations of family violence interventions.

### The Social Implications of the Growing Diversity of the Childhood Population

The Committee to Develop a Research Agenda for the *Education of Limited-English-Proficient and Bilingual Students* is establishing priorities for scientific work that will inform pressing issues that face the growing population of non English-speaking students in our schools.

The board is exploring research and policy issues related to today's discussions about immigration, with a special focus on the health and mental health of *immigrant children and families*.

### The Science Base for Childhood Interventions

The Roundtable on *Head Start Research* provides a neutral forum for discussion of researchable questions and models for conducting research that can significantly advance the quality of Head Start. Key issues include the role of head Start in family support, effective programs for infants and toddlers, and innovative

outcome measures for early childhood programs.

*Welfare and children's development* provide the focus for research briefings aimed at bringing to light new findings regarding children's development in the context of initiatives aimed at promoting families' economic self-sufficiency; the National Institute of Child Health and human Development's Family and Child Well-Being Research Network collaborates on this activity.

*Child care research* and its articulation with current policy and practice are the topics of a series of workshops aimed at synthesizing the science base, examining the current child care delivery system, and discussing the next generation of research in this area.

*Federal statistics on children* are the focus of an ongoing inquiry, in collaboration with the NRC Committee on National Statistics, aimed at examining the adequacy with which available data inform efforts to design, implement, and evaluate policies for children and families. This involves identifying pressing data needs, opportunities for coordination, and mechanism for more effectively linking available statistics to policy issues.

### The Quality of Children's Health Care

The protection of maternal and child health in a changing health care system is the topic of joint inquiry by the Board on Children and Families and the IOM Board on Health Promotion and disease Prevention. Workshops have explored the unique needs that children and pregnant women bring to the health care system and their implications for benefit structures, systems of care, and efforts to monitor and

improve the quality of health care.

For further information, please write:

Board on Children and Families  
National Research Council  
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Harris 156  
Washington, DC 20418

You can also reach the board by phone (202-334-1935) or fax (202-334-3829); please direct e-mail inquiries about the board to Anne Bridgeman, communications officer, at [ABRIDGMA@NAS.EDU](mailto:ABRIDGMA@NAS.EDU).

### **Conference on Indicators of Children's Well-Being**

A conference motivated by concern with monitoring the well-being of children and creating a statistical system for this purpose was held November 17-18, 1994, at the Hughes Conference Center, a part of the National Institutes of Health complex in Bethesda, Maryland. Sponsors of the conference included the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Child Trends, Inc.; the Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The meeting brought together ninety people representing a range of academic disciplines (economics, sociology, psychology, education, medicine), a variety of federal agencies (the departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of the Census), and representatives of private foundations and

interest groups.

Twenty-one commissioned papers were grouped into sessions on child health; education; economic security; cross-cutting issues (developing indicators from administrative data, community-level indicators, connection in social indicators); population, family, and neighborhood; and social development and problem behaviors. Several background papers were also prepared on such topics as criteria for indicators.

Robert Hauser, Vilas Research Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin, former Director of the Institute for Research on Poverty and a principal organizer of the conference, summed up its significance in these words: "Social statistics and demography once concentrated on how to estimate a few, key population characteristics indirectly from incomplete data, or were built on incommensurable numerators and denominators. Now we can easily conceive of systems of indicators, directly measured, that meet the highest disciplinary standards. The several disciplines that focus on child well-being, from medicine, to public health, to psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, and social work, are now more likely to engage each other directly, as they did in this conference, rather than to talk past one another".

A forthcoming special issue of *Focus*, the newsletter of the Institute for Research on Poverty, will be devoted to the conference. *Focus* is free. A several-volume IRP Special Report will make the papers available, at cost. For information on how to order any or all of these volumes, and to obtain a copy of *Focus* and/or put yourself

on its subscription list, contact:

Publications  
Institute for Research on Poverty  
1180 Observatory Drive  
Madison, WI 53711  
Phone: 608-262-6359  
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### **Scholars in Washington Program**

Child Trends, Inc., a leading non-partisan social science research organization on issues related to children, youth and their families, is entering the fourth year of its Scholars in Washington program sponsored by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The goal of this program is to increase the interaction between scholars and federal policy-makers working in areas related to children, youth, and families, with resulting benefits for both scholarship and policy. Established scholars are invited to spend all or part of their sabbatical at our offices pursuing independent and/or joint research projects in a diverse, policy-oriented research environment. Moving expenses and modest stipend are provided. Please submit applications by May 1, 1995 for the 1995-96 academic year. Summer appointments also considered.

### **CONTACT:**

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### **PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITY** **Special Issue of Work and Occupations** **on Work and Family: Research** **Informing Policy**

This special issue asks researchers addressing work-family interdependence to use research findings to inform social policy. Papers should feature empirical research with clear theoretical and/or conceptual roots. We welcome, for example, papers treating "the new home economics"; labor supply issues (e.g., shift work); effects of parental work on child well-being; adolescent work and its consequences; and variations in employer and labor movement response to work-family issues. Successful papers will appeal to readers with interests in work, markets and organizations, but will also take seriously family arrangements, processes and/or change, and will discuss the policy implications of their findings.

The submission deadline is September 1, 1995. Please submit three copies to Toby Parcel (parcel.1@osu.edu), Special Issue Editor, at the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, 1010 Derby Hall, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210. Papers are subject to same editorial standards and review processes as other papers submitted to the journal. Communications with the special issue editor are welcome, but encouragement to submit does not have any implication for the ultimate acceptance of the paper.

### **Have You Heard of the Journal of Child Language?**

For information write to:

Cambridge University Press  
40 West 20th Street,  
New York, NY 10011-4211

### **Books to Consider**

Beller, Andrea H. and John W. Graham. 1993. *Small Change: The Economics of Child Support*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.

The real value of child support payments has declined and unmarried mothers and African Americans still fare worse in the process than their white and married counterparts, according to Small Change: The Economics of Child Support. The new book analyzes child support in the United States, discussing what went right and what went wrong in the 1980's and offering policy recommendations for the 1990s.

Goode, William J. 1993. *World Changes in Divorce Patterns*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

### **Member On The Move**

Judith D. Auerbach has accepted a position with the Office of AIDS Research (OAR) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as Chair of the Behavioral Research Coordinating Committee. In this capacity, she will work with other NIH staff to develop the annual AIDS research plan required by Congress, and to advance behavioral and social science research on AIDS throughout the agency. This will involve contact with the external research and advocacy communities. Her new address and phone number(s) are:

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Chair, Behavioral Research Coordinating  
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### **First Membership Directory, ASA Children's Section**

You recently received a copy of the first section member directory. The directory was prepared by Gertrud Lenzer with assistance from Nancy Fox. I'm certain you will agree that this is a valuable contribution to the section, and that we all owe a debt of gratitude to Gertrud Lenzer for taking the lead in making it happen.  
DJH

### **This is YOUR NEWSLETTER**

Your active participation in **CHILDNEWS** is essential if it is to be valuable to you and your colleagues. Please help make **CHILDNEWS** a success by sending news items, calls for papers, new book announcements, calls for proposals, receipts of professional awards, etc. to: Donald J. Hernandez, Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233-8800.

Thanks to Stephanie Kennedy for manuscript preparation. DJH