Abstract: My dissertation has three chapters that analyze the impact of housing market fluctuations on household balance sheets and the implications for household spending decisions. The first chapter, shows the importance of local geography and zoning regulations in determining the dynamics of house prices and construction following a national shock to interest rates. The second chapter identifies the propensity to consume out of housing wealth. The third chapter focuses on saving and consumption responses to the housing bubble and bust during the 2000s.

What’s next? Economist at the Federal Reserve Board, Macro Analysis Unit, starting in September 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: People really do appreciate the work you put in when you go out and start presenting your work, so keep working hard.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Michigan vs. Notre Dame football game under the lights.
Abstract: My dissertation research analyzes the effects of paid parental leave on maternal labor supply. Using monthly longitudinal SIPP data, my event-study research design characterizes the evolution of labor-force participation around childbirth for women affected by paid leave laws in California and New Jersey. I find that paid leave laws are associated with a substantial increase in labor-force participation in the months directly around birth, but have little impact beyond six months after birth. While US-style short-duration leave is unlikely to change prolonged exits from the labor force, my findings imply that paid leave laws induce some women to work stay more attached, particularly low-skill women.

What’s next? Assistant Professor of Economics at Middlebury College, starting in September 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: There are great resources and people at PSC. Get involved. Get to know people. Go to brown bags.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Diego Rivera Mural at the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Tigers Games, and running the Detroit half marathon 3 times. (I guess these are not exactly Ann Arbor experiences...)
Abstract: I examine the impact of the Neighborhood Legal Service Program (LSP), established in 1965, on the welfare of the poor. First, I evaluate empirically the effects of the LSP on reported crime and other economic outcomes, finding increases in both crime reporting and the staffing of police officers, improved police relationships with the poor, and higher median property values by 1980 in cities that received legal services. Next, I analyze the impact of the large share of LSP services provided for divorces and annulments, finding that subsidized legal services in a county increased the divorce rate, and that women in these counties were less likely to remarry. The combination of these results indicates that the program played a pivotal role in family dynamics. Finally, as part of examining the association between police and crime, I analyze how election cycles affect changes in the size of the police force during this period, finding no statistical relationship.

What's next? Assistant Professor in Economics at Portland State University, starting in September 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: Enjoy Ann Arbor and take advantage of the many workshops and seminars on campus. Also take time to connect with other scholars and trainees from other fields as well as other resources on campus. The Writing Center and the Center for Statistical Consultation and Research are very useful resources for completing research.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Summers are very welcoming and enjoyable. The University and the City of Ann Arbor provide free entertainment such as movies and festivals all summer long to enjoy with friends.
PSC predoc trainee: 2008-2014

Field: Economics

PSC mentor: Matthew Shapiro

Dissertation: Labor Search, Inequality, and Public Policy

Abstract: Search-theoretic models of the labor market are widely used to evaluate public policy. Wage setting mechanisms, a key component of such models, yield different theoretical implications for public policy, market efficiency, returns to experience, and inequality between workers depending on their formulation. My dissertation grapples with issues of how the wage setting mechanism is selected, the implications of the wage setting mechanism when interpreting aggregate and cross-sectional data, and the interaction of public policy with the wage setting mechanism.

What's next? Economist in the division of Monetary Affairs, Monetary Studies Unit, at the Board of Governors of Federal Reserve, starting in September 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: Take advantage of all opportunities to present your work, even at early stages.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Big Heart Big House (run/walk to benefit several local organizations, 2007-2012).
ANDREW GOODMAN-BACON

**PSC predoc trainee:** 2009-2014

**Field:** Economics

**PSC mentors:** John Bound and Martha Bailey

**Dissertation:** Three Essays in Health Policy Evaluation

**Abstract:** The main components of the health safety net in the US—public insurance, or Medicaid, and public low-cost clinics, or Community Health Centers (CHCs)—were established in the 1960s, yet most empirical evaluations rely on smaller policy changes that have taken place since. My research combines historical methods (data collection and archival research) with modern empirical program evaluation methods to provide new estimates of the effects of these health reforms at their inception. The effects of the original implementation of health safety net programs are of interest in their own right, and because these policy changes are often much larger than more recent reforms, studying implementation improves our understanding of how health safety net programs work more generally.

**What’s next?** Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research, UC-Berkeley, in August 2014, then on to Assistant Professor of Economics, Vanderbilt University in September 2016.

**Advice for incoming trainees:** Be nice and generous to everyone because eventually they are all potential colleagues, coauthors or referees!

**Best Ann Arbor experience:** Having my son, Isaac!
PSC predoc trainee: 2008-2014
Field: Sociology
PSC mentor: Yu Xie
Dissertation: Developmental Thinking and the Individual Life Course

Abstract: My dissertation research was driven by an interest in the worldwide convergence toward a Western life course model that encompasses prolonged education, late marriage, neolocal residence, and low fertility, and in particular how social development ideals and assumptions influence behavior. The three chapters of my dissertation examine the international prevalence and diffusion of developmental thinking, its influences on attitudes toward family matters, and higher education in the presence of alternative adulthood engagements.

What’s next? Assistant Professor, Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies, Florida International University, in August 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: Go to as many talks as you can, but remember to graduate.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Having an office at ISR.
Abstract: Many population-based studies have found black women to be 2 to 3 times more likely than white women to develop triple-negative breast cancer, a more aggressive and less treatable subtype. Much of this research has focused on identifying predisposing biological or genetic factors associated with African ancestry. My research takes into account growing evidence that racial stratification shapes environmental and social exposures that can subsequently impact cellular physiology and even gene expression patterns. My dissertation (1) integrates important findings from stress biology, breast cancer subtype, and health disparity research in the form of a critical literature review, (2) develops an alternative conceptual model for the examination of racial disparities in breast cancer subtype, and (3) tests aspects of the model in two empirical analyses.

What’s next? Instructor, Division of Public Health Sciences, Department of Surgery, Washington University School of Medicine (St. Louis), starting in September 2014.

Advice for incoming trainees: As a part of the PSC community, take advantage of the opportunity to meaningfully engage with trainees, post-docs, and faculty from other departments. It sounds clichéd and is sometimes harder than expected, but it really is one of the best benefits of being a part of the center.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Starting our family here and taking advantage of all of the wonderful kid- and family-friendly activities has really defined our Ann Arbor experience. If I had to name a few, I’d pick walking to the farmers’ market, going to the Natural History Museum, and watching the Michigan Marching Band practice on Friday evenings. We will continue to encourage our kids’ boisterous renditions of “The Victors” for as long as they are willing to listen to us.
Abstract: My dissertation evaluates the effects of three pre-Affordable Care Act policies that resemble ACA reforms. In the first chapter, I show that the effect of a tax subsidy similar to the ACA’s tax credits depends on the type on regulations that affect underwriting - that is, people with pre-existing conditions do not respond to tax subsidies in places where they cannot buy health insurance, but that they respond disproportionately in places where they can buy risk-rated health insurance. In the second chapter, I use the introduction of a minimum medical loss ratio rule in Michigan to show that a minimum MLR rule results in at least a six percentage point decrease in MLRs among for-profit commercial insurers. In the third chapter, I use quasi-experimental variation in the availability of subsidized pap smears to estimate their effect on cervical cancer mortality. I find that large increases in the likelihood of receiving a Pap smear in the last year do not correspond to changes in cervical cancer mortality or incidence, suggesting the test has low predictive value.

What’s next? Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation, University of Michigan, starting July 2014; then Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy, Vanderbilt University, starting in January 2016.

Advice for incoming trainees: Take study breaks to look out the windows on the 6th floor.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Eating at Frita Batidos
JANE ROCHMES

PSC predoc trainee: 2006-2014
Field: Public Policy & Sociology
PSC mentor: David Harding
Dissertation: Teachers’ Beliefs about Students’ Social Disadvantage: Exploring High School Contexts and Teachers’ Influence on the Achievement Gap

Abstract: Case studies of “transformational” schools, which claim to alter the academic trajectories predicted by social disadvantage, represent the belief that teachers and schools can make life-changing differences for poor students and students of color. But the effect of such teacher beliefs on academic success has not been generalized to the broader educational landscape. Using nationally representative data, my research examines teachers’ beliefs about the extent to which they can overcome disadvantages in students’ social background. It provides the first empirical analysis of how attitudes toward social disadvantage vary across all types of schools, how they relate to student performance at a national level, and how they impact students varying in levels of advantage.

What’s next? Postdoctoral Fellowship, Stanford University’s Center for Education Policy Analysis, starting September 2014

Advice for incoming trainees: Take advantage of as many opportunities as you can to meet with the outstanding scholars who visit PSC as speakers/guests.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Seeing President Obama speak the year I got my master’s degree.
Sanctions in Prisoner Reentry

Abstract: My dissertation examines the predictors and implications of recidivism among parolees.

What’s next? On the job market.

Advice for incoming trainees: Take advantage of PSC’s and ISR’s resources and institutional knowledge, which offer an unparalleled opportunity to grow as a scholar.

Best Ann Arbor experience: The doughnuts and ice cream at Washtenaw Dairy.
**Abstract:** Little is known about how the larger structural environment, and factors like racial residential and economic segregation impact PTSD risk. In my dissertation research, I first conducted a stratified analysis that examined within-group effects of gender, race, and poverty status, both alone and in combination, and tested for between-group differences in these effects. Second, I used discrete-time analysis and life-tables to examine the relationship between PTSD risk and incarceration, an exposure chosen to capture the effects of the U.S. macro-level social context due to its differential impact on the Black population. I found considerable variation in the pattern of PTSD risk when the effects of race and gender were considered together, and I found that prison exposure was a significant predictor of lifetime PTSD for blacks and whites, controlling for the effects and timing of a comprehensive list of traumatic exposures.

**What’s next?** NIMH Postdoctoral Fellow, Yale School of Public Health.

**Advice for incoming trainees:** Dissertation-writing is like running a marathon. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other and you will reach the finish line.

**Best Ann Arbor experience:** Living near a natural wetland and having herons, egrets, and kingfishers as neighbors.
PSC predoc trainee: 2008-2014

Field: Sociology

PSC mentor: David Harding

Dissertation: Class Structure and Income Inequality in the United States: An Analysis of Trends from 1983 to 2010

Abstract: Income inequality in America has increased substantially since the early 1980s. This study delineates a theory of class based on antagonistic social relations within the workplace and investigates the relationship between class structure – here defined on unequal workplace ownership and authority relations – and trends in aggregate income inequality from 1983 to 2010. Results indicate that between-class income differences increased by at least 50% since the 1980s. This increase was driven by growing incomes for managers and especially proprietors together with stagnating incomes for workers. Results also indicate that, since the mid-1980s, the proportion of workers and independent producers increased, while the proportion of proprietors and managers declined. A formal decomposition analysis suggests that changes in the relative size of different classes had a small dampening effect and that growth in between-class income differences had a large inflationary effect on trends in aggregate income inequality, particularly during the 1990s.

What’s next? Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Toronto.

Advice for incoming trainees: Work hard.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Biking and fishing along the Huron River.
Laura Zimmermann

PSC predoc trainee: 2010-2014
Field: Economics
PSC mentor: David Lam and Dean Yang

Abstract: In 2006, the Indian government began the world’s largest public-works program, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), with a legal assurance of 100 days of public employment per year for all rural households. Today, NREGS is the flagship example of public-works programs in developing countries – efforts that have often had severe implementation problems and limited success. My dissertation examines how NREGS overcame the known drawbacks to these programs. Chapter 1 reconstructs the government algorithm used by the Indian government to assign districts to implementation phases, focusing on the labor market impacts. Chapter 2 examines the effects of the program on the Maoist conflict – a key security challenge in India. Chapter 3 analyzes the impacts of NREGS during the general elections.

What’s next? Joint Assistant Professor in Economics and International Affairs, University of Georgia, starting in August 2014

Advice for incoming trainees: Make the most out of the many great opportunities offered by PSC like the conference travel support for PAA.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Washtenaw Dairy visits with friends.
AMELIA KARRAKER

PSC postdoc trainee: 2012-2014
Field: Sociology
PSC mentor: Sarah Burgard

Research worked on/started while at PSC: In the past two years, I have worked on the Panel Study of Income Dynamics in the area of psychological human capital and mortality (with Bob Schoeni); on the Health and Retirement Study, examining illness as a risk factor for divorce in middle and older ages; and on the Americans’ Changing Lives study, looking at the social determinants of health and well-being (with Sarah Burgard, others). I have also continued work on perceived economic position and psychological well-being and physical health; smoking and gender; and psychosocial work characteristics and psychological well-being.

What’s next? Pending. Will know very soon.

Advice for incoming trainees: Enjoy every minute.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Bostok pastry from Zingerman’s.
PSC postdoc trainee: 2012-2014

Field: Political Science

PSC mentors: Arline Geronimus and John Bound

Research worked on/started while at PSC: With Arline Geronimus and John Bound, I coauthored three articles in the International Journal of Epidemiology, and received a grant for “The Political Origins of Health Inequalities: Political Parties and Infant Mortality.” I’m also working on a project entitled “The Implications of Differential Trends in Mortality to Social Security Policy,” and on a paper analyzing differential mortality and the racial composition of the electorate. (I was awarded a PSC Initiatives Fund grant for my work on how racial disparities in health and aging affect the racial composition of the electorate.) I also worked with Jose Tapia Granados on a comparative analysis of economic crisis, population health, health care performance, and austerity in Greece, Finland and Iceland.

What’s next? On the job market.

Best Ann Arbor experience: Working with my PSC mentors, Arline Geronimus and John Bound.
PSC postdoc trainee: 2012-2014

Field: Sociology & Demography

PSC mentor: Arland Thornton

Research worked on/started while at PSC: I have conducted an experimental web survey on the effects of social contexts on fertility preferences in the U.S. and Turkey. I’m currently working on an analysis (together with former PSC postdoc Caroline Hartnett) using RDSL data to gauge how educational enrollment affects changes in fertility-related attitudes among young women. I’ve also started a project to analyze schematic representations of fertility and family formation using RDSL data.

What’s next? On the job market.

Advice for incoming trainees: Make it a priority to meet new people from different parts of ISR and the university. Knowing people from the SRC, the School of Information, or other departments related to your work can really help you be productive, and it can also be fun. This is a great place to do interdisciplinary work!

Best Ann Arbor experience: Enjoying the outdoors when spring comes (still waiting for it this year!)