Brady West, on survey methods, statistical modeling, Erasure, and Lego Batman. pp. 2-3

Recently funded projects at PSC pp. 4-5

Who’s in the news? pp. 6-7

Kristin Seefeldt, on the poor in post-welfare reform America and the importance of qualitative social science research. pp. 8-9

PSC by the numbers p. 10

Honors & Awards p. 11

Recently published papers p. 12

Recently published books p. 13

ISR Runs for Bob, April 1, 2016 p. 14
Brady West joined the Center as a Research Affiliate in July 2015. Brady has an extensive background in applied statistics and statistical consulting. He finished his PhD in Survey Methodology in 2011 – graduating from ISR’s Program in Survey Methodology Program in November 2011. Brady’s primary research interests are: the implications of measurement error in auxiliary variables and survey paradigms for survey estimation, survey nonresponse, interviewer variance, and multilevel regression models for clustered and longitudinal data. He is the lead author of a book comparing statistical software packages on their mixed-effects modeling procedures (Linear Mixed Models: A Practical Guide using Statistical Software, 2nd Ed., Chapman Hall/CRC Press, 2014), and co-author, with Steven Heeringa and Pat Berglund, of a statistical overview of the analysis of complex sample survey data (Applied Survey Data Analysis, Chapman Hall, 2010). Together with Steve and Pat, he is currently working on a second edition of ASDA, slated to be available in 2016.

Brady’s current work includes methodological studies funded by NSF and NIH. In one NSF project, he is working with Fred Conrad and Frauke Kreuter to examine differences in the interviewer variance introduced by conversational and standardized interviewing, mainly to see if more conversational approaches tend to reduce the efficiency of survey estimates (preview: they don’t). In a second NSF project, he is working with Joe Sakshaug to examine the prevalence and implications of analytic error in published analyses of complex sample survey data. In an NIH-funded study, he is examining whether face-to-face interviewers vary in terms of the strategies they use to collect observations, and whether some strategies tend to result in more accurate observations than others. The results of this work will have important implications for standardizing the interviewer observation process during training. Brady also serves on the management team of the National Survey of Family Growth, helping to oversee the implementation of responsive survey design strategies and managing research dissemination. In terms of future research, he is greatly interested in the potential of modular survey research methods to better prepare interviewers, survey logistics, and the public for research.

Brady is a Research Assistant Professor in the Survey Methodology Program in November 2011. He is the lead author of a book comparing statistical software packages on their mixed-effects modeling procedures (Linear Mixed Models: A Practical Guide using Statistical Software, 2nd Ed., Chapman Hall/CRC Press, 2014), and co-author, with Steven Heeringa and Pat Berglund, of a statistical overview of the analysis of complex sample survey data (Applied Survey Data Analysis, Chapman Hall, 2010). Together with Steve and Pat, he is currently working on a second edition of ASDA, slated to be available in 2016.

Brady’s current work includes methodological studies funded by NSF and NIH. In one NSF project, he is working with Fred Conrad and Frauke Kreuter to examine differences in the interviewer variance introduced by conversational and standardized interviewing, mainly to see if more conversational approaches tend to reduce the efficiency of survey estimates (preview: they don’t). In a second NSF project, he is working with Joe Sakshaug to examine the prevalence and implications of analytic error in published analyses of complex sample survey data. In an NIH-funded study, he is examining whether face-to-face interviewers vary in terms of the strategies they use to collect observations, and whether some strategies tend to result in more accurate observations than others. The results of this work will have important implications for standardizing the interviewer observation process during training. Brady also serves on the management team of the National Survey of Family Growth, helping to oversee the implementation of responsive survey design strategies and managing research dissemination. In terms of future research, he is greatly interested in the potential of modular survey research methods to better prepare interviewers, survey logistics, and the public for research.

Brady is a Research Assistant Professor in the Survey Methodology Program in November 2011. He is the lead author of a book comparing statistical software packages on their mixed-effects modeling procedures (Linear Mixed Models: A Practical Guide using Statistical Software, 2nd Ed., Chapman Hall/CRC Press, 2014), and co-author, with Steven Heeringa and Pat Berglund, of a statistical overview of the analysis of complex sample survey data (Applied Survey Data Analysis, Chapman Hall, 2010). Together with Steve and Pat, he is currently working on a second edition of ASDA, slated to be available in 2016.

Brady’s current work includes methodological studies funded by NSF and NIH. In one NSF project, he is working with Fred Conrad and Frauke Kreuter to examine differences in the interviewer variance introduced by conversational and standardized interviewing, mainly to see if more conversational approaches tend to reduce the efficiency of survey estimates (preview: they don’t). In a second NSF project, he is working with Joe Sakshaug to examine the prevalence and implications of analytic error in published analyses of complex sample survey data. In an NIH-funded study, he is examining whether face-to-face interviewers vary in terms of the strategies they use to collect observations, and whether some strategies tend to result in more accurate observations than others. The results of this work will have important implications for standardizing the interviewer observation process during training. Brady also serves on the management team of the National Survey of Family Growth, helping to oversee the implementation of responsive survey design strategies and managing research dissemination. In terms of future research, he is greatly interested in the potential of modular survey research methods to better prepare interviewers, survey logistics, and the public for research.
and services. This project uses the natural experiment of the ACA's mandated contraception coverage to observe real-time changes in patient contraception behavior during the mandate's implementation using a nationally representative claims database. This project will examine whether the elimination of patient cost-sharing is associated with changes in contraception-related office visits and/or changes in contraception method use patterns, including method type, consistency of use, and method switching. Our primary analysis will be conducted at the patient level to estimate the effect of cost-sharing on our outcomes. A second analysis will examine the impact of the mandate's implementation at the plan level to determine whether it is associated with changes in aggregate contraceptive method use patterns. We will also examine the relationship between the elimination of cost-sharing and changes in related medical spending for patients and plans (i.e., outpatient contraceptive visits, pregnancy care, births and drug spending).

Recently Funded Projects at PSC

**Jennifer Barber**
**Scholars in Health Policy Research Program**
8/1/2014 – 7/31/2016
$18,342

The goal of the University of Michigan site of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Scholars in Health Policy Research Program is to help develop a new generation of creative thinkers in health policy research within the disciplines of economics, political science and sociology. To achieve this goal we will provide an interdisciplinary curriculum and educational environment that instruct the Scholars about the U.S. health care and public health systems, and provide the resources and mentorship needed to design, implement, and complete health-related research projects contributing to both health policy scholarship and respective social science disciplines. The seminar series brings in national experts from the three disciplines to meet with the Scholars and present their current research. Given the diverse mentoring needs and desires of Scholars, the Program offers its Scholars a variety of mentoring resources and services.

**Martha Bailey**
**Impact of No-Cost Contraception on Utilization and Direct Medical Expenditures**
U-M Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology & U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
9/1/2015 – 6/30/2016
$11,914

As of January 1, 2014, the Affordable Care Act’s mandate required all commercial employer-based health plans to cover contraception counseling and methods without patient copayments, except for certain religious organizations. About 58% of all American women are enrolled in such health plans. Given concerns about unintended pregnancy as both a serious maternal-child health problem and a societal burden (generating an estimated $4 billion in direct and indirect costs for the U.S. health care system), a program to provide free contraception impacts contraception use patterns, pregnancies, and health care spending. Previous studies have suggested that contraceptive use patterns, such as method choice and consistency of use, can be improved by eliminating out-of-pocket costs for contraceptive services. This project uses the natural experiment of the ACA’s mandated contraception coverage to observe real-time changes in patient contraception behavior during the mandate’s implementation using a nationally representative claims database. This project will examine whether the elimination of patient cost-sharing is associated with changes in contraception-related office visits and/or changes in contraception method use patterns, including method type, consistency of use, and method switching. Our primary analysis will be conducted at the patient level to estimate the effect of cost-sharing on our outcomes. A second analysis will examine the impact of the mandate’s implementation at the plan level to determine whether it is associated with changes in aggregate contraceptive method use patterns. We will also examine the relationship between the elimination of cost-sharing and changes in related medical spending for patients and plans (i.e., outpatient contraceptive visits, pregnancy care, births and drug spending).

**Jeffrey Morenoff**
**Detroit Metropolitan Area Communities Study (DMACCS): A Collaborative Information and Innovation Platform for the Region**
Kresge Foundation
2/1/2016 – 1/31/2018
$300,000

As Metro Detroit emerges from bankruptcy and the Great Recession, decision-makers throughout the region face the daunting challenge of reinvigorating Detroit’s economic and community development in an equitable and sustainable manner. Where will targeted investments have the greatest impact, and how will they shape the future of Metro Detroit? How do residents of the communities most affected by such investments and public policies perceive their impacts? How should they prioritize the next generation of investments? To help community stakeholders answer these questions, the Detroit Metropolitan Area Communities Study (DMACCS) provides an innovative online survey and web structure that provides timely and accessible survey and web structure that provides research-quality information to stakeholders about their communities. DMACCS will (1) determine which childhood and adolescent experiences and time-varying information on young adults' sexual behavior, partner. The study will use data from the RDSL study to combine these limitations, we plan to develop the transportation security index, a novel measure of access to adequate transportation that can be used to produce national estimates of the prevalence of transportation insecurity, to improve scholarly knowledge of the role of transportation in the reproduction of social inequality, and to design policy solutions that address disadvantages in transportation security, which are widely understood to disproportionately affect people by race, ethnicity, and other socio-demographic characteristics.

**Alexandra Murphy**
**What about Transportation? Developing a Measure to Capture an Understudied Dimension of Poverty**
Stanford Poverty Center & ASPE, DHHS
1/1/2016 – 9/29/2016
$10,000

Despite the importance of transportation to individual wellbeing and opportunity, extant measures fail to precisely capture the ability to travel as needed at the individual level and are thus inadequate in generating nuanced understandings of how transportation is shaped by and shapes other forms of hardship. To overcome these limitations, we plan to develop the transportation security index, a novel measure of access to adequate transportation modeled after the food security index. In this second phase of development, we are testing the survey items that will comprise the index. We intend this index to be used to produce national estimates of the prevalence of transportation insecurity, to improve scholarly knowledge of the role of transportation in the reproduction of social inequality, and to design policy solutions that address disadvantages in transportation security, which are widely understood to disproportionately affect people by race, ethnicity, and other socio-demographic characteristics.

**Dirgha Ghimire**
**Family Migration Context and Early Life Outcomes**
Arizona State University & National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
7/31/2015 – 6/30/2016
$94,840

Under this subcontract, Ghimire will serve as Co-Investigator and Institutional PI at the University of Michigan, sharing responsibility for overseeing each phase of the project. Tasks conducted at the University of Michigan include: (1) design and refinement of the data collection instruments; (2) overall supervision of the data collection and data processing activities at the field site in Nepal, and; (3) coordinating and conducting the data analysis and publication.

**Narayan Satrny**
**Disparities in Recovery from Hurricane Katrina: KATRINA@10 Program**
Tulane University & National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
$96,661

This project uses new data from a representative sample of pre-Katrina residents of New Orleans—the Displaced New Orleans Residents Survey (DNORS)—to examine outcomes among this population approximately four years after the hurricane. A critical need in assessing the social, economic and health effects of natural and human-caused disasters is to obtain population-representative data on the pre-event residents of affected areas. The dispersion of residents in the aftermath of disasters means few studies have been able to collect or assemble such data, nor to examine post-disaster outcomes over periods longer than one year. We will use DNORS data to provide new information about the location of pre-Katrina residents of New Orleans in the four years after the hurricane; assess the causal effects of post-Katrina experiences on mental health outcomes; examine race disparities in post-Katrina outcomes; and investigate factors associated with black-white differences in return migration, residential location, and mental health.

**Abigail Weitzman**
**Sexual Behavior During the Transition to Adulthood and Associated Health Outcomes**
National Inst, of Child Health and Human Development
4/12/2016 – 3/31/2018
$77,500 Total Costs

This project will provide one of the first in-depth analyses of sexual concurrency among young adult women in the US. Specifically, it will: (1) determine which childhood and adolescent experiences affect the likelihood of sexual concurrency and why; (2) investigate how changes in personal circumstances affect young women’s likelihood of concurrency over time; and (3) examine which relationship dynamics contribute to young women’s likelihood of having more than one simultaneous partner. The study will use data from the RDSL study to combine time-varying information on young adults’ sexual behavior, relationships, education, employment, and static information on their childhood and adolescent experiences and on their attitudes toward sex and perceptions of risk. Fixed and random effects regression models will be used to assess how the probability of sexual concurrency differs both within and across women over a 2.5-year period.
“An election strategy of appealing to whites only will have limited returns for Republicans in presidential politics, as younger minorities become a larger part of the electorate. By the same token, elections where one party courts mostly younger minorities and the other courts mostly older whites can have a divisive impact on the nation as a whole.”
– Bill Frey, on political divisiveness around America’s youth-driven minority growth. *ON*, 3/19/2016.

“Concern about Zika could lead to real change for reproductive health for millions of women in the region. But this can happen only if the expansion of abortion and contraception is based on human rights and reproductive health equity, not driven primarily by fears of defective babies.”

“If rates of unintended pregnancy remain high in the United States, especially for a developed country, and there is a lot of variation across groups with much higher rates among disadvantaged young people.”

“The public and private research campuses and the public flows of money into them have created the single most effective system to producing and sharing new knowledge that has ever existed in human history.”

“Rates of unintended pregnancy remain high in the United States, especially for a developed country, and there is a lot of variation across groups with much higher rates among disadvantaged young people.”

“It’s a well-known pattern. There’s still a significant reallocation of labor that occurs at marriage — men tend to work more outside the home, while women take on more of the household labor. And the situation gets worse for women when they have children.”

“[All] children living with a step- or half-sibling have one thing in common: at least one child in the household has an absent biological parent, … [which] is associated with a higher risk of aggressive behavior in younger children.”

“Saying that you must work doesn’t do anything to address any labor market problems that a particular area might be experiencing. And it doesn’t address people’s long term prospects for getting jobs.”

“Rates of unintended pregnancy remain high in the United States, especially for a developed country, and there is a lot of variation across groups with much higher rates among disadvantaged young people.”

“[All] children living with a step- or half-sibling have one thing in common: at least one child in the household has an absent biological parent, … [which] is associated with a higher risk of aggressive behavior in younger children.”

“Saying that you must work doesn’t do anything to address any labor market problems that a particular area might be experiencing. And it doesn’t address people’s long term prospects for getting jobs.”

“China’s one-child policy has incurred a “daughter tax” – physical and emotional retaliation against unwanted girl babies – that has had devastating effects on first-born daughters.”
– PSC postdoc Abigail Weitzman’s research cited in *Al Jazeera*, 10/29/2015.


“Saying that you must work doesn’t do anything to address any labor market problems that a particular area might be experiencing. And it doesn’t address people’s long term prospects for getting jobs.”

“There’s an emphasis on former prisoners changing themselves, but they’re often changing themselves in a space where there are few resources. These are good people who are locked out of the housing market and locked out of the labor market because of their criminal record, so many of their modes for self-improvement have hurdles.”

“I think it has to have something to do [with] the pain underlying it. That is the age when people have their middle crisis … I think it has to do with that stage of life, and physical ailments do start to accumulate at that age.”

“China’s one-child policy has incurred a “daughter tax” – physical and emotional retaliation against unwanted girl babies – that has had devastating effects on first-born daughters.”
– PSC postdoc Abigail Weitzman’s research cited in *Al Jazeera*, 10/29/2015.

My research [on the Zika virus] may underlie rise in substance-related and suicide deaths among white middle-aged Americans. Washington Post, 11/02/2015.

“Saying that you must work doesn’t do anything to address any labor market problems that a particular area might be experiencing. And it doesn’t address people’s long term prospects for getting jobs.”

“There’s an emphasis on former prisoners changing themselves, but they’re often changing themselves in a space where there are few resources. These are good people who are locked out of the housing market and locked out of the labor market because of their criminal record, so many of their modes for self-improvement have hurdles.”

“I think it has to have something to do [with] the pain underlying it. That is the age when people have their middle crisis … I think it has to do with that stage of life, and physical ailments do start to accumulate at that age.”

“China’s one-child policy has incurred a “daughter tax” – physical and emotional retaliation against unwanted girl babies – that has had devastating effects on first-born daughters.”
– PSC postdoc Abigail Weitzman’s research cited in *Al Jazeera*, 10/29/2015.
Kristin Seefeldt

Seeking to understand the ‘whys’ and ‘hows’ of poor families

My research shows that single mothers working in low-wage jobs often attempt to resolve the work-family conflict by foregoing educational and career aspirations altogether, staying in low-paying, dead-end jobs for the sake of their children.

...perceptions they held about clients. One of my most vivid memories of this work was sitting in a welfare office waiting room where I overheard two women, presumably welfare recipients, talking. Both were experiencing domestic violence and one was homeless. While I had been told by various staff and welfare case managers that what recipients needed were more skills and better attitudes so that they could get and keep jobs, I wondered how these two women could possibly get jobs given their circumstances. This question now seems naïve, but for a 23 year old still learning about poverty in the U.S., it resonated with me.

After finishing my master’s degree, I was fortunate to be hired by PSC researcher Sheldon Danziger to work on a longitudinal survey project, the Women’s Employment Study (WES), with which he and Sandra Danziger were identifying factors beyond education and job skills that posed challenges to poor single mothers. Poverty researchers at the time typically focused on so-called “human capital” limitations, such as low levels of education, and problems such as lack of child care and transportation as factors keeping poor adults out of the labor market. Welfare reform had just been implemented, and it required recipients to find jobs or lose benefits. But our work found that a significant majority of women on welfare had serious personal challenges, such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and work-limiting physical health problems.

We conducted the WES data collection during the late 1990s and the early 2000s, when the economy was very strong. So although some of these women did find jobs, we found that many remained in low-paying jobs, despite steady employment. To better understand their employment decisions, I interviewed 60 WES respondents. These interviews resulted in my book, Working After Welfare: How Women Balance Jobs and Family in the Wake of Welfare Reform (2008).

Being able to enter the homes of these families and listen to them tell their stories is always an important reminder that academic publications cannot be the only reason to do this work. The well-being of real people is at stake.

A dominant theme in these poor women’s discourse about employment was a belief that they had to choose between their parenting responsibilities and advancing into higher paying jobs. They equated better paying jobs with less control over their work hours and less ability to fulfill their children’s needs. Many determined that obtaining a better job and/or going back to school could wait until their children were older. The sociological literature on work and family tends to focus on women who have more education and better jobs, analyzing (1) the competing demands faced by mothers (usually married) as they attempt to balance career aspirations with family needs, and (2) the negative effects of motherhood on upward career mobility. My research shows that single mothers working in low-wage jobs often attempt to resolve the work-family conflict by foregoing educational and career aspirations altogether, staying in low-paying, dead-end jobs for the sake of their children.

My experience working on this qualitative project spurred me to return to school to obtain my PhD. In 2006 I entered the U-M joint Sociology/Public Policy program and became a PSC trainee. At PSC I had the freedom to continue exploring my interests in understanding the “whys” and “hows” around low-income families, questions that are usually answered with qualitative research. I started a project which I initially hoped would help us understand how economically vulnerable families were faring in a post-welfare reform world. After interviewing the same 45 women for six years, I came to the conclusion that these families had been “socially abandoned.” That is, they were denied access to traditional institutions of inclusion and upward mobility and instead were consigned to segregated labor, post-secondary education, housing, and financial markets, resulting in instability, isolation, and a stripping of wealth, rather than the building of it.

I’m currently working on the Michigan Recession and Recovery Study (MRRS), a longitudinal survey of working-aged adults in Southeast Michigan. I’ve been able to collaborate on a number of papers with PSC researcher Sarah Burgard, who has taught me so much about the importance of looking at the health impacts of various experiences. (Fun fact: Sarah and I grew up in the same small Wisconsin town and have been asked more than once if we are sisters!) I’ve also had the opportunity to conduct qualitative interviews with MRRS respondents who had experienced spells of six months or more with no earnings and no cash welfare.

As a researcher who studies poverty, being able to enter the homes of these families and listen to them tell their stories is always an important reminder that academic publications cannot be the only reason to do this work. The well-being of real people is at stake.

I have found Michigan to be a place that takes this perspective to heart.

Kristin Seefeldt is an Assistant Research Scientist at PSC and an Assistant Professor at the School of Social Work and the Ford School of Public Policy.
Kerri Cross Wins Distinguished Research Administrator Award

The University of Michigan’s Vice President for Research has selected PSC staff member Kerri Cross as this year’s winner of the Distinguished Research Administrator Award. The award, which includes an honorarium of $250 and a plaque, is made based on “distinguished service to the research community on campus over a number of years exemplifying the goals of professional research administration.”

In his nomination, PSC Director Jeff Morenoff cites Kerri’s 24 years at the University (9 with PSC), her “exceptional ability to work with researchers from a diverse range of academic fields,” her expertise in both pre- and post-award project management, and the “extensive orientations” she gives to new and junior faculty to help them “get their research projects up and running as soon as possible.”

PSC faculty praised Kerri’s abilities, calling her a “key member of the research team,” “a grant Sherpa,” and “bomb-proof.”

One researcher summed it up by saying that Kerri possesses the “rare combination of talents that perfectly exemplifies the kind of person who understands and elevates the science that goes on at U-M.”

Kerri Cross is a Research Process Senior Manager at the Population Studies Center.

Jason Kerwin wins 2016 Dorothy S. Thomas Award from PAA

Jason Kerwin, a PSC economics trainee 2010-2015 (mentors John Bound and Rebecca Thornton), won the Population Association of America’s 2016 Dorothy S. Thomas Award for the best paper written by a graduate student on the interrelationships among social, economic, and demographic variables. The award, presented at PAA’s Annual Program Meeting in early April, includes a cash prize.

Jason graduated from U-M in 2015 and is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. He specializes in the use of randomized field experiments to understand health and labor markets in sub-Saharan Africa.

Jason’s award-winning paper: “Scared Straight or Scared to Death? The Effect of HIV Infection Risk Beliefs on Risky Sexual Behavior”  