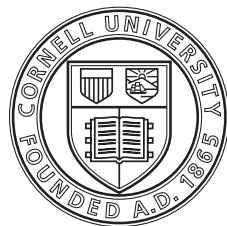


# Institute for the Social Sciences



SUMMARY OF THE 2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Cornell University

This report summarizes annual achievements in the three primary programming areas of the Institute for the Social Sciences (ISS) at Cornell:

- The three-year **THEME PROJECTS**, which bring together faculty from across Cornell to explore a promising research topic together
- The new **FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM**, which provides funding and course relief for assistant and associate faculty in the social sciences
- The biannual **SMALL GRANT PROGRAM**, which provides funding for cutting-edge faculty research



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## THEME PROJECTS

### **The Evolving Family:**

#### **Family Processes, Contexts, and the Life Course of Children, 2004–2007**

The Evolving Family Theme Project ended its term in June 2007. The synergy created by this project resulted in the development of the new Cornell Population Program (CPP), which was founded in 2007 and awarded in July 2008 a \$1.15 million National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) grant to support its growth over the next five years. Since its inception, the CPP has engaged over 70 affiliates; developed a website ([www.cpp.cornell.edu](http://www.cpp.cornell.edu)); offered a seminar series; and held an inaugural plenary address on September 5, 2008, delivered by Peter Donaldson, president of the Population Council. It promises to bear fruitful connections with the newest ISS theme project on Persistent Poverty as well as the university's sustainability effort.

Evolving Family team members have produced 33 publications, in addition to a number of presented papers, lectures, and seminars, and have 25 forthcoming publications. Team members have sought a total of \$5,212,831 in external funding via seven proposals.

### **Getting Connected: Social Science in the Age of Networks, 2005–2008**

The Networks Theme Project ended its term in June 2008. The project created an extensive community of committed scholars who bring complementary skills and methodologies to a shared interest in tackling problems at the forward edge of network research, including the study of online networks. Team members report that working with scholars across interdisciplinary boundaries bolstered their potential to make unique contributions and original discoveries.

This team engaged 70 affiliates from 28 departments and programs. Team members taught nine courses related to their theme, including a new course team-taught by David Easley and Jon Kleinberg that has seen enrollment grow from 200 to about 275 students between 2007–2008. The team also sponsored events open to the public that included two international conferences and 29 seminars and lectures. Team members have produced 40 publications, and five publications are forthcoming. All Networks team members have pursued external funding during 2007–2008, including two proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation.

### **Contentious Knowledge: Science, Social Science, and Social Movements, 2006–2009**

The Contentious Knowledge Theme Project completed its second year in June 2008. Bringing together social science and natural science scholars who might not otherwise have a chance to connect, this project has spawned a number of collaborative teaching and research activities. It has also given Cornell greater visibility at the novel intersection of the sociology of science and the study of social movements or contentious politics. New links with life science scholars are being explored in areas such as genomics that have policy and ethical implications.

The team engaged 116 affiliates from 30 departments and programs and offered many events open to the public, including a forum on the politics of science, four international workshops, and a yearlong seminar series. The team taught 15 courses, including eight graduate seminars and seven undergraduate courses that encourage students to explore new analytical perspectives on the authoritative character of knowledge and the political contention that surrounds it. Two new courses were developed: a senior seminar and an undergraduate seminar co-taught by team members from different departments.

Team members have produced 26 publications and have 25 publications in preparation or in press. One team member secured two fellowships totaling \$60,000 to support her international sabbatical research during 2008–2009. Another team member was awarded a \$120,000 grant in 2006–2007 to support a seminar series and a \$13,000 internal grant to organize a workshop that produced a collection of papers for an edited volume. A proposal has been submitted to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for \$1,200,000 for the Cornell portion of the project.

### **Persistent Poverty and Upward Mobility, 2008–2011**

The Persistent Poverty project boasts the most interdisciplinary team to date, bringing together 10 faculty members from seven departments. It has engaged over 50 affiliates from 20 departments and is planning two conferences and three workshops for 2008–2009. The team began by convening a one-day planning retreat in July 2008. It is preparing to compete for a major U.S. Department of Health and Human Services grant and for an innovative collaborative work agreement with the international development agency CARE.

## **FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM**

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The inaugural ISS Fellows Program began on August 1, 2008. Eleven faculty fellows will work in residence at the ISS for one semester, allowing them to focus on research. This cohort includes faculty from nine departments, spanning six colleges. The President's Council of Cornell Women has contributed funding to cover some of the expenses for this program.

## **SMALL GRANT PROGRAM**

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During the fall 2007 and spring 2008 semester, 52 proposals for small grants were received, of which 22 were funded. The amount requested in these two funding rounds was over \$600,000. The average funding per project was \$5,613 for fall 2007 (totaling \$44,902) and \$4,758 for spring 2008 (totaling \$66,611).

During the spring 2007 round of funding, 12 small grants were awarded. Out of this cohort, one journal article has been published, two are in journal review, six articles are in preparation, two papers have been posted on the web, and one book on a conference supported by ISS funds has been accepted for publication. In addition, two workshops have been given at Cornell, one data set has been received on the strength of grant monies, one database of over 2.39 million entries has been produced, and six research papers have been presented at national conferences. Six of the grant recipients have applied for funding or resources ranging from \$2,000 to \$150,000 from both internal and external sources. The total amount received so far is \$140,607.



The Institute for the Social Sciences  
[www.socialsciences.cornell.edu](http://www.socialsciences.cornell.edu)

**Far Above...**  
**THE CAMPAIGN FOR CORNELL**

The Social Sciences Initiative  
[www.campaign.cornell.edu/socialsciences](http://www.campaign.cornell.edu/socialsciences)

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