Dr. Cowan, the Institute of Human Development (IHD) director from 1998 to 2003, retired at the end of the 2004-2005 academic year. Although IHD continues to be an active center for research on development throughout the lifespan, Dr. Cowan was the last researcher at UC Berkeley involved in the Inter-Generational Studies (IGS).

His collaborators at University of California, Davis and University of Southern California (USC) are continuing research with IGS data and participants. Therefore, all involved thought it best to move the IGS archive from IHD to UC Davis where it will be maintained by Drs. Kevin Grimm and Keith Widaman. In November 2009, 45 file cabinets of invaluable data were moved to the Department of Psychology at UC Davis. In early 2010, a searchable, electronic archive was begun by scanning each document in the files. This is being conducted by trained undergraduate research assistants under Dr. Grimm’s supervision. So far, documents from 10 file cabinets have been scanned and are now being coded. This includes information in the files that was never previously computerized. We expect this new resource will lead to many more research publications in the years to come.

**Study in the Spotlight: Genetics and Cognitive Aging**

Studies of families indicate that differences between people in genetic makeup help explain differences in cognitive abilities. An important area of current research is studying how genetic factors combine with early experiences to influence adult cognition. Drs. Carol Prescott and John McArdle (Professors of Psychology at University of Southern California) proposed that a clearer understanding of this topic could be obtained by combining genetic information with multiple measures of cognition obtained at many points throughout development. Given the wealth of data already available from IGS members, you were viewed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as a unique study sample for contributing to this important topic.

In 2009, the NIH funded Drs. Prescott and McArdle to add genetic information to the health and cognition data you have already provided. We are in the process of contacting IGS members, their spouses and adult children to ask for saliva samples. Saliva contains DNA, from which we will be measuring genes and studying how genetic information combines with early health history to influence cognition throughout the lifecourse.

CogUSC stands for the Unified Studies of Cognition. CogUSC is headed by Dr. McArdle and includes several studies that address important national research areas in cognition and aging, including developing measures that can be given over telephone or the internet, rather than in person.

Visit [http://kiptron.usc.edu](http://kiptron.usc.edu) to learn more. For information on the Genetics and Cognitive Aging study, click on “CogGENE”
Researchers at the University of Southern California

Dr. John McArdle, Professor of Psychology and Gerontology (http://kiptron.usc.edu/people/mcardle.html) Dr. McArdle has been a Visiting Scholar of Psychology at UC Berkeley for the last ten years. His research focuses on age-sensitive methods for psychological and educational measurement and longitudinal data analysis, including adult cognitive abilities. McArdle recently won an NIH Merit Award and is the director of the Unified Studies of Cognition (CogUSC) Laboratory, which conducts longitudinal studies throughout the United States about how cognition changes during adulthood. He has collaborated on the Inter-Generational Studies since 1980.

Dr. Carol Prescott, Professor of Psychology (http://college.usc.edu/labs/prescott) Dr. Prescott is a clinical psychologist who studies genetic influences on substance use, psychopathology, and cognition. She and Dr. McArdle recently received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to add genetic information to IGS health and cognition data to test hypotheses about how genetic variation interacts with demographic, economic, and health variables to influence cognitive change throughout the lifespan.

Kristen Fong, Project Specialist, Department of Psychology Kristen joined the research team in September 2009 to work specifically in the CogUSC laboratory with Drs. Prescott and McArdle on their Genetics and Cognitive Aging research. She currently serves as the contact for IGS members participating in the study, and has assisted in the development of the IGS website and newsletter.

Researchers at the University of California, Davis

Dr. Kevin Grimm, Assistant Professor of Psychology (http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/labs/Grimm/personal/) Dr. Grimm has used longitudinal data from the Inter-Generational Studies and the Bradway-McArdle Longitudinal Study to examine trajectories of verbal and memory abilities from early childhood through late adulthood. He has found that memory skills are a leading indicator of changes in verbal abilities throughout the lifespan. Thus, in childhood, memory skills serve as a platform for subsequent growth in verbal ability, whereas in later adulthood memory skills serve as a protective factor against subsequent declines in verbal ability.

Dr. Keith Widaman, Professor of Psychology (http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty/Widaman) Dr. Widaman conducts research on the development of human mental abilities and on statistical methods. In research on mental abilities, Dr. Widaman studies the cognitive processes underlying numerical ability, especially as these processes change from childhood through early adulthood. He also studies how parenting encourages the development of adaptive behaviors in persons with mental retardation. With IGS data, Dr. Widaman is developing measures of personality and factors that predict different patterns of change.
Recent Publications using IGS Data


IGS Website

You can visit the website (http://kiptron.usc.edu/igs) to learn more about the IGS team and recent publications.

While you’re there, visit the “Contact Us” page where you can update your contact information.

You can also use the website to request more information about participating in the CogGENE (Genetics and Cognitive Aging) study, or inform the researchers that you prefer not to participate.
Recent Findings

Constance Jones, Professor of Psychology, California State University, Fresno (http://psych.csufresno.edu/jones/about/index.shtml) and Harvey Peskin, retired Psychology professor at San Francisco State University, recently published two articles in the Journal of Adult Development using information collected from members of the Inter-Generational Studies. One article, published in 2010, explored trajectories in men’s and women’s psychological health from early adolescence to late adulthood. Psychological health was measured using the self-report California Psychological Inventory as well as scores based on interviews with Institute of Human Development staff. Employing newly-developed statistical techniques, Jones and Peskin found several distinctly different paths of change in psychological health. They found trajectories of increasing psychological health, and life-long trajectories of stability. The most common was a pattern of relatively high initial psychological health with a subsequent small linear increase. Clearly some individuals have very stable levels of psychological health, while others see improvements through to later adulthood.

Where are you now?

HELP KEEP US UP-TO-DATE
If you have moved or changed your name or phone number, please contact one of the members of the IGS team

Dr. John J. McArdle
CogUSC
Psychology Department
SGM501
University of Southern California
3620 S. McClintock Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90089-1061

Website: kiptron.usc.edu
Email: CogGene@usc.edu
Phone: 877-846-9551 (Toll-Free)

Dr. Kevin J. Grimm
Young Hall
Psychology Department
University of California, Davis
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616

Email: kjgrimm@ucdavis.edu
Phone: 530-752-1880