

THE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH

ON POVERTY AND THE LAW SCHOOL—

A CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP



Professor Handler

From the time it was established in 1966, the Institute for Research on Poverty has had members of the Law faculty among its participants.

The Institute was designed as the research arm of the Office of Economic Opportunity, with funds provided by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1967—a major component of the War on Poverty, during the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Separate projects have involved consumer protection, equal access to education, crime and violence among the poor, problems of lawlessness in welfare administration, and the uses of law by social reform groups.

Recently, a major study of the careers of lawyers doing legal rights work has been completed by *Professor Joel F. Handler* of the law faculty, with Ellen Jane Hollingsworth of the Poverty Institute, and Howard S. Erlanger, Department of Sociology. Using survey data collected from a very large number of lawyers with current or past work experience in poverty and public interest law, the investigators have been able to specify the characteristics of lawyers choosing such work, the nature of the work done and the reactions of lawyers to such jobs, and, finally, the types of work later selected by lawyers who have had legal rights experiences. Since data from a large random sample of the bar (1450 lawyers) was also collected, it is possible to contrast career paths for those who have and have not had professional experience in poverty or public interest law, controlling for

age and numerous background variables. The monograph reporting these results will be available in 1976. A second study, concerned with status and mobility in the American legal profession, using data from the random bar sample, will be carried out next by the same authors.

Professor Handler and his colleagues have received a substantial grant from the National Science Foundation for a further study of the legal profession: 1) patterns of recruitment; 2) models of career development; 3) patterns of stratification within the bar.

During recent years, in addition to Professor Handler, Professors William Clune, Neil Komesar, William Whitford, and James Jones have been part of the scholarly community at the Institute.

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