



Kelley Fong, PhD

I am assistant professor of sociology at the University of California, Irvine. My research and teaching interests include poverty, inequality, social policy, children and youth, education, and family life. Much of my current research focuses on Child Protective Services, drawing on administrative data as well as fieldwork with mothers, child welfare agency staff, and professionals mandated to report child maltreatment. Other projects examine school choice and residential decision-making.

My work has been supported by the Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard, the Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Well-Being, the Julius B. Richmond Fellowship at the Harvard Center on the Developing Child, and the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

I received my Ph.D. in sociology and social policy from Harvard University and was previously at Georgia Tech's School of History and Sociology. Before beginning my doctoral studies, I contributed to multi-method research on community college reforms and worked on impact litigation to reform child welfare systems. I have also advocated for youth in foster care and assisted self-represented litigants in housing and family law clinics.

My primary line of research focuses on Child Protective Services (CPS). I examine CPS as a state response to families facing adversity, analyzing the workings and implications of a system that can offer therapeutic support to families but that also wields coercive power.

I also study the spatial patterning of CPS contact, using child welfare system administrative data from Connecticut. In an article recently published in *Child Abuse & Neglect*, I estimate the prevalence of CPS reports during early childhood and of substantiated CPS reports during childhood, for children living in neighborhoods with different poverty rates and racial compositions. In a study forthcoming in *Housing Policy Debate*, Lindsey Bullinger and I analyze the relationship between evictions and neighborhood CPS reports.

- [We Shouldn't Rely on Child Protective Services to Address Family Adversity](#)
- [Research: Child Protective Services and State Intervention into Families Facing Adversity](#)