The Socializer-Fall 2013

Western Michigan University

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Anything that can be put in a nutshell, Should Remain There
Dr. David Hartmann, Department Chair

Attributed to Bertrand Russell
Perhaps more than most I need to remember Russell’s warning to avoid the pithy summary or the too glib rejoinder. Particularly when reflecting on so diverse and valuable a thing as this community we call the Department of Sociology, it is hard to capture its essence or its internal consistency – I am absolutely sure they exist but I am probably too close to the thing to properly analyze it. Like a gardener admiring a row of beans, it gives me a pleasure that an impartial observer (whatever that means) cannot really have. Voltaire recognized the charms of gardening and Yeats' spoke of “nine bean rows” and captured a humanistic connection that spoke to “the deep heart’s core”. I think it has something to do with good people dedicated to good work, as we try very hard to see the good, and our satisfaction in that effort.

I guess what I am trying to say is that I do not understand our department, I cannot figure out what makes it work or even what are its constituent parts – there are obvious demarcations like students, faculty and staff or teaching, research and service or independent and collaborative endeavor – but these are clearly demarcations of convenience, like Caesar’s division of all Gaul into three parts, for funding or accounting of various kinds. It is not ultimately a mechanistic thing amenable to reductionist analysis. It is therefore a gestalt, it is emergent, it is a dynamic system – to use the terminology of three reputable efforts to explain magic in scientific terms.

It is, I suppose, ultimately simply ours. And that is what makes it everything that it is including dear to us. That is what community means at some level and while it is the job of sociology to figure community out in more credible – precise, predictable, repeatable – language, I have no interest in those particular nutshells today. Read in these pages about some of the light that comes off this community and recognize that it is ours together.

Welcome Dr. Jesse Smith and welcome back to the rest of you as well – now let’s get back to work.

1 Both lines are from The Lake Isle of Innisfree.

2 “Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres”, the opening line of Caesar’s The Gallic Wars.
Dr. Jerome Manis Obituary

Western Michigan University professor emeritus of sociology, died Feb. 23, 2013. He was 95. Manis joined the faculty in 1952 and retired after 26 years of service. Survivors include his wife, Laura, associate professor emerita of counseling.

Manis led development of WMU’s graduate program in sociology. That effort began with a Master of Arts in 1958 and a Doctor of Philosophy in 1966, which was one of the University’s first doctoral programs. In addition, he founded WMU’s Center for Sociological Research and directed it from 1956 to 1972. The center served as a basis for the U.S. Office of Education doctoral traineeship grant that initiated the University’s doctoral program in sociology. He received research grants from agencies such as the National Science Foundation and Public Health Service as well as the U.S. Office of Education.

His professional activities included service as chairman of the psychiatric sociology division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, vice president and program chair for the North Central Sociological Association and president of the Michigan Sociological Association. Manis had been living in Honolulu, Hawaii. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Wayne State University, master’s degree from the University of Chicago, and doctoral degree from Columbia University.

Private services have been held. Memorial gifts may be made to the Kokua Council, c/o Harris Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 96813.

Introducing Dr. Jesse Smith!

I received both my MA and PhD from the University of Colorado at Boulder. My MA was in sociology and was based on a written and oral exam in the area of religion and identity.

My dissertation topic was on irreligion, and it involved a five year ethnography of local atheist/secular/freethinking groups in Colorado.

Yes, my wife’s name is Katie. We were married in 2002. We moved here from Boulder Colorado in late July with our 7 pound rescue miniature pinscher. Katie was a 3rd grade teacher back in Colorado. We had never visited Michigan before taking the job, so we look forward to exploring the state and trying out some great restaurants and breweries.

In addition to moving to Kalamazoo Jesse continued his professional work through the summer.

He had a paper accepted for publication for the December issue of Sociology of Religion titled “Conceptualizing Atheist Identity: Expanding Questions, Constructing Models, and Moving Forward.

Jesse presented a paper at the Society for the Study of Social Problems annual meeting in New York, NY titled: “The Social Deviance of Atheism: Negotiating Cultural Membership with a Stigmatized Identity”

Alumni News

Ondrea Dillard and an alumni of the program writes, I currently live in Kalamazoo. I work for the State of Michigan as an Adult Service Specialist. Prior to this I worked as a Children Protective Service Specialist. I am married with two grade school children so needless to say I am very busy. At some point I would like to pursue a Masters Degree in Sociology. Continue to keep me updated on the program.

Kathleen Tiemann just accepted the deanship for the School of Liberal Arts at Merrimack College in North Andover, Massachusetts.

Justin Brophy is employed by the Mitchell First United Methodist Church as a Youth and Young Adult Pastor.

He graduated with his BA in Sociology with a concentration in Social Psychology in 2009. He also received a Masters of Divinity, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL.

Advice for students: Be persistent and do things on your own time-line. Pay attention to what you are doing and why you do it. It develops your character. The first step to success is learning from your failures. Be graceful and love people, we all deserve love and grace.

“Healing through movement: The benefits of belly dance for gendered victimization”

-Angie Moe

Dr. Angie Moe earned a graduate certificate in Integrative Holistic Health and Wellness from WMU April 2013. The program is premised on experiential learning and practical application. It usually attracts students in health related fields. I believe I am the first sociologist to complete the certificate. It required 18 credits of advanced graduate work in all areas of alternative health and healing mechanisms. My final project, much like a mini-thesis was on the healing potential of creative movement for gendered victimization. This project, titled “Healing through movement: The benefits of belly dance for gendered victimization” is under conditional acceptance for publication in Affilia: The Journal of Women and Social Work.
Aaron Thomas Kinzel, MPA is a part-time instructor for the WMU Department of Sociology and teaches Introduction to Criminal Justice and Juvenile Delinquency. Kinzel brings a unique perspective to these courses as in his youth he was actively involved in a life of crime. As a teenager he quickly became involved with the criminal justice system and was in prison due to a serious confrontation with law enforcement. After his release he has earned three college degrees with honors and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Education from the University of Michigan. Earlier this year he was a featured speaker at the Prison Awareness Conference held at the University of Toledo:
http://www.knowledgestream.org/kstream/index.asp?item_id=13209

He has worked on various criminal justice public policy reforms in the State Capitol in Lansing, Michigan. He has also mentored and worked with a broad range of both juvenile and adult offenders to guide them away from a life of crime and towards a positive future as a law abiding and productive citizen. Kinzel hopes to bring the Inside-Outside Prison Exchange program:
http://www.insideoutcenter.org/ to WMU in 2014 to give students a better perspective of the inner workings of the criminal justice system. If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact him at: aaron.t.kinzel@wmich.edu.

Alumni we want to hear from you!

Our strong suit is our alumni. We enjoy receiving your announcements: job changes, promotions, advanced degrees, etc. All you need to do provide us with the information below (with a picture, if possible) and send to ann.browning@wmich.edu.

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If alumni, degree and year:
Dr. Charles Crawford


Dr. Whitney Gunter

*Awards:* Dr. Whitney Gunter received a professional development grant from the Western Michigan University Women’s Caucus (April 2013).

*Presentations:* Gunter, Whitney D. and Kevin Daly. (2013, August). *Video Game Violence, Violent Behavior, and Gender Differences in Effects.* Presented at the 121st annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Honolulu, HI.


Dr. Angie Moe

*Presentations:* Church, Jessica and Angie Moe (April 2013) "Still Siblings: The Importance of Sibling Bonds for Children in Foster Care". Michigan Sociological Society Meeting.


Dr. Ron Kramer continues to serve as one of the co-chairs of the Interdisciplinary Humanities Study Group on Climate Change that operates through the WMU Center for the Humanities. On September 25, 2013 he gave a talk sponsored by the Study Group and the WMU Center for the Study of Ethics in Society titled, “Is Climate Change a Crime: Moral, Legal and Political Perspectives.” Ron has also recently published a journal article and two book chapters analyzing climate change from a criminological perspective:

