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Fall 2017

## The Socializer-Fall 2017

Department of Sociology

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# The Socializer

A Newsletter from the Department of Sociology



WESTERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY

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## Capacity

By Dr. David Hartmann

As sociologists, we often draw attention to the limits of agency – to the influence of social systems on the life chances of their citizens and to the reality that one need not have formal citizenship (e.g., voting rights) in a system to be influenced by it. In addition, social systems can appear to be natural or inevitable, and indeed can devote substantial resources to that impression. Nevertheless, particular structural forms at least, have some amenability to change and even to obsolescence. I want to use the word “capacity” to discuss the potential to accomplish work and to highlight the capacity of a system for change. To do so, I will explore what is in many ways an atypical kind of system – the modern university.

So, capacity is both the potential for work of a particular kind and is fungible across different (other) kinds of work. In assessing capacity therefore, we must know in broad terms at least, “capacity for what?” - the nature and amount of desired work need to be specified. Moreover, that specification is always an opportunity for assessing priorities and should consequently always be more or less aspirational.

If I were to be asked, for example, what is the capacity of the department of Sociology at WMU in 2017 (I have in fact been asked this question more than once), I would assess that capacity in terms of our potential to achieve outcomes (products) related to our aspirational goals. At a university, these goals and products are difficult to define with precision though that cannot be an excuse for avoiding the conversation that will ultimately do so.

Fortunately, the capacity of a university and of any of its subunits toward almost any end is largely based in highly fungible components - the intellectual and experiential capital of its workforce.

(cont. page 2)



## Capacity (cont.)

Faculty and staff have the capacity to adapt and move and are relatively footloose in doing so (there are important exceptions to this in what is typically classed as infrastructure – space, equipment, professional staff and so on - of various kinds).

This is not to say that faculty and administration are not often creatures of intellectual habit. Change is hard and generally relies on both push and pull factors – on dissatisfactions with the present path and on the appeal of alternatives. These are questions of value as well as of supposedly more objective assessment. But intellectual and pedagogic changes are rarely radical and as mobilizations of aspiration and effort occur, we will find that most of the necessary intellectual capacity is already here or easily obtained. Indeed, the limiting force of imagination and experience – what Hume in another context called habit - suggests that it is likely that our aspirations will not generally run too far ahead of our current practice.

This discussion suggests that in times of transition and until the particulars of goal and measurable outcome are agreed upon, capacity should sensibly be measured in terms of the available time and commitment of the faculty. Measures of infrastructure fungibility can also be developed though they will vary by college and department and may be particularly important in engineering and the natural sciences. The basic unit of potential for work, either work of the present kind or of some alternative to which commitment is obtained, is therefore the available workload of the relevant faculty. Indeed, that workload will always be allocated across goals and outcomes that are to some extent in flux for the individual as well as for the unit, college or university. But in gross terms, we are capable of – we have the capacity for – whatever the faculty are committed to doing. This means more of some things and less of others among

the current portfolio and perhaps a reorientation toward goals and products not yet well articulated.

The main avenues to enhance capacity are therefore those which build a consensus of commitment toward goals and products. Such objects – first of curiosity and then of attraction and commitment - are limited mainly, as I've already said, by faculty imagination which in turn is primarily nurtured by the usual expectations of scholarship: curiosity, wide and sympathetic reading and a willingness to seriously engage with ideas and evidence. If this practice is valued and its efforts rewarded with attention, our capacity is just fine thank you. One would do well, of course, to remember that actualization of capacity requires attention, support, resources – in a phrase, an adaptive institution. The last time I checked, straw that actually changes into gold is still the stuff of fairy tales.

A final note on direction: The arenas for creativity include the well-known categories of general education, the education of majors and minors, graduate education, faculty research, policy advice relevant to local, state, national and international debates and so on. These are merely placeholders, of course, and are therefore places to start rather than finish our thinking.

Centralized or pluralistic forms of creative movement are possible and unifying themes – e.g., globalization, sustainability, responsible citizenship - may be important in self-identity and to marketing. But one must always recognize the productive tension of what we have in common and in how we differ. A goal of the university can never be homogeneity – of perspective, of task, of method and certainly not of values beyond the shared commitment to intellectual honesty. What can be agreed upon then is a commitment to come together as best we can and to embrace principles of authentic dialogue as the

generic process we all follow – even as it may lead us in different directions.

Be a part of that dialogue – contribute your ideas and your experience – read in these pages about what we are up to and give us feedback. We cannot and should not change as fast as the swirling world to which we contribute, but neither can we be recalcitrant – tending toward that obsolescence to which I alluded in the first paragraph. In a word – talk to us because, when we are uninformed, when we listen only to others like us, we grow complacent and our capacity to be a force for good is diminished.



Dr. David Hartmann, Chair  
Department of Sociology



## Catching up with Slava Karpov

Lisovskaya, E. & V. Karpov (October, 2017). "Russian education thirty years later: Back to the USSR?" Presented at "Seeing Like a State? Innovative Ways of Embedding the History of Education" organized by Indiana University (Bloomington, USA) and the IU Consulting & Research GmbH (Berlin, Germany).

Karpov, V. (July, 2017). "Secularizations, desecularizations, and religious toleration." Presented at the Conference of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR) held at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

Karpov, V. (June, 2017). "Secularizations, desecularizations, and regimes of toleration." Presented at university-wide research seminar at the Ukrainian Catholic University (Lviv, Ukraine).

Karpov, V. (June, 2017). "Orthodoxy in Protestant and Post-Protestant America: Encounters, Perceptions, and Influences." Invited lecture at the Little Academy of Sciences (Kyiv, Ukraine).

Karpov, V. (November, 2017). "Secularizations, desecularizations, and regimes of toleration." Keynote lecture at the international conference "Secularization and Toleration" (Santiago, Chile).

Karpov, V. (October, 2016). "Desecularization in Ukraine and Russia: A comparative perspective." Invited lecture at the Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv, Ukraine.

Karpov, V. & Yelensky, V. (Sept– Oct, 2016). "A tale of two desecularizations: Ukraine and Russia compared." Presented at "Public Religion, Ambient Faith: Religious Institutions and Socio-Political Change in the Black Sea Region." Workshop sponsored by Region, Nation, and Beyond Research Group and the Swiss National Science Foundation, Kyiv, Ukraine.

## Karpov (cont.)

### Books in progress:

Karpov, V. Religions Resurgent: Desecularization in Modern Society.

Karpov V. and Svensson, M. (Editors) *Rethinking Secularization and Toleration: Cross-Disciplinary and Comparative Perspectives*.

### Internal grant:

Karpov, V. (2017). International Education Faculty Development Fund (IEFDF), WMU. Presentation at International Society for Sociology of Religion (ISSR), Lausanne, Switzerland, \$1200.

**Session organizer** of "Secularizations and counter-secularizations: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives" at the Conference of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR), University of Lausanne, Switzerland, July 2017.



With participants of the Secularization and Toleration conference in Chile, November 2016.



After the lecture in Kyiv, with students of the Little Academy of Sciences, June 2017



With Vice-President of the Ukrainian Catholic University Dr. Oleh Turiy. Lviv, Ukraine, June 2017

In the cups.... Delicious Ukrainian borscht!

## Elena Lisovskaya

### Published book chapter:

Lisovskaya, E. (2017). Religion's uneasy return to the Russian school: A case of contested desecularization 'from above.' In M. Sivasubramaniam & R. Hayhoe (Eds.). *Religion and education: Comparative and international perspectives*. Oxford: Symposium Books. <https://doi.org/10.15730/books.101>



### Published article:

Lisovskaya, E. (2016). Religious Education in Russia: Inter-Faith Harmony or Neo-Imperial Toleration? *Journal of Social Inclusion*. Special Issue on *Religious Diversity and Social Inclusion*, 4(2) <http://dx.doi.org/10.17645/si.v4i2.509>

### Book in progress:

Lisovskaya, E. *From Marxism-Leninism to "Orthodox Culture": The Ideological Transformation in Post-Communist Russian Education*.

**Received internal grant:** Lisovskaya, E. (2017). International Education Faculty Development Fund (IEFDF), WMU. Presentation at International Society for Sociology of Religion (ISSR), Lausanne, Switzerland, \$1200

### Presented at international meetings:

Lisovskaya, E. & V. Karpov. (October, 2017). "Russian education thirty years later: Back to the USSR?" Presented at "Seeing Like a Stat? Innovative Ways of Embedding the History of Education," organized by Indiana University (Bloomington, USA) and the IU Consulting & Research GmbH (Berlin, Germany).

Lisovskaya, E. (July, 2017). "Religion in public schools in the context of two patterns of desecularization: Ukraine and Russia." Presented at the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR) held at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland).

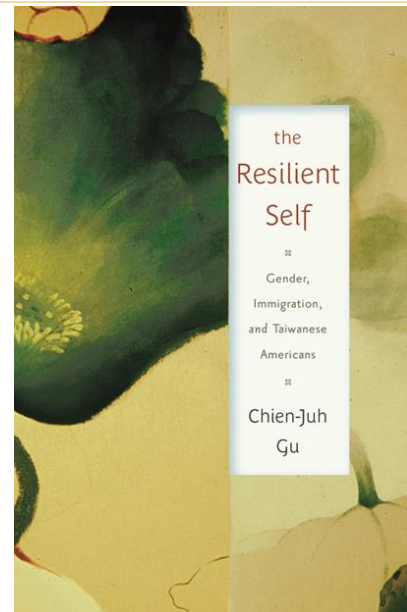
## Jessie Smith

### Publication:

Smith, Jesse M. (2017). "Communal Secularity: Congregational Work at the Sunday Assembly." Pp. 151-170 in *Organized Secularism*, edited by Cragun, Ryan, Manning, Christal, and Lori Fazzino. De Gruyter Press.

### Presentation:

Smith, Jesse M. (2017). "Mormonism on Secularism: Decoding Mormon Leadership Rhetoric on Unbelief through Ethnographic Content Analysis." Society for the Scientific Study of Religion annual conference. Washington D.C.



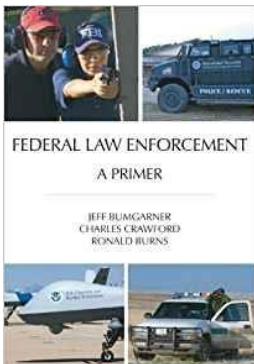
**Chien-Juh Gu** published her second book, *The Resilient Self: Gender, Immigration, and Taiwanese Americans* (2017, Rutgers University Press).

In this book, Gu integrates Mead's theory of the self and Giddens' concept of reflexive self to examine how international migration re-shapes women's senses of themselves during different phases of adaptation. Based on life-history interviews and ethnographic observations, Gu illustrates how immigration creates gendered work and family contexts for middle-class Taiwanese American women, who, in turn, negotiate and resist the social and psychological effects of the processes of immigration and settlement.

This study makes three ground-breaking contributions. First, it brings self into the study of gender and immigration. The topic of "self" was discussed in classical sociological research in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when only men were included in immigration studies. Immigrant women have been studied mostly as mothers or wives; their employment is often discussed in the context of their financial contributions to the family. Gu grounds sociological understanding on women's standpoints as individuals.

Second, immigration research tends to discuss only family or work, and most studies focus on laborers. Based on a middle-class sample, Gu examines the multifaceted structural connections of immigration-family-work-gender-race-ethnicity-citizenship and their varied intersectional effects on self-concepts and behaviors in various social domains. Finally, racism is mostly discussed in studies of immigrant laborers. This is the first book to document everyday racism facing highly skilled immigrant women.

## Charles Crawford has two new book editions coming out this fall:



*Federal Law Enforcement: A Primer* (2nd edition). Edited by Jeff Bumgarner, Charles Crawford, and Ronald Burns. Carolina Academic Press, 2017.

*Spatial Policing: The Influence of Time, Space, and Geography on Law Enforcement Practices* (2nd edition). Edited by Charles Crawford. Carolina Academic Press, 2017.

### Book Chapters:

2017, "Historical Dynamics of Ethnicity in Law Enforcement" In Martin Urbina

(Editor) Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System: The New American Demography 2nd edition (pp 23-41).

**Chien-Juh Gu** presented a paper, "Money, Culture, and Power: Negotiating Egalitarianism in Taiwanese Immigrant Families," at the American Sociological Association conference in Montréal, Canada, in August.

Jack Marsden, an undergraduate sociology major under Dr. Gu's guidance, received the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award. Jack's research project, "School Shootings: A Nexus of Adolescent Masculinity and Homophobic Bullying," takes a unique gender lens to examining cases of school shootings in the United States.

**Angie Moe** published with colleagues from the WMU Medical School:

Kothari, C.L., Wiley, J., Moe, A.M., Liepman, M.R., Tareen, R.S., & Curtis, A. (2016). Maternal depression is not just a problem early on. *Public Health*, 137, 154-161.

**Elena Gapova** became the winner of the Best Book Award in Social and Political Studies from the International Congress for Belarusian Studies for *Klassy Natsiy* [The Classes of Nations: Feminist Critique of Nationbuilding, Moscow: NLO, 2016]. The photo is from award ceremony in Warsaw, September 2017.



**Vincent Lyon-Callo** co-organized a session at the Society for Applied Anthropology Meeting in April "Academic Practice and the Ends of Possibility: Negotiating Power and Enacting New Worlds through Teaching and Research"

Lyon-Callo also presented a paper, "Rethinking the Violence of Common Sense: Ethnography, Overdetermination, and a Quest for Equity within Public Education"

### Whitney DeCamp

#### Publication:

DeCamp, W. (2017). Who Plays Violent Video Games? An Exploratory Analysis of Predictors of Playing Violent Games. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 117, 260-266. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2017.06.027

#### Grants:

Drinking Water Protection Survey of Kalamazoo County. Kercher Center (DeCamp).

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety Community Survey. Kercher Center and Walker Institute (DeCamp, Crawford, Cundiff, Goetz, Ready).

Public Safety WMU Student Survey. Kercher Center and Walker Institute (DeCamp, Crawford, Cundiff, Goetz, Ready).



## Faculty News

During the summer **Dr. Charles Crawford** participated in an International Faculty Development Seminar on Portugal's drug policy reform in Lisbon, Portugal, with assistance from the Haenicke Institute for Global Education. He reports that it was a fantastic class with a great group of colleagues.



"We had lectures and meetings with some of the leading Portuguese scholars in the field, community activists, addiction counselors, and numerous site visits. I will be integrating the lessons learned, and information into my classes."



"Of course there was fun and wine during the down times."

## Department News

### *Words from the new Director of the Kercher Center*

*Dr. Whitney Gunter*

*The mission of the Kercher Center for Social Research is to: a) advance the understanding of social processes and of social policy analysis, b) serve the research needs of Kalamazoo and surrounding communities, the southwest region and the state of Michigan, and c) train undergraduate and graduate students to become the next generation of social researchers. Prior to coming to WMU, I was fortunate enough to gain several years of experience with similar applied projects at another research center (the University of Delaware Center for Drug and Health Studies). In addition, I also specialized in research methods and statistics as part of my doctoral studies. My main goals as Director of the Kercher Center are to further these elements of the center's mission using the experience and skill sets that I bring from my prior experience and education.*

*The training of our students is a particularly important part of the center's mission. We currently have two projects underway, with two more planned for the near-future, and each of them includes a component to provide training and experience to students, including both undergraduate and graduate. These projects include a variety of research methods, such as mailed surveys, online surveys, and telephone interviewing. The scopes are also varied and provide applied contributions at both the local and national level. Through these projects, we have partnered with other local organizations, including the WMU Evaluation Center and the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. With these and future projects, we will provide both contributions to the community and the experience that makes our students competitive on the job market.*

*I would be remiss to not thank our outgoing director, Dr. Paul Ciccantell, for his valuable contributions as the center's director over the past ten years. His commitment to service was (and remains) strong and clear, and the opportunities and insights that he offered to me during my time here has given me a running start. As the new director, I look forward to helping to advance the center's platform for conducting research, providing training and experience to our students, and contributing to the Kalamazoo community through applied sociological research.*

### Michigan Sociological Association



Dr. Ron Kramer, receiving the Charles Horton Cooley Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Sociology from the Michigan Sociological Association, October 2017. The award was presented by Liz Bradshaw (WMU PhD, 2012).

### Graduate Student News

**Matt Reid** joined the Board of Directors of the Midwest Sociological Society as the Media Editor. You can follow MSS on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/themss.org](http://www.facebook.com/themss.org)

**Traci Joseph** presented "Antibiotics: The Nexus of State-Corporate Crime in Our Food Supply" at the American Society of Criminology in New Orleans last year; "What We Don't Know CAN Hurt Us: How Ignorance Studies Can Inform Criminological Theory" at MSS in Milwaukee this past April; and "Would you like Antibiotic Resistance with that? Ignorance Production as State-Corporate Crime" at the Justice Studies Association this past June.

**Casey James Schotter and Ronald C. Kramer** presented "State Adaptations to Climate Change: Just and Progressive or Militaristic and Criminal?" at the Justice Studies Association this past June.



## **Dr. Zoann Snyder**

### **Director, Criminal Justice Program**

I have been asked to write something as the Criminal Justice Program Director. First, I want to recognize Dr. Ron Kramer for the outstanding leadership he has provided for the students, faculty, and staff in the department. Ron started his long tenure as the director the same fall I arrived at Western as a newly hired assistant professor. During the past 25 years, the Criminal Justice Program has grown from 4 full time board appointed faculty to 10. We have expanded our course offerings for our undergraduate majors and established a strong critical criminology core in our Sociology Graduate Programs. There is not time or space enough to do justice to all of the firsts and milestones achieved in the past 25 years so I offer instead a humble and grateful thank you to Ron.

My first tasks as Criminal Justice Program Director are to do the daily work in support of education for our many undergraduate students. I have been reaching out to and meeting with criminal justice professionals in Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties and beyond to continue and grow our internship opportunities. Experiential learning has long been

a hallmark of the Criminal Justice Program and will continue to be so into the future.

The spring semester brings two notable opportunities for our students. Dr. Angie Moe will be offering the first service learning course in the department, the Social Justice Practicum. While others have provided students with service learning as one component of the traditional classroom, the practicum is exclusively about service to and engagement with a community partner.

I am offering the first study abroad course, Advanced Criminology, in the Netherlands. The class explores comparative and international study about criminal justice and criminology. Our week in the Netherlands will provide rich engagement with criminal justice professionals and students from the Netherlands and Europe, as well as chances to explore Dutch history and culture. We will partner with the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Institute for Applied Safety and Security Studies. We also have the opportunity to visit and attend a session at the International Criminal Court in the Hague. Course enrollment is still underway at press time.



**Dr. Zoann Snyder**

### ***Congratulations to the new Director of the Graduate Program Dr. Susan Carlson***



Dr. Susan Carlson (left) pictured with PhD Graduate Dr. Kelly Faust (right), 2012. Dr. Faust is currently a faculty member at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN.



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# *Alumni Updates*

*A recent email from Laura Gialanella*

Subject: Thanks!!

Message: This a very long overdue email, but better late than never! I am a 2007 graduate from WMU. I got my BA in Criminal Justice and I distinctly remember in my advanced criminology class being assigned the book *Courtroom 302* which was about a reporter who spent a year in the Cook County courthouse (the busiest courthouse in the country) and wrote about his observations.

After reading that I said to myself, "I will work in that building one day." Just wanted to send a thank you because I got to where I wanted to be as a probation officer in the mental health unit at the Cook County courthouse.



***Alumni, we want to hear from you!***

*Please email us an update, with or without a photo. We'd love to hear an update from you right here in the next issue of The Socializer! Send email to: [ann.browning@wmich.edu](mailto:ann.browning@wmich.edu)*

- *Where are you?*
- *What are you doing?*
- *Like us on facebook: SOC-WMU to keep up to date on current events.*

Below...a couple of fun "blasts from the past" with our alumni!

