

SARAH L. JIREK

Westmont College
Sociology and Anthropology Department
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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2017-present Associate Professor, Sociology, Westmont College
2014-2017 Assistant Professor, Sociology, Westmont College
2011-2014 Assistant Professor, Sociology, University of Tampa

EDUCATION

2011 Ph.D., Social Work and Sociology, University of Michigan
Dissertation: *Posttraumatic Growth in the Lives of Young Adult Trauma Survivors: Relationships with Cumulative Adversity, Narrative Reconstruction, and Survivor Missions*
Committee: Daniel Saunders and Karin Martin (Co-Chairs), Beth Glover Reed and Jeffrey Morenoff
Sociology Preliminary Exam: *Sociology of Gender and Sexuality*, Passed with Honors
Social Work Preliminary Exam: *Posttraumatic Growth: An Exploration of the Positive Outcomes of Traumatic Life Events*, Passed with Honors
Committee: Daniel Saunders (Chair), Beth Glover Reed, and Richard Tolman

2005 M.S.W., Social Work, University of Michigan
Concentrations: Interpersonal Practice and Mental Health

2001 B.A., Sociology, Westmont College
Human Services Track
Valedictorian, *Summa Cum Laude*

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Jirek, Sarah L., & Truscott, Philip. (2020). Geographical variation in the relationship between religiosity and campus sexual assault: Differences in prevalence or reporting? *Social Work and Christianity*, 47(4), 45-70. <https://doi.org/10.34043/swc.v47i3.140>

Jirek, Sarah L. (2020). Ineffective organizational responses to workers' secondary traumatic stress: A case study of the effects of an unhealthy organizational culture. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership, and Governance*, 44(3), 210-228. doi: 10.1080/23303131.2020.1722302

Jirek, Sarah L. & Saunders, Daniel G. (2018). Cumulative adversity as a correlate of posttraumatic growth: The effects of multiple traumas, discrimination, and sexual harassment. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 27(6), 612-630. doi: 10.1080/10926771.2017.1420720

Jirek, Sarah L. (2017). Narrative reconstruction and posttraumatic growth among trauma survivors: The importance of narrative in social work research and practice. *Qualitative Social Work*, 16(2), 166-188. doi: 10.1177/1473325016656046

Jirek, Sarah L. (2015). Soul pain: The hidden toll of working with survivors of physical and sexual violence. *SAGE Open*, 5(3), 1-13. doi: 10.1177/2158244015597905

Sumerau, J., & Jirek, Sarah L. (2015). Post-apocalyptic inequalities: Race, class, gender, and sexualities in *Firefly*. In B. Gurr (Ed.), *Race, gender, and sexuality in post-apocalyptic TV and film* (Ch. 5, pp. 71-84). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Jirek, Sarah L. (2018). A new narrative for psychology. [Review of the book *A new narrative for psychology*, by B. Schiff]. *Social Forces*, 97(1), e12. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soy068>

WORKS IN PROGRESS (FOR PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATION)

Jirek, Sarah L. (in progress). The motivations and contributions of trauma survivors with a survivor mission: An exploratory study of an unexamined form of posttraumatic growth. (received a “revise and resubmit” from *Journal of Social Work*)

Jirek, Sarah L. (in progress). Narrative reconstruction and therapeutic self-reflection during life story interviews: The potentially positive outcomes for trauma survivors participating in trauma-related research.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2020 Jirek, Sarah L. *Organizational Culture, Organizational Structure, and Secondary Traumatic Stress: A Study of Organizational Deficits and Remedies*. [Conference cancelled due to COVID-19.] Accepted for presentation at the 115th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.

2019 Jirek, Sarah L. *Ineffective Organizational Responses to Workers’ Secondary Traumatic Stress: A Case Study of the Effects of an Unhealthy Organizational Culture and How to Remedy It*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology, Portland, OR.

2016 Jirek, Sarah L. *Narrative Reconstruction and Posttraumatic Growth: The Importance of Narrative in Sociological Research and Practice*. Paper presented at the 111th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Seattle, WA.

2013 Jirek, Sarah L. *“I Really Want To Help People”: Survivor Helpers, Survivor Missions, and Survivors’ Empowerment*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology, Portland, OR.

2013 Jirek, Sarah L. *Narrative Reconstruction and Trauma Survivors’ Development of Posttraumatic Growth*. Paper presented at the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, New York, NY.

2012 Jirek, Sarah L. *Designing and Teaching a Clinical Sociology Course for Undergraduate Students: Lessons Learned*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology, Milwaukee, WI.

- 2012 Jirek, Sarah L. (with Bruce Friesen and Norma Winston). *From the Ground Up: Designing a Capstone Course for an Applied Sociology Program*. Workshop co-led at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology, Milwaukee, WI.
- 2012 Jirek, Sarah L. *Cumulative Adversity and Other Correlates and Predictors of Posttraumatic Growth*. Paper presented at the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Denver, CO.
- 2009 Jirek, Sarah L. *Organizational Responses to Vicarious Trauma Among Advocates Working with Domestic Violence Survivors*. Paper presented at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, San Antonio, TX.
- 2009 Jirek, Sarah L. 'Viewing the World Through Different Eyes': *Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth and the Missing Sociological Discourse on Positive, Post-Trauma Change*. Paper presented at the 104th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA.
- 2008 Jirek, Sarah L. *Vicarious Traumatization and Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth Among Advocates Working with Trauma Survivors*. Poster presented at the 54th Annual Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2008 Jirek, Sarah L. *Vicarious Traumatization and Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth: The Paradoxical Effects of Working with Survivors of Physical and Sexual Violence*. Paper presented at the 4th International Congress on Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, IL.
- 2006 Jirek, Sarah L. *Soul Pain: The Hidden Toll of Working with Survivors of Physical and Sexual Violence*. Paper presented at the 101st Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal, Quebec.
- 2006 Jirek, Sarah L. *Exploring Risk Factors and Empowering Strategies for Organizations Treating Survivors of Physical and Sexual Violence*. Paper presented at the 10th International Family Violence and Child Victimization Research Conference, Portsmouth, NH.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 Jirek, Sarah L. *Understanding and Implementing Trauma-Informed Care*. Invited presentation for Title IX report recipients, Westmont College.
- 2020 Jirek, Sarah L. *Family Violence: Facts, Correlates, and How Each of Us Can Weed Out the Seeds of This Problem*. Invited keynote address for the Santa Barbara Family Seminar on "What Seeds are You Sowing?" [Event postponed due to COVID-19.]
- 2019 Jirek, Sarah L. *Qualitative Research: Understanding the Basics, Formulating Research Questions, and Choosing Research Methods*. Invited presentation to Political Science majors, Westmont College.
- 2017 Jirek, Sarah L. *The Relationship Between Campus Sexual Assault Rates and Religiosity: Differences in Prevalence or Reporting?* Paul C. Wilt Phi Kappa Phi Lecture (all-campus, public lecture), Westmont College.
- 2016 Jirek, Sarah L. *Applying to Graduate School 101*. Sociology and Anthropology Department's Professionalization Series, Westmont College.

- 2016 Jirek, Sarah L. *Narrative Reconstruction and Posttraumatic Growth Among Trauma Survivors: The Importance of Gender and Cultural Narratives*. Gender Studies Lecture (all-campus, public lecture), Westmont College.
- 2016 Jirek, Sarah L. *What Can I Do With a Sociology Degree?* Sociology and Anthropology Department's Professionalization Series, Westmont College.
- 2016 Jirek, Sarah L. (with Felicia Song and Meredith Whitnah). *Graduate School: Advice From Faculty*. Sociology and Anthropology Department's Professionalization Series, Westmont College.
- 2014 Jirek, Sarah L. *"I Really Want To Help People": Survivor Helpers, Survivor Missions, and Survivors' Empowerment*. Sociology and Anthropology Department's Faculty Brownbag Series, Westmont College.
- 2013 Jirek, Sarah L. *How to Survive Graduate School*. Invited presentation to the Sociology Club and other interested students. Department of Government, History, and Sociology, University of Tampa, Tampa, FL.
- 2013 Jirek, Sarah L. *"When Life Hands You Lemons...": Cumulative Adversity and Other Correlates and Predictors of Posttraumatic Growth*. Invited colloquium, Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA.
- 2012 Jirek, Sarah L. *Preventing, Recognizing, and Reducing Vicarious Trauma in Youth Caregivers*. Invited presentation / training for the staff members at CHOICE (Children Having Opportunities in a Caring Environment), Inc. group home, Valrico, FL.
- 2012 Jirek, Sarah L. *The Do's and Don'ts of Graduate School*. Invited presentation to the Sociology Club and other interested students. Department of Government, History, and Sociology, University of Tampa, Tampa, FL.
- 2011 Jirek, Sarah L. *Successfully Navigating the Sociology Academic Job Market: Lessons Learned*. Invited presentation to advanced Ph.D. students. Department of Sociology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2011 Jirek, Sarah L. *Successfully Navigating the Social Work Academic Job Market: Lessons Learned*. Invited presentation to advanced Ph.D. students. School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2008 Jirek, Sarah L. *On Being an Interdisciplinary Scholar*. Invited presentation to first-year cohort of Ph.D. students. School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2008 Jirek, Sarah L. *Soul Pain: The Hidden Toll of Working with Survivors of Physical and Sexual Violence*. Invited presentation of the paper that won the Henry J. Meyer Distinguished Paper Scholarship Award, School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

HONORS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

- 2024 Dallas Willard Research Grant, Westmont College
- 2023, 2020, Professional Development Grants, Westmont College

- 2017, 2015
- 2022 Sabbatical Research Grant, Westmont College
- 2014 Unsung Hero Award, University of Tampa Student Body and Student Leadership Committee
- 2013 Professional Development Award, University of Tampa (a competitive grant allowing a one-course off-load, for one semester, for research purposes; two are awarded annually to UT faculty members)
- 2013 International Faculty Development Seminar Grant (a competitive grant that allowed me to study in Istanbul, Turkey for 10 days), University of Tampa
- 2011 Rackham One-Term Dissertation Fellowship, Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan
- 2009 Bodine Research Grant (\$1,600), Department of Sociology, University of Michigan
- 2009-2011 Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin Student Scholarship
- 2009 Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate Mini-Grant (\$1,500), University of Michigan
- 2009 Graduate Student Research Grant (\$3,000), Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan
- 2009 Thesis Grant (\$500), School of Social Work, University of Michigan
- 2009 Dissertation Research Grant (\$1,000), Department of Sociology, University of Michigan
- 2008 Henry J. Meyer Distinguished Paper Scholarship Award (\$16,000), School of Social Work, University of Michigan
- 2006, 2005 Research Partnership Grants (\$7,000 total), School of Social Work, University of Michigan
- 2005-2007 National Institute of Mental Health Pre-Doctoral Research Training Fellowship, Interdisciplinary Research Training Program on Violence and Mental Health, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, University of Michigan
- 2005 Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant (\$1,500), Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan
- 2005 Student Research Grant (\$2,000), Sociology Department, University of Michigan
- 2005 Student Research Grant (\$750), Center for the Education of Women, University of Michigan
- 2003-2005,
2007-2010 Rackham Merit Fellowship, Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Criminal Justice System Reform
Trauma & Posttraumatic Growth

Prison Reentry
Deviance & Crime

Social Stratification & Inequality
Social Work/Interpersonal Practice

COURSES TAUGHT

- 2014- Westmont College: SOC 001 *Introduction to Sociology*; SOC 050 *Special Topics: Sociology of Sport*; SOC 109 *Qualitative Research Methods*; SOC 177 *Interpersonal Violence*; SOC 180 *Human Services and Social Policy*; SOC 182 *Sociology of Deviance*; SOC 190 *Internship*; SOC 192, *Extracurricular Departmental Activities*; SOC 195, *Senior Seminar*
- 2011-2014 University of Tampa: SOC 100 *Introduction to Sociology*; SOCH 100 *Honors Introduction to Sociology*; SOC 213 *Qualitative Research Methods*; SOC 214 *Sociology of Sport*; SOC 315 *Sociology of Deviance*; SOC 325 *Clinical and Counseling Sociology*
- 2008-2010 University of Michigan: SOC 368, *Criminology*; SOC 325 *Project Community* (Organizing for Social Justice sections; service-learning course)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2022- Principal Investigator, Westmont College
Study: *Formerly Incarcerated Individuals' – and Prison Reentry Professionals' – Experiences with and Perspectives on Prison Reentry*
- Designed and implemented a mixed-methods study exploring: 1) How can we better promote the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals? 2) How do individuals successfully desist from crime? and 3) What changes in social structures, societal institutions, and social programs are needed to: a) reduce the numbers of individuals who get involved in the criminal justice system, and b) promote the successful reintegration of individuals post-release? I conducted 83 in-depth, qualitative interviews with, as well as administered 15 surveys to, research participants (75 formerly incarcerated individuals and 8 reentry professionals).
- 2008-2011 Principal Investigator, University of Michigan
Study: *Students' Experiences of Personal Growth After Trauma*
Faculty Advisors: Daniel Saunders, Karin Martin, Beth Glover Reed, and Jeffrey Morenoff
- Designed and implemented a mixed methods study exploring: 1) how individuals who have suffered violent victimization or other forms of trauma successfully recover from these experiences; 2) the impact of cumulative adversity on trauma recovery and posttraumatic growth; and 3) how traumatic life events become a positively transformative experience in the lives of (some) trauma survivors. Conducted 46 in-depth, qualitative interviews with, as well as administered six quantitative surveys to, research participants.
- 2005-2007 Principal Investigator, University of Michigan
Study: *Vicarious Traumatization Among Staff Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault*
Faculty Advisor: Karin Martin
- Designed and implemented a qualitative study exploring: 1) the ways in which working closely with trauma survivors affects the lives of helping professionals; 2) how staff members cope with the demands of their job; and 3) how a direct service organization may more effectively address issues of secondary trauma and burnout among its staff members.

Conducted 29 in-depth, qualitative interviews, engaged in participant observation within the agency, and coded and analyzed data.

2006 Research Assistant, University of Michigan
Study: *Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Demonstration Initiative*
Principal Investigators: Daniel Saunders, Cris Sullivan, and Richard Tolman

Coded and analyzed qualitative interviews of formerly battered women participating in a supervised child visitation/exchange program, as part of a national evaluation funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (Grant #2003-WT-BX-K044).

2005-2006 Research Assistant, University of Michigan
Study: *Jail Overcrowding and Recidivism Among Domestic Violence, Controlled Substance, and Non-Payment of Child Support Offenders*
Principal Investigators: Jeffrey Morenoff and Benjamin Hansen

Collected and analyzed quantitative data regarding the consequences of jail overcrowding upon sentencing outcomes, early release from jail, and the likelihood of recidivism for offenders in Washtenaw County, Michigan.

CLINICAL AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2004 *Legal Advocate Intern*, SafeHouse Center, Ann Arbor, MI

Advocated for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault within the legal system. Monitored court proceedings to identify areas for system change. Conducted crisis counseling with survivors immediately after assault. Co-facilitated support group in county jail for incarcerated survivors of domestic violence.

2002-2003 *Case Manager*, Big Brothers Big Sisters Program, Family Service Agency, Santa Barbara, CA

Conducted intake interviews with clients, families, and volunteers. Assessed client needs. Paired at-risk youth with adult mentors. Provided case management services to clients, families, and volunteers. Made appropriate referrals.

2001-2002 *Development Coordinator*, Devereux, Santa Barbara, CA

Identified and researched potential funding sources for programs for clients with developmental disabilities. Cultivated relationships with donors, foundations, and corporations. Wrote grant proposals. Coordinated grant management and stewardship activities. Prepared fundraising reports.

2001 *Case Manager Intern*, Teen Court Program, Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Santa Barbara, CA

Conducted client intakes and assessments. Facilitated court hearings for first-time juvenile offenders. Taught classes on anger management and tobacco education. Facilitated a process group for adolescents. Provided case management services to clients and their families.

- 2000 *Residential Counselor/Case Manager*, Noah's Anchorage Youth Shelter, Santa Barbara, CA
- Provided a safe, therapeutic home life for youth. Supervised client activities. Counseled crisis-line callers, providing appropriate referrals. Conducted family counseling sessions with clients and their families. Assessed client needs. Developed, implemented, and evaluated treatment plans for youth. Provided case management services.
- 2000 *Chaplain Intern*—Forensics Unit, San Francisco General Hospital, San Francisco, CA
- Counseled patients/inmates. Served as chaplain/counselor to deputies, nurses, and hospital personnel. Led two chapel services. Served as chaplain in emergency room for one night.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND VOLUNTEER WORK

- 2023- Academic Senate Committee Member, Westmont College (except for Fall 2024)
- 2023-2024, Major Honors Committee Member, Westmont College
2022-2023
- 2022-2023 Chair, Institutional Review Board (IRB), Westmont College
- 2022-2023 Search Committee Member (Medical Anthropology Tenure-Track Position), Westmont College
- 2022-2023 Academic Advising Ambassador, Westmont College
- 2020-2024 Department Chair, Sociology and Anthropology Department, Westmont College
- 2020-2021 Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee Member, Westmont College
- 2019-2020 Search Committee Member (Sociology and Institutional Research Tenure-Track Position), Westmont College
- 2019 Program Review Committee Member (lead assessor for one department's 6-year review and one annual review; second assessor for two additional departments' annual reviews), Westmont College
- 2019, Meeting Minutes Scribe, Sociology and Anthropology Department Meetings, Westmont
2015-2016 College
- 2018 Panelist, "Christianity, Manhood, and Sexual Violence" (hosted by the Feminist Society student group), Westmont College
- 2018 Panel Organizer, Sociology Recent Alumni Panel on Post-College Life, Westmont College
- 2017 Interviewer, Fulbright Scholarship Candidates, Westmont College
- 2017 Panelist, Reel Talk event (on the documentary *The Interrupters*), Westmont College
- 2016-2017 Secretary of the Faculty, Westmont College
- 2016-2018 Interviewer, Augustinian Scholars Semi-Finalists, Westmont College

- 2016-2017 Project Manager on Alumni Survey / Alumni Reflections and Internship Supervisors' Survey / Internships Report, Sociology and Anthropology Department's 6-Year Program Review Report, Westmont College
- 2016 Panelist, "Mental Health Journeys" (a panel regarding mental health, positive coping, and recovery; hosted by the Active Minds student group), Westmont College
- 2016 Panelist, Reel Talk event (on the documentary *Prison State*), Westmont College
- 2016 Panelist, Westmont Reads Program (on the book *Just Mercy*), Westmont College
- 2015-2018 Diversity Committee Member, Westmont College
- 2015-2016 Coordinator for the Sociology and Anthropology Department's Professionalization Workshop Series, Westmont College
- 2015 Panelist, Preview Day, Westmont College
- 2015-2016 Search Committee Member (Anthropology Tenure-Track Position), Westmont College
- 2014-2015 Coordinator for the Sociology and Anthropology Department's Faculty Brownbag Series, Westmont College
- 2013-2014 Faculty Advisor for Spartan Running Club (a student organization), University of Tampa
- 2013 Sociology Co-Representative at the Major's Fair, University of Tampa
- 2012-2014 Teaching Guild Committee Member, University of Tampa
- 2012-2014 Faculty Handbook Committee Member, University of Tampa
- 2011-2012 Search Committee Member (Sociology Term Position), University of Tampa
- 2008-2009 Volunteer Mentor and Running Coach, Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative
- 2007-2008 Volunteer Mentor, Sociology Department Peer Mentoring Program, University of Michigan
- 2006-2007 Co-Coordinator, Conversations Across Social Disciplines Interdisciplinary Workshop Lecture Series, University of Michigan
- 2004 Volunteer Clemency Petition Researcher and Writer, Michigan Battered Women's Clemency Project

PEER-REVIEWER (for journal articles)

Violence Against Women
Christian Scholar's Review

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association (ASA)

Section Memberships: Crime, Law, & Deviance; Sociological Practice & Public Sociology; Teaching
& Learning in Sociology
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS)
American Society of Criminology (ASC)