
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NAME: Harel Shapira

eRA COMMONS USER NAME: hs23698

POSITION TITLE: Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology

EDUCATION/TRAINING

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Chicago, Chicago, IL	BA	05/2001	Sociology
Columbia University, New York, NY	MA	09/2005	Sociology
Columbia University, New York, NY	PhD	12/2010	Sociology
New York University, New York, NY	Postdoc	08/2013	

A. Personal Statement

I use qualitative methods in order to study a range of topics which stand at the intersections of demography and political identity. Particularly, I focus on right wing politics and seek to understand how participation in various aspects of right wing political life can be understood in terms of changes in the individual life course, including aging and the transition of veterans from military life back to civilian life, as well as larger demographic changes in the ethnic and racial make up of the United States. My research is cross-disciplinary and addresses key questions in the fields of sociology, demography, anthropology, and political science. Moreover, although I rely primarily on qualitative methods such as interviewing and participant observation, my work also incorporates quantitative methods of analysis and large data sets. Currently, my research tackles themes in two of the PRC's primary research areas: Demography: Family Demography and Intergenerational Relationships and Population Health. My Harry Frank Guggenheim and Andrew Carnegie Foundation funded project, "The Right to Kill: Guns, Justified Homicide, and the Future of American Democracy," examines the growing phenomenon of gun ownership for self-defense. This project contains four dimensions: (1) an ethnographic focus on gun schools where individuals train to use lethal force, which is the basis of a book length manuscript currently being considered by a trade press; (2) an interview-based analysis of how different demographic groups participate in and experience gun culture, which is the basis for a journal article to be published by the interdisciplinary journal *Public Culture*; (3) a quantitative analysis of applications for concealed handgun licenses which is the basis for a journal article under review at the criminology journal *Justice Quarterly*; and (4) a quantitative analysis of incidences of justifiable homicide which is in preparation for submission. As a junior faculty member trained in qualitative methods, I have benefited greatly from participating in the intellectual life of the PRC. My grants from the Guggenheim as well as Andrew Carnegie Foundation emerged out of a seed grant I received, and I am currently co-authoring two papers with faculty associates of the PRC.

B. Positions and Honors**Positions and Employment**

2013-present Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, The University of Texas at Austin
2014-present Faculty Research Associate, Population Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Honors, Other Experience, and Professional Memberships

2002-2008 Paul F. Lazarsfeld Fellowship, Columbia University
2007 National Science Foundation, Dissertation Improvement Grant
2010 Robert K. Merton Dissertation Prize, Columbia University
2012 Young Leaders Fellow, BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt
2013 Fellow, C.B. Smith, Sr. Centennial Chair in U.S.-Mexico Relations
2014 Southwest Book Award, Border Region Library Association
2015 Academic Enrichment Fund, College of Liberal Arts, UT-Austin
2015 Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship
2016 Macatee Fellowship, College of Liberal Arts, UT-Austin

C. Contributions to Science

Right Wing Political Participation and Changing Life Course. How do military veterans transition back into civilian life? In this project I examine a sub-set of career military veterans and explore how they deal with the alienation they experienced in post-military life by forming a militia group to patrol the United States / Mexico border. As I show in *Waiting for Jose: The Minutemen's Pursuit of America* (Princeton 2013) the actions of these veterans needs to be situated within their life histories and previous experiences, and not simply as an expression of a set of attitudes and beliefs. Instead of coming to the border to express a set of beliefs, as I show, the actions of the Minutemen on the border are best understood as an attempt to reintegrate into civilian life by recreating the experiences and organizational dynamics of their previous military life.

- Shapira, Harel. 2013. *Waiting for Jose: The Minutemen's Pursuit of America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Shapira, Harel. 2013. "From the Nativist's Point of View: How Ethnography Can Enrich Our Understanding of Political Identity." *Sociological Quarterly*, 54(1).
- Shapira, Harel. 2013. "The Border: Infrastructure of the Global." *Public Culture*, 25(2).

Race and the Emergence of Self-Defense Culture in the United States. A growing concern in the area of population health is the prevalence of gun violence. This research project investigates how the rise of gun-centered self-defense culture in the United States generates new forms of racial disparities. The first line of this project collects and examines administrative data regarding concealed handgun licenses from states such as Texas, Utah, Indiana, Florida, and Massachusetts. The findings indicate that the right to bear arms is unevenly distributed across the U.S. population. Blacks and women are less likely to apply for such licenses than whites and men, and when they do so, they are more likely to be denied a license (Shapira, Jensen, and Lin, under review). Using FBI data on homicide reports, the second line of research examines how the race of the victim and the race of the offender jointly shape the likelihood that a homicide is considered "justified." The preliminary results show that when a white person kills a non-white person, the incident is 4 times more likely to be considered "justified" than when the victim is white (Lin, Gutierrez, and Shapira, in progress).

- Shapira, H., K. Jensen, and K. Lin. "Concealed Handgun License: Trends and Patterns." Under Review
- Lin, K., C. Gutierrez, and H. Shapira. "When Do Offenders Become Victims? Race, Gender, and Justifiable Homicide." In Progress

D. Research Support

Ongoing Research Support

G-F-16-53741 (H. Shapira, PI)

06/01/16-05/31/18

The Andrew Carnegie Foundation

The Right to Kill: Guns, Justifiable Homicide, and the Future of American Democracy

While Americans have long used guns for hunting and target shooting, it is only in the last forty years that they have broadly embraced guns as part of everyday protection. Moreover, while the American government has long protected the rights of gun owners, the recent passage of laws such as concealed carry and "Stand Your Ground" have dramatically expanded Americans' ability to own, carry and use guns in self-defense. Today, about a third of American households have a gun, and between 8 and 11 million Americans have licenses to carry a gun with them nearly everywhere they go. What does such access to firearms mean for the future of American democracy? By participating in classes offered at gun schools, by interviewing instructors and students, and by watching people as they become comfortable around guns, I move beyond accounts which document people's motivations for having guns, to analyzing how they train their bodies and minds to kill.

Role: Principal Investigator

Responsibilities: Engage in data collection including participant observation and interviewing, supervision of graduate research assistants and lead data analysis and writing up results.