

# Tagged and Turfless: Neo-liberal Justice and Youth Crime in Winnipeg

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## I. NEO-LIBERAL PROJECTIONS

The crime statistic plays a critical role in neo-liberal policy discourse. And yet, crime statistics are characteristically indeterminate insofar as they are the dual product of police and public reporting. They inevitably fluctuate in proportion to the efficacy of the legal enforcement and information services and according to the amount of trust the public places in them (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006b:219-220). David Harvey denotes as neo-liberal, those highly interested class-based public policies that enrich those with capital, while deteriorating the quality of life for the poor and working classes (cited in Ferguson 2009:170). The political agendas of most neo-liberal democracies have come to place a high priority on the management of class anxieties and fear with regard to crime, risk and the re-categorizing of other governmental issues under these headings (Stenson 2001, 2005).

The calculation of risk is also a central governmental technology of “Actuarial Justice,” a juridical style that is mainly renowned for its introduction of new consequences for sentencing, but which also underpins crime prevention strategies, policing and reflects a specific

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politics closely associated with conservative brands of neo-liberalism (O'Malley 2008:451-453). Actuarial justice aims to impose sanctions that incapacitate offenders rather than reforming them. It works by removing from circulation the risks the offender represents (Feeley and Simon 1994).

This article attempts to explore how the construct of “at-risk youth” is filtered through a number of discursive configurations: namely, through different methods for creating knowledge (anthropological, sociological and criminological); the types of expertise they give rise to and the practices of intervention they constitute. In it, I argue that contemporary practices of calculating, managing and storing the disordered (i.e. youth who disrupt the orderly functioning of the market) have created some of the needs for and many of the limits on, critical protective factors that mitigate against gang involvement – namely, Aboriginal community-realizing initiatives. Moreover, the supplanting of non-profits’ collectivizing function by an auditing one comes at great human cost – one that cannot be borne in the absence of either corporate or university partnerships. The non-profit “market” is predicated on such collaborations.

Geographer, David Harvey’s analysis of neo-liberalism serves as the conceptual ground:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices...But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit (Harvey 2005:2).

While Harvey’s construction proves compelling for many, there exists no singular critical conception of neo-liberalism within the social sciences. As Wendy Larner (2000) instructs, neo-liberalism is unevenly deployed as a policy paradigm, a hegemonic ideology and as a form of governmentality. Its conceptual elaboration in anthropology focuses on the ways in which it serves as a process – i.e., the political project of neo-liberalism – namely, how it is specified in a variegated landscape of ideas, institutions and economic circumstances (Collier 2012:191).

According to Wacquant, for example, the neo-liberal state functions to remove impediments to the free functioning of the market and to

ensure positive conditions for its operation. It extends freedom at one end of the income scale and replaces the welfare state with punitive measures. It “accumulates by dispossession” (cf. Harvey 2004) or places limitations on citizenship and penalizes poverty. Wacquant insists that although this level of state intervention seems antithetical to its *laissez-faire* character, these twinned actions of guaranteeing circulation in some sectors while impeding it in others is a core principle of the neo-liberal project (Wacquant 2012:67).

Given that gang members tend to hail from the lowest socio-economic strata, it is tempting to play up the role of material factors (the economy) in the production of gangs and to assess gangs in terms of the exploitation and social control gang members endure as “deviant classes” at the hands of those who design the neo-liberal project. A Marxist approach would decry the injustice of a system with interests in protecting the propertied that would rather see corporate crimes go unpunished and the lowly locked up. Capitalism itself, from this perspective, is crimogenic. Criminal behaviours are nourished in an environment where the maximization of profit, the accumulation of wealth and economic self-interest rather than collective interests are valorized. RETORT (2005:31), an activist academic collective in the San Francisco Bay area, adds ‘spectacle’ and ‘violence’ to the terms of reference for neo-liberalism, and provides a Marxist analysis of the ways in which neo-liberalism serves not merely as a struggle for material dominance, but as struggle for the control of appearances. Among other implications of this ‘colonization of everyday life,’ they argue that the hollowing out of state welfare functions through policies of privatization and deregulation has contributed to the increasingly corporate nature of policy formulation (RETORT 2005:100).

Non-structural accounts of neo-liberalism in the governmentality scholarship (following Foucault’s lectures 1978-79) see neo-liberalism and neo-liberal techniques as fluid, mobile, mutable and more responsive to local conditions and forms. For governance scholars, neo-liberalism is more particularized than structuralists would allow (see Rose et al. 2006; Collier and Ong 2005; Ong 2006). Taking a governance approach, as I attempt to do, permits one to attend to the ways truth regimes are created in local settings moving beyond mere ideological discussions. Thus, gang members may be viewed as trafficking in neo-liberal techniques, but not as necessarily in league with the neo-liberal project. The governance approach also permits attention to neo-liberal means of policy development and implementation.

In terms of anthropological prison research, approaches critical of neo-liberalism increasingly question the premises of the growth of penalization and seek to contextualize the political emphasis on crime and punishment that supports the expansion of the prison apparatus. Critics suggest, according to Rhodes (2001:67), that the prison performs a socio-political and economic magic, insofar as it “disappears” significant numbers of poor and minority peoples. Its political function is to repress disorder and dissent through policing and “lawfare” (cf. Comaroff 2001). Economically, the prison provides jobs in rural areas or in the prison industrial complex. Finally, says Rhodes (2001:67), the prison contributes to market-friendly counts, removing the unemployed from statistical visibility among other demographic feats.

Although its penetration is incomplete, Canadian criminal justice practices increasingly resemble what Freely and Simon have termed “the new penology.” Its characteristics are as follows: rather than to eliminate offending, which is now considered inevitable, authorities seek merely to minimize its consequences. Offenders are evaluated not in terms of a biological profile but in terms of their risk and dangerousness. Offenders become “risk objects” and are targeted as aggregates rather than individuals. Rather than to *transform* them, which is difficult and resource depleting, the objective shifts to *managing* the risks that offenders represent. Statistical data is used to predict the risk of future offenses and to assemble the tools for the actuarial justice enterprise, namely indicators, prediction tables and population projections (Feely and Simon 1992:451-458).

In keeping with its neo-liberal tenor, although it continues to delegate funds, in the post-social welfare environment, the state devolves its responsibility to *intervene* in the lives of troubled youth to what Rose, O'Malley and Valverde (2006:91) call, “quasi-autonomous entities” such as non-profit groups or what are popularly referred to as civil society organizations. The state then governs these entities “at a distance”, through management procedures “via budgets, audits, standards, benchmarks and other technologies that [are] both autonomizing and responsabilizing” (Rose et al. 2006:91). The effect of this governing technology has been the devolution of responsibility to the voluntary sector in terms of both *service provision* and *visibility procedures*. The organizations compete for funds on a per service – or program – only basis, but are not generally compensated for core operating costs. The overall effect has been a destabilization of the funding regime for so-called “special interest groups” and an overburdening of the sector’s administrative capacities with resource-

depleting conditions of investment. These priorities have also diminished the *political* capacity of registered charities at the level of policy development by limiting their annual expenditures on advocacy to 10% of their total resources (see Levasseur 2012:182; Laforest 2013).

This places the very existence of non-profits in peril. The sort of collaborative governance the neo-liberal program supports will not succeed says Phillips (2000-2001:184), “if it is weighted down by the rules and accountability mechanisms designed to work within departmental hierarchies”.<sup>i</sup>

One could argue that the very creation and ongoing existence of youth serving non-profits reflects doubts about the state’s capacity to safeguard youth populations. The same could be said, however, about doubts concerning the abilities of parents to govern their own offspring. The attribution of super-parental, “bio-political” responsibility for youth welfare, which may indeed represent an ethical response to the state’s failure, has become a normative condition of contemporary Canadian citizenship.

In contrast to the parent and to the state, the role of populist rule and more specifically, of the consumer-voter, is expansive in the neo-liberal regulatory regime. Individuals are expected to employ “calculative choice” working toward greater and greater self-governance (Rose et al. 2006; Collier 2012). Under these circumstances, wherein every citizen’s expertise is suddenly valorized, the subject positions created by popular media for gang members become critical data sources in the public’s reckoning schemes.

Lacking in social capital and possessing cultural attributes that are inimical to marketing, Native youth are read as depleting resources within the political economy. As such, Native male youth are easily signified as a non- or even, as a counter-productive class. Tough on crime advocates mobilize these alleged dangers to the proper functioning of the market to support policies that would increase incarceration rates (Dyer 2000). In seeking to contain or minimize those who do not self-maximize in legally sanctioned ways, the state then works to remove from circulation this so-called “problem” population and pours heavy resources into institutions of segregation. This draws limited funds away from the efforts of non-profit groups which seek to ameliorate the circumstances of those whose freedoms are not well-served by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade alone.

## II. THE AFFLICTED CITY

In the annual public forums organized by the Gang Action Interagency Network (GAIN) in 2012 and 2013, residents in Winnipeg's Central, West, and North Ends identified safety as a growing public concern. Community members pointed to high rates of drug use, ongoing fallout from the illicit trade in drugs and the presence of gang operated crack shacks in their midst. They conceded that concerns about retaliation by gangs often prohibited residents from mobilizing collectively to reclaim their communities and to improve safety controls. Residents stated that they feared that all Aboriginal youth in the North, Central and West End are at-risk of gang involvement owing to the pervasiveness of gang related violence in their neighborhoods and to a perception among many male youth of the necessity of joining gangs as the primary means of surviving this violence. High rates of sex trade activity also pervade these neighbourhoods which contributes to the general perception of the area as disorderly, lawless and "plagued" by social problems (Buddle 2012b).

Aboriginal male youth, in particular, have become the unmarked subject in local media crime reports, such that suspects in stabbings, shootings or automobile theft are automatically assumed to involve impoverished North, Central and West End Native or other raced males. Hence, the practice of providing rich background context in stories involving differently classed and raced criminals so as to account for their *exceptionality*.

Through the repetition of stories on, and the stylizing of, Native youth crime, the local media outlets manufacture "the gang member" presenting him as an immediate threat to societal values and interests. The coding of violence through which urban Native male youth are identified in the media has become normalized enough to evoke "moral panic" without any explicit reference to the implied authors of the crime (cf. Welch, Price and Yankey 2002:4). As a result, the drive-by shooting, for instance, is pre-configured as a racially specific and group-organized form of crime. Statistical incidences of Aboriginal youth involvement in these criminal acts inform the city's national crime-ranking indicators, negatively affecting capital investment.

Representations of lawlessness form an important structuring device both in the production of knowledge about gangs and in the creation of a moral civil society. This latter concept, though imprecise and unspecified, is both extremely common and rife with complexity owing to the country's colonial history, which took the form of a

“civilizing” mission. Secondly, the polyvalent concept encompasses a populist endeavour to realize a moral collective at a time when neo-liberalism, with its cult of the individual, calls into question the very existence of “society” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999:3). Civil society links and stands for a broad cluster of values in academic, political and social activism discourse and in peoples’ everyday imaginings of their cultural identities, moral communities and relationships between their selves and the state. It refers broadly, according to the Comaroffs, to a neo-communal ethic and to a means of constituting an “us” and a “them”. They write:

The threat of the postmodern, the crisis of masculinity, the excesses of identity politics, the demise of family values, the triumph of the commodity over morality, the availability of work and alterations in the conditions of employment, the dispersal of community; all of these things have sparked moral panics in many parts of the world...and sparked an equally millennial pursuit of civil society (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999:15).

Similarly, narratives of crime and fear incorporate specific racial and class anxieties to produce a certain type of signification. While the notion of the law-abiding citizen helps to structure what is civil, what is sociable and the appropriate relationship between the individual and the state, as a complementary mutually constitutive term, lawlessness serves a critical distinguishing function. Namely, the crime category has become a resource with which citizens and police classify a number of social problems as “gang” problems.

For the propertied classes, gangs are “threats” and are often characterized as deploying the discourse of cultural “difference.” As Rosemary Coombe (2005:37) suggests, *legitimate* social movements are governed by a cultural politics of place denoting cultural and ecological attachments to territory. They are accommodated by neo-liberal orders because these forms of difference can be formulated in commodity terms. “The Indian” in Canada’s remote north who lives off the land is a useful tourist motif and a marketable form of distinction. Native peoples in urban areas such as Winnipeg, on the other hand, assert rights based on forms of cultural difference that are difficult to articulate with the conceptual framework of modernity. “Urban Indians” in the Canadian imagination are symbolically “out of place” they are, not incidentally, turfless. Identified as having failed to live up to formulaic renditions of “traditionalism,” urban residents are structurally ambiguous and symbolically “polluting.” They do not perform their difference in socially acceptable *productive* ways that help to tell the story Canada wants to tell about itself to others (see Buddle 2011a; Buddle 2011b).

Accordingly, in a neo-liberal era wherein the urban underclass is left to fend increasingly for itself, gang involvement offers one means to challenge conventional demarcations of *legitimate* commerce, to contest spaces of inequality, to disturb practices of exclusion, and to displace normative notions of marginality. Justice Murray Sinclair, co-author of the *Aboriginal Justice Inquiry* (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991), insists that common practices, principles and comportment codes become law when the community recognizes them as corresponding with a set of enforceable rights and obligations. In practice, however, large segments of the population may refuse to endorse the premises on which an order is founded and this defiance may have a collectivizing force. Nowhere is this more apparent than in discussions of “crime” with disaffected urban Aboriginal youth from Winnipeg.

The Preliminary Report on Aboriginal Gangs in Manitoba (Buddle 2006) reveals that street gang members view gangs in contradictory ways—as integral components of the community or as neighborhood institutions, at once performing services for and exploiting their neighbors (Buddle 2006). Like the Mexican gang youth whose lives Zatz and Portillo (2000) document, Manitoba Native youth sometimes see themselves as agents of anti-colonialism (cf. Alfred 2008). These youth point to the police as trouble-making interlopers and charge the media with failing to cover the economic problems that pervade poor non-white neighborhoods.

Looking askance at statutes that protect only the wealthy, gang members may conceive of their activities as valid forms of material redistribution and legitimate means of emotional redress. Appropriating and re-signifying the culture of legality, gangs self-regulate using codes of ethics and by-laws for ranking and disciplining subordinates, while at once perpetuating exploitative gendered violence. Yet, offering initiates a quasi-legalistic mode of citizenship, gangs may well represent a pragmatic and rational response to the situations of placelessness in which many Winnipeg Native youth find themselves. And, in the process of internally regulating the lives of their members, gangs may unwittingly serve in the “realization of community” (Amit 2002).

### III. ARCHIVING ANARCHY

While Canadian authorities have been monitoring Aboriginal gang activity for some time, newspaper reports and the Canadian Security and Information Services Annual Report (CSIS 2004) advises that there has been a dramatic upsurge in Aboriginal gang activity in major urban



centres on the prairies where Aboriginal gangs have reached “crisis” proportions. Winnipeg is commonly referred to in the media as the Aboriginal “gang capital” of Canada (for example, Hayes n.d.; Vice News 2014). Thus, in the Late-Capitalist era, a different set of conditioning circumstances ensures that Aboriginal urban residents will be subjected to seemingly inescapable bureaucratic regimes that situate them in a city’s most undesirable spaces. As Comaroff and Comaroff (2006b) have argued, statistical representations grant authority to these constructions. The crime statistic serves as:

a discursive currency by means of which government speaks to its subjects, citizens speak among themselves, experts speak to everypersons, everyone speaks back to government — and the media mediate all the incessant talk, adding their own inventions, inflections, inflations (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006b:211).

As the following concedes, the economic imperatives of neo-liberalism have given rise to a ubiquitous and pernicious managerialism. To establish evidentiary authority today, one cannot avoid resorting to numbers – indeterminate though they may be.

RCMP reports indicate that beginning in 2006 Winnipeg youth street gangs began to grow at an alarming rate and are engaging in increasingly lethal battles for control of the lucrative illicit drug economy. From 1991-2008, gang related homicides increased more than 500% (Beattie 2009). This period corresponds with a significant increase in the number of Winnipeg street gangs (Linden 2010). Conservative estimates by Winnipeg Police Services suggest that Aboriginal street gangs now dominate the roughly 26 Winnipeg gangs, with an approximate total of 2000 members. Despite the fact that overall youth crime rates appear to be declining in Canada, and acknowledging the indeterminacy of police reported crime statistics, (where low reporting to police is in evidence<sup>ii</sup>), Winnipeg continues to report the highest *violent* Crime Severity Index (CSI) among the census metropolitan areas (119.9) with robbery serving as the highest contributor to the index.

Manitoba (136.0) has the highest violent CSI among the provinces (Boyce, Cotter and Perreault 2014:12). Moreover, Manitoba had the highest homicide rate among the provinces (for the seventh year in a row) reporting 3.87 deaths per 100,000 persons (Boyce, Cotter and Perreault 2014:14). According to Statistics Canada counts, Manitoba’s homicide rate is currently almost triple the national average of 1.44 per 100,000 (Boyce, Cotter and Perreault 2014:13). Other violent crimes are also on the rise. Winnipeg Police Statistics indicate that while most forms of assault and most property crimes declined from 2012-2013, sexual assaults with a weapon increased by 130% and firearms offences

by 19% (Winnipeg Police Service 2013:2). While there were 27% fewer robberies (1,822 total) (Winnipeg Police Service 2013:2), the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Winnipeg continues to serve as the robbery capital of the country with provincial rates keeping pace (Boyce, Cotter and Perreault 2014:16).

In Winnipeg, there were 26 homicides in 2013 – exactly half of which involved youth (Boyce, Cotter and Perreault 2014:39). The Winnipeg Police statistics reveal a 19% decrease from the previous year. Meanwhile, *attempted* murders increased by 55% (Winnipeg Police Service 2013:2). For every homicide, there are approximately 6 admissions to hospital for intentional injury and more than 148 emergency department visits. Data from a 2012 study by the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy indicates that among youth (aged 13-19), violence whether to the self (8.6%) or caused by others (10.5%), is among the top four causes of injury hospitalizations (Brownell et al. 2012:117).

In 2009 more Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal peoples reported being victimized (37-26%) by crimes and Aboriginal youth (aged 15-24) were the victims of nearly half of the violent incidents that Aboriginal people reported. In 2009, there were 425 violent incidents for every 1,000 Aboriginal people aged 15 to 24 years. The corresponding rate for non-Aboriginal people was 268 per 1,000 (Perreault 2011:9).

Over the past decade, youth violent crimes in Canada have increased 12% with assault accounting for much of this increase. By 2013, youth crime under the Youth Criminal Justice Act in Winnipeg had increased by 50% over a 5 year average (Winnipeg Police Service 2013:4). In 2011-12, for example, 77% of youth court cases involved males, 61% were aged 16 and 17 (Dauvergne 2013:3). Inducing bodily harm is the violent offence for which youth are most often apprehended (Dauvergne 2013:6). There was a 10% decline, however, in the number of cases completed in youth courts from 2009 to 2012. Youth who commit crimes but who do not find their way to court may receive warnings, cautions, or referrals to community programs. In courts, 57% are found guilty, while 43% have charges that are dismissed, stayed, withdrawn or discharged – a number that is increasing (Dauvergne 2013:3). Of those who are found guilty, only 15% receive custody sentences – the majority being released under community supervision (i.e. probation). The national trend is toward youth release.

Despite that youth incarceration declined throughout Canada by 12% from 2005 to 2011, it increased by 38% in the same time period in

Manitoba (Munch 2012). According to Manitoba Justice reporting, Manitoba's youth incarceration rate was 29 per 10,000 people aged 12-17 in 2011-12, while every other province (aside from Saskatchewan) was below 10 per 10,000 (Manitoba Justice 2012). The corrections system renders results similar to the treat and release strategy of hospitals, in that as many as 90% of young offenders who serve time in corrections facilities are re-arrested within two years of their release (Manitoba Justice 2011).

The numbers reveal that non-profits must assume the enormous responsibility for managing miscreant youth. As risk assessment, management and cost-effectiveness come to prevail over the "best interests of the youth," a *parens patriae* orientation becomes more difficult to sustain (Kempf-Leonard and Peterson 2000). With curtailed lobbying power, non-profits cannot speak for youth, nor are youth voices heard in a system of penalization that evidences diminishing concern for intentions or mental states. Rather, adult *moral* authorities produce, control and distribute criminal representations and create the official gang archive. Governance structures, crime statistics, legal precedents, police records and media reports, among other popular and official sources of gang knowledge, comprise the archive.

The archive works to store and contain, organize, represent, render intelligible and produce narratives. The archive thus acts as a political apparatus rather than as a neutral format for communicating information. In addition to preserving a certain type of crime talk, it works to legitimate the rule of those in power and to produce a historical narrative that presents class structure and power relations as both commonsensical and inevitable. Although it is seldom approached as an object of critical practice (Meehan 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 2006a), the gang archive is intimately connected with social structural power relations *and* individual ways of being, along with everyday practices and patterns of thought which generate and reproduce a gendered, racialized and spatialized moral hierarchy (see Razack 2000; Gill 2002).

The gang archive functions as an object of both surveillance and discipline. It is populated by a variety of methods for accumulating "intelligence": observing without being observed, recording, counting, mapping, interrogating, interviewing and, most recently, through practices of diagnosing.

The contemporary imaginary of the plague in the city serves as a fertile repertoire for experimenting with notions of crime and disorder as infectious diseases. By shifting from "crime" to "illness" and from law

enforcement to public health, neo-liberal governance indexes an important neo-liberal movement. This shift resonates with a rising investment in what Foucault denotes as “security” namely, bio-political practices for “...organising circulation, eliminating its dangers, making a division between good and bad circulation, and maximizing the good circulation by eliminating the bad” (Foucault 2007:18).

The idea of the city under siege by contagious forces is employed to show how a previous concern with controlling territory morphs into a governmental concern with circulation. The movement of disorderly and dangerous elements becomes the focus for control and marshalling these movements serves the purpose of creating security. Risks come to be viewed as social and health problems requiring law and order solutions. Statistics enable a health risk accounting. Crime figures, as Jean and John Comaroff contend, are often cited as a symptom of the “state of disorder” in the land (2006b:219). Disorder, and the people constructed as embodying disorder who circulate improperly, have become a central resource of political power. The law not only plays a central role in producing disorderly people and facilitating “bad circulation,” but also plays a role in assisting their social and economic exclusion (O’Grady and Bright 2002:39; Parnaby 2003).

#### IV. DIAGNOSING DISORDER

In 2012, Winnipeg became the Census Metropolitan Area with the highest number of police per capita. There are 198 police officers per 100,000 persons (Burczycka 2013:13). Given that youth crime continues to increase in Manitoba, and that Aboriginal peoples are disproportionately victimized in youth gang crime, it is telling that resources continue to be so heavily invested in suppression activities which provide only the illusion of security.

Criminalization, Wacquant asserts, is an effective means of disciplining so-called problem cultures, signaling the decline of the maternalist welfare state and the rise of paternalist penal authority:

The social worker is being succeeded by the prison guard...as the state representative entrusted with exercising public guardianship over the dangerous classes ...police, courts and prisons have become major instruments of penetration...over the nether zones of social space and prime vehicles for the symbolic construction and material management of ‘problem’ populations and territories (Wacquant 2002:11, 20).

Permitting the police to stand in for the public signals an important shift from a centralized to a more dispersed form of governance.

Police street gang units began to emerge in major prairie cities in the 1990s to quantify information on, track and subdue assemblies of miscreant youth. Statistics Canada, the police, the media and a variety of service organizations also regularly contribute to the torrent of numbers—each producing, purveying and deploying figures according to specific “governance” projects. As John and Jean Comaroff contend, estimations of disorder or “deviance” pre-suppose a rule-governed social order with positive parameters that are most visible in the negative (2006b:210). And, as O’Grady and Bright rejoin, “...the well-being of the public, as constructed by the government, has come to depend upon a mentality of exclusion - on the notion that public safety and security depend upon finding, punishing and excluding an enemy ‘other’” (2002:39).

The criminal accounting of Aboriginality in Canadian prairie cities has become critical to mainstream civic identity-making equations. The “Aboriginal criminal other” renders a *moral* public meaningful—at once dis-counting Native “outlaws” and bringing majority lawfulness into full relief. What passes for lawfulness is really an endless accounting of criminality. The numbers re-count that the majority of people do not break the important laws. And, ‘they’ who experience lethal violence suffer outside the areas where most of ‘us’ live. Times of security in moral spaces are times of danger and chaos elsewhere. That violence exists “out there” is enough to maintain the fantasy of lawfulness “here.” Made legible by specious crime statistics, spurious surveys, dubious gang “data” bases and sensationalized media reports, the Native gang represents a landscape of pseudo-knowledge and fantasy projection (see Buddle 2011a).

Gang suppression activities are typically reactive and incident driven. Special initiatives are designed to cut out pathological elements with surgical precision under the auspices of police probes such as “Project Northern Snow” (which syphoned off the founding members of Manitoba Warriors in the 1990s), “Project Falling Star” (incising the third and fourth wave of Warriors in 2014), “Project Guillotine” (a project designed to sever the head of the Indian Posse) and “Project Recall” (which called back the tainted meat that was the Mad Cowz). The 2006 police effort to eliminate from circulation and store elsewhere all manner of street crime in the West End, aptly entitled “Operation Clean Sweep” came into existence after a passer-by was killed in a gang shooting in the West End. The operation targeted visible street crimes such as prostitution, drug dealing and street-level violence and was eventually transformed into a permanent organ of Winnipeg Police

Services in the form the Street Crime Unit, which would come to serve the whole of the city.

Still, a prominent gang theorist and his colleagues assert that, “There is little, if any, consensus as to what constitutes a gang and who is a gang member, let alone what gangs do either inside or outside of the law” (Esbensen et al. 2001:106). Indeed, both within the academe, among policy makers and between law enforcement officials in different geographic locales, there is no consensus concerning the best method for defining gangs. One consequence of this conceptual impasse is the absence of a standard methodology for identifying gang members or gang-related crime (Wortley 2010).

This has concrete consequences for law enforcement practice. For instance, if a police organization or study employs a restrictive definition of a gang, it is likely that the actual number of gangs in a community will be under-estimated (Wortley 2010). Under-estimating gang activity may have the effect to further jeopardize the safety of already vulnerable, economically disadvantaged communities—namely the high crime zones in Winnipeg.

Employing an overly vague or broad definition may yield an over-estimation of the gang threat (see Barrows and Huff 2009). Exaggerating the pace of gang growth and the scope of gang activity may have the effect to create a moral panic, augmenting public fear of youth assemblages in general, racialized male youth in particular and gang crime *in toto*. Ill-founded public panic may lead to an inappropriate apportioning of police, judiciary and social services resources. Determining when a group constitutes a gang and identifying gang members are far from straightforward processes (Wortley 2010; Buddle 2013a).

Unlike more historically established criminal sub-cultures such as are to be found in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, New York, Chicago and California, Winnipeg is considered an “emerging” gang city. This label refers to the class of cities that only began to experience serious problems with violent urban street gangs in the early 1990s (see Tita and Ridgeway 2007). Methods for defining and dealing with gangs locally are limited by complex factors, not the least of which are funding shortages and increasing administrative burdens, both of which are well-known to Winnipeg Police Services.

Detecting who is or who is not a gang member can be systematized with a proper assessment tool. According to Andrews, Bonta and Wormith (2006), there have been significant advances in the assessment of gang crime offenders over the past 20 years. Despite that these

instruments exist, police departments do not seem to be making use of them.

Instead, Canadian police agencies are developing their own gang member classification systems based on the unstructured judgments described by Andrews *et al.* above. There would appear to be some loose consistency across Canadian police department practice concerning identifying gang members and associates along the following criteria. When the fourth condition is met, an individual may be identified as a member if at least two additional criteria can be evidenced:

1. There is information confirming membership from a reliable source (e.g., inside gang member/rival gang member, legitimate community resources, i.e. schools, business, citizen).
2. Police information is provided as a result of observed association with other known gang members (i.e. surveillance).
3. The individual admits to gang membership.
4. There is involvement (direct/indirect) in gang-motivated crime.
5. Previous court findings identify that person as gang member.
6. The person has or participates in common and/or symbolic gang identifiers such as gang paraphernalia (i.e. tattoos, weapons, poems, clothing) and induction rituals (see Chatterjee 2006; Hemmati 2006:29).

The likelihood of misreading these measures and for identifying a false positive is high when police and other observers seek to prove, rather than to scientifically disprove, a theory of gang membership. Circular logic rationalizes identification, charging and sentencing in a lawful tagging exercise that delivers disorderly youth into the gang-making machine that is the youth detention centre (see Nafekh 2002).<sup>iii</sup>

## V. CORRECTING CIRCULATION

A positive gang identification is critical in determining whether a drug-related crime, for instance, may benefit a criminal organization. This would be considered an aggravating factor when sentencing youth under the amended “Controlled Drugs and Sentences Act”, which mandates a mandatory minimum sentence.

In previous years, youth advocates had hoped that that the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA), introduced in 2003, would encourage police to use their discretion to clear youth by other means or to refer them to a diversionary program, rather than charging them. Prior to 2003, Canada is alleged to have had the world’s highest youth incarceration rate (Bernard 2007:A7). There is evidence to suggest the YCJA had its intended effect, for in 2007, 62% of youth accused of a drug-related incident were cleared by means other than the laying of a

formal charge compared to 42% a decade ago (Dauvergne 2009). In 2012, 44% of youth accused were charged (Dauvergne 2013). It would seem the legislation was interpreted unevenly across the country however. In 2007, youth accused of a drug-related crime in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador and the three territories were most likely to be cleared by other means. Youth in Manitoba, on the other hand, and particularly in Winnipeg, were most likely to be charged (Dauvergne 2009). When I interviewed youth advocate and Winnipeg-based *Gladue* Report writer, Donna Bear Glover on 28 September 2012, she charged that the YCJA grants too much power to the police who may be encouraged to inflate the number of charges so as to ensure that a youth is detained. Manitoba currently has the highest youth incarceration rate in the country. While the national average is 8 per 10,000, Manitoba's is 28 per 10,000 youth (Munch 2012:19).

In Manitoba, Aboriginal youth comprise 23% of the provincial population, but are vastly over-represented in custody. The percentage of Aboriginal youth (12 to 17) admitted to correctional services in 2011 was 71.3%. According to Munch (2012:3):

The youth incarceration rate, at 8 per 10,000 youth population, fell 5% between 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, the third consecutive annual decline. The overall decrease in the rate of youth in custody between 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 was driven by decreases in youth in remand (-5%) as well as youth serving an open custody sentence (-7%) and youth serving a secure custody sentence (-3%).

Aboriginal youth sentenced to pre-trial detention, however, grew from 2010 to 2011 (from 1,621 to 1,907), compared to that of non-Aboriginal youth (382 to 410). Aboriginal youth sentenced to secured custody also increased from 123 in 2010 to 150 in 2011 (compared to non-Aboriginal youth, 10 to 24). Finally, rates of open custody sentencing also increased for Aboriginal youth, from 138 in 2010 to 173 in 2011 compared to non-Aboriginal youth (which rose from 20 to 32 in 2011) (Statistics Canada n.d.(a); Statistics Canada n.d.(b)).

When referred by extra-judicial means, youth in Winnipeg have some options. A number of Winnipeg after-school and community-based agencies currently work to provide programming and services to support at-risk and marginalized youth (ranging in ages from 6 to 29) – the most recent of which is McDonald Youth Services 24 hour emergency youth centre which opened in April 2014. Others include: the Art and Sports Programs at 26 Lighthouse sites, Just TV, Grafitti Art Programming, Art City, Teen Stop Jeunesse, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, the West Central Community Program and the YMCA-YWCA, all of which provide supervision and organized activities at schools,



community centres and/or cultural organizations. There are Youth Outreach Programs at Spence Neighbourhoods, West Broadway, Ndinawemaaganag Endawaad Inc. (N'dinawe), Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY), Immigrant Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) and the LINKing Refugee Youth and Families to Positive Social Supports program at Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (NEEDS Inc.) which seek out vulnerable youth, build relationships with them and connect them with existing programs.

There are Mentoring Programs at Ka Ni Kanichihk, MacDonald Youth Services and Big Brothers and Sisters that pair youth with positive role models and Employment Skills Programs such as Youth Build, N'dinawe's (Ndinawemaaganag Endawwad Inc.) Turning Tides, and Workforce Venture at MacDonald Youth Services. There are temporary housing solutions offered via N'dinawe, MacDonald Youth Services, RaY and Rossbrook House. Finally, there are clinical options for addictions and/or psychiatric or psychological treatment as well as support groups at the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Opportunities for Independence, several medical clinics, the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre, the Marymound Crisis Stabilization Program and New Directions which offers family counselling and parenting programs. As many programs require referrals, access to them is often difficult to negotiate and the wait lists for some can be as long as three years (Buddle 2009).

Winnipeg's community cultural organizations generally formed to engage in collectivizing or community-realizing activities. Community-realizing encapsulates Appadurai's notion of "the production of locality" which he views as a social achievement (1996:179) more than a geographic or demographic entity. Namely, he is referring to the creation of belonging, integration, engagement or connectedness within, and responsibility to, one's material and cultural environment. Referring more to a quality or idea of sociality, rather than an actual social form (Amit 2002), this connectedness correlates strongly with one's sense of quality of life and of opportunities for the future as well as with health outcomes and educational attainment.<sup>iv</sup>

The neo-liberal shift from the provision of core, to program-only funding from the 1990s onwards, has resulted in a situation whereby fewer than half of the above mentioned programs may be running at any given time, generally with attenuated or inconsistent program schedules, and with inadequate staffing, as resources are re-directed toward fundraising and lobbying initiatives. This causes difficulties both

reaching and retaining youth with complex needs. Those that are currently in operation have low intakes and fill up quickly. Some have pre-emptively expensive membership fees. All but three serve low-risk youth who attend school. And, many are geographically inappropriate for youth who cannot safely travel outside their neighbourhoods without threat of rival gang attack, nor participate in programs with rival gang members.

There is a significant gap in services which are appropriately located, consistently offered and which can engage and retain Winnipeg's highest risk youth, such as gang-involved youths and their families. There is an inadequate database to systematically track program outcomes. Also, there currently exists no systematic effort to coordinate multi-service delivery to youths whose needs are multi-faceted, whose family situations are complicated, whose connections to community resources are unstable, and who often carry exhaustingly weighty cultural and political baggage which they do not have the skills to unpack on their own<sup>v</sup>.

Economically impoverished and racially marginalized youth populations and youth crime are growing. Yet youth who have been charged with offences and returned to the community with warnings or conditional sentences such as probation are unlikely to find adequate treatment or services. Consequently, the number of youth facing penal segregation seems likely to rise. Addressing the underlying causes of youth violent offending behaviours ought to be of urgent concern, however, it is difficult to quantify the outcomes of social programs which aim to build social, cultural, economic and political capacity. This does not bode well for social organizations whose 'capital production' cannot be measured without resorting to nebulous "crime reduction" projections. Government funders are reticent to promote long-term programs that are unlikely to return electoral gains. Short-term programs are a better bet, targeting low to moderate risk youth and producing measurable outcomes in education, employment and criminal involvement.

## **VI. THE CIRCLE OF COURAGE INTERVENTION**

Ka Ni Kanichihk developed Circle of Courage in 2007 after Manitoba Justice determined Central Winnipeg to be one of four Winnipeg neighbourhoods experiencing high gang activity. Working in collaboration with community partners and within the context of the Manitoba Gang Reduction Strategy, Ka Ni Kanichihk created a

community-based comprehensive gang reduction initiative that was comprised by a combination of direct interventions and partnerships with law enforcement agencies and community organizations.<sup>vi</sup>

From 2007 to 2012, Circle of Courage (COC) in partnership with myself and a team of grad students at the University of Manitoba worked with Aboriginal youth aged 12-17 who were at risk of joining, or who are already involved in, gangs. The program's objectives were to stabilize Aboriginal youth involved in gang violence through the provision of youth-centered, holistic, asset-based and outcome-oriented programming. COC's core elements included: life skills and academic education, visual media training, employment preparation, emotional and spiritual socializing, mentoring, case management and recreation. COC was innovative insofar as it combined and operationalized the 'best' practices of programs that *build assets* to prevent or reduce gang involvement among marginalized male youth and qualitative methodologies that demand intensive and prolonged interaction in the lives of youth participants and their families (for project design, funding application, evaluation and reporting (see Buddle 2012a). Researchers employed Participatory Action Research and Photovoice, which placed project design, decision-making as well as recording equipment in the hands of youth and trained them in the practice and ethics of visual storytelling (see Buddle 2015).

According to the Social Planning Council's (2014:7) *Child and Family Poverty Report Card* for 2013, Manitoba has the second highest poverty rate for children in the Country:

In 2011, 31.2% of the Aboriginal people in Manitoba lived below the Low Income Cut-Off (after tax) compared to 14.3% of the non-Aboriginal population. In Manitoba, 16.7% of the population is Aboriginal (199,940), which includes about 63,000 children under the age of 15, according to the 2011 National Household Survey. This is a 22.9% growth in the Aboriginal population between 2006 and 2011. The Aboriginal population is expected to continue to be the fastest growing population in Manitoba and will make up an estimated 20% of the population of Manitoba by 2030.

Aboriginal families characteristically endure less stable housing and greater dependence on social assistance. They are comprised by younger parents and by parents who have been disproportionately maltreated as children. Aboriginal families have higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse and experience a higher number of child welfare placements (Trocmé et al. 2001).

The majority of children in Child and Family Services' care are members of poor, Aboriginal or ethnic minority families (Zetlin et al. 2003; Zetlin and Weinberg 2004; Bennet 2008). Drawn from

circumstances where community, family and pro-social peer supports are absent or dysfunctional, the target youth group are likely to have been expelled from schools and therefore cannot avail themselves of the sorts of programs offered therein. Their most basic needs for food, shelter and clothing are not often being met. They are generally unaware of, and therefore have little access to, the sorts of community programs and treatments that are available to them and are more likely to have served time in a corrections facility than to have achieved employment (Buddle 2012a, 2013b).

Aboriginal gang youth in Winnipeg experience culture conflict, poverty and associated family and school problems. In addition, they are apt to undergo personal devaluation, anomalous child-rearing experiences, tension-filled gender role expectations and problems with self-esteem stemming from all these forces. Sexual, physical and emotional abuse, exploitation experiences and neglect can lead to pent up rage that may be expressed through violent behaviour (Buddle 2006). Circle of Courage began with the premise that anti-social behaviours, failure at school, social deficits, poor self-esteem and gang membership are more productively understood as the symptoms of underlying unmet needs, rather than as the expressions of innately aggressive adolescents, the program expands this definition to include their needs for “belonging, mastery, independence and generosity” (cf. Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern 2002).

Therefore, rather than pursuing a focus on risks and deficits, Circle of Courage offered a strength-based approach, seeking to identify assets, build social and personal capacities, and ground these in a strong belief system.

This approach differs significantly from an expert-driven medical model approach. Approaching gangs employing the public health model for prevention of disease and disorder involves assessing the epidemiology of a targeted problem such as youth violence, identifying risk factors associated with the problem, applying interventions known to reduce these risk factors and enhance protective factors that buffer against the effects of risk, and monitoring the impact of these interventions on the incidence and prevalence of the targeted disease or disorder (see Hawkins et al. 2002). The difficulty with this approach is its tendency to obscure gang members’ relationships with a variety of disciplinary and regulative protocols and apparatuses of the state. Identifying the violent criminal as the pathologic element deflects attention from the deviant positionality through which the state produces these subjects. Seeing violence merely as a disease or disorder

produces a historical narrative that presents class structure and power relations as both commonsensical and inevitable. This works to legitimate the rule of those in power and normalizes unexamined notions of moral health.

While measuring assets is far from an exact science, the research team employed a post-test devised by myself, that measured changes in the pre-test assessment criteria (Buddle 2008). In addition, we employed the mixed data collection methods designed specifically for the program. From the output results, it appears clear that high risk youth benefit from immersion in intensive, culturally appropriate, relevant, programming and from working with adult mentors whom they respect and with whom they have established bonds of trust and caring. The majority of COC youth demonstrated improved capacities for negotiating crisis, for coping with a constantly changing set of circumstances and for building personal, social, physical and human assets (Buddle 2012a).

By the end of the program funding period in 2012, 120 youth had registered for the project. Fifteen, actively participate at one time, which is the maximum number the staff can work with. After the first year, there were 12 youth on a waiting list to enter the full program. This number would grow year by year to 20 in the final year. The project reached its target of highest risk youth all of whom reported gang and criminal involvement. While there continued to be traffic between the program and various youth detention centres, youth remained in the community on average four times longer than when they were not supported through the program. There was a reduction in smoking, alcohol and drug use among youth while in the program. The majority of youth had applied for waged jobs for the first time in their lives. Youth also reported being more confident entering public places such as Starbucks, libraries, stores and other venues and claimed to experience more “curiosity” and less “racism” when they did. Many were able to avoid their former associates who remained gang-involved. While in the program, youth were less inclined to engage in criminal activity and some managed to avoid gang activities entirely (Buddle 2012a).

Many of the youth referred to the program had substance addictions. The few residential treatment facilities for youth in Winnipeg, however, have long waiting lists and youth are routinely denied treatment. COC was not equipped to provide the addictions treatment these youth required. Some of the youth referred to the program from corrections facilities genuinely wished to exit gang life, but were unable, and justifiably unwilling, to cut off ties with family

members who were gang involved. This often resulted in continued, although reduced, gang involvement. Some youth were so ensconced in gang life it would have been impossible for them to safely exit gangs without subjecting their families and friends to certain gang retaliation. There are no facilities or services that can facilitate family relocations for exiting gang members in Winnipeg (Buddle 2012a).

COC youth who had been expelled from high schools were frustrated in their efforts to pursue home schooling, the regulations for which are complicated for programs of this nature. Certified teachers willing to offer lessons under alternative circumstances are difficult to find and prohibitively costly. Circle of Courage requires permanent funding to remain viable. When the five-year funding cycle ended in 2012, the youth were left to their own devices and many of the gains that had been achieved began to dissolve. The youths' preconceptions that adults could not be relied upon were confirmed. Their former gang associates, on the other hand, were ever willing to console them (Buddle 2012a).

Street gangs are not necessarily oppositional and a-cultural, nor merely symbolic substitutes for culturally approved social structures. Rather, they may function as one of the few avenues for entrepreneurship, authority and for the production of non-hegemonic gender identities (Monsell-Davis 1986) available to groups barred by race and class from other forms of capitalism (Sanchez-Jankowski 1991), or political and cultural power. Youth gang violence makes legible through the language of bruises, flesh-torn bones and bullet wounds, the unspeakable pain of psychological trauma. It does so in a strikingly clear and expressive display that demands attention from adults as a lethal ultimatum.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

Reliable Winnipeg-wide statistics regarding youth violent crime and violent injuries according to neighbourhood, ethnic or cultural markers and other contextualizing factors (time of day, place and nature of crime, outcomes after sentencing) do not exist. Nor are there rigorous evaluations of the programs that do intermittently offer anti-violence programing for the highest risk youths.

Social scientists may over-rely on indeterminate statistical information, poorly drafted surveys, interviews (either with non-authoritative sources or without verifying data with participant observation); some never achieve the critical skills that are necessary to

overcoming the assumptions that may inform and over-determine their studies. Scholarly disciplines have different preferred criteria for reliability and validity (these are sometimes mutually exclusive). For example, a researcher might rely on a strategy of rigorous randomized sampling to conduct research with gang members. This can be disastrous without a good understanding of the culture however, as it allows the researcher to narrow the focus prematurely and eliminate the very people who are relevant to the study. Such a study would yield high reliability but extremely low validity undermining an entire study.

Legal experts, as with others, are concerned with particular questions (to the exclusion of others). They follow particular procedures and have their own standards for reliability and validity – chief among them being the principle of precedent. Asking questions that will yield information that is relevant to Canadian law, legal scholars and practitioners are sometimes reluctant (or may lack the resources) to undertake the amount of work that might advance legal precedent and promote a paradigm shift in legal reasoning.

Legal practitioners must be practical and use their resources economically. Problematic or out-dated precedents therefore often remain unchallenged. Thus despite that an individual may have been deemed a gang member in a former trial, a defense attorney may deem it expeditious to deal only with a theft charge, leaving the former gang ruling in tact – showing the theft to have been minor, i.e., without a weapon. The result for the defendant might be a swifter trial and a quicker release from an overcrowded remand centre, which might be of higher immediate value to the offender than name clearing and legal precedent setting which challenges, for example, whether gang membership itself, is criminal. Prosecutors may invoke the “benefiting a criminal organization” charge strategically calculating its value as a tradable commodity for pleas on other charges, while acknowledging the difficulty of proving this empirically in court.

Gang members are not themselves reliable information sources. Gossip and rumour mongering are common methods by which gangs (like many other social formations) manage unwanted and invite desired attention, sanction gang and rival gang members, and misinform police (as well as probation officers, social workers and family members) (see Sanchez-Jankowski 1991). In other words, gang members constantly spread a mixture of facts and misinformation. The girlfriends of gang members are also a rich source of strategic rumour mongering for a wide variety of purposes (see Totten 2000). There are methods of triangulating research that test the validity of these individuals’

assertions. One wonders if the same standards for testing are employed in police interviews of “reliable sources,” or in academic studies that rely primarily on interviewing gang members without engaging in participant observation.

Despite the indeterminacy of gang reporting, crime statistics continue to measure incidents of crime presuming a similar normative subject. And, viewed as empirical data rather than as a priori epistemological processes, statistics are fed into a higher level of abstraction—social indicator categories—and only here receive analytic attention. Thus, treated as reality in itself, rather than representations of it, frequency-facts serve to solidify social facts (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006b:211).

Taken together, these quasi-surveillance systems contribute to the dispensation of Actuarial Justice—identifying, measuring, and presenting a vicarious experience of disorder—“managing” and “storing” the products of pre-conceptions rather than questioning these complicated discursive processes. Surveillance, a form of governance from a distance, combined with the self-assertive citizen action—the use of cell phone cameras to record crimes or the installation of private surveillance cameras—is typical of the regulated autonomy of neo-liberal polities.

To counter these calculative practices, academics would ideally engage more directly in interventions, working for instance, on the street with new units of police to change the nature of the prevention and suppression strategies now being constructed to deal with the perceived problem of Aboriginal gang-related crime. Replacing a focus on police gang units, with community policing ones, would shift the focus from suppression to prevention – the latter requiring a skill set and temperament that are radically different from the former. Here, method sharing across camps of ethnographers, statisticians and police would promote the building of more trusting relationships between community officers and the small percentage of youth and their families who are contributing most significantly to crime. Additionally, such an approach would permit the collection of data on youth in crisis (as opposed to youth crime) that would lead to the provision of greater supports, rather than criminal categorization and penalization.<sup>vii</sup>

Youth serving organizations ought to be able to engage more concertedly in political advocacy which includes the design, implementation and evaluation of all components of youth crime reduction initiatives. They require stable core funding that does not limit their political activity to meet this task. They would also benefit



from greater assistance from the Children and Youth Opportunities Department by way of accounting and administrative technicians who would, themselves, complete the extraordinary bureaucratic gymnastics required to meet government funders' accounting conditions.

Different sorts of colonial violence have become "folded" into present day institutions of order (Deleuze 1988). As threats *to*, rather than resources *within*, the political economy Winnipeg Native male youth are easily signified as a dangerous class just as their ancestors were "outlawed" and contained to facilitate the 'proper' circulation of goods, people, finances, technologies and ideas that Canadian political and economic progress entrained over the course of the settlement era. As agents of the state seek to reduce disorder by restoring zones of civility—employing the discourse of crime to distract attention from the material and social effects of neo-liberalism—segregation comes to serve as the instrument *de jure* of social restoration (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2006a:61). The extraordinarily high rate of Aboriginal youth incarceration in Manitoba confirms that Aboriginal youth are the most *managed* aggregate group of young offenders in the province, and serves as a reminder that the colonial project of classifying and removing improperly circulating persons or "pollutants" from spaces reserved for 'legitimate' commerce is far from a distant memory. Then as today, this serves the purpose of surveillance, confinement and control.

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i Meanwhile, commercial firms enjoy expansive freedoms. Taxpayers, for instance, indirectly finance the lobbying activities of corporate entities because their taxable income is reduced by virtue of the fact that expenses are considered a legitimate cost of doing business. This creates a "de facto public subsidy of corporate activities...and their activities are virtually unrestricted in scope" (Phillips 2000-2001:187).

ii Burczycka instructs: "Many factors can influence police-reported crime statistics including: local police service policies, procedures and enforcement practices; changes in various demographic, social and economic factors; neighbourhood characteristics; technological advancements; legislative amendments; and public perception and attitudes," among other things (2013:12). Initiatives specifically designed to target drug crime, for instance, may result in a greater number of incident identifications by police, rather than a greater number of actual occurrences. Likewise, police may focus law enforcement efforts more on addressing drug-related crimes when resources permit; as, when other types of crime decline (Dauvergne 2009).

iii When the police make a positive gang identification, the information is entered into their database - the Niche Record Management System. According to its Winnipeg-based developer, Niche RMS is a unified, incident-centric operational policing

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system that manages information in relation to the core policing entities – people, locations, vehicles, organizations (businesses or other groups), incidents (or occurrences) and property/ evidence (see Niche Technology n.d.). While the system has streamlined administrative and information sharing practices, if erroneous information, such as the mis-identification of a gang member, is entered regarding a suspect, this same information is reproduced incorrectly throughout related databases often for long periods of time before detection. Countervailing forces or tests cannot easily compensate for such systemic problems. Because these files are confidential, there is currently no peer review or social science critique of these data standard protocols. Therefore, there is no way of knowing who oversees any errors in reporting, what the consequences of these false positives may be for erroneously labeled individuals, and how, when, or if, corrections to a file can in fact be made. Since allegations of gang affiliation are based on one’s association with identified members or associates, one errant entry has the potential to negatively affect the status of numerous individuals simultaneously.

- iv The funding to voluntary organizations became institutionalized in the 1970s with the intent to provide a training ground for the making of ‘good citizens.’ Funds for the organizations’ core activities were dramatically reduced under the Mulroney government (1984-1993), however, “premised on the twin beliefs that such organizations should succeed or fail in the ‘marketplace’ of ideas and funding and that the states should not support groups that criticize it’s policies” (Phillips 2000-2001:185). This occurred at a time when non-profits were under tremendous pressure to provide those services from which the government was withdrawing. This situation was temporarily vitiated when the Liberal government introduced the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) in 2000.
- v The Block by Block Community Safety Initiative is a Provincial government program launched in 2014 to provide greater coordination of services within a 21-block area in Winnipeg’s North End. Block by Block aims to improve communication between community groups, social and health agencies, schools and police. Certain community organizations charge that the \$600,000 for the three-year networking plan might have more productively funded an actual service or program.
- vi In 2001, Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. became a registered non-profit corporation. It operates using a culturally-centered and value-based approach to provide Aboriginally-identified programs and services which build on the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal peoples. It promotes empowerment, healing, reconciliation and justice through self-sufficiency, healthy relationships and caring communities.
- vii Suppression remains a necessity. Aboriginal families who are the victims of crime by Aboriginal and other offenders are not the “soft on crime” advocates they are often assumed to be. Focusing on the actual perpetrators of offences rather than profiling, however, would facilitate more reporting of crimes by community members and result in a more accurate registering of crimes by police. This would lend greater reliability to statistical counts and improve the general safety of Aboriginal and other inner city residents.

