

Criminology Faculty Research Projects

Elizabeth Comack

Research Themes: Inequality and the Law; Justice, Safety and Security in Aboriginal and Inner-City Communities; Masculinity and Crime; Criminalized Women

Research Projects:

For the past three years Elizabeth has been working with the Manitoba Research Alliance on a SSHRC/CURA-funded project entitled “Transforming Aboriginal and Inner-city Communities” (see: <http://www.manitobaresearchalliance-tiac.ca/>). The project is broken down into four streams: justice, safety, and security; housing and neighbourhood revitalization; education and skill- and capacity-building; and community economic development. Elizabeth is leading the justice, safety, and security stream. Within this stream she has been involved in a number of studies:

- 1.) **“Violence against Women in Winnipeg’s Street Sex Trade”:** Maya Seshia, a graduate student in Political Studies at the University of Alberta, was the primary researcher on this project. Together Elizabeth and Maya wrote an article based on a quantitative analysis of data collected from bad date sheets distributed to sex trade workers in Winnipeg (Comack and Seshia. 2010. “Bad Dates and Street Hassles: Violence in the Winnipeg Street Sex Trade.” *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice* vol 52 no 2: 219-30).
- 2.) **Meeting the Needs of Youth:** was a project that Elizabeth conducted with two Sociology graduate students—Evan Bowness and Amelia Curran—in collaboration with the Coalition of Community-Based Youth Serving Agencies, a group of 18 after-school and community-based agencies that work together to provide programming and services to support at-risk and marginalized youth (ranging in ages from 6 to 29) in Winnipeg. The study drew upon interviews with 34 CCBYSA front-line workers and administrators to address two questions: *What are the issues that youth in Winnipeg face? What are the difficulties youth-serving agencies encounter when helping the populations of youth they serve?* The report was published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives–Manitoba (CCPA–MB) in September of 2010. (see: <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/meeting-needs-youth>)
- 3.) **Don’t Let the Bed Bugs Bite:** working with Sociology graduate student James Lyons, and in collaboration with the Spence Neighbourhood Association, interviews were conducted with 16 inner-city residents, 3 landlords, 2 public health inspectors, and 5 inner-city community workers to explore the social impacts of a bed bug infestation on inner-city residents and the policies and practices needed to respond effectively to this

growing problem. (see:

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/fast-facts-winnipeg-needs-bed-bug-plan>; <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/handle/1993/4121>)

- 4.) **Aboriginal-Police Relations: Documenting the Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples:** working in collaboration with Nahanni Fontaine, Justice Director of the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), the aim of this project is to produce a 'collective narrative' of Aboriginal peoples' experiences with the police. To date, 78 interviews have been completed and Elizabeth and Nahanni are in the process of writing up the results. (see: <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/fast-facts-racialized-policing>)
- 5.) **Public Discourse on the Policing of Winnipeg's Inner-city Communities:** Elizabeth has been working with Evan Bowness, an M.A. student, on this project, which involves an analysis of on-line comments posted in relation to the police shooting deaths of Aboriginal men (see: Comack and Bowness. 2010. "Dealing the Race Card: Public Discourse on the Policing of Winnipeg's Inner-city Communities." *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* vol. 19 no. 1: 34-50). Evan is also using these data for his Master's thesis project.
- 6.) **The Trouble with Normal:** working with Jim Silver (Politics, U of Winnipeg) and Lawrie Deane (Social Work, U of Manitoba), and in collaboration with Larry Morrisette of Ojijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin (OPK), the aim of this project is to gain deeper insight into what life is like for Aboriginal men and women growing up and living in Winnipeg's North End. (see: <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/if-you-want-change-violence-hood-you-have-change-hood>)

Rick Linden

Research Themes: Policing; Crime Prevention; Restorative Justice; Crime Causation; Aboriginal Justice

Research Projects:

- 1) **Vehicle Crime:** Since 2003, Rick has received funding from the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence for his research on Antisocial Behaviour and the Automobile. Along with co-researchers Bob Mann and Reg Mann of the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health this project is conducting research on a number of topics including road rage, dangerous driving, drugs and alcohol and driving, and auto theft. Rick's research involves a study of reasons why young people steal cars; an evaluation of the successful Winnipeg Auto Theft Suppression Strategy (WATSS); an evaluation of the electronic mobilizer program; and an evaluation of the electronic monitoring

program for high-risk auto theft offenders. Ashley Pearson is doing the electronic monitoring project as her M.A. thesis project. The next projects in this research program will look at the causes and prevention of dangerous driving and at auto insurance fraud.

- 2) **Gang Crime Prevention:** One of Rick's major areas of interest is crime prevention. He recently presented a paper on gang crime prevention at a national Organized Crime Summit. He is on the management committee of Manitoba's Gang Response and Suppression program (GRASP) and will be doing research evaluating the impact of that program.
- 3) **Student Resources:** Rick is currently working on the 7th edition of his textbook *Criminology: A Canadian Perspective* and the 5th edition of *Sociology in Our Times: Essentials Edition*.

Russell Smandych

Research Themes: Canadian and comparative youth justice (legislative change, policy transfer); global criminology and criminal justice (transnational environmental crime, international criminal justice); comparative common law legal history (19th century British colonial law; colonial policing in Australia and Canada; biography and legal history)

Research Projects:

- 1) In recent years, Russell has been involved in several projects on **Canadian and comparative youth justice**. This has included historical research on the origins of Canadian juvenile delinquency and youth criminal justice legislation, and comparative research on youth justice legislation and parental responsibility laws in Canada and Australia. He is also currently involved in co-editing a book (with John Winterdyck, Mount Royal University) on *Youth at Risk and Youth Justice* to be published by Oxford University Press in 2012.
- 2) In the field of **global criminology and criminal justice**, Russell has recently co-edited a new textbook on the topic (with Nick Larsen, Chapman University), which is now widely used by students taking courses in this growing area of research. He is also currently involved in carrying out research on transnational issues related to environmental crime and international criminal justice.
- 3) Russell has a long career as a legal historian, having spent many years carrying out research in the field of **Canadian legal history**. Over the last decade he has broadened

his legal-historical research to include work in comparative and transnational legal history, with a particular focus on the development of British colonial law in the 19th century and its application to Indigenous peoples in white-settler societies. Among other projects, he is currently involved in a comparative study of colonial policing in 19th century Australia and Canada, along with a biographical study of the 19th century British legal reformer and colonial administrator James Stephen, Jr.

Andrew Woolford

Research Themes: Conflict Resolution (Mediation, Restorative Justice; Transitional Justice); Genocide and Indigenous Peoples; Genocide and Criminology; Neoliberalism and the Inner-city.

Research Projects:

- 1) For the past 6 years Andrew and R.S. Ratner (Emeritus, UBC) have been gathering data for a comparative analysis of **post-genocide/mass violence reparations** in 47 countries. To do so, they have created an analytical grid for mapping the lifecourse of reparations claims from launch to resolution.
- 2) Andrew and Bryan Hogeveen (U of Alberta) are conducting a SSHRC-sponsored study titled "**Experiencing Neoliberalism in Two Prairie Cities**" through which they are tracing the effects of neoliberal policy shifts at the government level on people living in precarious or marginalized situations in the inner-city.
- 3) A spin-off of his "Experiencing Neoliberalism" research is a project (with Sonia Bookman, U of M) titled "**Policing the Brand.**" In this project, Andrew and Sonia will consider how surveillance and policing are bound up with the framing and construction of branded urban space – the Exchange District – and the social implications of this growing urban trend. In particular, how is surveillance configured and performed to create an impression of safety? How is this bound up with the construction of brand image? What are the social implications of branding in terms of the mobilization of surveillance and policing techniques? How does this contribute to certain social and spatial exclusions?
- 4) Andrew is also beginning a **comparative study of Indigenous boarding/residential schooling experiences in the United States and Canada**. This research will involve an evaluation of both cases through the lens of genocide, as well as an examination of the different paths taken by each respective government in the aftermath of the boarding/residential school experience. With respect to the latter issue, the fundamental question is: how did Canada arrive at a three-pronged reparations strategy (apology, compensation, truth commission) while the United States has done little to recognize boarding school injustices?