

Mobilizing Justice

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Law, Crime,
Justice and Mobilities

Virtually May 5-7 2021

Hosted by: The Centre for Interdisciplinary Justice Studies
University Of Winnipeg

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Wednesday May 5th

**5:45 pm Opening Remarks: Kelly Gorkoff, Chair Criminal Justice
Department (UWinnipeg)**

6:00 pm – 6:45 pm **Featured Speaker**

**Nadine Wathen: Mobilizing Knowledge for Wicked Problems:
Lessons Learned from Gender-Based Violence Research**

(Canada Research Chair in Mobilizing Knowledge on Gender-Based Violence, UWestern
Ontario)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is “wicked”, i.e., a social problem that defies easy solution due to large social and economic burden, knowledge gaps and contradictions, multiple stakeholders, lack of consensus about the nature of the problem and potential solutions, and its interconnectedness with other problems, including mental health, substance use and health inequities. Nadine Wathen will present lessons learned on how to mobilize knowledge about GBV using examples from various projects, including her current work on the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on GBV services. These projects have all used an integrated knowledge mobilization approach, where policy actors and other knowledge users actively partner with researchers to develop and implement new knowledge. Dr. Wathen will propose strategies to more effectively produce and apply GBV-related knowledge to improve policy processes, and ultimately, the well-being of Canadians.





Wednesday May 5th

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Panel: Identities, Vulnerability and Empowerment

Chair: Jane Lothian, UWinnipeg

Khandakar Kohinur Akter (UWindsor): Legal Interventions and Access to Maternal Health Services by Women with Disabilities (WWD) in Bangladesh: Lessons from Canada

Reproductive rights are among the basic rights promised to the people with disabilities, including the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to marry and found a family; the right to comprehensive reproductive health care. Like many other human rights, the maternity health care rights of WWD have been violated on a larger scale. But, a comprehensive legal framework can be discerned from Canadian health care laws and disability-related laws. In Bangladeshi national framework, section 16 of the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of Bangladesh, 2013 along with rules of 2016 deal with the health care rights of women with disabilities. In the case of Canada, the primary legal framework for Canada is the Canada Health Act (1984) which lists the conditions that provincial/territorial health policies relating reproductive health care of women with disabilities. So in light of this background, this study will aim to explore the barriers of various kinds that women with disabilities in Bangladesh face during maternity observing how they are treated in their families and by medical service providers Through the examination of international disability rights instruments, Bangladeshi and, Canadian laws ensuring the maternity health care services of WWD, attempts will be made to provide suggestions on how Bangladesh can make changes in existing laws and policies to remove barriers for effective implementation of the right to maternal health services for WWD.





Wednesday May 5th

Mary Chadee (UWest Indies): Beliefs Towards Delinquency: Influence of Attachment and Personality

This paper assesses the relationship between attachment bonds, personality and attitudes towards delinquency. Absent in the literature are single theoretical and measurement models evaluating these relationships. Adolescents reorganize their hierarchy of relationships and develop multiple attachment bonds (Hazan and Zeifman 1994). Given adolescents multiple attachment figures, this paper differentiates between attachment bonds of parental and peer (Kobak, Rosenthal & Serwik 2004). Additionally, there has been little theorizing on how personality is associated with attitude towards delinquency among adolescents although this factor interplays with attachment. This study hypothesizes that peer and parental bonding together with personality are explanatory factors in understanding attitudes towards delinquency. In June 2017, utilizing a survey design, a questionnaire was administered to 408 males (age, $m=15.3/SD=2.2$) attending secondary schools within urban high risk areas in a Caribbean country. The following measures were used: Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) (Armsden & Greenberg, 1989), The Big Five Inventory (BFI; Goldberg, 1993, John & Srivastava, 1999), and Attitude towards Delinquency (Wortley, 2008). Attachment (parental and peer) was a weak predictor of delinquency and attitudes towards delinquency. However, personality (agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism) explained 13% of variance in delinquency. Hierarchical regression models were computed. Findings are discussed in the context of social control and individual characteristics.





Wednesday May 5th

Vicki Chartrand & Sheyann Foshay (Bishop): Centering Indigenous Women in Mobilizing Justice Beyond Colonial Structures

Through an investigation of grassroots initiatives for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ (MMIWG2S+), in this paper we show how Indigenous women are central to understanding and mobilizing justice. We first offer a historical contextualization of Indigenous dispossession that highlights how Indigenous women are the targets of colonial violence and genocide. We then exemplify the persistence of this colonial violence and its attendant forms of dispossession through a discussion of the colonial spectacles and erasures found within the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver. Drawing on the works of Million (2008) and Saleh-Hanna (2015), we argue that Indigenous women are not only the targets of colonial violence and genocide but are at the heart and soul of the struggle against it. Drawing on several examples of the 500+ Unearthing Justices grassroots initiatives for the MMIWG2S+[1], we show how Indigenous women's leadership works to "dismantle from within" through Indigenous knowledges and lived wisdom.





Thursday May 6th

10:00 am - 11:00 am

Panel: Governance and Health

Chair: Steven Kohm, UWinnipeg

Courtney Waid, Kristi Brownfield, Christopher Near, Pamela Monaghan-Geernaert (Northern State): The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Service Provision in a Midwestern State

Globally speaking, criminal justice systems undoubtedly faced critical issues related to ample resource availability and efficient service provision long before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020. The pivot necessitated by many criminal justice entities at the onset of the pandemic placed constraints on system personnel and thus undoubtedly affected the offenders and victims served by such agencies. This survey research seeks to explore the perceptions of system personnel working in an American Midwestern state concerning the mobilization of services and resources for offenders and victims since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Implications of the survey results will be discussed, and future directions for research will be addressed.





Thursday May 6th

Alan McGreevy (UWinnipeg/UManitoba): Impersonal medicine: Genetic Wealth, Genome Databases and Informed Consent

Genome-wide association studies look for correlations between human genes and complex traits such as health and disease. However, human genomic research relies on databases that have persistent biases towards European ancestries. As the disease burden of COVID-19 falls disproportionately on minoritized communities, many scientists are seeking genetic explanations, but these analyses are only as robust as the data they build on. While the Nagoya Protocol obligates member nations to share benefits of the genetic wealth and research with the nation where material was collected, it makes no allowance for human genetic material. COVID-19 has highlighted the intersection of a pathogen's genetic sequence, covered under the Nagoya Protocol, and human genomic data, which is not. These gaps in the national and international practices around human genomic data are a current point of contention and legislation. Next-generation genetic sequencing is a powerful tool for medical diagnostics, but also captures patient genomic information, raising questions about distributing raw data and patient consent. Canada's new tri-agency data management requirements include sharing publication-supporting data in international databases. Informed consent is often not required for de-identified samples, but data from separate studies can be combined to describe the genomic data of minoritized populations. The speed of scientific advancement and the urgent need for diverse biobanks calls for populations traditionally underserved or actively harmed by medical institutions to trust these bodies with their genetic data. The shifting longevity of these data and push to make data accessible complicates issues around informed consent for individuals and communities.





Thursday May 6th

Agnieszka Doll (Dalhousie) & Ania Zbyszewska (Carleton): Elite and Precarious? Neoliberal Reforms, Fragmented Solidarities and Resistance among Professional (Legal) Workers

Our paper draws on the case studies of British academics and Polish law attorneys to examine resistance to growing precariousness among knowledge-based 'elite' workers. Both these groups have in recent years experienced increasing, albeit uneven, erosion in work conditions, which can be attributed, in part, to the interplay between structural changes associated with the reforms of higher education in the United Kingdom and liberalization of the legal profession in Poland, and the parallel rise of academic and professional capitalism. Although these developments reflect similar tendencies in the broader labour markets, we show how increasing competition within both these groups combined with their (simultaneously internalized and externally imposed) categorization as intellectual elites or professionals who are independent, yet motivated by vocational ethos or a sense of public duty and responsibility, have tended to both contribute to the overall growth of insecurity, along with erosion and polarization of working conditions within these sectors, and to fragment solidarity between workers and undermine their ability to resist neoliberal precariousness. We highlight a number of recent responses, proposals and resistance campaigns mounted by each group, critically evaluating whether, and to what extent, they carry the potential to effectively challenge the downward trend in work conditions or how they can be used in shaping new alternative strategies for rebuilding solidarity and overcoming fragmentation among these 'elite' workers in the quest for change.





Thursday May 6th

11:15 am - 12:15 pm

Panel: Occupational Settings

Chair: Michael Weinrath, UWinnipeg

Madu Blessing (UWindsor): Gender Diversity in the Boardroom and Firms Effectiveness: A Comparative Analysis of Nigerian and Canadian Corporate Governance Framework

Study has shown that the presence of three or more women in the boardroom is positively correlated with factors such as stronger organizational health, better decision making and greater diversity of thoughts. Gender diversity in the boardroom is not adequately present in Nigeria due to the inadequacy of the corporate governance framework in the country and the cultural and patriarchal nature of Nigeria. The existing research on board gender diversity in Nigeria is extant and there are dearth recent materials on this subject. The limited nature of literature and the sudden disappearance of this subject in Nigeria is the reason for this research. My research aims to contribute to literature by comparison of gender diversity within the Corporate Governance framework of Nigeria and Canada and providing an investigation into the relationship between gender diversity and firms' effectiveness in these two jurisdictions. The study would also highlight key recommendations derived from the comparative analysis and in particular the lessons both countries can learn from each other in relation to gender diversity in the board and the steps Nigeria can take to achieve gender diversity in the board room in a bid to attain social justice.





Thursday May 6th

Rosemary Ricciardelli (MUN): Socialization into Correctional Work: An Ethnographic Experience of the Correctional Officer Training Program at the National Training Academy of the Correctional Service of Canada

In the current ethnographic study, I participated in elements of the three stages of the correctional officer training program (CTP) offered by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). Unpacking my socialization experience, as I participated in the program, I use Van Maanen and Schein (1977) theory of organizational socialization to understand the socialization process inherent to the structure of the training academy while noting the key elements of informal socialization recruits experience. Thematic reflection on the latter reveals that even before arriving at the academy, the pressures tied to testing and the module content reinforce organizational commitment. Moreover, it is at the academy, where the emphasis remains on organizational commitment, that a seemingly contradictory message emerges, where the academy atmosphere and lessons encourage collective solidarity and comradery among recruits, while also reminding recruits to remain self-focused, enforcing that recruits are accountable for their actions or role in the acts of others. In response, I show how recruits appear to be socialized for, what I refer to as, caveated comradery; where recruits learn the value of collective solidarity and comradery but only as far as all recruits act with integrity and abide to the behavioural expectations of the organization.





Thursday May 6th

Marcella Siqueira Cassiano and Rosemary Ricciardelli (MUN): CCWORK Protocol: The Study of Canadian Correctional Workers' Wellbeing, Organizations, Roles and Knowledge

Correctional officers (COs) in Canada and abroad experience high rates of mental health disorders compared to the general population. Researchers still do not have a clear understanding of the factors affecting their mental health and well-being. The rates of mental health disorders among COs and other public safety personnel led Canada's House of Commons to acknowledge Occupational Stress Injuries as a norm in public safety work, reinforcing the demand for research on the topic. In our presentation, we share the protocols we use to investigate the determinants of health and well-being among COs working in Canada's federal prison system under the project CCWORK. CCWORK is a multi-year project (2018-2023, with a five-year renewal) that tracks longitudinal and cohort data from COs in 43 prisons. With Correctional Services Canada's assistance, we recruit research participants when they start the Correctional Training Program and study their mental health, correctional work experiences, correctional training experiences, views and perceptions of prison and prisoners, and career aspirations over time. To collect research data, CCWORK relies on quantitative and qualitative research instruments applied at baseline and yearly after that (i.e., follow-ups). Baseline instruments comprise two surveys, one interview, and one clinical assessment. Meanwhile, follow-up instruments consist of one interview, one clinical assessment, and one survey. The follow-up survey comes in two versions, which we alternate from one follow-up wave to the other. The first version focuses on the COs' work-life, while the second emphasizes their overall well-being. By the end of 2023, we expect to have studied about 500 participants. CCWORK has received approval from the Research Ethics Board of the Memorial University of Newfoundland (File No: 20190481). Participation is voluntary and confidential.



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG



Thursday May 6th

12:30 pm - 1:15 pm **Featured Speaker**

Introduction: Michelle Bertrand, UWinnipeg

Sara Dorow: 'Your Money or Your Life': The Human Costs of Fly-in Fly-out Resource Sector Work

Professor and Chair of Sociology, and former founding director of the Community Service-Learning Program at the University of Alberta

The assumption that humans will "move to where the jobs are" often does not take into account the costs of such mobility for individual workers and their families. I draw on more than a decade of research in the oil sands region of northern Alberta--most recently, a mixed-methods study of mobile work and mental health--to examine the material, emotional, and social tradeoffs of fly-in fly-out work for people who rotate back and forth between camp and home. The talk also considers the structural barriers to creating a more just mobility regime, and the roles that employers, governments, unions, and social service agencies can play.





Thursday May 6th

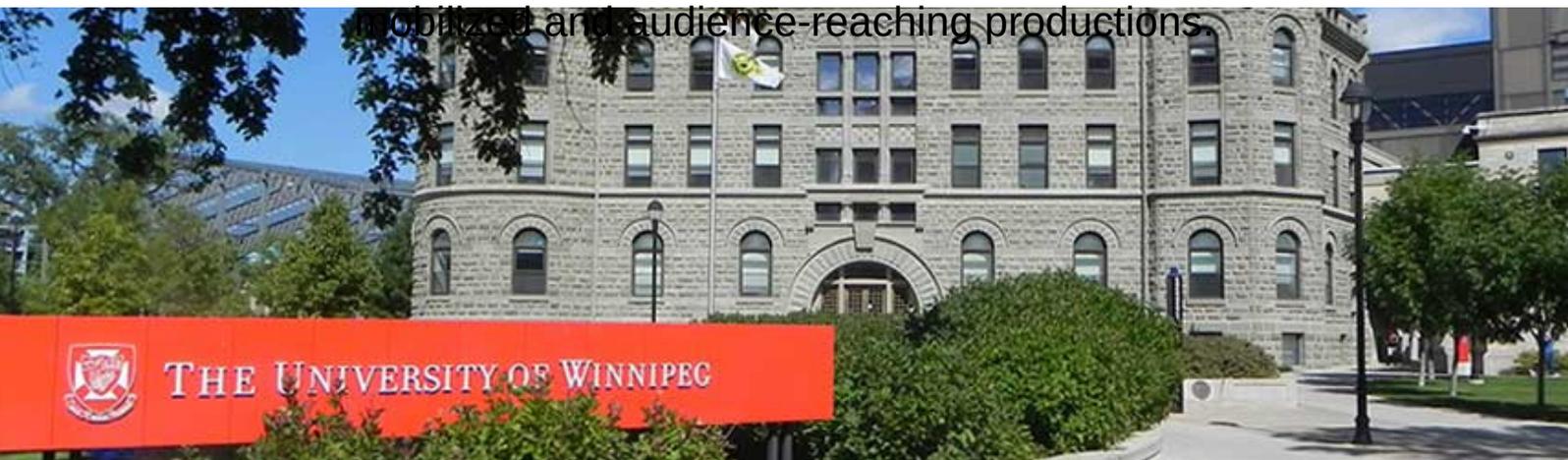
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Panel: Precarity and Marginalization

Chair: Amelia Curran, UWinnipeg

Pauline Greenhill (UWinnipeg) & Heidi Kosonen (University of Jyväskylä [Finland]/UWinnipeg): Colour-Blind Casting or Inclusiveness? Political Casting as Racial Justice

As global commodities, Anglo-North American fictional cinema and television have long had an impact beyond their immediate contexts through their domination of global movie theatres and streaming services. Hollywood productions, in particular, as imperial commodities mobilized across continents, globally mediate their creators' conceptions and values in their culturally specific dramatized depictions of human lives, influencing media productions also elsewhere. Like in most Western institutions, access to positions of power in media is most easily granted to White North Americans/Europeans, which renders it necessary to pay attention to participation at all levels by Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) who lack similar access to narrating their own stories. Justice can be served not only in media narratives, but also in casting choices. Blanket presumptions that White folks can portray individuals of any ethnoracial origin, while BIPOC must only play BIPOC, and that any BIPOC actor's identity is interchangeable with any other's, have been highlighted in their absence from recent productions (e.g. Netflix's *Bridgerton*). We look here at how critical, political casting can mobilize racial justice within North America and beyond. We discuss so-called colour-blind casting and tease out its social implications by directing our gaze on media produced in Canada. We focus on positive examples of representation that empower minority and oppressed groups, including work from the Manitoba-based Eagle Vision and how they demonstrate possibilities for creating impactful, globally mobilized and audience-reaching productions.





Thursday May 6th

Dale Spencer (Carleton): (Auto)Mobility, Precarity and Homelessness

As an economically, politically, and culturally manufactured system of objects, automobility articulates with economic discourses and practices of work and production as well as political discourses and practices of security and regulation. The automobile and the attendant system that supports it articulates with dominant cultural discourses and practices about what constitutes 'the good life'. At the extreme end, those that lack the means to an automobile are viewed as falling on 'hard times'. While scholars have engaged with the problematic aspects of the automobile as a factor in propagating urban inequalities, this paper contributes to the homeless and mobilities literature by engaging with how homeless and street involved folks relate to, negotiate, and are marginalized by systems of automobility. This paper draws on 100 biographical interviews with homeless and street involved males in Chicago and Winnipeg and probes how automobility contributes to their precarity, specifically their access to work, social assistance, and housing, as well as more at risk for victimization. This paper considers how their relationship to automobility works to keep them in "their place" with limited means for overcoming their current circumstances.





Thursday May 6th

Meg Lonergan (Carleton): Hard-on of Darkness: Gore & Shock Websites as the Dark Tourism of Digital Space

Dark tourism is a growing area of study in criminology, especially the focus on penal museums and decommissioned prisons (Walby & Piché 2011; Fiander et al. 2016) and increasing literature in tourism studies (Stone & Sharpley 2008; Podoshen et al. 2015; Hartmann et al. 2018). Despite the turn towards “pornifying” concepts such as referring to violent films and other content as “torture porn” (Lockwood 2009), little research has been conducted on websites devoted to shocking and violent content (Tait 2008). This research applies a dark tourism framework to gore and other “shock” websites, and explicit media online more broadly, as a lens to explore how these sites are navigated by visitors to the sites. I use the term “explicit media” to refer to both graphic violence and hardcore sexual content. I address the legal and ethical impossibilities of researching “shock pornographies,” (Jones and Molabocus 2009) to articulate how a deeper understanding of these types of media contributes to broader conversations of pornography more broadly. While much literature addresses how people seek out dark places in the world, this article explores connections between the dark places in cyberspace and those who visit them.





Friday May 7th

10:00 am - 11:30 am

Panel: Police, Security and Crime Prevention

Chair: Sarah Heath, UWinnipeg

Kelsey Trott (URegina): Public Perceptions of Law and Order and Policing: A Global Analysis

Cross national research is useful in helping us better understanding global patterns in the operations of criminal justice systems. This research examines public perceptions of law and order and police efficacy using poll data from 110 nations. Two dependent variables are examined: (a) the Law and Order Index, which is collected by Gallup, and includes indicators of confidence in the local police, victimization within the past year, and fear of crime; and, (b) the Global Police Index, which is an indicator of the ability of the police to render effective services. Controlling for crime and the use of punishment (imprisonment and use of the death penalty) we find that people in nations with higher levels of economic development and economic freedoms, as well as less inequality and higher levels of civil liberties have a more favorable outlook toward law and order; whereas development and political rights are more strongly associated with the perceived effectiveness of the police. Given those findings we discuss the implications for understanding attitudes toward the justice system in light of current debates over the use of formal social control, including de-funding the police and prison abolition.





Friday May 7th

Braeden Broschuk & Michael Weinrath (UWinnipeg): Evaluating the Mobilization of Restorative Justice

In Canada, recent emphasis has been put on restorative justice (RJ) by the federal government and provincial governments like Manitoba, encouraging criminal justice agents to mobilize its use. RJ programs are intended to divert individuals from the justice system into mediation or helpful programming and away from the formal court system. It is touted as more consistent with traditional Indigenous dispute resolution systems and hence, a more appropriate means to deal with First Nations or Metis who come in contact with the law. This study evaluated the Winnipeg Police Service and Manitoba Prosecutions Restorative Justice pilot in Winnipeg's North End. This quantitative evaluation examined arrest records from the first 6 months of the program and studied the relationship between demographic factors, prior criminal history and offence type and RJ referral by police or prosecutors. Results from the pilot are modest, as, as 15% of eligible cases were referred. Police were more reluctant than prosecutors to divert cases. Both agencies missed opportunities to refer low risk offenders but were observed to refer some offenders who had committed serious crimes and had lengthy records. While falling short of mobilizing a major shift in criminal justice practice, findings indicate potential for greater use of RJ in Winnipeg. Recommendations to improve practice and promote referrals are provided.





Friday May 7th

Christopher Schneider (UBrandon): Public Criminology and the Debates Over Police: Reform, Defund, and Abolish

The year 2020 has been called the year of the protest. The police killing of George Floyd was the catalyst of global protests that quickly materialized into broad public debates ranging from calls for police reform to defunding and abolishing the police. Public criminology involves those conditions in which crime and related issues such as policing are understood publicly and how such matters are discussed in public spaces. This qualitative research article investigates some of the ways that criminologists and other social scientists responded in media in 2020 to public debates over whether to reform, defund or abolish the police and what insight such responses can provide about public criminology. The findings raise some general questions about public criminology and illuminate new concerns regarding the framing of scholarly expertise related to knowledge claims and credibility. Some suggestions for future research are noted.





Friday May 7th

Kelly Gorkoff (UWinnipeg), Nadine Bartlett (UManitoba), Cassandra Dokken (Department of Justice), Rebeca Heringer & Mehmet Yavuz (UManitoba), Natassia D'Sena (UWinnipeg): Networked Architectures of Crime Prevention: Community Mobilization in Manitoba

Crime prevention programs in Canada have increasingly adopted community mobilization frameworks –a process where individuals, groups, and organizations in a community come together to address particular social issues associated with health and safety, crime prevention, and community development. These initiatives intend to address systemic issues that are strongly correlated with criminal activity and with community safety and wellbeing. Responding to this call, 12 community mobilization (CM) initiatives have been in operation in Manitoba for between 5 and 12 years. CM is considered a networked form of crime control with programs across Canada. Although some programs have been questioned for being state-centric and promoting a police agenda there is evidence that Manitoban initiatives have retained autonomy and local governance in their design and operation. We argue that models of CM in Manitoba have maintained local leadership and resisted standardization which may have the potential to co-produce, community grounded definitions and practices of public safety. We introduce indicators verifying this and highlight this pattern and its possibilities for reimagining public safety.





Friday May 7th

Vincent Eagan (Wilfrid Laurier): Reframing Indigenous Blockades after Section 35 of the Constitution Act; Police Operations

This paper derives from a Policing BA program at Wilfrid Laurier University. How should police handle current Indigenous unrest? I use a legal pluralism analysis to examine the shift from bilingualism to the evolving application of historical Indigenous treaties that are occurring post Section 35 of the Constitution Act 1982 leading to Indigenous self-governance, and territorial/cultural autonomies. American cases also guide our policy frameworks such as the July 2020 Judge Boasberg ruling in favour of Standing Rock and Cheyenne Sioux. That prevented the Dakota Access Pipeline under Lake Oahe, triaging the corporate economic arguments less important than the environment and peoples. Governance include executive decision making, legislative-law making, and judiciary-independent Courts. The police have peace and order mandates, with new jurisdictional ambiguities existing that requires police to use restraint, discretion, fully gather evidence, and use more third-party intervenors. Acknowledging latent historic conflict issues becomes necessary for the police as well. Police will need to be educated and recognize the co-legitimacy of environmental inspired band appointees such as land or water defenders, and Elders, as well as the parity of Band Constables.





Friday May 7th

11:45 am – 12:30 pm **Featured Speaker**

Introduction: Kevin Walby, UWinnipeg

Josh Scannell: Weaponized Transparency and the Carceral Surround

Assistant Professor at The New School's School of Media Studies

The 2020 uprisings against racist police violence were the United States' largest and most sustained in over fifty years. Across the country and globe, millions took to the streets in the midst of the worst pandemic in a century to march under the banner of the Black Lives Matter movement. In city after city they were met with relentless and brutal police violence and retaliation - much of which was recorded and publicly shared. Nevertheless, consequences and accountability have been scarce. This talk will use the 2020 movement for racial justice as an entry point to think through the failure of the "transparency" and "accountability" paradigm in police reform to achieve appreciable changes in the structures of violence in policing. Especially in the wake of the first Black Lives Matter movement in the mid-2010s, police agencies invested heavily in digital technologies that were meant to improve transparency, efficiency, and precision of police work in order to rebuild "trust" between police and communities. This has not happened. But rather than asking after why the program has failed, this talk will reframe what the program is meant to achieve by introducing two key concepts: "weaponized transparency" and "the carceral surround." By understanding transparency as a mode of sociotechnical violence, and by understanding the target of policing as the social itself, it's possible to account for the stakes of the increasingly digitized "violence work" (Micol Siegel 2018) of policing under 21st century racial capitalism.





Friday May 7th

12:45 pm – 2:00 pm

Panel: Prisons and the Carceral State

Chair: Katharina Maier, UWinnipeg

Dawn Moore (Carleton) & Sarah Turnbull (UWaterloo): Understanding Prisoner Mobilities in and Through Lived Experiences of Incarceration

Recent scholarship on prisoner mobilities has critiqued conceptualisations of carceral spaces as fixed and stable, and movements within or around sites of confinement as linear and horizontal. According to this critique, criminological studies of imprisonment have typically embraced what Turner and Peters ('Rethinking mobility in criminology: Beyond horizontal mobilities of prisoner transportation,' *Punishment and Society*, 19(1), 96-114, 2017) term a 'sedentarist ontology' by failing to consider the complexities of prisoner mobilities in the lived experiences of the carceral. Drawing on qualitative interview data from the Prison Transparency Project, a multi-year study across four research sites in Canada, this paper analyses former prisoners' narratives of their carceral experiences, attending to the multifaceted mobilities that characterise prison life, including transfers, shackling, lockdowns, and release to the community. It considers the degree to which the theoretical work on carceral mobilities aligns with lived experiences of the carceral, as narrated by research participants, and relates to the spatialised colonial logics of Canada's penal institutions.





Friday May 7th

**Sophie Lachapelle, Katarina Bogosavljevic & Jennifer M. Kilty (UOttawa):
The “Cruel Optimism” of Public Health: Affect Theory and the Role of
Public Health in the Creation of Carceral Spaces**

The discipline of public health is generally considered to advance a universal good and is often discussed as a moral and ethical mission that aims to empower individuals to take responsibility for their own health. However, the ardent promotion of neoliberal discourses of individual responsibility and risk mitigation can also result in the hyper-policing and surveillance of marginalized communities, where the capital required to adhere to risk management is often systemically lacking or unobtainable. These consequences have become more visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many people who are unable to follow public health guidelines to mitigate risky behaviours – such as unhoused people – are punished in increasingly carceral ways, including quarantine, monetary fines, increased surveillance, and forced removal from public spaces. In this chapter, we consider how public health deploys the language of risk to justify the carceral management of and indeterminate intervention upon citizens. To do this, we explore the affective economies of risk in public health discourses and discuss the cruel optimism of public health messaging as a way to control spatial presence and movement, noting how this can disproportionately affect marginalized communities. To show how public health – the institution, its discourses, and the spaces it creates – is carceral, we mobilize examples of strategies invoked to manage unhoused people during the COVID-19 pandemic in two Canadian provinces (ON and BC), noting in particular how public health uses the affective language of risk to carceral ends and the varying affective responses to this risk messaging by differently located groups. We also compare these examples to some of the ways in which Canadian correctional systems have responded to the pandemic to showcase the similarities across the two distinct fields and thus the punitive and carceral character of public health. Such an interdisciplinary analysis of public health and carcerality helps reveal the palpable, yet slippery, characteristics of carceral spaces in our current epoch.





Friday May 7th

Sarah Runyon (UArizona): Correctional Oversight? Offences Against the Administration of Justice

Administrative court orders are playing a detrimental and ubiquitous role in the lives of Canada's most vulnerable offenders. These orders, implemented under the guise of a preventative discourse, fail to reflect the ways in which intersections of poverty, substance use, mental health, disability, and racism shape the offender's life and daily activities. The consequence is often a cycle of criminalization and incarceration. Rather than ameliorating the crisis of over-incarceration, the imposition of community-based dispositions, which rely on administrative court orders as their enforcement mechanism, often serve to exacerbate the problem. So why do we continue to create, impose and maintain these orders and why does the harm associated with these conditions of release remain of a form of avant garde concern? At present, there is no mechanism in place to allow the criminal justice system to impose community-based sentences without some form of court order. My objective is to encourage dialogue about how community-based dispositions can be better deployed, by whom and for what purpose.





Friday May 7th

Jantje van de Weetering & Michael Weinrath (UWinnipeg): Painting a Picture and Creating 'Knowledge': Exploring the Influence of Crime Representation in Research Examining Perceptions of Crime

Public perceptions of crime seriousness are informed by social representations of crime. In examining perceptions of crime, research on crime severity has adopted a variety of methods in representing crime, ranging from brief generic one-line crime descriptions to full crime scenarios. Considering the influence of crime representations on perceived crime severity, it is important to scrutinize the impact of the various approaches to crime representation used in research to elicit severity ratings from respondents. This study sought to explore the influence of crime representation in survey research on participant ratings of crime severity. A sample of 971 students from the University of Winnipeg completed an online questionnaire measuring perceptions of crime severity for one-line crime descriptions as well as crime scenarios. Comparisons between responses to the one-line crime descriptions and the crime scenarios revealed significantly stronger severity ratings for the scenarios than for the one-line descriptions. The significant difference in severity ratings between different methods of representation opens up a debate about the use of crime representations in research. Social perceptions of crime severity have played and continue to play an important role in the creation of Canadian policy. Ways in which public perceptions of severity are measured and the representations of crime used to measure them can significantly influence the results and any subsequent policy informed by those results. These findings emphasize the need for careful consideration of the manner of crime representation in social science research.





Friday May 7th

2:00 pm - 2:20 pm Closing Remarks: Steven Kohm, UWinnipeg

Celebrating Our Past and Looking Forward to the Future. Official Launch of IJR Volume 10, and Announcing the CIJS 2022 Conference Theme

Mobilizing Justice marks the 10-year anniversary of the Annual Review of Interdisciplinary Justice Research (IJR). The IJR is a peer-reviewed, open access journal that provides scholars, students, justice professionals and activists with a venue to disseminate research on a broad range of issues in crime, law and justice. Thank you to everyone for supporting the IJR over the past decade and allowing it to reach this 10-year milestone.

We are looking forward to an in-person conference in May 2022, held jointly with the Carleton/Ottawa Critical Perspectives Group. The theme of the event will be officially announced at the close of Mobilizing Justice 2021.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of SSHRC Connections Program; the University of Winnipeg VP Research and Innovation Office; And the Department of Criminal Justice.

