Professor Emeritus Tony Doob Appointed to Order of Canada For His Contribution to Criminal Justice

When receiving the University’s Carolyn Tuohy ‘Impact on Public Policy’ award in 2011, Tony Doob was described as having had more impact on Canadian criminal justice policy than any other single individual. Some of that work was done behind the scenes, as senior civil servants and others consulted him, especially on youth justice. But much of this work, stretching back over 40 years, has been public, generating books, articles, research reports, expert witness affidavits, and testifying before parliamentary committees. While he has carried out research on virtually every dimension of criminal justice policy, his most important contributions have been in youth justice and in sentencing. In regard to the latter, he was one of the commissioners on the 1983 Royal Commission on Sentencing. In regard to youth justice, he had much influence, in the early 1990s, on the Youth Criminal Justice Act, and has continued to support and promote humane and rational responses to youth crime in a number of ways, for instance through expert witness testimony in inquests on deaths in custody.

He is not merely a policy researcher, however. He continues to publish in major journals and to do research, now mainly in collaboration with former graduate students, particularly Jane Sprott (a professor at Ryerson University) and Cheryl Webster, (a professor at the University of Ottawa). He also speaks to the media regularly (most recently giving a long interview to the Toronto Star evaluating Bill Blair’s ten years as Toronto police chief), and regularly publishes op-ed pieces, usually co-authored with noted criminal lawyer Edward Greenspan and former Ontario Chief Justice and former Ontario Attorney General Roy McMurtry.

Around the Centre he continues to come in to his office almost every day and to generously respond to all manner of inquiries, whether from graduate students needing quantitative research methods help or from colleagues seeking his input on the latest criminal justice policy developments.

The Order of Canada is awarded by a committee headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and recognizes a very small number of notable Canadians who have made outstanding contributions to the country. That committee is unlikely to be interested in the inner workings of the institutions employing those notable Canadians. However, the Centre’s many friends and alumni, internationally and nationally, all know that in addition to his amazing work as a scholar and as a public policy expert, Tony Doob has also been the single most important person in the Centre’s history. Even when not serving as director or acting director (and he has served in those capacities far longer than any other faculty member), Tony has always provided leadership and quiet support to staff as well as to faculty and students, and he can take much of the credit for the Centre’s longstanding reputation as one of the world’s best.
Dr. Beatrice Jauregui has just moved to Toronto, as Assistant Professor (tenure-track) at the Centre. Holding a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Chicago, for an ethnographic study of front-line police in Lucknow, India, she was until recently a Mellon postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, and before that had a fellowship at Cambridge University. Her appointment strengthens the Centre's cross-disciplinary networks and creates a long-desired link with Anthropology, although she is very familiar with all manner of criminological and sociolegal research methods, having studied criminology before her Ph.D. She told the newsletter, “I’m delighted to join the community here at the Toronto Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies, an exciting group of scholars in an exciting place”, and on an anthropological note added, “I find the Centre culture of doing satirical skits at the annual summer barbecue most intriguing”.

Jeewon Lee and Grace Tran are two of the five students who are this year graduating from the undergraduate program and going into the MA. Jeewon told us: “I am interested in issues pertinent to ethnic and racial minorities, partly because I have been volunteering with non-Canadian seniors who do not have a sense of belonging due to cultural and linguistic barriers. And as an MA student I hope to learn more about aboriginal women, and about how gender, race and history intersect and function as barriers in our legal system.” On her part, Grace said: “Prior to being admitted into the MA program, I did a double major in English literature and Criminology. Support from my undergraduate professors, especially William Watson and Mariana Valverde, prompted me to pursue a Master’s degree. I look forward to exploring the stories of those who are silenced or marginalized in both literature and the law, and to examine and understand their stories through both legal and literary lenses, which I hope will contribute to innovative socio-legal change.”

Dr. Victoria Sytsma is coming to the Centre on a one-year Assistant Professor appointment. She recently defended her thesis at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, on juvenile offender re-entry. She will be teaching criminological research, youth justice, organized crime and corruption, and crime and migration, as well as the seminar on neighbourhoods and crime. Victoria is from Athens, Ontario, and obtained her B Sc and her Master’s from the University of Ottawa before going to Rutgers. In her spare time she plays drums in a folk band.

Jacqueline Briggs, who is joining the PhD program, comes to the Centre with undergraduate and MA degrees in English from U of T. She has spent a number of years independently working on a biographical study of Norman Lickers, one of Canada’s early First Nation lawyers. Supervised by Professor Valverde, with support from Professor Heidi Bohaker from History and Professor Jim Phillips from the Law School, Jacqui’s dissertation will focus on the gradual decline of the Indian Agent, in a nation-wide study of their role in the administration of the Indian Act from the post-WWII period through the 1970s.

She applied to the Centre based on a suggestion from Professor Jim Phillips and looks forward to engaging with the scholarship, critical frameworks and methodologies for which the Centre is so well-respected, but also learning from her colleagues in the PhD program.
Congratulations and Au Revoir

Our colleague Gavin Slade, who came here on a Commonwealth post-doc to work with Professor Matt Light and Professor Peter Solomon and then stayed as a one-year Assistant Professor, has moved to the Free University in Berlin, having won a post-doctoral fellowship co-financed by the German Excellence Initiative and the Marie Curie Program of the European Commission. The project he will work on for the next 18 months is on the role of prisons and prison reform in policy work around organized crime in the post-Soviet region. This comes out of his prior work on organized crime in the Republic of Georgia, published last year as a book by the Clarendon Press, Reorganizing Crime: Mafia and Anti-Mafia in Post-Soviet Georgia. He tells us that he loved his time at the Centre and hopes we will keep in touch with him.

Graham Denyer Willis, who came to the Centre on a SSHRC post-doc (working with Professor Rosemary Gartner) and also taught our graduate policing course while Professor Matt Light was on sabbatical, has just accepted a position as University Lecturer at Cambridge University, in Development Studies and Latin American Studies. He is about to publish his first book, The Killing Consensus: Police, Organized Crime and the Regulation of Life and Death in Urban Brazil, a work drawing on a three-year ethnography of homicide detectives and how they deal with both organized crime killings of police and police killings.

Akwasi Owusu-Bempah successfully defended his doctoral dissertation, on Black Males’ Experiences with and Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System, in July 2014. The thesis was supervised by Professor Scot Wortley. He is moving to Bloomington, Indiana, where he is Assistant Professor (tenure-track) of Criminal Justice. Congratulations and au revoir, Akwasi!

Tara Watson successfully defended her dissertation, titled “Risks Inside and Beyond Institutional Walls: Organizational Responses to Substance Use in Canadian Federal Prisons”, in June. With a great deal of experience in public health research on harm reduction, Tara is currently working on a CIHR-funded project to develop comprehensive guidelines for harm reduction programs across the country. She hopes to eventually move to a research management and policy position at an international level. One dissertation chapter, “The politics of harm reduction in federal prisons” is in press with the International Journal of Drug Policy.

A Year After The Centre’s 50th Anniversary

Readers of this newsletter will recall that in November of 2013 the Centre held a major celebration, in part to honour Prof. Anthony Doob on his retirement and in part to mark the end of the Centre’s first half century. The keynote speaker at this well-attended event was former Supreme Court Justice Ian Binnie, who presented an eloquent defence of the need to improve all parts of the criminal justice system so as to ensure justice and avoid wrongful convictions. This was preceded by a panel discussion featuring a range of notable speakers, from Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair (a graduate of our undergraduate program) to noted criminal defence lawyer Edward Greenspan. Roy McMurtry, former Attorney General of Ontario and former Chief Justice of Ontario, also participated in the event. Then Dean and now University President Meric Gertler attended both the panel and the keynote lecture and welcomed the participants.

The 50th anniversary also provided the Centre an opportunity to engage in successful fundraising efforts, with the essential support of Woodsworth College’s fundraising expertise. These efforts enabled us to provide new undergraduate and graduate scholarships named in honour of Prof. Doob.

While in the future we will no longer use the 50th anniversary logo designed for the occasion, the event and its aftermath helped everyone at the Centre, including recent graduates, to recall the great responsibility we all have to ensure that the Centre’s historical role as a key intellectual and policy leader in Canada and internationally serves as inspiration for us even as new issues arise and new people join our Centre family.
In July, Professor Rosemary Gartner saw the publication of the 736-page tome she co-edited with Professor Bill McCarthy, The Oxford Handbook of Gender, Sex, and Crime (Oxford). She and PhD student Maria Jung also co-authored the chapter on “Sex, gender, and homicide”; Professor Mariana Valverde wrote the chapter on “The legal regulation of sex and sexuality”, and two other chapters were contributed by international scholars who were once Junior Fellows at the Centre – Ross McMillan and Greg T. Smith.

PhD student Sasha Lysova received the Richard Ericson essay award for her paper, “Victims but also offenders: women’s experiences of partner violence”, which will be published next year in H. Kury, S. Redo and E. Shea, eds., Women and children as victims and offenders (Springer).

Professor Jamie Rowen spent part of the summer as a research fellow at the University of Copenhagen’s iCourts, a new Centre for Excellence funded by the Danish government that focuses on international courts and their impact on politics and society. There she worked on a new project on the professionalization of international criminal law.

Professor Kelly Hannah Moffat and Professor Paula Maurutto have worked with Abby Deshman from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association on research designed to document and reform police record check practices in Canada, especially the release of non-conviction records. See [website CCLA] for more information.

Professor Matt Light, who received tenure this year, spent six months of his sabbatical leave in the Republic of Georgia, doing research on prisons, police, and other criminal justice issues there. Recent publications include: Matthew Light, Rosemary Gartner, and Milomir Strbac, “Explaining the Use of Interpersonal Violence by Political Leaders: Saddam Hussein and Joseph Stalin Compared,” in Post-Soviet Affairs (forthcoming) and Matthew Light, “Police Reforms in the Republic of Georgia: The Convergence of Domestic and Foreign Policy in an Anti-Corruption Drive,” Policing and Society, 24:3 (2014).

Professor Mariana Valverde has completed a book that will appear in December 2014 with Glasshouse/Routledge, entitled Chronotopes of law: jurisdiction, scale, and governance. The work uses Bakhtin’s notion of ‘chronotope’ to synthesize spatial and temporal dimensions when analyzing legal and security processes, while also showing that jurisdiction is not reducible to spatial scale and needs separate analysis. This draws on several already published theoretical articles.

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**Sociolegal Research on the Governance of Urban Infrastructure**

Professor Mariana Valverde is the PI on a SSHRC-funded three-year sociolegal research project on the use of partnerships to build local infrastructure. The project, entitled “Planning by Contract?” examines, in concrete terms, how various legal, administrative and informal tools, many of them drawn from contract and property law rather than from municipal bylaws, are put together to form the complex governance networks that are required for multi-partner infrastructure projects. The three case studies are: 1) the Toronto Community Housing’s arrangements with developers to rebuild public housing and mix it with private housing; 2) the building of a new high-level sports centre on the Scarborough campus for the 2015 Pan Am Games, to be jointly owned by the city and the university but with substantial contributions from the provincial government; and 3) the 407 East highway extension. The latter will allow the team to study urban governance in suburban and rural municipalities, as well as investigate the work of Infrastructure Ontario. The other investigators are Aaron Moore, an urban political scientist currently at the University of Winnipeg, Sue Bunce, who teaches geography and planning at UTSC, and Fleur Johns, a transnational finance expert at the law school at the University of New South Wales. PhD student Jordana Wright is senior RA on the project, and a number of other PhD students and Junior Fellows, as well as a fourth-year student, have all contributed research skills to the project.

In the fall of 2014 the project will be hosting a workshop at which stakeholders and expert practitioners can share their experiences and provide early feedback to the researchers. Mariana, who has been doing the historical and legal research necessary to put today’s special-purpose authorities and other complex local governmental entities in proper historical context, presented some preliminary results at the University of New South Wales in Sydney in late August.
Graduate Student News

For a small doctoral program, we have always done well in external grant competitions. This past spring, Julius Haag, Mayana Slobodian and Jordana Wright were all awarded SSHRC doctoral fellowships. Valentin Pereda was awarded the International Ontario Graduate Scholarship. Holly Pelvin was awarded the Vivekananda Graduate Prize and the McCuaig-Throop Bursary from the 2014-2015 University-Wide Awards Competition. In addition, Katharina Maier, who as a foreign student did not qualify for a SSHRC, had the great honour of being awarded a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship, one of only 8 awarded to U of T humanities and social sciences students. Congratulations all!

Undergraduate Program

The undergraduate students’ association, CRIMSA, had an excellent 2013-2014 year, and plans are already underway for exciting career-related and social events this fall. CRIMSA co-president Alex Evangelista reports that the students particularly enjoyed a CRIMSA academic seminar led by Professor William Watson, “Sherlock in Criminology”, a talk critically examining various representations of Sherlock Holmes from early film adaptations to the acclaimed BBC series featuring Benedict Cumberbatch. CRIMSA also decided to join the student association in the Ethics, Society and the Law program for a joint pub night. There are many students who do double majors or otherwise take courses in both programs, and socializing together appears to have been very successful.

CRIMSA’s major career event for the year was the ‘Backpack to Briefcase’ panel discussion, attended by both MA students and graduating undergraduates. Moderated by Prof. Scot Wortley, six graduates of either the undergrad or the graduate program (including some with degrees from both) who are now in responsible management positions, primarily in the provincial government, gave job advice to the younger generation. Alex told the newsletter that “CRIMSA has some of the most intelligent, warm, fun and driven students that I have the pleasure to meet at U of T. I am very fortunate to be the co-president for the fifth and final year of my undergraduate degree, and I hope to continue to make the criminology program just as enjoyable outside classes as in classes”.

Some enterprising students also initiated an undergrad journal, the University of Toronto Undergraduate Criminology Review, with Kevin Kim as founder and editor-in-chief. The issue that came out in the spring of 2014 has seven substantial articles, as well as some shorter news items, totalling 60 pages. The Centre is pleased to hear that while Kevin is moving to Ottawa to study law, he will continue to be involved, in order to ensure that the journal continues next year. The journal can be reached at utucrimreview@gmail.com
Penal Boundaries Workshop

In April 2014 the Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies – with financial support from UTM and Arts & Sciences – hosted a two-day workshop entitled “Penal Boundaries: Excesses, Limits, and the Production of Inequality.” In addition to a keynote address by Professor Lucia Zedner (University of Oxford) exploring what constitutes punishment, there were seven panels, for a total of 21 papers. There were also several dozen guests who came to hear the panels and many of whom contributed to lively discussion of the papers. The scholars were a wonderfully diverse bunch – including career stage (from graduate student to full professor) and discipline (sociology, criminology, and women's studies, among others). Especially well represented were the University of Toronto (six faculty and five graduate students were on the program), as well as the University of California Irvine, Edinburgh University, and New York University. The workshop provided myriad opportunities for mentoring, informal networking, and collaboration between students, mid-career and senior faculty – including during two informal dinners and the lunch breaks.

Substantively, the papers did an excellent job tackling the original plan of the conference, which was to theorize penal boundaries using cutting-edge research. Questions raised in the papers include: How have states expanded punitive power through ostensibly non-punitive means, and how do these innovations complicate theories about contemporary punishment? Where and how does state punishment overlap with the logics and practices of contemporary immigration control? How can we understand why people who are poor and ethnic minorities are persistently (and globally) over-targeted for punitive intervention, and how is punishment gendered in unexpected ways? In all, it was a lively workshop, and that will further the goal of collaboration and cross-fertilization across disciplines, universities, and national borders.