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Alex Luscombe

research keywords

Policing; economic crime; qualitative methods; computational criminology

education

Ph.D, Criminology, University of Toronto, 2017-2021 (Expected)

Thesis: *Police Responses to Complex Economic Crime in Canada*

Committee: Matthew Light, Ayobami Lanionu, Elizabeth Acorn

M.A., Sociology, Carleton University, 2015

Thesis: *Where States Lie: A Historical Sociological Investigation into the Art of Cover Storying in a Secret Cold War Intelligence Operation*

Committee: William Walters, Neil Gerlach, John Walsh

B.A. (Honours), Sociology, University of Victoria, 2012

Thesis: *Outside Accountability: The Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Textual Organization of Surveillance*

Advisor: Kevin Walby

publications

Books and edited volumes

Forthcoming. [Alex Luscombe](#), Kevin Walby, Derek Silva, eds. *Private Influences, Privatization, and Criminal Justice in Canada*. Under advanced contract with UBC Press.

2019. Walby, Kevin and [Alex Luscombe](#), eds. *Freedom of Information and Social Science Research Design*. New York: Routledge.

Journal articles

2020. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah and [Alex Luscombe](#). "Race, Cannabis and the Canadian War on Drugs: An Examination of Cannabis Arrest Data by Race in Five Cities." *International Journal of Drug Policy*.

2020. Kevin Walby, Randy K. Lippert, and [Alex Luscombe](#). "Police Foundation Governance and Accountability: Corporate Interlocks and Private, Non-profit Influence on Public Police." *Criminology and Criminal Justice*.

2020. Kevin Walby and [Alex Luscombe](#). "Freedom of Information Research and Cultural Studies." *Cultural Studies* <-> *Critical Methodologies*.

2018. [Alex Luscombe](#). “Deception Declassified: The Social Organisation of Cover Storying in a Secret Intelligence Operation.” *Sociology*. [Shortlisted, SAGE Prize for Innovation and Excellence, 2019].
2018. Kevin Walby, [Alex Luscombe](#), and Randy K. Lippert. “Going to the Dogs? Police, Donations and K9s.” *Policing*.
2017. Daniel Fridman and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Gift-Giving, Disreputable Exchange, and the Management of Donations in a Police Department.” *Social Forces*.
2017. [Alex Luscombe](#) and Kevin Walby. “Theorizing Freedom of Information: The Live Archive, Obfuscation, and Actor-Network Theory.” *Government Information Quarterly*.
2017. Kevin Walby, Randy K. Lippert, and [Alex Luscombe](#). “The Police Foundation’s Rise: Issues and Implications for Public Policing’s Dark Money.” *British Journal of Criminology*.
2017. [Alex Luscombe](#), Kevin Walby, and Randy K. Lippert. “Brokering Access Beyond the Border and in the Wild: Comparing Freedom of Information Experiences in Canada and the United States.” *Law and Policy*.
2017. [Alex Luscombe](#), Randy K. Lippert, and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Online Readers’ Comments as Popular Texts: Public Opinions of Paid Duty Policing in Canada.” *Canadian Journal of Communication*.
2016. [Alex Luscombe](#), Kevin Walby and Randy K. Lippert. “Public Police Sponsorship Networks: Benign Ties or Relations of Private Influence?.” *Policing & Society*.
2016. William Walters and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Hannah Arendt and the Art of Secrecy; Or, the Fog of Cobra Mist.” *International Political Sociology*.
2016. Kevin Walby and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Criteria for Quality in Qualitative Inquiry and Use of Freedom of Information Requests in Social Research.” *Qualitative Research*.
2015. [Alex Luscombe](#) and Kevin Walby. “High Policing and Access to Information.” *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal*.
2014. [Alex Luscombe](#) and Kevin Walby. “Occupy Ottawa, Conservation Officers, and Policing Networks in Canada’s Capital City.” *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*.

Book chapters

- Forthcoming. [Alex Luscombe](#). “Where Public Meets Private: In Search of Evidence of an Emerging ‘Industrial-Espionage Complex’ in Canada” in *Privatization, Private Influences, and Criminal Justice in Canada*, edited by A.

Luscombe, D. Silva, and K. Walby. Vancouver: UBC Press. [Winner, Ericson Prize, University of Toronto, 2019].

2019. Kevin Walby and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Using Freedom of Information Requests in Socio-Legal Studies, Criminal Justice Studies, and Criminology,” in *Methods of Criminology and Criminal Justice Research*, edited by M. Deflem and D. Silva. Emerald Publishing Limited.
2019. William Walters and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Postsecrecy and Place: Secrecy Research Amidst the Ruins of an Atomic Weapons Research Facility,” in *Secrecy and Methods in Security Research: A Guide to Qualitative Fieldwork*, edited by M. de Goede, E. Bosma, and P. Pallister-Wilkins. New York: Routledge.
2019. Akwasi Owusu-Bempah, [Alex Luscombe](#), and Brandon M. Finlay. “Unequal Justice: Race and Cannabis Arrests in a Post-Legal Landscape,” in *High Time: The Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada*, edited by A. Potter and D. Weinstock. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
2019. Kevin Walby and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Repertoires of Empirical Social Science and Freedom of Information Requests: Four Techniques for Analysing Disclosures,” in *Freedom of Information and Social Science Research Design*, edited by K. Walby, and A. Luscombe. New York: Routledge.

Reports

2020. [Alex Luscombe](#), and Alexander McClelland “*An extreme last resort: Monetary Penalties and the Policing of COVID-19 in Canada*.” Montreal, QC: Centre for Media, Technology, and Democracy.
2020. Abby Deshman, Alexander McClelland, and [Alex Luscombe](#) *Stay Off the Grass: COVID-19 and Law Enforcement in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

Op-eds

2020. [Alex Luscombe](#) and Alexander McClelland. “Tickets and fines unlikely to help in battle against COVID-19.” *Montreal Gazette, The Province*, April 23.
2018. [Alex Luscombe](#) and Akwasi Owusu-Bempah. “Why Legalization is Unlikely to Reduce Racial Disparities in Cannabis Arrests.” *Vice News*, April 19.
2017. Kevin Walby, Randy K. Lippert, and [Alex Luscombe](#). “Opinion: Federal Access to Information Act Reform is Overdue.” *Montreal Gazette*, April 6.

Book reviews

2017. Alex Luscombe. “[Review](#) of *The Vigilant Eye: Policing Canada from 1867 to 9/11* by Greg Marquis. *Surveillance & Society*.

Data Sets

2020. Alexander McClelland and [Alex Luscombe](#), “[Policing the Pandemic: Tracking the Policing of COVID-19 Across Canada](#).” *Scholars Portal Dataverse*.

selected
invited talks

“What Does it Mean to Police a Pandemic?” Guest lecture for undergraduate policing class, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto Mississauga, November 2020.

“Policing the Pandemic Mapping Project: Trends Since the end of Wave 1.” Guest lecture for undergraduate punishment class, Centre for Criminology and Social Legal Studies, University of Toronto, October 2020.

“Data Activism in R.” Speaker, Toronto Data Workshop, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto, August 2020.

“Policing the Pandemic: Counter Mapping the Expansion of COVID-19.” Speaker, Ethics of Covid, Centre for Ethics, University of Toronto, 2020.

“Colonialism and Criminal Justice: Addressing the Legacy.” Speaker, Massey Talks, Massey College, University of Toronto, 2020.

“Freedom of Information Requests as a Means of Data Collection in the Social Sciences.” Guest lecture for undergraduate methods class, Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa, 2020.

“Racial Injustice and the Canadian War on Drugs.” Presenter, Junior Fellow Lecture Series, Massey College, University of Toronto, 2019.

“Qualitative Methods.” Guest lecture for graduate methods class, Centre for Criminology and Social Legal Studies, University of Toronto, 2018.

selected
conference
presentations

“Where Public Meets Private: In Search of Evidence of an ‘Emerging Industrial-Espionage Complex’ in Canada.” Panel presentation, American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 2019.

“Race, Cannabis, and Canadian War on Drugs: An Examination of Racial Disparities in Cannabis Possession Arrests in Six Major Cities” (w/ A. Owusu-Bempah). Panel presentation, American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, 2018.

“The Conceptualization of Secrecy in Research on Organized Crime” (w/ V. Pereda). Panel presentation, European Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, 2018.

- “Four Approaches to Analyzing Freedom of Information Disclosure” (w/ K. Walby). Panel presentation, Access Justice: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Access, Justice, Law, and Order, University of Winnipeg, 2018.
- “Purifying Misconduct: A Comparison of State Investigations into Police Transgressions in Northern British Columbia and New Orleans” (w/ D. Silva). Roundtable presentation, American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, 2017.
- “Three Frameworks for Theorizing Freedom of Information Processes” (w/ K. Walby). Panel presentation, Critical Perspectives: Criminology and Social Justice Conference, University of Ottawa, 2017.
- “Reducing Ambiguity in Gift-Giving: Disreputable Exchange and the Management of Donations in a Police Department” (w/ D. Fridman). Panel presentation, Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics Conference, University of California, Berkeley, 2016.
- “Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Secrecy” (w/ W. Walters). Panel presentation, Millennium Conference, London School of Economics, 2016.
- “Where States Lie: A Historical Sociological Investigation into the Art of Cover Storying in a Secret Cold War Intelligence Operation.” Panel presentation, Canadian Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Ottawa, ON, 2015.
- “Freedom of Information and Social Science Research.” Invited panelist, Canadian Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Ottawa, ON, 2015.
- “Peeking Behind the Curtain: Accessing the Backstage of Security Intelligence Threat Assembly” (w/ M.-A. Lutfy). Panel presentation, Critical Perspectives: Criminology and Social Justice Conference, University of Ottawa, 2015.
- “Ambiguous Transactions: Institutional Management of Donations in a Police Department” (w/ D. Fridman). Roundtable presentation, Eastern Sociological Society, New York City, NY, 2015.
- “Suspicious Transactions: Institutional Management of Donations and the Distinction of Gifts and Bribes in a Police Department” (w/ D. Fridman). Panel presentation, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 2014.
- “Occupy Ottawa, Conservation Officers, and Policing Networks in Canada’s Capital City.” Panel presentation, Agency, Structure, and Social Change Conference, Carleton University, 2014.
- “Outside Accountability: The Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Textual Organization of Surveillance.” Poster presentation, Jamie Cassels Un-

dergraduate Research Fair, University of Victoria, 2012.

grants,
honours,
& awards

External grants, honours, and awards

Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement, SSHRC, 2020 (\$6,000)
Shortlisted, SAGE Prize for Innovation and Excellence, 2019
Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, SSHRC, 2017 (\$105,000)
Outstanding Graduating Student Award, Canadian Sociological Association, 2016
Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Government of Ontario, 2015 (\$15,000)
Travel bursary, London of School of Economics, 2015
Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, SSHRC, 2013 (\$17,500)
Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Government of Ontario, 2013 (\$15,000)

Internal grants, honours, and awards

R.V. Ericson Best Graduate Student Paper Award, University of Toronto, 2019
Junior Fellowship, Massey College, University of Toronto, 2018-Present
Faculty of Arts and Sciences Top Doctoral Fellowship, University of Toronto, 2017
Distinction at master's level, Carleton University, 2015
John Porter Graduate Bursary, Carleton University, 2015
Carleton University Entrance Scholarship, 2013
Alan Hedley Sociology Honours Essay Award, University of Victoria, 2012
University of Victoria Rising Star Award, University of Victoria, 2012
President's Scholarship, University of Victoria, 2011
Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Award, University of Victoria, 2011
Hazel T. Knox Memorial Scholarship, University of Victoria, 2011
Charles Howatson Scholarship, University of Victoria, 2011

service to the
profession

Peer-review: *International Political Sociology, Policing & Society, Security Dialogue, Alberta Law Review, Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*
Co-organizer (with E. Cornelius), Economic Crimes Working Group at the University of Toronto, 2019-Present
Member of the editorial board, *Criminological Highlights*, 2018-Present

Co-organizer (with K. Walby), “Digging for Data” (Tom Cardoso, Globe & Mail), CAIJ Politics of Information Colloquium Series, University of Winnipeg, February 2020

Elected Member of House Committee, Massey College, University of Toronto, 2019

Panel chair, Conference on Digitizing Justice: Crime, Law, and Order in an Online World, May 2019

Panel chair, Conference on Accessing Justice: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Access, Justice, Law, and Order. Department of Criminal Justice, University of Winnipeg, May 2018

Panel chair, Conference on Critical Perspectives: Criminology and Social Justice, Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa, 2017

Member, Criminalization and Punishment Education Project (CPEP), Carleton University, 2013-2015

workshops
completed

Social Sciences Methods Week, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto, May 2018/2019

Intermediate Social Network Analysis, LINKS Center for Social Network Analysis, Gatton College of Business and Economics, University of Kentucky, 2016

employment

Researcher, Centre for Access to Information and Justice, University of Winnipeg, 2019-Present

Teaching Assistant, Criminology & Sociological Studies, University of Toronto, September 2017-Present

Research Assistant, Sociology, University of Toronto, 2018-Present

Research Associate, Criminal Justice, University of Winnipeg, 2015-2017

Teaching Assistant, Law & Legal Studies, Carleton University, 2015

Research Assistant, Criminology, University of Ottawa, 2014

Research Assistant, Political Science, Carleton University, 2014-2015

Research Assistant, Criminal Justice, University of Winnipeg, 2013-2015

Teaching Assistant, Sociology & Anthropology, Carleton University, 2013-2015

Research Assistant, Sociology, University of Victoria, 2012-2013

languages

English (native), French (limited working proficiency)

- programming
experience R, Python, SPSS, LaTeX, UCINET
- in the media
- Interview with Jacob Serebrin for Canadian Press, reprinted in *Toronto Star*, *Global News*, published Nov 4 2020: “Quebec threatens COVID-19 fines as researchers question if penalties deter behaviour”
 - Research featured in story by Canadian Press, reprinted in *Toronto Star*, *National Post*, *toronto.com*, published Nov 4 2020: “Quebec threatens COVID fines as researchers question if penalties deter behaviour”
 - Research featured in *Radio Canada*, published July 2 2020: “Une «pandémie» de contraventions et de profilage, dénonce un organisme”
 - Research featured in story by Jillian Kestler-D'Amours for *Vice News*, published June 24 2020: “Officers Targeted Racialized Canadians When Enforcing COVID-19 Rules: Report”
 - Research featured in story by Solarina Ho for *CTV News*, published June 24 2020: “Millions of dollars in COVID-19 fines disproportionately hurting Black, Indigenous, marginalized groups: report”
 - Research featured in story by Marg Bruineman for *Barrie Today*, published June 24 2020: “New report raises ‘ugly’ concerns over COVID-related tickets”
 - Research featured in story by Colin Perkel for Canadian Press, reprinted in *CBC News*, *Globe & Mail*, published June 24 2020: “Majority of Canada’s \$13M in pandemic fines were issued in Quebec, report finds”
 - Research featured in story by Mike Hall for *City News*, published June 24 2020: “Tickets, fines for coronavirus rules target minorities: CCLA”
 - Research featured in story by Canadian Press, reprinted in *CTV News*, published June 24 2020: “Pandemic fines top \$13 million, study says; punitive approach criticized”
 - Research featured in story by Andrew Russell for *Global News*, published June 24 2020: “Canadians have racked up \$13M in coronavirus fines, racial profiling evident: report”
 - Research featured in story by Jason Magder for *Montreal Gazette*, published June 24 2020: “Report: Quebec led the country in fines for violating distance orders”
 - Research featured in story by Robert Benzie *Toronto Star*, published June 24 2020: “Civil liberties watchdog warns of ‘ugly ticketing pandemic’ during COVID-19 outbreak”

- Research featured in story by Karissa Donkin for *CBC News*, published June 23 2020: [“More than \\$20,000 in COVID-19 fines issued, but few details on violations”](#)
- Interview with Saritha Ramakrishna for *The Baffler*, published June 22 2020: [“Giving Back to Themselves: Police Foundations Exemplify the Logic of Racial Capitalism”](#)
- Research featured in story by Shree Paradkar for *Toronto Star*, published May 24 2020: [“\(Mostly\) white covidiot at Trinity Bellwoods think the rules don’t apply to them. They’re right”](#)
- Research featured in the University of Toronto’s *Crimbrary* Blog, published May 22 2020: [“Policing the Pandemic: Tracking the Policing of Covid-19 Across Canada”](#)
- Research featured in story by Meenakshi Manno for *The Tye*, published May 21 2020: [“Police Are Making Pandemic Life Worse for Already Oppressed People”](#)
- Research featured in story by Justin Ling for *National Magazine*, published May 11 2020: [“A Patchwork Response: The trouble with legislating pandemic rules in Canada”](#)
- Research featured in video for *CTV News*, published May 6 2020: [“Policing the Pandemic in Canada”](#)
- Research featured in story by Caora McKenna for *The Coast*, published May 6 2020: [“Locked down: Halifax’s police state of emergency”](#)
- Research featured in *BBC News*, published May 5 2020: [“Canadians fined for coronavirus infractions”](#)
- Research featured in story by Alexandra Mae Jones for *CTV News*, published May 5 2020: [“Report: Fines issued for breaking pandemic measures top \\$5.8M, questions raised over ‘snitch lines”](#)
- Research featured in story by Kevin Ritchie for *Now Toronto*, published May 5 2020: [“Canadians charged \\$5.8M in coronavirus fines: Report”](#)
- Interview with Jane Gerster for story in *Global News*, published May 4 2020: [“Canadians have racked up \\$5.8M in coronavirus fines, report says.”](#)
- Research featured in story by Inayat Singh for story in *CBC News*, published May 2 2020: [“Got a COVID-related ticket? Here’s why some lawyers say you might want to fight it.”](#)
- Research featured in story by Jane Gerster for story in *Global News*, published April 30 2020: [“Crowded shelter or \\$880 fine? Homeless face ‘impossible’](#)

coronavirus choice.”

- Interview with Jane Gerster for story in *Global News*, published April 28 2020: “Fines, snitch lines: Crackdown on coronavirus rule breakers could have consequences.”
- Interview with Sharon Lindores for story in *National Post*, published April 22 2020: “COVID-19 and the rising costs of social distancing.”
- Interview with Giuseppe Valiante for story in *Canadian Press*, published April 15 2020, reprinted in *National Post*, *CTV News*, *Times Colonist*, *CBC Radio Canada*, and *La Presse* among others: “Harsh policing and big fines don’t make people safer from COVID-19: criminologists.”
- Research featured in story by Shree Paradkar for *Toronto Star*, published April 15 2020: “Who will police the COVID-19 police?”
- Research featured in story by Dale Curruthers for *London Free Press*, published April 14 2020: “Canadian Civil Liberties Association put enforcement of pandemic orders under spotlight.”
- Research featured in blog post by Lisa Silver for *Ideablawg*, published April 12 2020: “Criminal Law in the Time of Covid-19: Part One.”
- Research featured in op-ed by Samantha Peters for *National Magazine*, published April 10 2020: “Increasing criminalization during a pandemic is not the solution.”
- Research featured in op-ed by Robyn Maynard and Andrea J. Ritchie for *Vice News*, published April 9 2020: “Black Communities Need Support, Not a Coronavirus Police State.”
- Research featured in *Sputnik News*, published April 6 2020: “New Website Monitors the Policing of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Canada.”
- Research featured in story by Kevin Ritchie for *Now Toronto*, published April 6 2020: “Online map tracks police charges related to COVID-19.”
- Interview with Wendy Gillis for story in *Toronto Star*, published February 19 2020: “Contractors’ Association Withdraws Offer to Fund New Armoured Car for Toronto Police Emergency Task Force.”
- Research featured in Library of Parliament Legislative Summary by Julia Nicol, published April 3, 2019: “Legislative Summary of Bill C-93: An Act to provide no-cost, expedited record suspensions for simple possession of cannabis.”
- Interview with Ry Rivard for story in *Voice of San Diego*, published November 1, 2018: “Chula Vista Police’s Unusual Fundraising Arrangement Draws Scrutiny.”

Research featured in op-ed by Dr. David Moscrop in *Washington Post*, published July 18, 2018: [“Legalization Alone Won’t Erase Canada’s Prejudiced Pot Convictions. We Weed Mass Pardons.”](#)

Analysis for Rachel Browne for story in *Vice News*, published April 18, 2018: [“Black and Indigenous People are Overrepresented in Canada’s Weed Arrests.”](#)

Interview with Dr. Derek Silva for podcast *What’s That Noise?!*, published May 14, 2018: [“Volume 8: Freedom of Information.”](#)

references

Available upon request