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CRIME SCENE

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Message from the Chair

Jeremy Mills, Ph.D., C.Psych

Greetings everyone. I hope everyone has had time to enjoy the Fall season and for the students that your Fall term was not too taxing. Your Executive is back to work and I would like to catch you up on some changes. The vote regarding the increase in Section fees was unanimous in favour with one vote being on the fence. On behalf of the Executive, I want to express my appreciation for your support on this change. Part of our role is to look forward and ensure the longer-term position of the Section and finances are an important piece. The change in membership fees should be reflected in your 2026 membership renewal. (*Editor's note: The new membership fees are now \$25 per regular member, and \$10 for student members*).

There have also been some changes to the Executive. **Alexandra Zidenberg** has stepped down as Social Media Coordinator. We thank her for her service to the Section. The Executive is thinking through how best to structure the roles and you may hear of additional changes at a later point. We also welcome to the Executive Student Representatives, **Emma Holmes** (Carleton University) and **Samantha Mason** (Simon Fraser University).

The Executive will soon release a questionnaire to the full membership. The focus of it will be to determine what activities you, as members, would like to see that would support your academic and professional activities. This may look different for folks depending upon their career stage. For example, I expect that early career folks may have different needs than later career folks. We want to determine what we as a Section can do to add value to you being a member. I hope that all of you will take a few minutes to provide your feedback.

From our CPA Convention in St. John's last summer, we congratulate **Emma Holmes** (Carleton University) as this year's Graduate Student Award winner. Congratulations are also extended to **Melissa Handford** (Wilfred Laurier University, now at Ontario Tech University) and **Abbygail Rafuse** (St. Francis Xavier University) on winning the Undergraduate Student Poster award. I hope many of you are planning on attending the 2026 CPA Convention in Montreal, Quebec. In addition to the conference, Montreal offers many activities for a mini get-away for those who would like to mix the conference with some downtime.

Regards to all,

Jeremy Mills



Brief Recap of CPA 2025 in St. John's

If you were unable to attend the most recent CPA Convention in St. John's this past June, then you certainly missed out on an amazing experience! St. John's proved to be a gem of a city that brought out many more attendees than was expected. Due to being the most eastern capital city in the country, it was anticipated that turnout would be lower than normal—but CPA attendees certainly proved the estimations wrong! According to Dr. Lisa Votta-Bleeker (CEO of CPA), CPA expected 1,110 submissions and received **1,383 submissions!** They also expected 1,200 delegates and instead welcomed **1,595 delegates!** It was also estimated to have 25 exhibitors on site, but **more than 40 exhibitors joined on site!** By all metrics, the St. John's convention was a huge success and the Criminal Justice Section was pleased to see so many of our members in attendance.

During the Section's AGM, we held a vote to elect two student representatives, and welcomed **Emma Holmes** (Carleton University) and **Samantha Mason** (Simon Fraser University) as the newly elected representatives onto the Executive. The Section is glad to have these folks on board and look forward to working together over the coming year. The Section also formally recognized the winners of the Section awards. This included **Dr. Mark Oliver** (University of Saskatchewan) being the recipient of the Significant Contribution Award, and **Emma Holmes** (Carleton University) being the recipient of the J. Steve Wormith Graduate Award. Congratulations to you both!

The Section also had their work cut out for them to judge many high quality research posters, and as always, deciding upon the winners is a challenging task. Congratulations are extended to our Student Poster winners: **Emma Holmes** (Carleton University) received the Best Graduate Student Poster prize, and **Melissa Handford** (Wilfred Laurier University, now at Ontario Tech University) and **Abbygail Rafuse** (St. Francis Xavier University) received the Undergraduate Student Poster award. Well done to all!

We hope you can join us at the 87th Annual Convention in Montreal! See you there!



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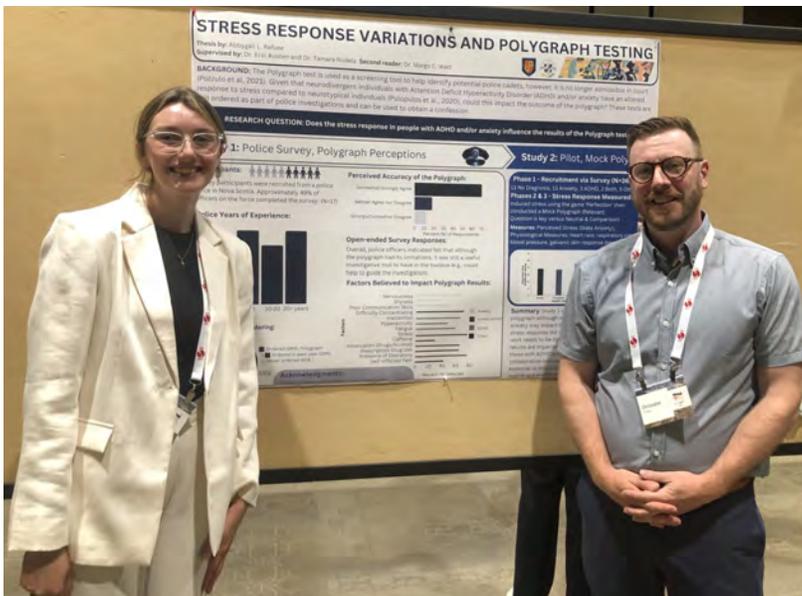
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PHOTOS FROM CPA ST. JOHN'S



Members of the CJPS Executive (L to R): Dr. Andrew Gray, Dr. Mary Ann Campbell, Dr. Jeremy Mills, Dr. Pamela Yates, and Dr. Christopher Lively



(Left Photo, L to R): Abbygail Rafuse (Undergraduate Poster Winner) with Dr. Christopher Lively
(Right Photo, L to R): Emma Holmes (J. Steve Wormith Graduate Research Award Winner) with Dr. Jeremy Mills

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PSYCHOLOGY SECTION AWARD NOMINATION INFORMATION

If you would like to nominate a colleague for any of the following awards, please forward your nomination package by **January 31st, 2026** to the current Director-at-Large: Awards Coordinator, Dr. Alisha Salerno-Ferraro (sal3rnoa@yorku.ca).

Don Andrews Career Contribution Award

This award recognizes a corpus of work accrued over a period of at least 10 years that makes a significant contribution to our theoretical understanding and/or practices in criminal justice psychology and/or law. The contributions can be theoretical, empirical, or applied. For the theoretical and empirical works, the award would typically concern a series of published works that have had an important influence on the field. Signs of this influence could include changes in practices (e.g., widespread use of treatment or assessment methods; changes in the law) as well as recognition by the academic community (e.g., bibliometric indices, awards). The applied contributions would recognize leaders in the criminal justice field who have demonstrated excellence in one of the following areas: the creation and implementation of psychological services to offenders or to the courts, the teaching and mentoring of new psychologists, and management and administration.

The Don Andrews Career Contribution Award will be presented at the upcoming Canadian Psychological Association Conference in June of 2026. The recipient will receive up to \$1,500 in travel funds to attend the convention. The recipient will be asked to speak at the annual convention. Nominators will be asked to provide information or highlights about the awardee to help create a Crime Scene feature write-up, and/or the recipient will be invited for an interview for Crime Scene.

Eligibility (all of the following criteria must be met):

The following items are included in the application package:

- ◇ **Two** nomination letters indicating how the nominee meets the criteria outlined above (at least one of the two nomination letters must be from a CJPS member)
- ◇ Nominee's curriculum vitae
- ◇ **Two** first-authored research publications by the nominee appearing in peer reviewed journals

Other:

- ◇ Nominee is a CJPS member or in the process of becoming a CPJS member (Note: we will ensure this criterion is met prior to formally issuing the award)
- ◇ Nominee is not a former recipient of this award



The nominee's application will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Productivity over time:** Achievement must be the product of a career of contributions (over 10 years) as opposed to a single contribution, no matter how significant the contribution. A singular contribution might more appropriately be recognized by a CJPS Significant Contribution Award.
- **High quality and innovation:** The nominee must be an original thinker and/or creator whose work has established new frames of reference. Is their research or are their practical endeavours novel/sophisticated? This could involve cutting edge statistical or analytic approaches, a unique merging of ideas from different fields, developing a unique training approach, etc.
- **Acclamation:** The nominee must be recognized and known for superlative contributions to the field as evidenced by awards, invited talks, bibliometric indicators, etc.
- **Practical implications:** The nominee's work has either direct or indirect practical implications for advancing and bettering the field of criminal justice.
- **Impact:** Considerations of a nominee's impact may include the following:
 - ⇒ Presentation of research findings at conferences
 - ⇒ Specialized trainings or invited talks/workshops (consider venue/outlet, size/type of audience)
 - ⇒ Media coverage of research
 - ⇒ Instances where expertise is called upon (e.g., consultations; court testimony; service to the community, government agencies, or educational institution; community-engaged scholarship, etc.)
 - ⇒ Impact of research on the community or larger society (e.g., their work changes policy/practice somewhere)
- **Research citizenship and/or service to the profession:** This criterion is also an indicator of leadership and influence in the field, and may include the following:
 - ⇒ Grant and journal reviewing, including participation on editorial boards (consider role in journals, volume of activities, and prestige of journals)
 - ⇒ Mentoring of other researchers (excludes practitioners but can include scientist/practitioners). Can include supervision of researchers in university or government settings.



Significant Contribution Award

The Significant Contribution Award recognizes a specific work that has been recently completed (within the last year or two) that makes a significant contribution to the application of psychology to criminal behaviour, criminal justice, and/or law. The work could be theoretical, empirical, or applied. For the theoretical and empirical works, the award would typically be based on a paper published during the previous year in an academic or professional journal. The applied contributions would address the creation and implementation of psychological services to offenders, the courts, or the police, or recognize the publishing of a book or other resource that has made a significant contribution to the field (either applied or theoretical). The effective promotion and administration of psychologists and psychological services would also qualify as a significant contribution (e.g., setting up a treatment center, hiring 10 new psychologists). If a member of the section makes exceptional contributions on different years, then it is possible for the same individual to receive this award more than once.

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria outlined below, the nominated contribution will be assessed on measures of **quality** (i.e., anchored in theoretical/empirical evidence), **innovation** (i.e., offers something novel to the field), and **potential impact** (i.e., likelihood of influencing policy, practice, or public understanding of criminal justice issues).

The Award will be presented at the upcoming Canadian Psychological Association Convention in June of 2026. Nominators will be asked to provide information or highlights about the awardee to help create a Crime Scene feature write-up, and/or the recipient will be invited for an interview for Crime Scene.

Eligibility (all of the following criteria must be met):

The following items are included in the application package:

- ◇ **One** nomination letter indicating how the nominee meets the criteria outlined above (the nomination letter must be from a CJPS member)
- ◇ Nominee's curriculum vitae
- ◇ Supporting documentation for the nomination. This will vary by nomination but can include a copy of the journal article in question, reference to a book, testimonials from professionals in the field, citation metrics, etc.

Other:

- ◇ Nominee is a CJPS member or in the process of becoming a CPJS member (Note: we will ensure this criterion is met prior to formally issuing the award).

J. Stephen Wormith Graduate Student Research Award

J. Stephen Wormith was an inspiring advocate and educator of forensic and correctional psychological practices in Canada and internationally. He was a professor in the Department of Psychology, and Director, Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies, at the University of Saskatchewan. His research on risk assessment, correctional interventions, crime prevention, and public attitudes towards offenders and criminal justice have had a major impact in the field. He has had a significant influence developing the next generation of researchers, clinicians, and advocates in the field of criminal justice psychology.

The Criminal Justice Psychology Section of the Canadian Psychological Association is honouring Dr. Wormith's legacy by presenting the Graduate Research Award to one successful applicant in recognition of their graduate level research in the field of psychology that examines criminal behaviour, the law, and/or other psychological phenomenon in a criminal justice context. This award was developed with the intent of recognizing research excellence of graduate-level criminal justice psychology students and is expected to be awarded annually. Submissions that will be considered for the J. Stephen Wormith Graduate Research Award will be reviewed and adjudicated by the section Executive and/or members of the Awards Subcommittee. Evaluation of submissions will focus on the extent to which the research builds upon theory and extant empirical literature, incorporates appropriate and innovative research design and analytical methods, and holds relevant implications for the field of criminal justice psychology. The award will be announced in the *Crime Scene* newsletter, on the Section website, and at the annual CPA convention.

The Award will be presented at the upcoming Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) Convention in June of 2026. The recipient of this award in 2026 will receive \$1,000, and will be asked to provide a summary of their research for publication in the *Crime Scene* newsletter. The award recipient will also be strongly encouraged to attend the CPA convention (either virtually or in person, depending upon circumstances) and present their research. The recipient will also be invited to submit a summary of their research to be published in *Crime Scene*.

Eligibility (all of the following criteria must be met):

This is a self-nomination award. If you would like to submit your graduate research for consideration, your submission should include:

- ◇ A cover letter containing a physical address, e-mail address, and telephone number
- ◇ A 100- to 150-word statement (included in your cover letter) of how the research contributes to criminal justice psychology
- ◇ A letter of support from your faculty supervisor
- ◇ An updated curriculum vitae
- ◇ A manuscript of your graduate research as described below.



Prior to submission, applicants should ensure adherence to the following eligibility criteria and submission guidelines:

- Only research completed as a graduate thesis or dissertation is eligible for award consideration.
- Only completed investigations are eligible and must have been completed (i.e., thesis or dissertation was defended or submitted to university committee) in the 12 months preceding the submission deadline.
- Applicant cannot be a former recipient of the award.
- Applicant, at the time of submission, should be a member of the Criminal Justice Psychology Section or in the process of becoming a member.
- Research should be prepared in the format of a manuscript submitted for publication, strictly adhering to APA 7th edition style. The research and manuscript must be of publishable quality. Length is limited to 20 pages (min. 10 pages), excluding abstract, references, figures, and tables.

For further details on CJPS awards and past award recipients, see <https://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/criminaljusticepsychology/criminaljusticeawards>. If you have specific questions about any of the awards, please contact Dr. Alisha Salerno-Ferraro, Director-At-Large, Awards Coordinator (sal3rnoa@yorku.ca).

Editors' Note:

2026 CPA Student Research Grants — APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

Call for applications for the 2026 CPA Student Research Grants is now OPEN. The CPA Student Research Grants support student research in all areas of psychology. For information on the call, including eligibility criteria, application requires, and the link to the application form, please go to <https://cpa.ca/student-research-grants/>. The deadline to apply is **Monday, February 2, 2026**. If you have any questions about this competition, please contact science@cpa.ca

CPA Awards

For information about nominating someone for a (1) Canadian Psychological Association Award or (2) Canadian Psychological Association Fellow Award, see the [Canadian Psychological Association Award Information](#) page.



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Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment: Research to Practice

Highlights from a Knowledge Exchange Event

Chella M. Robles¹, B.Sc. Hons; Sandy Jung¹, Ph.D.; N. Zoe Hilton^{2,3}, Ph.D.; & Elke Ham³

¹Department of Psychology, MacEwan University, Edmonton AB

²Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto, Toronto ON

³Waypoint Research Institute, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, Penetanguishene, ON

Corresponding Author: Sandy Jung (sandy.jung@macewan.ca)

Background, Context, and Content

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has been declared an epidemic in Canada ([Virani, 2023](#)), where 2021 saw the seventh consecutive year of increased rates of IPV ([Statistics Canada, 2022](#)). IPV prevalence and severity increased, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic ([Kourti et al., 2023](#)), as lockdown forced partners into confinement together and imposed additional economic and psychosocial stressors. Yet, community resources remained finite. Therefore, to prevent further IPV incidents or escalation of violence that could lead to fatal consequences, prioritization of high-risk cases is necessary, and validated risk tools should be used to identify those cases. Research has shown that Canadian policing organizations demonstrate an openness to using risk assessment tools and a desire for up-to-date training that is easily accessible and does not add to operational burdens ([Ballucci et al., 2020](#)). Therefore, an important first step towards preventing partner violence reoffending and escalation is translating research knowledge to community practitioners and policing partners, to grow researcher-practitioner partnership and help ensure evidence-based practices are employed and sustained.

In June 2025, we hosted a knowledge exchange event held in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The initiative was a collaborative effort between MacEwan University and the Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, supported in part by a Connection Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), with additional funding from MacEwan University and Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care. This event was an offshoot of the CELIA IPV Project (Common language for intimate partner violence risk appraisal and mitigation: An evidence-based policing approach; <https://www.celia-ipv-project.ca/>), building on the project's goal of connecting research and practice in IPV risk assessment. This invitation-only networking event was organized by research assistant Chella Robles, a past honours student from MacEwan University, who coordinated invitations, managed logistics, and prepared event materials while working closely with the organizers to ensure the event ran smoothly. The timing and location of the event were selected to coincide with the annual CPA convention, to help us engage with psychology researchers as well

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as practitioners.

The event brought together academic researchers, police professionals, and other community practitioners and organizations from across Canada to connect and engage with one another, translating empirical research on IPV risk assessment into practical strategies to inform real-world practice and support evidence-based decision making by frontline professionals. Specifically, this event provided researchers with an opportunity to connect and exchange knowledge with practitioners who respond to IPV, offering practitioners access to very recent findings from empirical research relevant to their practices and policies, and offering researchers the chance to hear from practitioners about pressing issues that need more research and ways in which research can best be shared. One of the main goals was to provide practitioners with short information sessions and take-home points that would allow them to share gained knowledge with their colleagues, police counterparts, and non-police community partners to better prevent future reoccurrence of IPV incidents.

The 40 participants came from across five Canadian provinces (Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador) and included students, researchers, and criminal justice professionals. Participants represented five academic institutions (MacEwan University, Carleton University, University of Toronto, St. Francis Xavier University, and University of New Brunswick), six police services (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, Edmonton Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, Saint John Police Force, and Sault Ste. Marie Police Service), as well as government ministries and departments, including the Department of Justice and Public Safety, Victim Services, Provincial Courts, Legal Aid, and a women's shelter from Newfoundland and Labrador. This diverse group of individuals created a rich environment for discussion, ensuring that perspectives from both research and practice informed the day's activities.

Research Presentations

The Exchange Event began with a welcome from the event leads, who introduced the objectives of the event and its connection to the CELIA Project. Dr. Jung provided an overview of current trends in IPV prevalence and risk assessment, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based approaches for frontline professionals and the need to translate research into practice. Then, nine presentations, organized into three broad topic areas (assessing and communicating IPV risk, predictive accuracy of the ODARA, coercive control in IPV incidents) were given as follows:

Ms. Elke Ham gave an overview of the 771 cases from the CELIA IPV Project, showing that men who perpetrated IPV were more often convicted, used more types of physical violence, and had higher total ODARA scores than women. Dr. Karl Hanson described a recent study (Hilton et al., 2024) showing that ODARA scores recorded by police and researchers were aligned with each other but higher than expected based on existing norms, suggesting a potential overestimation of IPV recidivism risk and a need for standardized risk levels. Dr. Mary Ann Campbell presented on the use of ODARA by police in New Brunswick, finding that officers completed the ODARA promptly, but scores did not significantly influence the risk management strategies employed.

Dr. Zoe Hilton presented her study examining whether simplifying the ODARA by treating marital, cohabiting, and dating violence the same would impact its validity. Preliminary analyses showing that scoring marital, cohabiting, and dating violence as the same thing produced slightly lower ODARA scores than the original scoring but remained equally valid in predicting future IPV offences. Britni Gorman presented findings from her honours thesis at MacEwan University, showing that the ODARA predicted IPV recidivism equally well for Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, although item-level differences were observed. Dr. Angela Eke discussed two studies examining the overlap between IPV and child abuse. The ODARA and a list of child abuse



risk factors from [Salisbury et al. \(2009\)](#) both show promise for identifying co-occurring child abuse in IPV cases.

Chella Robles and Dr. Sandy Jung discussed a recently published paper ([Weissflog et al., 2025](#)) showing that coercively controlling behaviours can be identified and documented with moderate to good interrater reliability from police reports, particularly when researchers use structured checklists with item-specific descriptors. Dr. Soyeon Kim highlighted how coercive control can predict physical IPV and future recidivism, and that documenting the occurrence of these behaviours and attitudes, even in the absence of visible injuries, can improve risk assessment and help prevent serious harm. Dr. Meghan Weissflog discussed the association of threatened self-harm with younger age, unemployment, unstable relationships, prior IPV, and higher reoffending risk, and the finding that these threats were more closely related to coercive control than to mental health concerns.

Roundtable Discussions

After the presentations, participants broke into roundtables to discuss four main questions that focused on collectively identifying research needs, knowledge translation gaps, knowledge mobilization challenges, and strategies to overcome these challenges. Four meaningful themes emerged.

First, participants identified key research priorities and evidence gaps, including the need for a better understanding of coercive control, the use and integration of multiple risk assessment tools, engagement with victims to accurately assess IPV risk, and evaluation of interventions in response to risk assessment (e.g., absolute discharge, counselling). There was also interest in clarifying how risk assessments inform decisions in the justice system and exploring prevention strategies, such as leveraging protective factors and early interventions such as including consent education and body autonomy in healthy relationship education. Second, participants highlighted the importance of effective knowledge translation and communication, emphasizing the need for concise and consistent updates, practical summaries, and tools that make research findings accessible and actionable for police, victim services, and other agencies.

Third, attendees discussed the challenges of implementing evidence into practice, noting barriers such as limited time and resources, siloed agencies (i.e., a lack of information sharing among agencies, with some agencies being hesitant to share information), perceived liability, and skill gaps in areas like interviewing and relationship-building with victims. Finally, strategies to overcome these challenges were proposed, including regular and practical in-person training opportunities, networking, accessibility to local trainers on risk assessment tools, top-down support, and digestible communications (e.g., one-pager updates), with a focus on equipping frontline members who respond to IPV and fostering collaboration across agencies. These discussions not only highlighted critical areas for research and practice but also laid the groundwork for meaningful collaboration, knowledge sharing, and practical application of evidence-informed strategies.

Event Evaluation

In a post-event survey, participants indicated that they welcomed the opportunity to attend and that the event achieved the goal of translating research into practice. We noted that participants actively engaged in discussions throughout the presentations and the final roundtable sessions, fostering meaningful dialogue and exchange of ideas, and strengthening relationships among researchers, police, and community organizations. Participants gained insights into how evidence-informed strategies can be integrated into day-to-day practice, reinforcing the value of ongoing training, networking, and knowledge sharing to support effective IPV prevention and intervention. For presentation abstracts and a comprehensive report about the event, please visit our website at



<https://www.celia-ipv-project.ca/risky-business>. For a full summary of roundtable discussions, refer to this link: <https://osf.io/25yt7/files/chtey>.

Funding: The research team would like to acknowledge the funding support provided by MacEwan University, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. (*Jung, S., Hilton, N. Z., & Ham, E. Mobilizing What We Have Learned About the Risky Business of Assessing Intimate Partner Violence Risk: Research to Practice. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Connection Grant # 611-2024-0582*).

Acknowledgements: We sincerely thank all presenters, participants, and partner organizations for their time, expertise, and contributions, which made this event a productive and engaging opportunity for knowledge exchange. We are grateful for the participants' enthusiasm and engagement and look forward to continued collaboration across the country.



Presenters at *The Risky Business of Assessing Intimate Partner Violence Risk: Research and Practice* event.

(L to R): Dr. Meghan Weissflog, Elke Ham, Dr. Angela Eke, Dr. Sandy Jung, Dr. Karl Hanson, Dr. Mary Ann Campbell, Dr. N. Zoe Hilton, and Chella Robles.



Attendees actively engaged during the research presentations, taking notes, and discussing insights.

(Top Photo): Britni Gorman presenting her Honours thesis

(Bottom Photo): Dr. Karl Hanson presenting on the foundations of standardized risk levels for IPV and highlighting the importance of a common language for risk assessment across evaluators and settings.



(Top/Bottom Photos): Participants collaborating and exchanging ideas across four topics during roundtable sessions on IPV risk assessment.



CELIA Project Team Members Selfie!

(L to R): Dr. Sandy Jung, Dr. Meghan Weissflog, Dr. N. Zoe Hilton, Dr. Mary Ann Campbell, Dr. Karl Hanson, Dr. Angela Eke, and Elke Ham



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A Brief Review of the Assessment and Intervention of Youth Who Offend in a Sexual Manner

Jessica Gaudette, BA (Hons), & Mary Ann Campbell, Ph.D.

Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, Department of Psychology, University of New Brunswick, Saint John NB

Editor's Note: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Jessica Gaudette (jessica.gaudette@unb.ca)

Introduction

In New Brunswick, there has been an upward trend in sexual offence cases, with 849 cases of police reported sexual assaults occurring in 2022, representing a 52% increase from the 5 years prior ([Justice Canada, 2024](#)). When looking at police reported sexual assaults with youth victims, we see a 25% increase from 2019 to 2023 for girls aged 12 to 17 years old ([Government of New Brunswick, 2025](#)). Notably, the [Government of New Brunswick \(2019\)](#) has reported their province as having the 3rd highest average rate (289 per 100,000) of children and youth victims of sexual offences out of all other provinces, as well as a higher rate than the national average (199 per 100,000).

Not all of those who offend against youth are adults. Nationally, adolescent boys (i.e., ages 12-17) are responsible for approximately 30% of all sexual offences per year ([Statistics Canada, 2024](#)). Youth who sexually offend are considered a heterogeneous group, meaning that these youth often have different characteristics and offending profiles. However, certain consistencies have emerged in research. For instance, research indicates that youth who offend in a sexual manner are more likely to have experienced adverse childhood experiences ([Rose et al., 2020](#)) and have higher rates of experiencing sexual or physical abuse ([Chewning, 1991](#); [Justice Canada, 2004](#); [Seto & Lalumière, 2010](#)). In comparison, youths who offend in a sexual manner have much lower recidivism rates of sexual offences than adults who engage in this form of criminal behaviour ([Caldwell, 2016](#)).

Regardless of charge status, youth who engage in sexual violence need to be appropriately assessed in terms of their criminogenic risk and needs. Supporting access to evidence-based intervention to reduce this risk not only is important for the youth's benefit, but for the prevention of harm to others.

Assessment of Sexual Violence Risk and Needs

Broadly, risk assessment tools are used to identify an individual's risk of offending/re-offending. There are specialized risk assessment tools designed to identify specific types of risk (i.e., sexual, general, violent offending) for different types of individuals (i.e., youth and adult). Regardless of these differences, risk assessments utilize static and dynamic risk factors to identify the individual risk level, which is used to tailor treatment to the individual. There are two types of risk assessments: actuarial and clinical (i.e., structured professional judgement; [Public Safety Canada, 2018](#)).

Actuarial risk assessments are uniform tools that rely on measurable variables that have been validated as predictors, using mathematical analyses and formulas to calculate a numerical risk estimate attached to a probability of offending/re-offending ([APA, 2018](#)). In contrast, clinical risk assess-



ments are more flexible than purely actuarial tools. Whereas clinical risk assessment tools still are based on research-identified risk factors and tested for their predictive accuracy, the final risk level is determined by the clinician based on their professional judgment based on observations and information gleaned from the client's life history as they consider interactions of criminogenic and other related factors ([APA, 2023](#)). A few examples of sexual violence specific risk tools for youth include: The Estimate of Risk of Adolescent Sexual Offence Recidivism (ERASOR; [Worling & Curwen, 2001](#)), the Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol-II (J-SOAP-II; [Prentky & Righthand, 2003](#)) and the Juvenile Sexual Offence Recidivism Risk Assessment Tool-II (JSORRAT-II; JSORRAT-II; [Epperson et al., 2005](#)).

Considerations with Risk Assessments

There are considerations that need to be taken by clinicians when completing and utilizing risk assessment tools. Provided below are some examples of these considerations.

Specification by Age and Gender

Risk assessment tools are validated for specific samples. When picking a risk assessment tool, it is important to ensure the tool has been validated for the age and gender of your client. Often, risk assessment measures are validated for use with samples of boys or men. Therefore, clinicians with girls/women or gender-fluid clients should be cautious when using tools validated only for boys/men and instead should aim to integrate information provided by tools that are validated for their specific clients, including their age group and cultural context.

Stigmatization of Clients

Stigmatization occurs when negative evaluations of an individual or group are made based on limited - and often incorrect or misconceptualized - characteristics. Individuals involved in the criminal justice system are one of the most stigmatized groups ([Moore et al., 2024](#)). They are also the group for whom risk assessment tools are being most utilized. It is important for clinicians to be aware of how stigmatization of certain demographic and cultural groups can lead to over-assessment of risk, which in turn can affect conceptualizations of risk level outcomes and risk matching clients to misaligned intervention plans. When conducting risk assessments, clinicians should be aware of both societal and subjective stigma and strive in their practice to score clients as accurately as possible, including integration of research-supported risk instruments to inform risk appraisals. It is important to rely on multiple sources of information to enhance the quality of the risk assessment and inform subsequent decisions stemming from their risk evaluation and recommendations.

Interpretation of Results

Actuarial risk assessment tools determine risk level by mathematical equations and scores. As a result, there are often cut-off scores to risk level results (i.e., low, moderate, high), which may be too rigid. One or two points from the cutoff may be the difference between moderate and high-risk levels, and the implications of these scores in absence of sensitive contextualization can be detrimental to treatment planning and outcomes. Therefore, clinicians need to be precise with their scoring and take careful consideration of the interpretation of results.

Intellectual Disabilities

When conducting risk assessments with youth with intellectual disabilities, there are unique considerations and adaptations to be made. Assessments should be delivered in a way that the youth can understand and complete and integrating data from multiple information sources becomes especially poignant. Specialized tools such as the Multiplex Empirically Guided Inventory of Ecological Aggregates for Assessing Sexually Abusive Adolescents and Children (MEGA; [Miccio-Fonseca,](#)

2010) is one of the only tools designed for individuals with intellectual disabilities of different genders (i.e., boys, girls, transgender) aged 4-19 ([Blasingame, 2018](#)).

Intervention for Sexual Offending Behaviour by Youth

Once risk assessments are completed, the identified risk level should be matched with intervention intensity (i.e., “dosage” of treatment). Aside from intensity level, risk assessments also help identify specific risk factors, also known as criminogenic needs, that are largely contributing to pro-criminal behaviour and need to be targeted in intervention to reduce criminal recidivism. This process of identifying prominent risk factors and matching intensity of intervention with level of assessed risk level is essential for each client, as youth who offend in a sexual manner require specialized, tailored intervention. Responsivity factors (e.g., evidence-based treatment strategies, cognitive status, mental health and personality factors, gender, readiness, cultural considerations) also should be integrated into development of effective intervention and risk management.

Effectiveness of Interventions

A meta-analysis by [Reitzel and Carbonell \(2006\)](#) examined the effectiveness of treatment for youth who sexually offend. Across nine studies, a total sample of 2,986 youth with a sexual offending history was examined. Overall, youth who received treatment for sexual offending had significantly lower rates of sexual recidivism in comparison to those who did not receive treatment (8.6% and 19.44%, respectively). Another meta-analysis by [Winokur et al. \(2006\)](#) found similar results, with youth who received treatment having significantly lower rates of recidivism compared to those who did not receive treatment - not just for sexual recidivism, but nonsexual violent, nonsexual non-violent and general recidivism as well. This indicates that treatment is effective for youth in this context beyond just sexual recidivism ([Przybylski, 2015](#)).

Overall, there is extensive research that supports the effectiveness of interventions for youth who sexually offend in reducing not only sexual recidivism, but other types of offending as well. Multisystemic therapy (MST; [Letourneau et al., 2009](#)), cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT; [Harrison et al., 2020](#)), and community or correctional-based treatment programs ([Winokur et al., 2006](#)) are a few of the most commonly examined intervention types. However, it is challenging to determine which intervention is most effective, as they must be tailored to the individual. Interventions that are developmentally appropriate, account for motivational and behavioural diversity, and address both criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs (rather than focusing on individual psychological deficits alone) and while incorporating cognitive-behavioural techniques, are likely to be most effective ([Przybylski, 2015](#)).

Conclusion

In conclusion, youth who engage in criminal behaviour that cross sexual lines are recognized as a heterogeneous group. Risk assessment and management within this group requires evaluation of their criminogenic risk and needs, integration of responsivity circumstances, as well as provision of access to evidence-based, individualized interventions to reduce risk not only for the youth’s benefit, but also to prevent harm to others. However, despite the need for assessment and intervention, these services are still lacking in Canada. Therefore, the development of services and increased capacity in this area for youth who sexually offend should be further explored and implemented.

Editors’ Note: Additional reference cited can be found below.

Worling, J. R., & Curwen, T. (2001). *Estimate of Risk of Adolescent Sexual Offense Recidivism (ERASOR) Version 2.0* [Manual chapter]. In M. C. Calder (Ed.), *Juveniles and children who sexually abuse: Frameworks for assessment* (pp. 372–397). Russell House.



Meet Your Criminal Justice Section Executives

The *Crime Scene* Team

Hannah Stewart, Ph.D., R.Psych & Christopher Lively, Ph.D.



The *Crime Scene* Editorial Team

(Left Photo): Dr. Hannah Stewart, Review Editor

(Right Photo): Dr. Christopher Lively, Managing Editor

Hello *Crime Scene* Readers! In effort to help the *Crime Scene* readership get to know the members on the Section Executive better, we have launched a new piece within *Crime Scene* to allow for each representative to share a bit about themselves for your benefit. By putting the spotlight on our leadership and executive team, each installment of this feature will give you, the reader, an opportunity to get a closer look at who we are, what we do, and learn what motivates us to serve as your Criminal Justice Psychology Executives.

For the inaugural piece of this new feature, the editorial team of *Crime Scene* will be featured. Read on to learn more about Hannah and Chris!

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Dr. Hannah Stewart – Review Editor of *Crime Scene Newsletter*

Dr. Hannah Stewart is a Clinical and Forensic Psychologist practicing in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She completed her PhD in Clinical Psychology at University of New Brunswick with the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, following her undergraduate honours degrees at Carleton University in Psychology (BSc) and Criminology & Criminal Justice with Concentration in Psychology and Minor in Chemistry (BA). Her doctoral clinical residency with Nova Scotia Health's Mental Health and Addictions Program further honed her areas of specialization for working with populations accessing mental health services for a variety of forensic, psychiatric, risk, rehabilitation, problematic sexual behaviour, and personality-related concerns. Currently, Hannah works for Calian to provide contracted services for active service members of the Canadian Armed Forces within the interdisciplinary healthcare team at the Canadian Forces Health Service Centre - Atlantic. In this context, she delivers a breadth of general mental health services for a plethora of comorbid and concurrent presenting problems through provision of psychodiagnostics assessment, individual and group intervention, multidisciplinary consultation, and supervision of doctoral clinical psychology residents as a member of the Psychology Training Committee.

Beyond her employment, Hannah remains engrossed in other professional development activities, including ongoing involvement in research development and dissemination as well as providing supervision for psychology and mental health trainees at undergraduate, graduate, resident, and candidate levels. Where she is grateful to have received such enriched guidance from her own supervisors, Hannah is passionate to give back and provide mentorship, consultations, and training seminars to others. As part of the CPA Criminal Justice Section's Executive Committee, Hannah's role as Review Editor provides frontline engagement with contributions for biannual publication of the *Crime Scene Newsletter*. Her meticulous style enables thorough review of member's submissions toward readying content for publication, as well as coordinating featured articles including the Criminal Justice Sections' Member Spotlight and Meet Your Criminal Justice Section Executives profile pieces.

As a scientist-practitioner, Hannah's professional interests have broadly focused on how systems deal with marginalized, under-served, and stigmatized members of society. Her research explores the "grey area" of diverse forensic-psychological and criminological issues including forensic mental health, high-risk criminal offenders, sexual offending, processes of change, and forensic assessment, intervention, rehabilitation, and prevention. She believes that the reasons behind deviancy should be explored to reduce tendencies to demonize people and thus enable effective solutions for problems at both individual and societal levels. Likewise, Hannah's personal and professional philosophies are guided by her authentic style and values for evidence-based, person-centred care that integrate intersectionality and responsivity factors to drive collaborative engagement with clients in ways which incorporate their personal, social, cultural, and organizational contexts. At her core, Hannah is a curious, cerebral, outgoing creative soul who thrives in embracing dialecticals for understanding different perspectives, thinking outside the box, and revelling in the diversity of experience offered in our technicolour world.

Outside of her professional pursuits, Hannah vivaciously immerses herself into the world with a wandering mind and a wild heart. Fun Facts that she would like to share with the Criminal Justice Section Membership include an uncanny ability to find four-leaf clovers, as well as her avid involvement in supporting Canadian music scenes as a songwriter, musician, and performer.



Dr. Christopher Lively – Managing Editor of *Crime Scene Newsletter*

Dr. Christopher Lively is an Experimental Psychology researcher with a particular focus in Forensic Psychology. While forensic psychology research is Chris' passion today, he did not initially start out studying psychology. Rather, Chris began his academic training at St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) in Physics and Mathematics with the goal of being a high school physics teacher. He finished his Bachelor of Science in Physics, but an assortment of psychology electives taken during his degree piqued his curiosity enough to want to pursue more training in human behaviour. He returned to school a few years later to focus on psychology, and it was not long until he found himself being introduced to forensic psychology through a spring intersession course. This class, paired with the experiential and practical learning experiences built into the course, quite literally changed the trajectory of Chris' career life. He credits this course (and the professor, Dr. Margo Watt) with igniting the spark that fuelled his interest in clinical-forensic psychology. This excitement set him on a path of further graduate studies in the area that brought him to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador where he completed his Master of Science and Doctorate (both in Experimental Psychology) at Memorial University under the guidance of Dr. Brent Snook.

Flash forward to today, Chris is back at his alma mater and teaching some of the same courses that initially ignited his interest in the forensic psychology field. It is one of Chris' greatest joys (and literally a dream come true) to be an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Applied Forensic Psychology Program (AFP) at StFX. When he is not teaching courses related to the AFP program, he dedicates his time toward his research pursuits. His broad research interests pertain to the study of human behaviour within the criminal justice system. The overarching goal of his research is to improve and support the administration of justice through applied psychological theory and methodology. Specific areas of research interest include investigative interviewing practices within policing and the judiciary, alibi assessments, and safeguarding legal rights for adults and youth—the latter being the focus of his PhD dissertation. While he still has much interest in the aforesaid research areas, he has endeavoured to broaden his research interests and is currently collaborating on projects related to intimate partner violence, wrongful convictions, and weapon focus effect.

Outside of his academic roles, Chris serves as an Advisory Board member of the Centre for Policing and Criminal Justice Research at the University of New Brunswick (Saint John), and is among the steering committee group tasked with organizing the North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference (N6). He has been on the Criminal Justice Psychology Section Executive Committee since 2020, holding roles of Review (2020-2023) and Managing Editor (2023-Present) of the Criminal Justice Psychology Section where his main role is Managing Editor of *Crime Scene* (2023-Present). Indeed, journal/newsletter editorial management is something else that Chris is quite passionate about. In addition to these editorial roles with *Crime Scene*, he was previously, an Associate Editor for CPA's Student Journal, *Mind Pad*, from 2017-2018, and served as the Deputy Journal Editor of *Investigative Interviewing: Research and Practice* from 2020-2023. (*Editor's Note: despite enjoying editorial work, Chris has yet to write or publish anything that has been clerically flawless; generally speaking, all errors discovered in any of his work [In Crime Scene or otherwise] is usually his alone.*) 😊

A fun fact about him is that his academic career might have been all for naught if his musical pursuits panned out (which they obviously did not!). Nonetheless, he's proud that his musical accomplishments have earned him an East Coast Music Award and a Juno Nomination with various musical artists; all of whom he would say are much more talented and gifted in music than he could have ever hoped to be.

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PUBLICATIONS

Recently Published Abstracts

Send us the abstract of your recently published paper for inclusion in an upcoming issue!

Check out these recently published works by our CJS Members!

McArthur, J., Ford, E., Lively, C. J., & Ternes, M. (2025). A content analysis of how police in Canada handle the right to silence. *Journal of Criminal Psychology* [Special Issue: *Contemporary Developments in Investigative Interviewing*]. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCP-11-2024-0119>

Purpose. In Canada, police are legally allowed to continue questioning suspects who invoke their right to silence, thereby encouraging the suspects to waive that right. This study aims to examine police responses to suspects' right to silence invocations, focusing on how they en-

courage suspects to provide information and cooperate with the investigation.

Design/methodology/approach. This paper reviewed 24 archived video recordings (over 100 h) of Canadian police interviews, documenting suspects' invocations of silence and officers' responses. A directed content analysis was conducted to code and categorize the police officers' responses to the suspects' invocations. Themes were developed from these categories to capture the patterns in the officers' responses.

Findings. Suspects invoked their right to silence often ($M = 22.21$ per interview; $SD = 20.54$) and police used a variety of strategies to handle the invocations. While most strategies aligned with findings from previous research, several newly identified strategies also emerged, with 33% of responses using more than one strategy. The most used strategies fell within domains found in previous research, such as confrontation and competition, emotion provocation and collaboration. Novel strategies included minimizing the role of legal counsel's advice and using dismissive language to downplay silence.

Originality/value. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study to identify the strategies Canadian police use to handle right-to-silence invocations, providing a foundation for future research examining how these strategies predict suspect cooperation in police interviews.



Hilton., Z., Hanson, R.K., Jung, S., Campbell, M.A., Eke, A. W., Ham, E., Kim, S. & Weisflog, M. (in press). Cross-Province Comparisons of Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment New Canadian Percentile Norms for the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/ Revue canadienne de sciences du comportement*

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is the most frequent type of violent offending reported to police in Canada. Police often use risk assessment tools to inform decisions for IPV cases. The Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) is one of the most widely used tools for evaluating the likelihood that an individual who has assaulted an intimate partner will do so again. The ODARA published norms use percentile distributions of scores in cases of IPV from Ontario in the 1990s and require regular review and updating. Recent research suggests that the mean and median ODARA score is higher in more recent cases of men charged for IPV than in the published norms. This paper presents data from a total of 884 cases drawn from six samples across three provinces occurring in 2010 to 2019 (median 2018). The population weighted mean (5.53) and median (5) ODARA score were significantly higher than in the published norms. We present new Canadian percentile norms for the ODARA, which should be used to update user guidelines. Future research should examine calibration of predicted and observed recidivism rates and develop ODARA norms for women who perpetrate IPV.

Eastwood, J., Luther, K., Han, T., Arenzon, V., Crough, Q., Curtis, A., de Almeida, H., Downer, K. J., Dion Larivière, C., Lundy, J., Ogunseye, F., Snow, M. D., & Snook, B.

(2025). Statistical reporting practices within forensic psychology: Is anything changing? *Law and Human Behavior*, 49(4), 398–409. <https://doi.org/10.1037/lhb0000611>

Objective: We examined the evolution of statistical reporting practices within forensic psychology across two decades (2000–2020) to assess their adherence to recommended best practices. **Method:** We conducted a comprehensive analysis of articles published in six prominent forensic psychology journals, including every empirical article published in each journal in 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020 ($N = 813$). We then evaluated the use and interpretation of null hypothesis significance testing (NHST), effect sizes (ESs), confidence intervals (CIs), and Bayesian statistics for each article in the sample. **Results:** We found a persistent reliance on NHST, with nearly all articles employing it for data analysis and interpretation. Encouragingly, the reporting of ESs and CIs has increased substantially; their interpretative use, however, remains limited. Bayesian methods were rarely used for analysis or interpretation of data. **Conclusions:** These findings suggest a slow uptake of reforms advocated by statistical guidelines, with forensic psychology researchers continuing to prioritize NHST over recommended approaches. Although the increase in ES and CI reporting is encouraging, the continued reliance on NHST means that both the scientific literature and important applied decision making in the forensic psychology field are impacted by the shortcomings of this statistical reporting approach (e.g., simplistic dichotomous decisions, lack of reproducibility, potential for p -hacking). We call for journals in the field to encourage further use of statistical best practices within their manuscripts.



Recently Defended Dissertation

Structured Risk Assessment in Frontline Policing: A Prospective Field Study of Police-Scored Static-99R Assessments of Sexual-Assault Suspects

Dissertation Author: Heather Burke, PhD

Affiliation: Carleton University

PhD Supervisor: Dr. Kevin Nunes (Carleton University)

Collaborator: Dr. Sandy Jung (MacEwan University)

PhD Thesis Examination Date: October 14 2025 at Carleton University

Abstract

Evidence-based policing has increased interest in structured risk assessment. Yet, such tools are rarely used in sex crime investigations, as no tools exist for police use in this context, and those developed for police use post-conviction lack rigorous validation. To address this gap, this dissertation evaluated a well-validated actuarial tool, the Static-99R, for use in frontline policing. In a prospective field study conducted in a high-risk section of an Alberta police service, 11 police personnel and a researcher completed Static-99R assessments for sexual-assault suspects. Three interrelated studies provide early validation, addressing interrater reliability, relative predictive accuracy, and perceived feasibility and utility.

Chapter 2 evaluated interrater reliability on cases scored independently by a researcher and police personnel ($n = 104$). Agreement on total scores was excellent ($\kappa > .75$) between researchers ($n = 30$), the researcher and police, and within subgroups including formally trained, informally trained, and civilian staff. Among formally trained officers, reliability remained excellent over time. Variability appeared at the item level.

Chapter 3 evaluated the predictive accuracy of Static-99R total scores and risk levels, scored by police personnel and a researcher in 102 cases (M follow-up = 2.2 years) based on allegations, charges, and convictions. For both assessors, totals and risk levels showed large effects ($C > .71$) for supervision violations/technical breaches, general, and violent recidivism, but not for sexual recidivism. Additional exploratory variables showed mixed discrimination.

Chapter 4 examined police personnel's perceptions ($n = 5$) via a mixed-methods survey. The Static-99R was viewed as useful for assessing risk and prioritizing cases, but operational barriers were identified, such as time demands. Suggested supports included ongoing training, simplified processes, and involvement of civilian staff. Concerns about the relevance and comprehensiveness of items highlighted perceived limitations in utility.

Findings provide preliminary support for the Static-99R in frontline policing, particularly for broader public-safety outcomes, though the small sample and low base rates warrant caution. Adoption will require efforts to address concerns regarding operational barriers and officer perceptions. Future research should use larger, more diverse samples and incorporate validation methods, such as calibration. If validated and integrated, the Static-99R could improve risk management in sexual-assault investigations.

Keywords: Static-99R, police, risk assessment, sexual assault, recidivism, predictive accuracy, reliability



CAREERS

There are numerous opportunities posted on CPA's Career Ad site. Positions currently being offered include:

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UPCOMING EVENTS

6th Annual Canadian Forensic Psychology Virtual Conference is scheduled to take place February 6th, in Halifax on Saint Mary's University campus

21st Biennial Symposium on Violence & Aggression is scheduled to take place May 25 & 26, 2026 in Saskatoon on the University of Saskatchewan campus.

CPA's 2026 National Annual Convention is scheduled to take place in Montreal, QC on June 4-6, 2026.

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VIOLENCE & Aggression
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May 25 & 26, 2026
University of Saskatchewan

View Program Details

Save the Date

The poster features a white dove with an olive branch flying between two hands reaching towards each other. A megaphone icon is positioned below the title. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner, and a calendar icon is in the bottom right corner.

Have an upcoming event you want mentioned in *Crime Scene*? Contact the Managing Editor (clively@stfx.ca) with the details to have it advertised in *Crime Scene*!

CPA SCP
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The logo features the text 'CPA SCP' at the top, with a globe icon between the letters 'A' and 'S'. Below this, 'Montréal' is written in a large, stylized, cursive font, and '2026' is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font to the right.

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6th Annual Canadian Forensic Psychology Virtual Conference



Keynote Speakers

-  **Dr. Anne Crocker**
Professor, University of Montreal
-  **Dr. Craig Bennell**
Professor, Carleton University
-  **Dr. Charlene Senn**
Professor, University of Windsor

Deadlines

-  Abstracts due December 14, 2025
-  Conference takes place on February 6, 2026
-  Noon to 5:00 PM AST
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We are always looking for the latest news, events, research, or commentaries that may be of interest to our members. We accept a wide range of submissions and encourage both professionals and students to consider contributing in English and/or French.

Students, this is a great opportunity to boost your CV!

Please contact our Managing Editor, Dr. Christopher Lively (clively@stfx.ca), or our Review Editor, Dr. Hannah Stewart (hstewar5@unb.ca), if you have ideas for submission or questions.

Do you have ideas, comments, or suggestions?

Feel free to contact any member of our Executive team—we want to hear from you!

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