

Bringing Into Focus the Experience of Public Camera Surveillance

by

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B.A. Cultural Studies, Sheffield Hallam University, 2002

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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## Abstract

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This thesis is an exploratory investigation of public opinion about open-street closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance in Canada. Since 1981, at least 14 cities in Canada have established CCTV monitoring programs to address crime, fear of crime, and social disorder. Opportunities for the public to participate in the establishment of CCTV are limited, yet the opinions and interests of Canadians are invoked in CCTV promotional rhetoric. This study involves the discourse analysis of data from focus groups on the subject of CCTV conducted with seniors and support shelter clients in downtown Kelowna, British Columbia; Kelowna has run a CCTV monitoring program since 2001. I argue that understandings of public CCTV are linked to normative visions of the downtown, rather than evidence of CCTV's effectiveness. I also argue that public opinion about CCTV is contingent on the availability of resources and information. I recommend improved public consultation as one possible solution.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Focusing on the Subjects of Public Camera Surveillance

“Civilized man has exchanged a portion of his possibilities of happiness for a portion of security” (Sigmund Freud, 1930)

### **Introduction**

This thesis is an exploratory investigation of public opinion about open-street closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance<sup>1</sup> in Canada. Since 1981, at least 14 cities in Canada have established CCTV monitoring programs to address crime, fear of crime, and social disorder.<sup>2</sup> Many cities are currently planning CCTV schemes, and others have considered implementing CCTV in the past only to reject it as a viable response to crime and disorder. CCTV schemes are rejected primarily for financial reasons,<sup>3</sup> but proposals

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<sup>1</sup> “Closed-circuit television” is the technical term for what is generally known as “video surveillance”. As the name suggests, CCTV operates on a closed, access-controlled system (either literally a closed network of cables or, more commonly in recent times, encoded wireless networks). “Open-street” designates surveillance schemes directed at public areas such as city streets, parking lots and alleyways, in contradistinction to private video surveillance schemes dedicated to personal residences, privately owned malls or individual private businesses. However, “open-street” programs often have the incidental capability to view into private areas and residences where they fall into focal range.

<sup>2</sup> The cities with CCTV schemes are Drummondville, QC; Sherbrooke, QC; Hull, QC; Baie-Comeau, QC; Montréal, QC; Hamilton, ON; Toronto, ON; Windsor, ON; London, ON; Sudbury, ON; Sturgeon Falls, ON; Thunder Bay, ON; Antigonish, NS; Kelowna, BC.

<sup>3</sup> Until recently, CCTV networks required expensive cable or fibre-optic infrastructure. Some cities have been able to take advantage of existing cables dedicated to traffic signals or other communication networks. However, new innovations in wireless technology mean that CCTV is becoming more affordable and less disruptive to install.

have also been defeated by the resistance efforts of community members and advocacy groups (Hier, Greenberg, Walby and Lett, 2007).

While scholarly interest in CCTV surveillance has been primarily concerned with the establishment of monitoring systems (Hier *et al*, 2007; Walby, 2006; Hier, 2004), little research has been conducted on individuals who dwell under video surveillance cameras.<sup>4</sup> Though there are limited opportunities for members of the Canadian public to participate in establishing and implementing CCTV systems, the “opinions” and “interests” of ordinary Canadians are nevertheless regularly invoked in promotional rhetoric employed to validate public CCTV monitoring schemes. As an exploratory empirical study, this thesis investigates public responses to CCTV surveillance systems for two reasons: first, to supplement the scholarly focus on the implementation of CCTV schemes by investigating the experiences that members of the public have with CCTV; and second, to generate more nuanced insights into public opinion about CCTV monitoring practices than rhetorical promotional claims allow.

Data are presented from four semi-structured focus groups conducted with residents of the downtown area of Kelowna, British Columbia. The city of Kelowna has run an open-street CCTV monitoring program since 2001. The sample population comprises clients of two downtown support shelters and residents of two downtown seniors’ residences. The focus groups were designed to explore responses to, interactivity with, and opinions about CCTV as it is understood and experienced by people who

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<sup>4</sup> I use “dwell” throughout this thesis to account for the ambiguous relationship individuals have with CCTV if they live or regularly spend time in a city with CCTV. “Dwell” does not mean only to have one’s place of dwelling near to or under an area of focused video surveillance, but rather that as an implication of its being there, a co-presence with CCTV (physical or imaginary) may feature as a part of one’s daily phenomenological reflection.

regularly dwell under open-street CCTV cameras. The data are analyzed and findings are presented over two chapters. The first chapter provides a descriptive analysis of public opinion about CCTV. The second chapter provides an interpretive commentary that draws upon the sociology of governance, and moral regulation in particular, to offer an explanation of the ways public CCTV is understood in Kelowna. I supplement the focus group data with ethnographic data on the establishment of CCTV surveillance. The ethnographic data were collected primarily as a component of the Surveillance Practices and Social Problems in Canada (SPSPC) Project;<sup>5</sup> limited ethnographic data were also collected specifically for this study during the focus groups and fieldwork.

I use these data to argue that understandings of public CCTV monitoring are linked to normative visions of the downtown area. I show how the particular knowledges drawn upon by individuals to understand CCTV affect whether or not they support the idea of public CCTV monitoring. I further indicate that these understandings are highly contingent upon the types of resources and information made available. I conclude that

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<sup>5</sup> The SPSPC is a three-year investigation into the establishment of CCTV surveillance in each city that has an open-street scheme in Canada. The study has entailed over 200 interviews, exhaustive document and media analyses, and research in over 40 cities. My involvement as the principle research assistant (RA) allowed me to arrive at the topic of investigation for the current study. In Kelowna, we conducted 15 interviews with local politicians, the mayor, the city manager, local business leaders and community representatives. We also interviewed the managers of both downtown support services centres. I draw upon findings of the SPSPC study throughout this thesis in order to establish context and background; I do not incorporate these data into my analyses.

I thank principal investigator Dr. Sean Hier of the University of Victoria and co-investigator Dr. Joshua Greenberg of Carleton University for their permission to refer to SPSPC data throughout this thesis. These data were crucial in establishing the context for this study. Also, my funded participation in the SPSPC project as a research assistant (RA) allowed me access to fieldwork possibilities that would have otherwise been impossible. I am therefore indebted to the kindness and support of Dr. Hier and Dr. Greenberg, and to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), for their generous funding.

the existing measures in place to incorporate public consultation into the process of promoting and implementing public CCTV monitoring systems in Canada warrant criticism.

### **The Need for Public-Based Substantive Research into CCTV**

This exploratory investigation is significant to current debates about safety and security at the regional, provincial, and national level in Canada. Research on CCTV in Canada has identified the need for data on the administration and experience of camera monitoring programs for purposes of video surveillance policy development (Hier and Greenberg, forthcoming). Although this study is designed primarily for policy-makers and scholars of surveillance, it will be of interest to social scientists interested in social control, public space, and public policy formation; to members of community organizations who either support or oppose monitoring schemes; to privacy/civil liberties advocacy groups/governmental bodies; and to members of the public for whom CCTV surveillance is – or at least has the potential to become – part of their geographical and experiential landscapes.

Specifically, this study addresses the need for substantive research on the opinions and experiences of people who co-exist with, and are subject to, public video surveillance practices. The study is significant in at least two respects. First, existing social-scientific CCTV studies are predominately theoretical in orientation (as noted by Hier, Walby and Greenberg, 2006; Walby, 2005; Hier, 2004). Second, in the process of promoting and implementing CCTV schemes, advocates of CCTV surveillance have generally failed to incorporate public experiences with, responses to, and opinions about CCTV

surveillance. Although federal and provincial guidelines on the use of video cameras in public spaces identify public consultations as a necessary component of good surveillance practice, public consultations in the establishment process are limited (Hier and Greenberg, forthcoming). When public consultations are held, they take the form of police-run information sessions about how CCTV schemes are being planned (ibid.).<sup>6</sup> A greater understanding of public responses to public CCTV will benefit both social-scientific literature on video surveillance and public CCTV policy-making.

In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss findings from the SPSPC project that identify the importance of research investigating public opinion about CCTV. I also discuss the practical implications of this research. Finally, I explicate the importance of this study in terms of public sociology.

### **Kelowna, Constructed Communities and the Politics of Implementing CCTV Systems**

The SPSPC is an investigation of the establishment of open-street CCTV monitoring programs in Canada. In addition to the 14 cities in Canada that have introduced open-street CCTV, the study investigates numerous schemes that have been abandoned, defeated, stalled, as well as schemes that are still under consideration. The latter are as significant as fully operational schemes; they highlight the alignment and misalignment of forces that CCTV implementation efforts hinge upon. Accordingly, the SPSPC's central research question is "How are open-street CCTV surveillance programs

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<sup>6</sup> The cities of Hamilton and Thunder Bay held some public consultations, but they were primarily public information sessions with little scope to incorporate the responses of an educated public (Hier and Greenberg, forthcoming).

established in Canadian cities?” The investigation, therefore, comprises a comprehensive review of the procedure of CCTV implementation in each city.

Creating a social history of CCTV in Canada entails building an oral history comprising the accounts of those involved with CCTV proposals at one stage or another. Typically, the participants are representatives of community organizations, shelters, police, politicians, mayors, potential program managers, business people, lawyers, and privacy advocates. The study involves recruiting interviewees with different levels of involvement and political standpoints vis-à-vis CCTV. This approach affords insights into the detailed and diverse accounts of the motivations and agency involved in CCTV implementation. Although “crime reduction” is the main reason for supporting open-street CCTV surveillance initiatives, there is considerable diversity in both patterns of identifying social problems that require attention and proponents’ expectations of the utility and effectiveness of CCTV surveillance systems. Whereas police, for example, often promote CCTV as a “tool” for crime detection and investigation “after-the-fact”, members of business communities tend to support CCTV surveillance systems to prevent crime and private property damage. City councilors generally favour CCTV systems in the hope that they will assist with efforts to beautify and civilize downtown areas. Panhandling, vagrancy, loitering, youth, nuisance, and vandalism are among the issues councilors intend CCTV to counteract. Although police, business, and council interests can coincide in certain respects, their idiosyncrasies are instrumental in shaping planning and funding procedure.

Aside from advocates for CCTV, the SPSPC found that individuals and organizations opposing public CCTV monitoring are able to exert significant influence

over CCTV implementation. In some cases, CCTV proposals were halted by citizens who staged resistance to monitoring initiatives, exemplified in the cities of Brockville and Peterborough, Ontario. In the present study, I am not concerned with opposition efforts per se, but instances of opposition suggest that people's opinions about CCTV are potentially significant to processes CCTV establishment. If public perceptions can lead to political support for, or opposition to, CCTV, then examining the ways opinions are formed and expressed will contribute to the analytical repertoire of efforts to explain modern surveillance practices.

In Canada, one recurring phenomenon in the establishment of CCTV schemes is a mode of agenda setting that involves the construction of "imagined communities" embedded in a narrative of conflict. "Agenda setting" is a term used in Stuart Soroka's (2002) *Agenda-Setting Dynamics in Canada* to refer to the establishment of "issue salience" (p. 5); an "issue" is "whatever is in contention among a relevant public" (Lang and Lang, 1981, p. 451). Locating specific contentions in concrete publics contravenes the interpretivist epistemology at work in this thesis. However, Soroka qualifies "public" as "a *defined* group" (p. 6, my emphasis); I interpret this as transcending the idea of a discrete collectivity in favour of one constructed through discourse.<sup>7</sup> For issues to attain salience, there must be a level of implicit agreement as to the signifiers used to invoke certain populations. For example, when Hurricane Katrina devastated the city of New Orleans in 2005, the "looter" emerged in symbolic aggregation of those individuals who took advantage of the disruption to re-allocate others' belongings to themselves. This is in contradistinction to the "victims" whose homes and belongings were destroyed or

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<sup>7</sup> This social constructionist perspective is fully elaborated in chapter 3.

stolen. “Looters” and “victims” almost certainly involved intersecting populations, but as “imagined communities” they remain distinct from one another and make intelligible narratives speaking of the aftermath of the disaster.

Agenda-setting involves claims-making activities of an “array of interpretive agents” (Vattimo, 2003, p. 17), and it is enacted across manifold modes of communication such as governmental addresses, interpersonal conversations and mass-media broadcasts and publications. Media analyses and on-site interviews conducted in the SPSPC study reveal that certain imagined communities are commonly invoked in relation to CCTV proposals. For example, the activities of “panhandlers”, “rowdies”, “druggies” or “vandals” are regularly problematized in terms of harassment, violence and public urination, conspicuous dealing, and the destruction of property, respectively. These imagined communities exist, discursively, in opposition to “decent citizens”, “families”, and “business owners” in modes of the problematization of downtown conditions. Of course, these issues and terms will resonate with most Canadians, particularly city-dwellers. Yet for some cities, CCTV is resorted to as a countermeasure to some or all of the downtown issues.

In the city of Kelowna, the SPSPC identified a particularly prominent problematization of “transients” during interviews with police, city councilors, and business owners, and through analyses of local media reporting. I decided to conduct research with two groups of downtown residents in Kelowna based upon the populations invoked in the construction of problems in downtown Kelowna: senior citizens and the clients of downtown support services. In promotional rhetoric about public CCTV in Kelowna, authorities claim that public CCTV will make seniors feel safer, and tackle the

problems caused by transient populations. CCTV promotion is communicated through various channels, such as the local media and police information releases. Yet, rarely are members of the public, on whose behalf CCTV advocates often claim to speak, encouraged to enter into dialogue with policy-makers and promoters. In most cases, the claims made in support of CCTV go largely unquestioned, despite the emergence of literature that concludes CCTV schemes often do not have the far-reaching effect on crime that is hoped for.<sup>8</sup> The considerations outlined above prompted me to narrow my purposive sample selection criteria to individuals implicated in these narratives. This allows a critical interrogation of the claims that are instrumental to CCTV initiatives. I further rationalize my selection of Kelowna as the ideal location for this study below.

#### *Kelowna: The Emergence of CCTV in Canada*

Following a brief pilot project in 1999, Kelowna's first permanent CCTV camera was erected in 2000 and made operational in 2001. The program is notable for becoming the first public CCTV scheme to be challenged directly by a Federal Privacy Commissioner.<sup>9</sup> The Commissioner's involvement spanned three years, attracting considerable media coverage, and culminated in a Charter challenge questioning the

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<sup>8</sup> A comprehensive review of CCTV in Britain commissioned by the Home Office was unable to conclude that CCTV had any positive overall effect on violent crime, or that the presence of CCTV cameras has a general effect on crime levels in general. CCTV cameras were found to have specific utility in reducing particular types of crime (car break-ins, prostitution, etc.) in the areas they view, yet displacement still occurs (Gill & Spriggs 2005).

<sup>9</sup> The legality of video surveillance was challenged on the grounds that videotape imagery constitutes an illegal "search and seizure" of personal information – forbidden under the Canadian Charter of Freedoms and Rights. Details of Federal Privacy Commissioner George Radwanski's challenge can be found on the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic website: <http://www.cippic.ca/en/faqs-resources/public-video-surveillance/#resources>.

legality of Kelowna's scheme. The challenge ultimately failed on a technicality, yet it ensured that the subject of video surveillance – Kelowna's continuing CCTV scheme in particular – became a national news issue. Based on SPSPC findings, it is clear that Kelowna's experience has become an important reference in the planning of other cities' CCTV schemes.

There are at least seven reasons why Kelowna was chosen for this research. First, Kelowna has had CCTV cameras for 8 years. In a city with a relatively long history of CCTV surveillance, the likelihood that my sample population is aware of CCTV monitoring is greater. Second, a typical promotional discourse invoking negative representations of certain imagined communities accompanied CCTV planning. Third, the attention Kelowna received over the Charter challenge influenced subsequent CCTV proposals across the country, possibly even rendering Kelowna a "role-model". Fourth, the involvement of federal and provincial authorities makes Kelowna's project politically significant. Fifth, through my involvement in the SPSPC study, I had already established key contacts with the gatekeepers necessary to conduct research with downtown-based seniors and clients of support shelters. Sixth, Kelowna is close to Victoria, and therefore a practical and convenient location in which to conduct multiple field trips. And finally, Kelowna's continuing CCTV monitoring ensures that the findings of this research may be of practical use to the participants and other individuals and organizations interested in understanding how CCTV is perceived and experienced in the city.

## **Public CCTV and Public Sociology**

Echoing Karl Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach,<sup>10</sup> Michael Burawoy, in his 2004 presidential address to the American Sociological Society (ASA), contends that sociology should be a "moral and political force" as well as a science (Burawoy, 2004, p. 6). Burawoy argues for *public* sociology as the proper response to what he sees as an erosion of civil society by the logic of political economy. In this section, I outline what Burawoy means by public sociology in order to illustrate the practical purpose of this study.

Burawoy adopts a Habermasian critique of globalizing capitalism, arguing that inclusive debate and dialogue – or "communicative action" – are marginalized in contemporary politics. Ergo, individuals have fewer opportunities to participate in the political processes that shape much of their lives. Furthermore, the problem mirrors recent trends in social-science: "the demobilization of civil society has gone hand in hand with a shift from reflexive to instrumental sociology" (Burawoy, 2004, p.21).

Instrumental sociology is understood as the "puzzle-solving" work of social science – that is, concerned with developing the means toward prior-established ends. Burawoy argues that, on the one hand, instrumental work such as policy sociology (social-scientific bolstering of political projects) and professional sociology (refining theories and methods; paradigm building within the social sciences) preoccupies sociology as a whole. Reflexive sociology, on the other hand, involves questioning the orienting ends themselves. Burawoy conceptually divides reflexive sociology into two components: critical and public. The former involves examining perceived problems and

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<sup>10</sup> "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (Marx, 1972, p. 145).

their inured normative foundations – that is, for an academic audience. The latter entails projects of reflexive sociology that directly involve extra-academic audiences.

If the moral force of sociology is its “particular investment in the defense of civil society, itself beleaguered by the encroachment of markets and states” (Burawoy, 2005, p. 4), its political significance lies in an ability to engage with diverse publics, and to aid in the formation of practical courses of action through doing so. An example of “practical application” would be helping a community to develop political strategies to advance their particular interests, or simply raising awareness by sharing the findings of a sociological study with a population to whom it might be of interest. Basically, public sociology “brings sociology into a conversation with publics, understood as people who are themselves involved in a conversation” (ibid., p. 7).

This study is intended as a contribution to public sociology, in that it is designed to encourage intra- and inter-group communication on an issue that affects many people. I achieve this in three ways. First, the focus groups I conducted have allowed individuals to share understanding and meaning with each other on a topic of common relevance; the focus groups also allowed me to impart sociological knowledge as part of the “conversation” – such as academic findings that may have corroborated or challenged certain perceptions of CCTV. Second, the findings of this study will entail a representation of public opinion about CCTV in Canada – something that has been consistently identified in SPSPC interviews as an important resource for individuals and groups involved in establishing or resisting public CCTV schemes. These data will be particularly useful when put into dialogue with claims made on behalf of the populations I studied. And third, this study mediates between individuals involved and/or implicated

in public CCTV monitoring schemes. For example, during the focus groups, I was able to answer several questions pertaining to the scope and purpose of Kelowna's CCTV scheme. Many participants either knew very little about Kelowna's CCTV scheme or held mistaken assumptions about the cost, location and operation of the cameras.

Burawoy recognizes two kinds of public sociology: traditional and organic. The first involves bringing sociological findings to extra-academic audiences via journalism, popular sociology books, and public speaking, for example. In this form, the dissemination of knowledge is generalized and specific publics are only indirectly addressed. By contrast, organic public sociology involves "the sociologist work[ing] in close connection with a visible, thick, active, local and often counter-public" (Burawoy, 2004, p. 7). This study is most like the second kind, yet Burawoy's definition might be interpreted as involving a political partisanship. In this study, I have tried not to "take a side" on the issue of CCTV. I did not intend to help a counter-public resist public CCTV schemes or to disseminate the rhetoric of local officials in order to justify the use of CCTV in Kelowna. Rather, I sought to "strike up a dialogic relation between sociologist and public in which the agenda of each is brought to the table." (ibid., p. 9). This study is conducted from the standpoint of civil society – it is designed to raise awareness and communication in the belief that the future planning of open-street public CCTV initiatives in Canada should be more inclusive of diverse publics and knowledges. Chapter 2 of this thesis will consider the history of CCTV in Canada and its particular implications for this study. Chapter 3 details the research methods employed. Chapter 4 comprises a descriptive analysis of the data, focusing mainly on participants' particular assumptions, opinions and awareness about public CCTV monitoring. Chapter 5 is a

deeper analysis of the themes identified in Chapter 4, conducted through a theoretical framework drawing on the sociologies of governance and moral regulation, as well as criminology. Chapter 5 will be a discussion of the findings, conclusion, and identification of further areas for research.

## Chapter 2

### Situating the Study:

#### Kelowna and the International Establishment of Public CCTV Monitoring

CCTV schemes differ across Canada in terms of numbers of cameras, geographical areas under surveillance, purpose, monitoring practices, technologies, and operational guidelines (to identify a few characteristics). All of these factors are shaped in one way or another by local politics, but they are also influenced by extra-local politics such as provincial and federal legal/regulatory frameworks, international politics, and media and interpersonal communication. The establishment of a CCTV system in Kelowna must be understood in the context of the local, national and international politics of CCTV surveillance.

In this chapter, I show how, in Canada, a particular set of non-binding guidelines for CCTV has been put in place by privacy commissioners. I argue that the concomitant marginalization of public opinion in the process of establishing public CCTV monitoring schemes should be addressed. I also provide further rationalization for my selection of seniors and clients of downtown support shelters as appropriate research participants. I do so through a discussion of the history and characteristics of Kelowna's public CCTV system.

I begin with a discussion of open-street CCTV as an international phenomenon. Next, I describe the rise of CCTV in Britain in order to show that the scale of CCTV deployment is related to certain sociopolitical factors. I compare the rise of CCTV in Canada to the UK, and I attempt to account for similarities and differences in patterns of

public CCTV deployment. I demonstrate the significance of the policy and guidelines governing public CCTV in Canada to patterns of CCTV adoption. I discuss the establishment of Kelowna's CCTV scheme in relation to privacy guidelines, and I explain why Kelowna has become a significant reference for the rest of Canada. Finally, I conclude that public opinion research has an important part to play in the future development of CCTV guidelines in Canada.

### **The International Rise of CCTV**

Public area CCTV surveillance is now a global phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> At least nine countries in Europe have schemes.<sup>12</sup> In the USA, CCTV establishment has followed a similar pattern to Europe: private sector deployment of CCTV (in banks, stores, and other private businesses) has dwarfed public sector use in the past (Norris, McCahill and Wood, 2004, p. 114), but public CCTV monitoring programs are increasing.<sup>13</sup> Public

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<sup>11</sup> Factors such as the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the economic rise of the East, technological innovation, and increasing global urbanization are linked to the continuing rise in the number of cameras and public places monitored by cameras throughout the world (Norris, McCahill & Wood, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> In Europe, Britain, Norway, Germany, and Hungary have schemes. These schemes are described by the Urbaneye Project. The Urbaneye project is a multidisciplinary study comprising criminologists, philosophers, political scientists, sociologists and urban geographers from six countries. Its aim is to investigate the employment of CCTV in open public spaces in Europe in order to advise on its regulation. It is coordinated by the Centre of Technology and Society at the Technical University of Berlin. The study has culminated in a number of publications, summarized in the Final Report (Hempel and Töpfer, 2004). France, the Netherlands, the Republic of Ireland, the Czech Republic and Italy also have public CCTV monitoring programs (Norris, McCahill and Wood 2004, p. 113, 117).

<sup>13</sup> Washington, DC has a sophisticated network of cameras monitoring transit stations, streets and other public spaces (Nieto *et al*, 2002); Chicago has implemented 2000 cameras in public spaces (Hunter, 2004). Similar schemes are anticipated by the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP) to be adopted across the country (Norris, McCahill and Wood, 2004, p. 114).

CCTV programs are also established in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan, Iran, Israel, Russia, India, China and Pakistan (Norris, McCahill and Wood, 2004).

### *CCTV in Britain*

CCTV in Britain is of particular interest for two reasons: first, Britain has the most extensive public CCTV networks in the world, and has therefore become an important international reference; second, a close cultural affinity between Britain and Canada means that the perceived success of British schemes influences promoters of public CCTV in Canada.<sup>14</sup> In fact, in many cases, direct consultation between Canadian authorities and their British counterparts has prefigured in the establishment of CCTV schemes in Canada.<sup>15</sup>

Aside from sporadic police-led schemes in the 1960s, the first major public CCTV program in Britain was installed in 1985 in Bournemouth. It was established in preparation for the then-ruling Conservative Party's Conference held in Bournemouth. During the previous year's conference, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) attempted unsuccessfully to assassinate Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher by bombing her hotel. Therefore, the Bournemouth program was not typical of the state approach to CCTV at the time, and CCTV schemes were otherwise implemented in a piecemeal fashion as the

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<sup>14</sup> This affinity is most evident in English-speaking Canada.

<sup>15</sup> In almost every SPSPC interview, the participants identified CCTV in Britain as an inspiration or example to follow for their own schemes. There are also instances of Canadian authorities traveling to Britain to learn about CCTV, and British representatives presenting on the merits of CCTV in Canada. For example, representatives of the Home Office and the Metropolitan police were recently invited to give a presentation on CCTV in Surrey, BC.

result of local initiatives (Ditton and Short, 1998). By 1991, there were still as little as 10 cities with permanent CCTV projects in the UK.

A change in national policy led to a rapid growth in the number of CCTV schemes. In 1993, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, allocated £2 Million of government funds for the establishment of CCTV programs. Local authorities were required to bid for these funds by matching the government expenditure. Norris, McCahill and Wood (2004, p. 111) identify two reasons for promotional efforts in the UK: a sharp increase in recorded instances of crime around the early 1990s and the repeated news coverage of the shopping mall CCTV coverage of toddler James Bulger being led away, by two other boys, to be murdered. An overwhelming response to the “City Challenge Competition” led to the release of an additional £3 Million to fund 106 of the 480 initial applications. The Competition was renewed three times. The government and local partnerships together raised £85 Million; 580 schemes were eventually funded. The New Labour party, who defeated the Conservatives to take over government in 1997, continued to fund CCTV. As of 2004, it is estimated that £4-5 Billion had been raised and spent on CCTV installation and maintenance throughout Britain (ibid., 111). The actual number of CCTV cameras operating in Britain is unclear.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> McCahill and Norris (2002, p. 20) estimate that there were around 4.2 million CCTV cameras operating in 2002, yet this number was derived by extrapolating figures based on London. Their estimate also included private sector CCTV schemes. In any case, the actual number of public CCTV cameras almost certainly exceeds the 40 000 estimated by the Urbaneye project in 2004 (Hempel and Töpfer, 2004, p. 5). CCTV took up 78% of the Home Office’s crime reduction budget by 1995 and spread into almost every city and town in the country (Norris, McCahill and Wood 2004, pp. 119-125).

Several factors contributed to the widespread adoption of public CCTV in the UK. First, the economic liberalization promoted by the Conservative Party in the 1980s, together with an economic recession and subsequent exodus of business from city centres to out-of-town malls, meant that many urban centres in the UK faced declining trade, closing and failing businesses, and a concomitant increase in unemployment and crime (Coleman and Sim, 1998). Second, the legal apparatus in Britain poses few barriers to the surveillance of public spaces. The Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act, both of 1998, have proven to be ineffective in tempering and regulating CCTV (Taylor, 2002). Third, in the light of rising reported crime levels in the 1990s, continuing IRA attacks, and high-profile incidents such as the Bulger killing – CCTV was one measure that gave the impression of tackling some of Britain's high-profile problems. Fourth, the government funding scheme was instrumental in the growth of CCTV. Not only was the funding vast, but the competition format – which forced cities and partnerships to raise their own matching funds in order to qualify – meant that even unsuccessful bidders found they had secured enough funds themselves during the bidding process to instigate some form of CCTV scheme.

Evidence for the efficacy of CCTV in reducing the problems mentioned above – and crime levels in general – is relatively scant. Results of existing studies are contradictory, or show little or no reductive impact on crime (Pawson and Tilley, 1994; Ditton *et al* 1999; Ditton and Short, 1999; Welsh and Farrington, 2003). The most comprehensive study to date (Gill and Spriggs, 2005) – examining 14 British CCTV systems – was unable to find definitive proof that CCTV has any overall decreasing effect on crime. Gill and Spriggs did uncover findings that suggest CCTV is of utility for

some specific, directed purposes.<sup>17</sup> However, whether it is due to the “self interested claims of practitioners and promoters” (Norris, McCahill and Wood, 2004, p. 123), a common-sense expectation that CCTV “works”, or a populist support for any measures seen to be “tough on crime” – CCTV enjoys an enduring popularity in the UK among politicians, businesses, and for the most part the general public. The perceived successes of London’s CCTV cameras in identifying the July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005 (7/7) bombers, who attacked underground stations and buses, has recently validated faith in CCTV both in Britain, and increasingly in Canada<sup>18</sup> (SPSPC data).

### **CCTV in Canada**

Surprisingly, the first public CCTV system in Canada predates Bournemouth’s 1985 scheme. In 1981, a camera was installed in a pedestrian tunnel in Drummondville, Québec, by the city council. The camera was installed in response to an assault in the area. Five cameras were eventually installed in the city (Bennett and Bayley, 2005), yet an SPSPC interview reveals that in recent years only the original camera remains. By 2006, at least fourteen other cities in Canada had adopted permanent CCTV monitoring practices. Sherbrooke, Québec, installed the second system in 1991, followed by Hull, Québec in 1993, and Sudbury, Ontario in 1996. Between 2001 and 2007 many other cities implemented cameras, most recently the city of Toronto, Ontario. Currently there

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<sup>17</sup> For example, CCTV cameras may decrease car break-ins and thefts if deployed in specific areas such as parkades. Similarly, vandalism can be countered by CCTV cameras if constant monitoring of problem areas is maintained.

<sup>18</sup> The success of the CCTV system in London in identifying the 7/7 bombers is regularly cited as evidence of CCTV’s utility for after-the-fact crime detection in interviews with CCTV stakeholders and promoters in Canada. This is indicative of a wider tendency for Canadians to base their assumptions about CCTV on examples from, and contact with, authorities in the UK.

are approximately one hundred public CCTV cameras operating in Canada<sup>19</sup> – a figure surpassed in the UK by 1991 – but the number is steadily increasing.

Though the scope of public CCTV monitoring practices in the UK far surpasses Canada, comparable circumstances accompany efforts to establish public CCTV in both countries. The first similarity between Canada and the UK is the migration of businesses from city centres to out-of-town malls, and the concomitant decline of downtown areas. Hernandez and Jones (2005) present statistics that show a 15.7 percent decline in downtown retail sales between 1990 and 1998 in Canada, whereas suburban sales figures steadily increased during the same period. Interview data from the SPSPC study links the installation of CCTV cameras in some cities to problems in the downtown partly precipitated by the abandonment of businesses due to mall competition. A second similarity is that Canadian law has limited and ambiguous implications for video surveillance practices. Privacy Commissioner George Radwanski's unsuccessful Charter challenge remains the only test to date of the legality of public CCTV monitoring per se. CCTV establishment is governed largely by the guidelines of the federal and provincial privacy commissions. These guidelines are themselves based on interpretations of Canadian privacy law. Third, the social problems identified in UK find their counterparts in Canada. Normative visions of the city that govern the planning of public CCTV schemes (Coleman, 2005; Lyon, 2001, pp.52-3) have much in common across cities in both countries. Problems commonly identified in Canadian cities as justifying monitoring programs invariably include vandalism and the rowdyism that accompanies

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<sup>19</sup> This figure is based on the 14 working schemes known to the SPSPC. Given the snowball sampling technique and extensive media searches employed by the SPSPC, it is unlikely that there are many unbeknownst public CCTV schemes – if any at all.

concentrations of diverse drinking establishments.<sup>20</sup> In most cities there is a typical problematization of the behaviour and presence of “street” populations, understood in terms of “aggressive” panhandling, conspicuous prostitution, and the crime and public disturbances associated with drug addiction.<sup>21</sup>

There are other sociocultural and political factors that matter in the establishment of CCTV programs. Importantly, Britain’s history of attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) prompted the establishment of many CCTV programs – notably the “ring of steel” monitoring the entrances to the city of London (McCahill and Norris, 2002, p. 6). This history, and emerging forms of terrorism such as the 7/7 bombings, might prompt an observer to conclude that the scale of public CCTV in Canada and the UK diverges for reasons other than mere funding disparities. However, high-profile “signal crimes” (Innes, 2004) – such as terrorist attacks – that signify a threat to social order serious enough to warrant an unprecedented response, have also been linked to the establishment of public CCTV programs in Canada. Toronto’s CCTV scheme developed in response to concerns about gang violence, following the infamous Boxing Day shooting of Jane

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<sup>20</sup> The sudden outpour of different populations, possibly inebriated, into a common area (known as the “bar-flush”) can lead to many situations viewed as problematic by city councils, police, local businesses and the general public: acts of violence arising from disharmonious co-presence, public urination due to a dearth of accessible conveniences, spur-of-the-moment acts of vandalism, disputes over scarce taxis, and so on and so forth. The bar-flush is a particular bugbear of most CCTV operatives.

<sup>21</sup> The SPSPC study found that most city councils and police perceive a worrisome growth in crystalline methamphetamine (a.k.a. “crystal meth”) use, and attribute to it rising levels of crime, open displays of intoxication, and violent behaviour. Other drugs such as crack cocaine and heroin are mentioned, but crystal meth currently seems the predominant concern.

Creba.<sup>22</sup> And in London, Ontario, a public CCTV program was established as a result of an anti-violence campaign responding to the stabbing of a local youth in 1999 (Hier *et al*, 2007). Increasingly, terrorism factors in public CCTV promotion in Canada: the perceived efficacy of CCTV cameras following 7/7 is consistently cited in support of establishing CCTV in Canadian cities (SPSPC data). I conclude that common patterns of problematization accompanying public CCTV promotion can be discerned in Canada and the UK.

While there are similarities, the issue of centralized/diffuse funding is a fundamental difference between the UK and Canada. The joint-funding schemes between the Home Office and local city partnerships in the UK encouraged the standardization of “elite” surveillance operatives composed of local authorities, police and businesses. In contrast, the piecemeal expansion of CCTV schemes in Canada closely mirrors the pattern in the UK during the late 1980s/early 1990s, wherein CCTV initiatives were “small scale, locally funded and set up as the result of individual entrepreneurship” (Norris, McCahill and Wood, 2004, p. 111). CCTV schemes in Canada have relied almost without exception upon the initiative of an individual or partnership of stakeholders or community members, funded by some combination of local business, city council, police, or enterprising security firms. CCTV has never been extensively debated as a national policy issue, and until recently individual cities have been solely responsible for financing their CCTV schemes.

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<sup>22</sup> Fifteen year-old Creba was shot as she became unwittingly embroiled in a gang shoot-out on one of Toronto’s busiest streets – Yonge Street. The incident led to public outcry and extensive media coverage.

The Toronto Police Service's (TPS) recent public CCTV program marks the first provision of funds for a public CCTV system from a centralized governmental agency.<sup>23</sup> In 2006, the TPS entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS)<sup>24</sup> to secure \$2 million for the purchase and deployment of CCTV monitoring cameras. The terms of this agreement compelled the TPS to adopt the guidelines issued by the Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) (Cavoukian, 2001), to conduct ongoing community consultation, and to complete financial and evaluative reports at predetermined intervals (Toronto Police Services Board, 2006). Therefore, Toronto's public CCTV monitoring program is significant for at least three reasons. First, it is the first time a CCTV scheme in Canada has been funded by a governmental agency other than a local council. Second, as it is the first CCTV scheme to be accountable to a governmental ministry; Toronto's scheme opens the scope for wider appraisals of CCTV as a possible tool for further sponsorship. Third, the scheme represents the establishment of privacy guidelines as the standard model for CCTV implementation in Canada.

#### *Privacy Guidelines and CCTV*

Radwanski's 2003 Charter challenge to Kelowna's public CCTV scheme failed, yet it generated two important and related repercussions. First, the failed challenge was a

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<sup>23</sup> The city of Brockville successfully applied for a \$70,000 federal grant, administered by the Ontario Minister of the Solicitor General, for the purposes of "futuristic crime prevention" (Hier et al, 2007). The grant, initially earmarked for a 3-5 camera public CCTV monitoring scheme, was eventually turned down due to local opposition to the proposed surveillance.

<sup>24</sup> The MCSCS is mandated with maintaining the "physical and economic security of Ontario...by coordinating public safety initiatives among municipal, fire and emergency services organizations within and outside of Ontario" (see [http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/English/about\\_min/mandate.html](http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/English/about_min/mandate.html)).

symbolic defeat of the legal opposition to public CCTV programs in themselves. Bennett and Bayley (2005) observe, “the Kelowna case demonstrated [public CCTV’s] constitutionality under the *Charter* is still unsettled”. There has been no challenge to a CCTV scheme under federal provisions since. Second, the challenge prompted Radwanski’s successor, Jennifer Stoddart, to develop coherent video surveillance guidelines at a federal level.

CCTV operatives in Canada have usually consulted provincial privacy commissioners as a part of the establishment process. In response to the emergence of video surveillance practices in Canada, some provincial privacy commissioners drafted guidelines aligned with privacy law – notably in British Columbia in 1998, and Ontario in 2001. These guidelines are non-binding, yet employed as instruments for “assessing any public video surveillance practice that is subject to a complaint” (Bennett and Bayley, 2005). The non-statutory guidelines allow CCTV operatives to voluntarily adhere to the privacy commissioner’s interpretation of legal uses of CCTV in order to satisfy the question of due process and prevent further scrutiny. Bennett and Bayley (2005) comment that the provision of non-statutory guidelines reports on a cautious, yet conciliatory attitude of privacy commissioners toward video surveillance practices. It is within the scope of privacy commissioners’ powers to issue orders on video surveillance practices, yet, instead, the approach has been to establish guidelines to provide a model for public bodies to ensure compliance with privacy law.

In response to the Kelowna episode, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC) set up a discussion group comprising the OPC, the RCMP, and other stakeholders. The group was tasked with studying international and Canadian uses of

CCTV, and deciding upon a suitable mode of regulation. As a result, the OPC ratified the already-established pattern of CCTV establishment adhering to provincial privacy commission guidelines by publishing a version with federal jurisdiction based on those of British Columbia and Ontario. As well as the federal version, six provinces now have guidelines: Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Québec.<sup>25</sup> Due to cooperation between the different privacy commissioners, the provisions in these guidelines are almost identical.

The guidelines outline circumstances and conditions that should be present before public video surveillance may take place, and standards of operation that must thereafter be met. Basically, the former requires CCTV advocates to establish that there is a problem, that video surveillance is a proper response, that there is adequate infrastructure in place, and that there is public support. The latter details various acceptable parameters of operation, involving the protection of privacy and civil liberties, such as the confidential storage and period of retention of recorded images, the implementation of an ongoing auditing process, and so on. As this study focuses on public opinion, I outline the

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<sup>25</sup> The federal guidelines are published at the following Web addresses.

[http://www.privcom.gc.ca/information/guide/vs\\_060301\\_e.asp](http://www.privcom.gc.ca/information/guide/vs_060301_e.asp)

Provincial guidelines also appear on the Web:

Alberta: [http://www.oipc.ab.ca/ims/client/upload/OIPC\\_Surveillance\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.oipc.ab.ca/ims/client/upload/OIPC_Surveillance_Guidelines.pdf)

<http://foip.gov.ab.ca/resources/publications/SurveillanceGuide.cfm>

British Columbia: [http://www.oipcbc.org/advice/VID-SURV\(2006\).pdf](http://www.oipcbc.org/advice/VID-SURV(2006).pdf)

Newfoundland: <http://www.oipc.gov.nl.ca/pdf/VideoSurveillance.pdf>

Ontario: <http://www.ipc.on.ca/images/Resources/video-e.pdf>

Saskatchewan:

<http://www.oipc.sk.ca/Web%20Site%20Documents/Video%20Surveillance%20June%2024,%202004.pdf>

Québec: [http://www.cai.gouv.qc.ca/06\\_documentation/01\\_pdf/new\\_rules\\_2004.pdf](http://www.cai.gouv.qc.ca/06_documentation/01_pdf/new_rules_2004.pdf)

provisions made in the guidelines pertaining to public consultations, and discuss how the public consultation requirement has manifested empirically.

The federal OPC guidelines address public consultations as follows:

Public consultation should precede any decision to introduce video surveillance. Public consultation should be conducted with relevant stakeholders, including representatives of communities that will be affected. "Community" should be understood broadly; it should be recognized that a particular geographic area may have several distinct communities, and one community should not be presumed to speak for the others.

(OPC, 2006).

Each of the six provincial guidelines include similar provisions. Ontario's guidelines state that "consultations should be conducted with relevant stakeholders as to the necessity of the proposed video surveillance program and its acceptability to the public," and "extensive public consultation should take place." (OIPC, 2001). The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia's (OIPCBC) document *recommends* only that stakeholders should be consulted (OIPCBC, 2001). Likewise, the OIPC for Newfoundland and Labrador asks that public bodies "should consider" (OIPCNL, 2005, p.5) public consultations; identical wording is employed in the guidelines of the Saskatchewan OIPC (SOIPC, 2004, p.5). The Commission d'Accès à l'Information du Québec (CAIQ) states "the populations concerned shall be consulted and involved before the decision is made" (CAIQ, 2004, p. 4).

The encouragement to consult the public has resulted in some form of public engagement taking place prior to the establishment of public CCTV in most cities. However, "public consultations" manifest empirically as something more akin to "public information meetings". Meetings often take place when the CCTV program in question

is already at an advanced stage of planning – precluding the collaborative dynamics between the public and authorities implied by “consultation”.<sup>26</sup> The mode in which public CCTV is promoted to the public during public consultation can be limited. For example, in some cities, questions related to cameras are inserted into annual surveys, or questionnaires are distributed at sessions. However, the phrasing of the question may entail an implied positive normative judgment toward CCTV. When asked “do you support *community safety* cameras?” (my emphases) a respondent interested in safety per se is obliged to answer in the affirmative. The latter indicates another problem: there are very limited resources available for the public to make reasoned and informed decisions even when public consultations are thoroughly publicized and well-attended. It is CCTV stakeholders themselves who conduct public information sessions, and they typically reproduce the evidence of the efficacy of CCTV that they gathered in order to promote the scheme in the first place. When publics are told that other cities in Canada have experienced huge success with CCTV, or that the technology has been effective in the UK, they are unlikely to have at their disposal any of the number of studies that are more critical of the proper application of CCTV technology in public spaces.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, in the absence of any formal stipulation or standard, the public consultation requirement of the various guidelines can be met with minimal gestures. And even when cities make

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<sup>26</sup> For example, authorities in Thunder Bay, Ontario, had developed plans for a CCTV program over six years (1998 to 2004) before a member of city staff was tasked with arranging public consultations in 2004. By this time, the cameras had already been purchased and were beginning to be installed (SPSPC data).

<sup>27</sup> This was the case in Hamilton, Ontario where great efforts were made to hold inclusive public meetings in many different areas of the city, yet the promotional rhetoric relied on Sudbury’s success and anecdotal evidence from the UK suggesting that CCTV “works”. These general claims have since been critiqued.

concerted efforts to conduct discussions, there are several barriers<sup>28</sup> to satisfactory levels of public opinion being measured and incorporated.

### **CCTV in Kelowna**

In this section, I discuss the history of public CCTV in Kelowna. I have divided the section into two parts. The first part provides an account of the program from its inception to the time of writing. The second part shows how public CCTV in Kelowna was justified by reference to certain perceived problems in the city.

#### *Establishment*

The idea for a public CCTV scheme in Kelowna originated with city council, after Mayor Walter Gray learned of Sudbury's CCTV program. The Greater Sudbury Police Service (GSPS) has run a 5 camera scheme since 1996 – the first CCTV scheme outside Québec, a factor that accounts for Sudbury's tendency to be a prominent reference for other mainly English-speaking cities. As Sudbury was one of the earliest cities to establish CCTV, the GSPS was under pressure to demonstrate the merits of the scheme. They commissioned KPMG to audit the "Lions' Eye in the Sky" CCTV program. The KPMG report, eventually published in 2000, claimed that the cameras had had a dramatic

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<sup>28</sup> These barriers include problems ensuring the following: soliciting a diverse range of participants; soliciting input from members of downtown residents (i.e. homeless people) who are difficult to contact and inform through conventional means (i.e. mail-outs, telephone publicizing); incorporating views of a range of "experts" on matters of privacy and CCTV; incorporating diverse sources of information (i.e. reports on CCTV, academic studies, statistical research about public CCTV); conducting public consultations in accessible, suitable locations.

effect on overall crime levels (KPMG, 2000)<sup>29</sup>. The findings have since been criticized, not least because the period which saw a decrease in crime levels coincided with the implementation of 6 dedicated downtown police foot patrols. Yet, the perceived success of Sudbury's program is regularly invoked in interviews with other public CCTV operators in Canada to legitimate their own monitoring programs.

In 1999, the Kelowna City Council passed a motion (8 votes to 1) to pursue video surveillance. The Council approached the Kelowna detachment of the RCMP who agreed to operate and monitor a camera at the Queensway bus loop if the city would fund it. The City Council, in partnership with the Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) – a local business collective – provided the set-up funds; the council was responsible for ongoing costs. The RCMP already had some experience with CCTV: in 1999, they erected a CCTV camera as a pilot project in Kerry Park, an area known for drug dealing and prostitution. But the camera – fixed atop a wooden pole – was burned down after a brief test period during which several arrests were made. The Queensway camera – a permanent pan, tilt and zoom model – was installed in 2000. As well as the bus loop, the camera could view Kasugai Gardens – a tourist attraction adjacent to the bus loop that was frequented by vandals and drug users/dealers. The camera images were transmitted to a monitor in the dispatch office of the Kelowna RCMP headquarters. The City Council addressed legality and privacy issues, and composed a set of video surveillance guidelines, before the camera became operational on February 23, 2001.

Critical attention from the Federal Privacy Commissioner culminating in the Charter challenge, coupled with advice from the Solicitor General of Canada, convinced

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<sup>29</sup> The KPMG report can be accessed online:  
[www.police.sudbury.on.ca/publications/reports/KPMG.pdf](http://www.police.sudbury.on.ca/publications/reports/KPMG.pdf).

the Kelowna RCMP to relocate the scheme to another area of the city in October, 2002. The new location, at the corner of Leon Avenue and Abbott Street, overlooked several bars and night clubs, the city's two downtown support shelters, and a park known to be frequented by homeless people, dealers and prostitutes. The intention was to carry out a one-year long impact assessment – a statistical analysis of crime rates prior to and after CCTV installation – in order to demonstrate that any privacy infringements were offset by a substantial amelioration of crime and disorder.<sup>30</sup> The new camera was equipped with pan, tilt and enhanced zoom capabilities; it could accurately identify people up to six city blocks away along Leon Avenue, and enjoyed almost a full view of City Park. The camera was plagued by technical difficulties, which delayed the beginning of the test period until it was finally turned on in April, 2004. The Kelowna RCMP received permission from RCMP E Division Headquarters to continue the scheme beyond the 12 month testing period. The camera currently feeds back to a dedicated monitoring station at Kelowna RCMP HQ, where it is intermittently monitored live, and recorded 24/7.

In 2005, the City Council decided they wanted to reactivate the Queensway camera. The city intended to monitor on their own behalf, rather than delegate responsibility to the RCMP. Plans to establish a dedicated monitoring station at a nearby city-owned parkade – the Chapman Parkade – were implemented in August of that year. An additional eight stationary cameras were purchased and distributed throughout the parkade. The monitoring station is manned for 16 hours a day. The eight parkade cameras and the one at Queensway, are recorded onto a hard disk drive that overwrites every 20

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<sup>30</sup> The results of the impact assessment are currently unavailable, despite a request by the Privacy Commissioner at the time that the results be made public. SPSPC investigations have failed to discover if the impact assessment was even formally concluded.

days, unless the footage is retained for any reason. The council is currently considering extending the scheme, as they have the technological capabilities to run 16 cameras on the existing circuit.

To summarize, there are currently two open-street surveillance cameras operating in Kelowna; one camera is operated by the RCMP, and the other is operated by the council. The former comes under the jurisdiction of the federal privacy commissioner, the latter is mandated by the BC provincial privacy commissioner. Eight further cameras are stationed in the city parkade and monitored on the same circuit as the council's camera at Queensway.

#### *CCTV, Transients and the Problematization of Kelowna's Downtown*

The first public CCTV camera in Kelowna was installed at the bequest of the city council, and was initially monitored by the RCMP, until the city council themselves took over in 2005. Public CCTV was first envisioned by members of the city council as a way to counter several problems in the city.<sup>31</sup> Of specific concern was the recurrent vandalism of the Queensway bus-loop – the main transportation hub of the city. But the Mayor and Council also felt that CCTV could be of use in the general policing of the downtown area. It was felt that the problems in Queensway were indicative of a wider pattern of public disorder attributable to certain problem populations. The proposed Queensway camera would also be able to view the adjacent Kasugai Gardens – a downtown tourist attraction that had become a dwelling place for various undesirables (SPSPC interview with the Mayor and City Council representatives). In identifying the problem population

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<sup>31</sup> Interview conducted on August 30, 2005 (SPSPC data). In a 2005 interview with the Mayor of Kelowna, the deputy Mayor, and the city manager of Kelowna,

in Kelowna, the Mayor evoked what the SPSPC later discovered was a recurrent motif of discourses pertaining to downtown Kelowna problematization: the problem of transients.

Transients are understood by representations of out-of-town drifter-types who take advantage of Kelowna's relatively clement weather and abundance of casual work in surrounding farms. As transients, by definition, are not indigenous, it is often expressed that they do not share a respect for the city that a local might have.<sup>32</sup> It is, however, unclear from the interviews how transients are distinguished from local homeless people, drug users and others who dwell in and around the downtown.

The second CCTV camera (at Leon and Abbott) is situated beside the Gospel Mission, a Christian charity providing food and lodging to men, that "cares for thousands of hungry, hurting and homeless people".<sup>33</sup> This camera is monitored by the RCMP. Three blocks down is the Drop-In and Information Centre, an organization providing food and services to the unemployed, as well as "transients, the working poor, and homeless"<sup>34</sup> men and women. In interviews with the Mayor, the Council and the Police, the Gospel Mission, the Drop-In Centre, City Park and the general neighborhood surrounding Leon and Abbott were designated as areas where the problematic behaviours attributed to transients (panhandling, dealing, public disturbances, petty crime) were most concentrated. But these areas are also where poor, homeless and needy residents of Kelowna come to access showers, employment advice, food, lodgings and so on.

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<sup>32</sup> This negative generalization of transients was not exclusive to authority figures. For example, during one of my focus groups, a young homeless man stated that the majority of transients were criminals, "wanted on warrants back east, from Québec and Ontario." Others expressed the more sympathetic view that they came to town for the warmer weather and seasonal work opportunities.

<sup>33</sup> See <http://www.kelownagospelmission.ca>.

<sup>34</sup> See <http://www.kelownadropincentre.ca/about.html>.

SPSPC interviews reveal that typical downtown problems including drug-trafficking, violence, “aggressive” panhandling and other disturbances are projected mainly as the repertoire of Kelowna’s sporadic population of transients. To what extent the use of the exteriorizing term transient<sup>35</sup> exhibits perhaps an “othering” of Kelowna’s social problems is unclear. City and police officials are unable to provide actual statistics as to the demographics or offending rates of the geographically unfixed, yet the transients epithet commands a widespread negative symbolic resonance in Kelowna.<sup>36</sup> Regardless of the “reality” of the problems posed by the transient population, the discourse cross-articulates in many SPSPC interviews, and can be considered a widely established trope of problematization active in reasoning and rhetoric justifying the public CCTV scheme.

Discourses employed to validate public CCTV monitoring invoke those who would benefit from the anticipated effects of the cameras. The negative effects of problematic downtown behaviour are understood by reference to “victims”. For example, in Kelowna there is a park called City Park which now falls within scope of one of the city’s active CCTV cameras (at Leon and Abbott). The city council express the hope that CCTV will encourage families, tourists and seniors to resume usage of the park – as it is felt that the park is an intimidating and unwelcoming area due to the growing presence of drug traffickers, addicts, prostitutes and of course transients. Across Canada, “seniors”

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<sup>35</sup> Most cities feature a local discourse of “homeless people” or “panhandlers” in relation to downtown problems, but nowhere was the term “transient” so promulgated as in Kelowna.

<sup>36</sup> Of course, transients are not the sole target for negative ascriptions. Another population invoked in Kelowna are the “bar-flush rowdies” – the often drunken patrons of downtown bars and clubs who get into fights, urinate and perform petty acts of vandalism. This study acknowledges that their activities were cited as another main reason to install CCTV in the city, yet is constrained in scope and can investigate them no further.

are regularly invoked as particularly affected by downtown issues to which CCTV is purported to respond (SPSPC data). Kelowna has a high population of seniors, and there are several seniors homes in and around the downtown. In Kelowna, public CCTV cameras are justified, in part, by reference to fears about the safety of senior citizens in the downtown. In particular, seniors' unwillingness to use the Queensway bus-loop, and their fears about safety on Kelowna's downtown streets, are employed to rationalize the public CCTV scheme.<sup>37</sup>

### **Discussion: The Need for Public Opinion Research**

The steady growth of public CCTV use in Canada is consistent with global trends. Although the potential “Orwellian” erosion of civil liberties surfaces in media reporting and public discourse in Canada (SPSPC data), CCTV technology is, for the most part, accepted as an inevitable, and perhaps necessary, tool to counter crime and disorder. Concerns about privacy and civil liberties still exist – evinced by Radwanski's Charter challenge and limited instances of resistance to public CCTV schemes. But, at a political level, the viability of public CCTV per se is not being debated, as civil libertarians prioritize practical ways to limit privacy infringements through the adoption of guidelines instead. However, these privacy guidelines have in effect standardized a model for CCTV establishment. As a result, CCTV appears increasingly as a “normal” measure of crime control – it is no longer a “pioneering” move to implement a public CCTV program, as it

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<sup>37</sup> Data from the 2001 census showed that 18.4% of the resident population in Kelowna were of retirement age, compared with the Canadian mean of 13.2% (Statistics Canada). In addition, the reputation of Kelowna as a “retirement community”, and the high concentration of seniors' residences in and around the downtown area, perhaps explain why “seniors” especially are represented as being either at risk from certain behaviours in the downtown, or negatively affected by the fear of crime.

was during the 1990s. The consolidation of public CCTV is marked by the recent implementation of large CCTV programs in Toronto and Montreal, and Canada's first federally-funded public CCTV program.

The establishment of individual public CCTV programs in Canada can be seen as involving the convergence of two related factors: first, the articulation of pre-existing perceived problems with the notion that CCTV cameras "work"; second, the existence of a local infrastructure capable of funding and running a public CCTV scheme under the conditions laid out in privacy guidelines. In Canada, the former is typically enacted through a set of rational discourses that lay claim to the problematization of downtown areas. These discourses involve a mode of problematization pertaining to the acceptable use of downtown areas wherein certain populations and activities are imbued with a negative normative judgment (transients, panhandlers, drug addicts) in relation to others whose presence and conduct is preferred (seniors, tourists). In Kelowna's case, this articulated (mainly, though not exclusively) in terms of the deviant activities of transients in relation to the safety, security and peace of mind of "decent" citizens – seniors in particular. The articulation of Kelowna's problems with a collection of discourses speaking of the "success" of CCTV (in Britain and Sudbury, for example) allowed authorities to rationalize CCTV as a viable option for the city.

Currently, privacy guidelines are the principal guarantor of public inclusion in CCTV establishment processes in Canada. This provision is important because public opinion toward public CCTV monitoring in Canada is heterogeneous, as the resistance to CCTV in Peterborough and Brockville demonstrates (Hier *et al*, 2007; Walby 2005). Thorough public consultation also aids CCTV proponents when it motivates them to

perform exhaustive research to rationalize the decision to implement CCTV and refine expectations of a public CCTV program. However, I have shown that the requirements of the guidelines may possibly be met by measures that fail to ensure a detailed level of debate, that provide limited opportunities for public participation, and that make few allowances for public opinion to influence actual local CCTV practices. As a result, there is scope for public opinion about CCTV to be explored in greater depth. I suggest that such an exploration would be significant to continuing debates about public CCTV as a national, and local policy issue.

I argue, first, that by talking to members of groups implicated in the discourses invoked to justify CCTV implementation, I can evaluate the assumptions of promotional discourses employed to validate public CCTV schemes. Second, in the accounts of those who live under CCTV cameras, I can explore the knowledges and interpretive techniques employed in understanding – and adopting opinions of – public CCTV monitoring.

## Chapter 3

### The Study: Methodology and Research Design

“...there can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth.” (Foucault, 1972, p. 93)

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I describe my approach to the research problem. I begin by clarifying my research objectives. I then present the methodology employed to conceptualize the study. Next, I present the specific research design I used to collect data. In the latter section, I also address issues of research ethics, validation and fieldwork. Finally, I introduce the method of data analysis I apply in later chapters.

#### **Research Objective**

My research objective emerged from observations about the ways public CCTV schemes are politically justified and regulated, and the extent to which public opinion and thoughts are incorporated into decision-making pertaining to CCTV. Therefore, my study is concerned not with actual CCTV practices or theoretical ideas about surveillance, but rather with a problematic identified within the processes of CCTV policy formation. I have identified certain modes of problematization, and other related discourses, as instrumental in the politics of public CCTV establishment. Currently, authorities are in a privileged position to make claims about the relationship between local problems and the potential for public CCTV systems to counter them, yet provisions to admit public opinion into the politics of CCTV are inadequate.

This study is primarily an exploration of the ways that publics subjected to public CCTV programs understand aspects of this relationship. This approach seeks to provide both inductive insights into the wider understanding of public CCTV, and data about public opinion of CCTV. Specifically, I explore the changes in public opinion brought about through discussing and introducing information about public CCTV monitoring. Given that the scope of the study is broad, and to avoid “simplistic inductivism”(Silverman, 2000, p. 64), I pose two central research questions to guide my empirical investigation: First, what knowledges, evidence or discourses are brought into play in evaluating public CCTV monitoring schemes? And second, how is public opinion about CCTV affected once participants are exposed to both the different opinions and arguments of their peers, and various other pieces of information related to CCTV (i.e. academic research) introduced by myself?

## **Methodology**

This thesis follows a hermeneutic approach similar to Max Weber’s interpretive sociology. This approach prefigures two main assumptions. First, sociology views its subject as a reality that is already pre-interpreted by its members. What this means is that meaning as a social accomplishment – rather than any “objective” social condition – is the starting point for sociological inquiry. Second, and following from the first, the task of sociology is to examine modes of meaning-creation to generate an “interpretative understanding of social behaviour in order thereby to gain an explanation of its causes, its course, and its effects” (Weber, 1947, p. 88). Understood in these terms, “social

behaviour” and meaning-creation are intertwined: the former always necessitates a negotiation of that which makes the social and natural world intelligible for people.

Weber’s position has been critiqued from a structuralist perspective (Turner, 1977; Giddens, 1976, p. 24-28) for attributing meaning-creation to individuals rather than to the outcome of structured social interaction. Silverman (1985) concurs that meaning is indeed irreducible to the acts of individuals, but he argues that Weber’s stance is not one of simple reductive individualism: “Weber refuses to take the *point of view* of individuals...he is concerned...with the economic and social construction of modern ideas of the individual” (Silverman, 1985, p. 40, my emphases). Silverman’s reading of Weber’s epistemology conceptualizes individuals as sites where interpretative schemes become amenable to study: “the value of an interpretivist perspective is that it draws attention to members’ own understandings as a first-order topic for sociological investigation” (ibid., p. 43).

The “causal” element of Weber’s sociology has also been criticized. According to Schütz (1967), Weber fails to explain the political by oversimplifying the relationship between meaning-creation and action. Put simply, Weber overstates the “intentional” aspect of action in shaping the social world (see also Giddens, 1976, p. 28). I acknowledge this critique, and modify my approach by reference to the work of Foucault. For Foucault, political power should not be understood as the intended outcome of the actions of sovereign bodies or individual actors. Rather, for Foucault, the political comprises a “microphysics of power” (Foucault, 1997) located in discursive formations. By this he means that governments or police services, for example, inhabit their privileged positions in power relations not because they have an inherent authority, but

rather because diverse and disparate discourses conspire to make these relations seem natural, legitimate or rational. What is “microphysical” about these discourses is that they subsist not in great ideological mechanisms (c.f. Althusser, 1971), but rather in the ordinary and “benign” negotiations of everyday social life. Stuart Hall describes discourses as “sets of ready-made and preconstituted ‘experiencings’ displayed and arranged through language” (1972, p. 322). Experiencings – also understood as knowledges – are conceptualized as discourses when put into relationship with other knowledges to the effect of producing a “truth” to which certain social action can be oriented.<sup>38</sup>

To summarize, I take from Weber the assumption that the social world is a composite of interpretations, and that the job of sociologists is to account for the ways these interpretations construct reality for those involved (see also Ricoeur, 1974). According to Foucault, interpretation can be seen as the assembling and reassembling of knowledges into configurations understood as discourses. When certain discourses become established – in that they are somehow endorsed over competing discourses in relation to a particular matter – they potentially form the basis for political action. Insights into discourses and their constituent knowledges can be gleaned in people’s accounts of their social worlds, even though they are not the “authors” of them.

I suggest, therefore, that the establishment of public CCTV monitoring programs is dependent upon the articulation of a set of discourses that rationalize CCTV as a proper

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<sup>38</sup> For example, the discourse of “pro-life” anti-abortion can be seen as involving two distinct knowledges: a definition of the fetus as an independent “life”, and a moral imperative to sustain life wherever possible. As such, the discourse of “pro-life” allows the rationalization of measures taken to interfere with the operation of abortion clinics.

response to certain problems.<sup>39</sup> CCTV schemes are promoted with reference to crime, terrorism, disorder, policing and so on, and when these ideas are incorporated with the idea of CCTV in a discursive formation intelligible to publics, CCTV monitoring schemes take on the appearance of viable possibilities. Discourses articulating with the question of CCTV differ across geographic and social spaces (e.g. “aggressive” panhandling, “tragic” outcomes of downtown misadventures, and “rowdyism”) (see Hier et al, 2007). Sometimes, as in Peterborough and Brockville, discourses articulate that undermine the legitimacy of public CCTV proposals (e.g. “big brother” or the erosion of civil liberties). My exploration of the accounts of those who live with CCTV is designed to detail some of the discourses employed to rationalize negative or positive opinions about public CCTV.

## **Research Design**

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<sup>39</sup> This paragraph draws attention to what seems to be a relativistic kernel to Foucault’s position: namely, if discourses are selected through “microphysical” dynamics, then understanding as a sociological problematic the dominance of certain discourses in the promotion of CCTV is invalid, as this dominance cannot be perceived as having a “source” to critique (see Rose and Miller, 1992). However, as Bruce Curtis (1995, p. 576) notes, it is a characteristic of the microphysics of power that a “centralization of knowledge” occurs in any synchronic configuration of the social. Understood variously as hegemony or domination, Curtis recognizes in Foucault’s concept of sovereignty a pan-historical tendency toward the creation of centres of privileged meaning-creation. Understood as “expert” or “authoritative”, certain knowledges are more prominent by virtue of the location within power relations from which they emanate. This is the point of public consultations – the voices of local businesses, the police and local politicians are recognized as privileged – and are often trusted over those of people less “qualified” or “experienced” – so extra efforts to elicit and incorporate diverse knowledges befit a democratic ethic.

The remainder of this chapter details the research methods I employed to collect data. I begin with the rationale behind my selection of focus groups, before explaining in depth the process of collecting data.

### *Focus Group Research*

Focus group research continues to face somewhat of a stigma in sociology due to its emergence from largely quantitative market research studies (O'Sullivan, 1998). Morgan (1996) notes – via a quantitative review of academic databases – that focus group research has increased since the 1990s. In Morgan's opinion, this resurgence is concomitant with the recent sociological focus on matters of "empowerment and diversity" (1996, p. 149). The suitability of focus group research to contemporary critical social studies and social justice research is becoming better documented. Agar and MacDonald (1994) and Saferstein (1995) assert that discourse analyses of focus groups, combined with separate interviews of the same individuals, are particularly useful in examining the ways meaning is socially constructed. The authors of a recent study of adolescent sexual health (Hyde, Howlett, Brady and Drennan, 2005), for example, examined focus group interaction to reveal how the normative rules embedded in the localized youth culture are negotiated by the members. These observations provided a hermeneutic frame of reference for the subsequent analysis of individual utterances and data collected from a follow-up questionnaire. In these ways, treating the focus group itself as text in relation to the text of participant contributions opens possibilities for more nuanced understandings of the "focus".

Another issue that marginalizes focus groups in the social sciences is the inevitable comparison with qualitative interviews and participant observation – both

established orthodoxies of qualitative inquiry. Morgan's (1997, pp. 8-17) comparison of research methods points to the practical virtues of focus groups. Contra participant observation, he argues, focus groups allow large amounts of interaction and data-collection in a limited period of time, and they allow access to inherently unobservable processes such as decision making and attitude formation. Compared to qualitative interviews, focus groups allow observation of interactions on a topic closer to the mode that interactions take place in everyday life.

Data considered “naturally occurring” are often judged “better” by social scientists. The question of naturalism is aligned with that of *validity* in qualitative research, which often gravitates to “neo-realist paradigms of binary opposites, namely trustworthy/untrustworthy and valid/invalid, based on some core notion of truth” (Hyde et al, 2005, p. 2597). Researcher intervention or involvement with the subject is seen to “pollute” naturally-occurring data, and methods that minimize intervention and maintain “usual” social circumstances as much as possible during data collection are preferred. The counter argument critiques the “natural” as myth. The interpretive view of sociology as a subject-subject relationship – as opposed to the subject-object relationship of natural science – dissolves the *a priori* division between the “natural” and the “unnatural”. The social world is “naturally” contingent on all manner of interactions and interventions. With this in mind, I view focus groups as social interaction *productive* of meaning, rather than *reflective* of established systems of meaning. From the perspective of public sociology, this dynamic is essential.

I also selected focus groups over qualitative interviewing because they transcend the dyadic character of the interview setting. If the qualitative interviewer is

conceptualized as the “tool” of research (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003), data collected in individual interviews can show consistent etch-marks. Focus groups are far less structured, and, whilst in no way more “natural”, they replicate the productive possibilities of everyday communication in that multiple subject positions can interact. As this study is exploratory, I judge that having many communicative contact points maximizes inductive potential.

Finally, focus groups offer the practical advantage of allowing data collection from many participants, without the administrative and temporal difficulties associated with arranging individual interviews. As this study is concerned with public opinion, it was imperative to design a study capable of including the views of multiple participants, whilst maintaining a manageable data set. Also, the focus group format limits the detrimental effect of participants failing to show up. The latter was an issue with my participants, particularly the shelter clients.

#### *Design and Sampling Strategy*

I conducted four focus groups with groups comprising five to ten people.<sup>40</sup> These focus group discussions were recorded on two digital recorders. Morgan (1997, p. 43) recommends six people as the optimal number of participants. However, the nature of my research populations (either the elderly or users of homeless support services) made it difficult to predict in advance who would be prepared to participate. This cross-sectional study involved two research trips, each of two days, for data collection. On each trip, and during extensive fieldtrips undertaken during my related work on the SPSPC project, I made observations and took fieldnotes to provide a descriptive ethnographic element to

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<sup>40</sup> There was a total of twenty-eight participants: ten at the Gospel Mission shelter, five at the Drop-In Centre, five at one seniors home, and eight at the other seniors home.

this study. In what follows, I draw on these data where appropriate to provide depth of description. People's names, names of places, and identificatory details have been altered where appropriate.

The selection of Kelowna as the site of study, and seniors and clients of support shelters as participants, has been discussed. I employed a purposive, theoretical sampling strategy, informed by my prior conceptualization of the ways public CCTV systems are established. I briefly summarize the rationale for this approach.

- Seniors are commonly invoked in SPSPC interviews with council, police and community leaders as the population with the greatest concerns pertaining to security. Advocates regularly claim that seniors are pleased with CCTV programs, but the SPSPC study has yet to broach the topic with seniors themselves.<sup>41</sup> Two seniors' residences were accessed for two reasons: first, initial contact with seniors' residences revealed considerable interest in participating in this project; and second, preliminary contacts with relevant gatekeepers resulted in securing permission to interview in two seniors' homes ideally-located in the downtown area.
- The support centre clients of Kelowna are a vital source of data because the transient signifier figures so prominently in local discourses of crime, disorder, and public CCTV. I have explained that, although the term transient is exteriorizing, the signifier is a general term for homeless types in Kelowna. These populations are invoked as integral to the problems that the cameras were intended to reduce. Also, the two shelters are situated immediately underneath the

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<sup>41</sup> The SPSPC study included the interviews of some managers of seniors' homes. This has been problematic, as certain managers cannot represent the views of all seniors.

gaze of a surveillance camera. I also chose the two shelters because they cater to slightly different clientele. The “Drop-In Centre” caters mostly to the younger, mixed-sex needy. The “Gospel Mission” caters for older males, and it has a code of conduct informed by a Christian ethos. Prior SPSPC interviews carried out with the directors of each facility revealed that the cameras are of interest to these populations for many reasons. I had already attended interviews with the SPSPC study at each shelter, therefore a rapport was established and access was easily gained.

### *Recruitment*

Recruitment took place in cooperation with the relevant gatekeepers at each facility. In the case of the seniors’ residences, this was the resident manager. At the support shelters, I made arrangements with the executive directors. I first used a telephone script in order to explain the research to the gatekeepers. I mailed a full description of research, informational flyers for potential participants, and consent forms for advanced perusal to be made available to all potential participants. However, at the time of conducting each focus group, I discovered that no-one had reviewed the materials ahead of time, and I had to explain the research and go through the consent process one more time.

At the Drop-In Centre, recruitment happened immediately prior to the start of the focus groups. The executive director advised me to bring snacks and drinks to encourage participation; this tactic worked, and I secured five engaging participants. At the Gospel Mission, I was invited to come the evening before my groups were scheduled as the men bedded down for the night. Arranging a meeting with the Gospel Mission clients in

advance was impossible, as it was hard to predict who would be there any one night. The director advised against relying on the men to keep appointments. I went around the building, explaining my research and recruiting. I found six men eager to participate. By the morning, word had spread and this number had grown to ten, two of whom slept through the focus group. It was below freezing in Kelowna, and attending my focus group meant that the usual 8 a.m. emptying of the Gospel Mission could be avoided. Furthermore, my efforts to include a diversity of shelter clients by recruiting at both support shelters were largely thwarted: no female clients agreed to participate at the Drop-In Centre, and it quickly became apparent that the clients made free use of both shelters owing to their different opening times, and not – as I had predicted – due to demographic idiosyncrasies. At the first seniors' residence, an outbreak of illness reduced my planned group of seven to five. At the second seniors' residence, the location for the focus group was a common-area living room, and three people other than my planned participants simply joined in, prompting me to start the information and consent process anew.

### *Data Collection*

The focus groups took place on the premises of the relevant organizations. In the case of both seniors' homes, the groups met in a central living area, complete with armchairs, coffee tables and a kitchenette. Morgan (1997) stresses the importance of conducting this kind of research in comfortable, familiar surroundings. There were challenges in the case of both support shelters. At the Gospel Mission, an alcove of a large dining area was converted for our use, but the adjoining dining room was noisily cleaned for some of the time. This did not seem to bother the participants. At the Drop-In

Centre, a corner of the in-use dining area was prepared. When I informed the participants that this situation might compromise anonymity, they reacted with amusement. It took a while for the focus group to begin, as the participants left for cigarettes or to speak briefly with other clients.

I adhered to Ritchie and Lewis' (2003, pp. 176-180) five stage guide to the practical considerations of conducting focus groups throughout the data collection process. First, the scene was set and the ground rules were established. This involved informing participants that if they felt uncomfortable by anything that was being said by anyone, they could leave or notify me at once. I ensured my introduction was not too lengthy or technical to avoid alienating or tiring the group. In one seniors' residence, because several of the participants could not see well enough to read the description of research in advance, I talked them through the details. Delivering the key ethical considerations was difficult, as the shelter clients in particular lost interest and wandered around. I asked the gatekeepers to remain nearby in case assistance was required. Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 183) offer advice for dealing with dominant group members who either take over the discussion or upset other members of the groups: including shifting attention away, encouraging more diverse responses and utilizing certain non-verbal clues such as withdrawing eye-contact from the individual. This was necessary only once, in the Drop-In Centre, when a man who wasn't even a participant became interested in the discussion and took us off track for a few moments.

Second, after the introduction, collection of consent forms, and question-and-answer period, I turned on the digital recorders and individual introductions took place. In all cases, I had a chance to chat with the participants before the group was ready, so

establishing rapport was swift. I only took first names; names were changed for the purposes of data presentation.

Third, I introduced the topic (see below for an elaboration of topical procedure). However, I was careful to reveal *only the barest details of the research*, namely that the group was to discuss the cameras on the street in Kelowna. This was imperative, as the “important” issues and angles were initially to be those spontaneously invoked by the participants. The specific dynamics of the focus groups were dictated by a topical procedure outlined in detail in a subsection below.

Fourth, I minimized interventions unless the topic went off-kilter, or descended into inappropriate subject matter. That is, although I instigated areas of discussion according to my semi-structured approach, I was careful to allow the participants to explore the topics on their own terms. One exception to this approach was when I began to introduce information (i.e. academic research about CCTV, etc.) in order to challenge participants’ opinions. This process is outlined in the following “Focus Group Topical Procedure” subsection. Fifth, I planned to end the focus groups after two hours, yet the Drop-In Centre meeting disintegrated of its own accord after an hour and a half. In one of the seniors’ homes, an assistant asked me to wrap up after an hour and a half so as not to disrupt the scheduled lunch time. Finally, I thanked all participants for their help, gave them the opportunity to raise any new questions or concerns, and reminded them of the confidentiality of their study and their right to withdraw retroactively. I also made efforts to thank the gatekeepers who were unwavering in their support for this study.

*Focus Group Topical Procedure*

It is the nature of focus groups that the discussion of the topic follows its own course – contingent on the participants’ reaction to the subject matter. However, to ensure that consistent themes were explored to allow comparative data analysis, and to provide me with a guide to keep the discussion progressing smoothly, I employed a topical procedure comprising the following topics. To begin with, I introduced general questions about perceptions of downtown Kelowna. Part of my research objective is to explore problematization and how it relates to claims promoting public CCTV, as well as participants’ expectations of CCTV. I encouraged a discussion of participants’ concerns about living downtown, and downtown problems in general. The focus groups proceeded with minimal initial prompting, in order to explore the “discursive inventory” of the participants – or, the different knowledges and evidence participants draw on to make public CCTV intelligible. I gradually introduced some topics – such as privacy implications, and personal experiences with CCTV – to the discussion only after the participants themselves explored the aspects of CCTV they found important or relevant.

The topical procedure also equipped me to advance the focus group in two respects. First, in the event of a general bias for or against public CCTV – I prepared a series of rhetorical arguments for and against CCTV in order to stimulate further discussion. This was to ensure that participants were given the chance to defend and justify their opinions against contrasting points of view. Second, in order to test the working hypothesis that the availability of information impacts public opinion, I introduced research and other material relevant to CCTV in order to observe the ways new information is negotiated. This would have particular significance for the public

consultation process if I could demonstrate a link between the availability of certain knowledges and the formation of public opinions.

Overall, the topical procedure was designed to ensure that the following issues were explored.

- Participants' awareness of the manifestation of CCTV. For example, this entails information such as where the cameras are, how long they have been there, what they are there for, and who is responsible for them.
- The resources participants employ to construct their beliefs and opinions. For example: Did participants learn about Kelowna's CCTV program through the media, through word of mouth, or from public information distributions? Were their opinions shaped by personal experiences with CCTV, perceptions of their efficacy for crime control, awareness of CCTV related research or some other source?
- Participants' opinions and expectations of public CCTV monitoring.
- Participants' responses to the focus group itself in terms of altering their opinions or deepening their understanding of CCTV, based on my introduction of new information, as well as the group dynamics

Of course, the discussions did not, in practice, follow the topical procedure to the letter.

In many cases, issues I had intended to introduce much later were raised by the participants early on. At the Gospel Mission in particular, with eight engaging participants, it was difficult to avoid tangential discussions. After all, the politics of downtown areas are a central concern for those who dwell in them for many reasons, and all of the participants were enthusiastic to discuss them.

*Data Analysis*

The primary data for the study are the transcripts of the four focus groups. I analyze the data in two different ways. The first type of analysis is a descriptive analysis; I offer an overview of the descriptive analysis below, and the descriptive analysis is presented in more detail in Chapter 4. The second type of analysis is an interpretive discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is an appropriate method of data analysis in relation to my methodological assumptions. Discourse analysis is “concerned with participants’ constructions and how they are accomplished and undermined” (Potter, 2004, p. 146). One assumption I make is that evaluations of public CCTV monitoring involve rational discourses that articulate certain knowledges.<sup>42</sup> This study involves exploring the types of knowledges drawn upon by participants in order to express views about public CCTV. I identify and interpret recurrent themes in order to make analytical observations about the ways public CCTV monitoring is commonly understood. Most importantly, the discourse analysis is attuned to uncovering ways different opinions (understood as evaluative rationalities) are affected by the introduction of alternative and conflicting evaluations (e.g. other peoples’ opinions) and knowledges (e.g. academic research on public CCTV) used to understand CCTV.

Raw focus group data, in the form of transcripts, are the starting point for the discourse analysis. Although in practice the focus groups were semi-structured through a topical procedure, the nature of group interaction meant that the data I collected were neither thematically compartmentalized, nor completely “on topic”. Potter (1997, p. 158) recommends that data are prepared before analysis: “discourse analysis involves coding a

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<sup>42</sup> See chapter 2.

set of materials, but this is an analytic preliminary used to make the quantity of materials more manageable rather than a procedure that performs the analysis itself.” Potter argues that discourse analysis is unlike quantitative analysis, and types of qualitative analysis, in that it doesn’t involving “coding” data in a reductive fashion, but rather approaches thematically related data in order to explore the ways understandings are socially arranged (see also Silverman, 2007, p. 223-5).

Following Potter, I initially re-organized the data into the topics I had planned to explore – removing incidental and unrelated data in the process. Next, I catalogued the data into what Spencer, Ritchie and O’Connor (2003, pp. 214-17) call a “descriptive account”. Spencer, Ritchie and O’Connor view data analysis as a hierarchy wherein there are different “levels” of analysis, each developing from lower levels, the first of which are descriptive accounts. Descriptive accounts are “classifications according to a set of substantive dimensions, refined categories, or more abstract classes” (Spencer, Ritchie and O’Connor, 2003, pp. 214), and are, therefore, a type of analysis in their own right. I organized the data according to substantive themes arising from the discussion. For example, the theme of CCTV cameras being a way to selectively police homeless people articulated in one particular focus group. Having established a preliminary index of recurring themes, I revisited all four transcripts in order to identify other data that fitted these themes. This iterative process resulted in breaking the data down into a collection of themes with substantive relevance to my research questions. Chapter 4 comprises a discussion of the topics covered in the focus groups, and the themes that emerged from them.

The second level of Spencer, Ritchie and O'Connor's (2003) hierarchy of analysis is the development of explanatory accounts. Explanatory accounts assimilate abstractions from collected data in order to offer insights into the phenomenon in question (*ibid.*, p. 215). The nature of the explanatory account depends upon the methodological framework employed. As the study is an exploration of the discourses involved in understanding and forming opinions of CCTV, the explanatory account takes the form of an interpretive discourse analysis. The discourse analysis, and a more detailed description of the method employed, comprise chapter 5.

## Chapter 4

### Descriptive Analysis

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I present a descriptive account, and a discussion, of the data for two reasons. First, as this study is in part a work of public sociology, it should be accessible to non-academic audiences. Observing Bloor (1983, pp. 156-171), who holds that research participants and related publics are not always interested in sociological modes of explanation, I have tried to offer a conventional representation of public opinion. Second, in presenting the data descriptively, I contextualize the interpretive analysis presented in the following chapter. The themes emerging from the descriptive analysis are revisited conceptually in the interpretive analysis to substantiate my analytic argument.

This chapter is divided into sections that correspond to the topical procedure I used to conduct the focus groups. I present talk that occurred in response to the main areas of questioning, and I indicate where the discussion was advanced either by additional probes to explore an interesting avenue of discussion, or by spontaneous directions selected by the participants' own questions and ideas. Given the different populations involved in this study, and the importance of their differences with respect to my research objectives, I distinguish the populations throughout, and offer commentary on trends of differing opinion/responses where relevant. I draw on ethnographic observations where they are relevant or illustrative in relation to an area of discussion. Where I present excerpts from the data, the participants' names have been changed. My

contributions are marked “R” (“Researcher”), and participants’ contributions are marked by a single first name. I use the conventions of transcription notation outlined in Deacon, Pickering, Golding and Murdock’s (1999) *Researching Communications*.<sup>43</sup>

Organizing the data into a thematic description enabled me to make several observations about my research populations. I found that downtown Kelowna is understood as a problem through representations of populations who either embody a threat, or who contribute to a negative image of the downtown by exhibiting certain behaviours. Shelter clients offer a rich and varied description of safety and crime concerns, and are more interested in discussing details of problems downtown. Seniors, on the other hand, tend to simplify downtown problems as an ambiguous threat embodied by certain types of “street” populations. Participants’ perceptions of safety are largely unaffected by the presence of public CCTV cameras, but the cameras are supported in the belief that they aid generally in crime detection and prevention. However, awareness and knowledge about the existence, purpose and effectiveness of public CCTV cameras is low, and corroborated by little evidence. Rather, media reports and stylized representations of crime are drawn on to substantiate support for public CCTV. Furthermore, a particular concern emerged that public CCTV cameras could contribute to the stigmatization of homeless people who are obliged to dwell under the cameras for much of their time.

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<sup>43</sup> “( )” indicates indecipherable utterances; “...” indicates an omission within a turn of speaking; “(...)” indicates an omission that extends beyond one turn of dialogue; descriptions of non verbal behaviour are in square brackets “[ ]”; a blank line left between blocks of quotation indicates quotes from separate discussions, but relating to the same issue.

The data are presented in three main sections. First, because public CCTV monitoring programs are based on modes of problematization (e.g. transients committing crimes and seniors feeling unsafe), I present data on participants' general views about safety, disorder and other problems in Kelowna. In the first section, I include a summary of the issues participants identify as safety concerns. Second, I gauge people's awareness of public CCTV monitoring (e.g. where the cameras are, who is monitoring them, and so on). The latter two issues are important because public consultations are concerned with public awareness and clarifying the expected utility of CCTV monitoring. Third, I discuss participants' opinions about public CCTV monitoring. In the latter section, I also show how attitudes and opinions are affected by various arguments and new information introduced to discussion.

### **Description 1: Public Safety and Problems in Downtown Kelowna**

I began each focus group with a discussion about safety and social problems in downtown Kelowna. Public safety and perceptions of safety and social problems are integral to the rhetorical justification of public CCTV schemes in general, and to Kelowna's CCTV scheme in particular. Issues of personal concern to shelter clients differ significantly from seniors, whilst perceptions of wider problems in the downtown are shared by all focus group participants. However, though these perceptions center around common ideas and representations, interpretations of shared problems vary between population groups. In this section, I begin by summarizing the issues raised by the different populations pertaining to personal safety. I then present data on both populations' perceptions of social problems.

*(i) Personal Safety: Shelter Clients*

All of the clients of support shelters who contributed to this part of the discussion indicated that they feel generally safe on the streets in downtown Kelowna. The following quote is a representative response.<sup>44</sup>

Jacob: I feel safe downtown. A lot of people are afraid to be downtown, you get a lot of people saying “oh it’s scary downtown”. There’s nothing to be scared of. People who look at people on the street are scared because they assume something. If you don’t bother them, they’re not going to bother you. It’s not really as dangerous as people think.

There is consensus that perceptions of Kelowna as an unsafe place are common, and that this is due to a large street-dwelling population. However, the shelter clients broadly report that concerns about safety are mostly unwarranted. One participant in his late twenties, Joe, claimed to live on the street because “it’s an exciting lifestyle, as bad as it is it’s very exciting”. He stated that while certain groups of people might signal danger, avoiding trouble “comes down to common street sense”. Most participants agree that they have a certain awareness that minimizes the risk of violent encounters or robberies.

However, two specific concerns about safety arise. First, apprehension regarding the police is widely articulated.

R: Do you feel safe just hanging around in downtown Kelowna?

Dave: Other than the police, yes.

(...)

Bob: If I see the police, a big red light goes on.

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<sup>44</sup> I acknowledge that data pertaining to personal safety would possibly have included many other issues and perceptions had I managed to recruit female shelter clients. This is an unfortunate limitation of the current study.

Almost all of the shelter clients report being wary of police officers. Some participants recount being assaulted or harassed.

Peter: ...they get a grudge against you and they'll harass you. Sometimes they'll fuck you up sometimes (...) I got a good fucking kicking once or twice.

Joe: I've been beaten up by police, by the RCMP. I got picked up for being drunk in public when I wasn't even drunk...they broke my nose and they smashed me out, all over nothing.

A second concern about safety – raised at the Gospel Mission and one of the seniors' homes – is dangerous traffic.

R: What kind of thing would make you watch your back?

Anthony: The way people drive...there's been a few brothers in Kelowna been hit by, very close by, the way people drive nowadays.

The Gospel Mission and the Drop-In Centre are on a street located one block away from the busy Highway 97. Two nearby budget restaurants and a convenience store with bathroom facilities are on the other side of the highway. Some of the Gospel Mission participants report a fear of crossing the street to reach these services, especially on weekends.

Anthony: There's been a couple of people killed...just walking across there. I guess Saturday night is the worst time. That's the time they were getting killed.

A discussion resumed about a previous client of the Gospel Mission, "Welsh", who had earned a living "squeegeeing" car windows on the roadside.

Peter: Then out of nowhere Welsh gets hit by a car. Hit and run, no-one ever gets charged. Now Welsh is a vegetable

pretty much now, poor guy, he's not the same. Brain-dead now.

*(ii) Personal Safety: Seniors*

The seniors' concerns about safety are less specific than concerns held by the shelter clients, yet they are also more pronounced. The central concern is with a dimension of threat embodied in groups of people hanging around in the downtown area.

R: What makes it unsafe? What makes you feel unsafe?

Edith: Just the people that are around you.

R: What kind of people worry you?

Edith: Um, gangs (...) and it's just, um, I think it's part of being old [laughs]. It's just a reaction to, as I say, gangs and sometimes the street is so full of people and I'm not used to that.

Particular groups of people, and their behaviour, are seen as a recent phenomenon that is progressively becoming worse.

R: So what do you think of Kelowna's downtown area? Is it a nice place to be?

Greg: No. Used to be, Not now.

Brenda: Too many transients downtown. You have to step over them on the sidewalk...you just don't feel safe downtown anymore.

The seniors report worsening local conditions. However, when one participant raised the issue of other people's opinions of the downtown, others agreed that perceptions are usually worse than the reality.

Harry: When I first got here and when I mentioned to people where I was living, they said "you're moving to the downtown area? That's the worst area of Kelowna." Yet we've had the odd break-in or window smashed, but overall it's not that bad.

R: How safe do you all feel living down here?

Jack: I feel safe.

Brenda: Safe.

Upon further probing, the seniors agreed that if someone were to get information and impressions about the downtown area solely from hearsay and local media, they would likely perceive the downtown to be less safe than the seniors who lived there did. This is how they accounted for a generalized apprehension about the downtown.

R: If you didn't live downtown, but you got all your information and impressions about downtown from friends, do you think you'd get the idea that downtown was worse than it actually is?

Harry: Yes, you would.

Greg: You would.

Jack: I'm pretty sure you would. You'd drive with the windows up and the doors locked. And you'd not stop.

R: How do you get this impression?

Edith: Newspaper.

Maude: Newspapers and radio. And if I were looking for a place to live, I would never come here.

R: You wouldn't?

Maude: No, I mean to say, there's far too much crime going on.

In further discussions about downtown, the seniors focused less on the safety issues posed to themselves by downtown conditions, and more on inter-group antagonisms.

Jack: There's been a lot of stabbings and beatings, and everything else out there. There's nightclubs pouring out at two in the morning (...) the alleys are a problem too. Not everyone who's on the street is a drug addict. But a lot of the aboriginal boys, they prefer to sleep outside. They feel

claustrophobic inside...but when the bars let out, sometimes you'll get a few rednecks going around and they're just looking for someone to whale the tire out of.

Some seniors, who previously reported feeling unsafe due to the types of people dwelling in the downtown areas, later acknowledged that their own safety is unlikely to be threatened.

Edith: I think the problems have nothing to do with us, like older citizens. It's bar fights, they've changed the hours of the bars closing to try and stop this grouping outside.

Seniors identify many indications that downtown is becoming "worse". Among these indications are open-drug taking, an increase in the number of homeless people on the streets, and widespread panhandling. Yet, although seniors often interpret these signals as suggestive of a generalized decline, when pressed to recount personal experiences of problems in the downtown – few reported actual negative experiences.

R: Emma, have you ever been approached by a panhandler?

Emma: In a very mild way, ye, but they didn't push. That's what I've noticed with any of them, they don't push if I avoid them or say no.

Maude: No, I remember a hat out or something, but they just sit there and some would try to entertain and you'd feel at least they're doing something. (...)

R: Maybe an interesting question would be: Have any of you been a victim of crime or harassment, of any kind?

All: No.

*(iii) Drugs, Transients and Downtown Problems: Shelter Clients and Seniors*

After the discussion about personal safety, I shifted the topic to several problems in the downtown. On this point, the views of the seniors and shelter clients converged.

Aspects of drug use and trafficking were identified as a main problem by both

populations. I discern two dimensions of the issue of drugs that are considered problematic. First, open drug use and trafficking contribute to a negative impression of the downtown area.

Peter: I'm sure normal people don't like coming down and seeing someone fucking... smoking shit... you know? I mean, I use needles, I'm an intravenous user but it's not like I sit there and do it in the open or where people can see me. I go behind closed doors, you know?

This shelter client's view that the spectacle of drug-related behaviour is a cause for concern is echoed by several seniors, some of whom claim they no longer go to the parks because of the "crystal meth" problem. One shelter client, Jacob, objects to the term "drug problem".

Jacob: I do drugs, so it's great (...) for me it's everything now.

However, he admitted that the spectacle of open drug use was problematic.

Jacob: It's a perception of harassment. When you're walking around the park with your wife and kids, on a Sunday morning, you see seventeen people sitting in a circle smoking crack, that's harassment.

The second issue, enunciated mainly by the seniors, is the idea that drugs are linked to increased aggression and violence in the downtown area. When presented with the question, "do ordinary people like yourselves have anything to worry about from these people?", one resident responded:

Greg: the panhandlers are getting too aggressive... they're getting very, very aggressive, and that's the people you've got to worry about.

One senior, Muriel, was visibly upset as she gave an account of a man being stabbed to death in a nearby street. Several seniors made references to similar stories, of unmotivated beatings and shootings.

Muriel: And there was another incident about this summer, this past summer, where a man, two boys came up to a man, asked him the time, and when he bent down to look at his watch they slit him open!

As I mention above, seniors generally consider it unlikely that they themselves will become targets of violence, but they are almost unanimous in their opinion that groups of drug-users are inherently threatening.

Drug users were not the only population linked to violent behaviour in the downtown. The other problem identified in all four focus groups is drunk people leaving bars, fighting amongst themselves, attacking strangers, and committing acts of vandalism, as this senior notes.

Jack: ...when the bars let out, sometimes you'll get a few of these rednecks going around and they're just looking for somebody who's sleeping, and whale the tire out of them (...) I guess it gets a little rough downtown, and when they get drinking and get some drugs inside of them they get pretty brave.

Shelter clients are also wary of drunken bar-leavers. During the Drop-In Centre focus group, participants were keen to distance themselves from this problem.

Anthony: ...speaking from experience, I've lived here four years and I feel a lot safer here than with those guys who come out of the bars. I find them more dangerous than the guys I live with.

Adrian: The drunken levels of violence and aggression [pauses] you can see at about three a.m. the crawl between the two bars...

R: Who are the patrons of the bars, local people?

Adrian: It's mostly idiots.

Mark: It's not the street people. We can't afford to go clubbing.

I probed the issue of who was to blame for the violence and vandalism. One theme that arose was that many problems were the fault of "out-of-towners."

Joe: A lot of people come here on holidays. They're here for a couple of days, couple of weeks, and they don't care what they do to this town, they don't care who they hurt in this town. "I'm here for a week, what the hell do I care? I'm going back to my life. Who cares if I get into a fight, kick this, smash this...who gives a shit?"

This theme also arose in relation to the problem of the spectacle of drug-taking in the city, as Peter, a self-confessed intravenous addict and shelter client, articulated.

Peter: I clean myself up and shit, but, it's those people who come in from other cities and shit, who've got no respect for nothing, that's the people you gotta worry about.

I interpreted these observations as relating to the established problematization of transients. Both seniors and shelter clients blamed transients for some of Kelowna's problems. Yet, several of the shelter clients I spoke to could conceivably be classified as transients. Of the fifteen shelter clients who participated, six said they had lived in Kelowna for less than a year. I noticed that the shelter clients were careful to discern "types" of transients, and to delineate between problem street populations and ordinary "street people."

Trevor: They all seem to come to town at the same time you know. They set themselves up on the highway, they all seem to hit the same salvation army on the same day. There are a lot of them around. If you go to the bus-stop it looks like the beginning of a Lollapalooza Festival.

R: How do things change downtown when all these guys come in? Is there any more trouble, or is it pretty much...

Douglas: Oh they're a pretty quiet bunch.

Peter: No, *we* keep them under control.

R: You never get any trouble from out-of-towners?

Peter: Oh, hell no.

I found that seniors – presumably too unfamiliar with the street-dwelling population to make similar distinctions – tended to conflate the homeless, transients and criminals into one category.

Greg: Now you've got the downtown area that's integrated into the drugs, the homeless and the transients. You've got four different societies you might call them. In one. They've actually joined to become one.

This type of perception was a common cause for complaint among the shelter clients. At several times in the focus groups, participants reacted to a perceived negative image of the homeless population.

Adrian: There's a certain level of assumption about us, we're expected to do something.

Although the focus groups gravitate to issues of crime and safety during discussions about problematization, it is worth mentioning that many of the problems identified by the shelter clients have little to do with these issues. Other concerns include a lack of social services in the downtown, the inability to take a rest on the street or a nap in the park without being confronted by police or by-law enforcement officers, the stigma of living on the street, and downtown Kelowna's inaccessibility to the poor.

Trevor: You can't go anywhere for a cheap breakfast in this town because it's a tourist town and everything is directed towards the tourist.

Mark: Oh yeah, I go to some restaurants and they want me to pay first. And I do it. Because I know what they're dealing with, and I say "ok, if I do it maybe they're gonna loosen up on their prejudice", they're assuming a lot, but it's their fear syndrome.

Sam: In Vancouver, it's all over. Abbotsford: same thing. There's tons of resources in Abbotsford, too. When I come here?

Douglas: This is it!

Sam: You got here, you got the Drop-In Centre which was closed when I came here, they got the friendship centre...other than that?

Peter: They make it worse for women...the women got nowhere to go.

To summarize, problems in the downtown are articulated in terms of threats to safety embodied by transients to some degree. However, further discussions reveal that the *spectacle* of open drug use and behaviours associated with vagrancy are of greater concern than fears for personal safety. Furthermore, participants recognize that media representations and hearsay contribute to an amplification of the safety problems downtown. Other problems, such as traffic and access to adequate social services, are greater concerns than risky others. The following sections address the ways public CCTV cameras were understood in relation to problems and perceptions of problems in downtown Kelowna.

## **Description 2: Awareness and Assumptions about CCTV**

The Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner (OPC) video surveillance guideline number seven reads, "The public should be advised that they will be under

surveillance.” Part of the public consultation process is to ensure public awareness about the presence and details of any public CCTV monitoring system. Part of my work for the SPSPC study involves contacting organizations and individuals to discuss the CCTV systems in their cities. Often, I discover that people either have inaccurate understandings of the nature of the CCTV monitoring, or no knowledge of it whatsoever. In the focus groups, I explored participants’ ideas about what Kelowna’s CCTV program involved.

I found it was necessary in many cases to reiterate that I was only interested in public CCTV cameras, even though I took care to make this clear in the consent form and when I described the research to potential participants. Few participants were sure exactly where the cameras were located, with the exception of one shelter client who had read about them in the newspaper. A few seniors knew of the Queensway camera. Only two seniors, one of whom was a retired RCMP officer, were aware of both cameras. One senior admitted to not knowing that there were CCTV cameras at all. Shelter clients are equally unsure as to the scope and location of surveillance cameras, though they are willing to speculate about the locations of the CCTV cameras.

Trevor: There’s a ton of them up and down this street...those cameras can zoom in on your shoelaces.

Anthony: I thought they surveilled with helicopters, right?

Seniors also presume where surveillance cameras might be located.

Muriel: I could guess where they needed one...they had to keep the bus stop free from small gangs of threes and fours, gathering at night...I think they were going to install a camera...the cameras might work at night, there might be a night camera, don’t ask me.

The seniors knew little about the details of the CCTV monitoring system. Issues of uncertainty include who is responsible for monitoring, whether the cameras are recorded, and if the cameras are operational all of the time, some of the time, or even at all.<sup>45</sup> Again, assumptions are proffered, including that the cameras are solely recorded and referred to only after an incident; that the cameras are used with face recognition software; and, that the public CCTV footage is used to broadcast on news media channels. Only the retired RCMP officer knew specific details of monitoring practices. A few of the seniors even believe that public information about the scope of public CCTV monitoring should be prohibited.

Edith: I don't agree that they should tell us where the cameras are. Even if they're not secret, because unless you're really looking for it, you're not going to see them.

Emma: Once they're aware, they're going to avoid that area. And if they're moved, I don't think we should be told that they're moved. All of this should be confidential.

Shelter clients were equally unaware as to the precise nature of the CCTV monitoring system in Kelowna. Some of the shelter clients believed, like the seniors, that the cameras were kept secret and moved in order to herd homeless people from the tourist areas.

Anthony: I'm speculating that they're moving these cameras, like moving on a chessboard, you get the case the public is in the mood for...this whole front is...it's gonna be all done for tourism.

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<sup>45</sup> Some participants correctly recall the Queensway cameras being temporarily switched off following Radwanski's attention. This fact led some seniors and shelter clients to speculate as to whether the CCTV cameras were operational at all.

Despite my corrections, the clients at the Gospel Mission continually conflated the traffic monitoring cameras with the public CCTV system in question. Some clients are uninterested in the CCTV monitoring system, so long as it does not interfere with their activities.

Peter: I really don't care. As long as they don't catch me doing nothing I'm all right.

I asked if anyone had been arrested or caught doing anything as a result of the CCTV cameras, but none had. Other assumptions about the cameras pertain to their number, uses and technological capabilities.

R: Did anyone else notice them go up?

Bob: I noticed a man who had some in the air, like he was trying to get attention...

R: What about the ones that are fixed, the ones that are on the streets.

Trevor: There's a ton of them up and down this street and they start from... the media building up here has a whole bunch of them and they're pointing up in every which direction. I don't know if they're using them for shots in-between commercials or what. But there's cameras all up and down here. Those cameras can zoom in on your shoelaces.

None of the shelter clients were sure of the scope of the CCTV program. Instead, each held assumptions constructed from pieces of information such as a newspaper article, word-of-mouth, or simply informed guesses based on assumptions about the purposes cameras were installed for.

Struck by the general lack of awareness of the location and other details of the CCTV cameras, I probed to find out what resources participants drew on to form assumptions about cameras. Most participants indicated that they learned from

newspapers and other media, indicated by the following quotes, the first from a shelter client, the second from a senior.

Anthony: One time I saw, there's a woman there, they showed it on the news one time, just one woman there who's got a wall of cameras.

Muriel: Well yes I read about it. I knew they were there but only when they came to be there, it was in the paper or something.

None of the participants had ever been involved in – or were even aware of – public consultation of any kind. In fact, when asked, not one of the participants remembered ever having been contacted or spoken to about the CCTV cameras before or during their operation. A discussion in the Gospel Mission is illustrative:

R: Did anyone ever ask your opinion about this? Was there a chance to go to city hall and give your say?

Trevor: No, there was no plebiscite! [laughter]

R: What about a leaflet?

[prolonged laughter]

Derek: Nothing, it was just up!

Though seniors were also unaware of public consultation or information dissemination, one senior participant said that it wasn't difficult to approach city hall to ask questions:

R: If you wanted to give your opinion, of any public issue, how could you do that in Kelowna? You'd write to the council and it would come up and go to the council meetings.

Maude: It's not difficult.

R: It's not?

Muriel: No. Not at all.

Maude: We've got a very good council, we've got a very good mayor.

This point of view contrasted with that of the Gospel Mission participants:

R: Can homeless people get involved in any kind of decision-making in Kelowna?

all: No!

Trevor: Not like in Vancouver you can't. They actually have all those Eastside projects...

In many instances, the shelter clients indicated that their views were marginalized or just ignored, whereas seniors believed that their opinions and ideas would be listened to by authorities – if they desired to make them known.

Therefore, I found that the participants were generally aware of the existence of public CCTV camera in Kelowna, but knew little about the nature of the program. In most cases, beliefs about the cameras were based on media representations, or common-sense assumptions. This was common to both shelter clients and seniors. Many assumptions were either contradictory or in marked contrast to the actual scope of Kelowna's public CCTV program. Shelter client participants reported few opportunities to learn about cameras, and fewer still to be consulted about CCTV practices in Kelowna. However, seniors were more assured that they could find out about CCTV practices if they wished. Participants' responses and opinions about public CCTV are addressed below.

### **Description 3: Opinions about CCTV**

In this section, I present data on participants' opinions of public CCTV monitoring in Kelowna. My intention is neither to offer an aggregate of individual attitudes or beliefs nor to gauge a level of support for public CCTV monitoring in

Kelowna. Instead, I discuss the ways evaluations of public CCTV monitoring are communicated.<sup>46</sup> The discussions involving evaluations of public CCTV monitoring are classified into four main themes: the efficacy of CCTV cameras in reducing crime, the relation between CCTV cameras and overall levels of safety in Kelowna, the implications of CCTV for privacy, and the potential for public CCTV surveillance to impact differentially on certain populations in the city. In what follows, I pay particular attention to instances where evaluations of CCTV appear to change or be challenged, as new information or lines of argumentation develop during the focus groups.

*(i) CCTV and Crime*

The majority of participants' opinions about public CCTV were expressed in relation to crime reduction. This was common among both sample populations. I discerned two recurring assumptions about public CCTV. The first assumption was that public CCTV monitoring has a deterrent effect on crime, as these two seniors related.

Greg: Surveillance helps, let's put it that way, it is a deterrent and it certainly helps, in the areas. I don't care what areas they are, it helps.

Muriel: It depends though, if it could be seen, if they could be recognized, I think that would be a deterrent. If someone could see that it was you there...Anonymity is a great protection.

Shelter clients also assumed that CCTV cameras were effective in countering crime.

Bob: Well put it this way, in Sydney Australia, or actually it was in England, the crime rate dropped 50% after they put the cameras in.

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<sup>46</sup> Myriad opinions were stated during the focus groups. As such, I have decided to present data on topics that cross-articulated between focus groups, were of heightened interest to the participants, or were consistently raised throughout discussions.

During discussion, however, the deterrent effect of CCTV cameras was questioned.

Trevor: It should be a deterrent, and I imagine it is a deterrent to a certain...but all it's really gonna do is to move people who want to be away from the cameras to a place where cameras aren't.

I introduced to the focus groups a piece of research that suggests that street lighting can be as effective as public CCTV in deterring people from committing crime. One senior's response marked a modification of her earlier stance about CCTV as a deterrent.

Muriel: I don't think it stops crime, I think it stirs them up and prevents accumulation of crimes in certain areas that are detrimental to the city's growth and safety.

Similarly, a distinction between crime deterrence and displacement emerged in a discussion with the other group of seniors.

R: Now if I were a drug dealer, which I promise you I am not, I'd just go the next street. So what kind of deterrent is that?

Frances: True.

Brenda: That's true.

(...)

Greg: I don't know about the overall picture, depending on where the area is. A drug area like we have over on Leon Avenue, there was a camera there monitored 24 hours a day. You might not have that problem, but it would go somewhere else.

Rachel: It would go somewhere else.

A second recurring opinion was that public CCTV monitoring could aid in responses to crime and after-the-fact crime detection. One participant opined that the cameras could help with catching the "crack-heads." Another shelter client suggested that the cameras could opportunistically record instances of crime.

Trevor: By fluke they might catch a burglary.

At the Drop-In centre, a discussion developed about cameras being used to respond to in-progress crimes. Some shelter client participants agreed that this was a positive aspect of the cameras, especially in relation to violent crime:

Jacob: If my mom walks out and gets gang-raped by six black guys, I'm going to want the camera on that. You could find out, right? You hear about an 80 year-old man getting stomped and robbed outside of a Seven-Eleven, it's horrible. (...)

Adrian: Let's just assume that cameras are used for instant response to crime, so the camera is there, it's viewing. People viewing witness a crime taking place. Very similar to a 9-1-1 call...I think that would be more welcome.

In response to this line of argument, I raised the issue of James Bulger, whose abduction was captured on a shopping mall CCTV system. Participants acknowledged that CCTV might not be able to stop crimes from happening, but supported the cameras for bringing violent offenders to justice, as these shelter clients relate.

Joe: Who was watching while those kids walked him away? Those cameras did absolutely nothing. All that camera did was allow us to go back and watch it, how did it help that kid?

Mark: It brings peace of mind, at least you know what happened

In fact, toward the end of my focus group with the clients of the Drop-In Centre, one participant, who had consistently opposed the cameras on privacy grounds, was persuaded by the others' arguments about particularly objectionable crimes:

Joe: Well, at the outset I was totally against the cameras, but after hearing the guys talking about safety, kids and...well, I'm more toward that.

(ii) *CCTV and Safety*

Public safety, and the perception of public safety, is regularly invoked to justify public CCTV monitoring systems, especially in relation to vulnerable populations such as seniors. Participants were aware that CCTV cameras were intended to aid in the perception of safety in the downtown, as one shelter client remarked.

Adrian: The majority of these cameras are in place to...to make sure the public feel a lot safer in the streets. Make them feel something is being done to help make it safer for them to go out.

However, when asked if the cameras made participants *feel* any safer, responses among seniors were largely indifferent or negative.

R: Do you think things are any safer with them being there?

Muriel: The one on Leon, yeah. And at Queensway I think has made a difference.

Maude: I don't know if we're any safer.

R: So when politicians say we need to have surveillance cameras because, for one reason, cameras make seniors feels safer, are they telling the truth?

Maude: Oh I don't. I don't think it'll make me feel different...

Muriel: No, I don't think about it.

Edith: No.

The same question was put to the shelter clients, none of whom declared feeling any safer. Peter referred to the failure of the CCTV cameras in preventing "Welsh" from falling victim to an injurious hit-and-run. In a discussion about whether the CCTV cameras had made the park any safer, one shelter client expressed doubt.

Douglas: Yeah I wouldn't bring my daughter down here. When I see the camera I don't think "yeah I'll bring my

whole family down here” because it would be six months later until they found the guy who murdered everyone, my kids would be toast!

Although many participants accepted that CCTV could have a positive effect on safety, few reported feeling any safer.

*(iii) CCTV and Privacy*

Two participants in particular, one from each of the support shelters, were opposed to the cameras because of a perceived invasion of privacy. The first, Joe, expressed a general resentment at being under surveillance.

Joe: I have no time for cameras, man, because if someone takes a picture of you - and you don't want it to be taken - you can tell them you don't want it taken...No I don't have anything to hide, but why should I be filmed whatever I'm doing? I don't agree with them, I think it's an invasion of privacy.

The discussion progressed to the capability of public CCTV cameras to view residences, and other areas that could be considered private. One participant remarked that someone could take a personal camera and do the same thing, to which, Joe responded

Joe: Yeah but if you've got a personal camera and you're filming someone inside their window, what do you call that? There's charges for that, you're being a pervert.

Trevor, from the Gospel Mission, expressed a unique objection to public CCTV on privacy grounds.

Trevor: I don't know how you are with your privacy, you know, but I regard mine. Not everyone in this place has got parents and kids, but a lot of us do. I don't want to end up in a picture because they had to shoot past me to get some guy dealing drugs because they want their money shot for the news of some guy handing something over to somebody else...it's a privacy issue

Trevor continued to argue that his employment opportunities could be harmed if a potential employer recognized him from CCTV footage broadcast via local news media.

However, Trevor and Joe were relatively isolated in their objections. Few other participants registered complaints about their privacy. Seniors were particularly unconcerned.

Greg: I don't care if I'm on camera, I'm not doing anything wrong, I don't care (...)

Harry: Now why would you worry about — unless you're up to no good, or in the criminal element — why would you worry about a little camera?...and I don't think you'll find anyone in this building who feels their privacy is compromised

[general responses of “no” and “not at all”].

I have learned, through many SPSPC interviews, that this type of response — the aphoristic “nothing to hide, nothing to fear” — is perhaps the most widespread response to questions about objections to CCTV. However, in the following subsection, I present data on a dimension of surveillance that concerns certain street populations, regardless of whether they are involved in crime.

#### *(iv) CCTV and Perceptions of “Street” Populations*

One Gospel Mission resident, Anthony, articulated a prominent concern of the shelter client populations.

Anthony: You know because you're on the streets, it's the way you have to live and, you have to come and eat here, and they have that camera out there in the car park, they kind of move everybody into the same pot, we're all just being filmed. And we're going for a job, and just because you're down on your luck, you have no choice. Because you can't afford to buy food at Safeway — you have to come here and eat. So you're recorded and then I guess just

because you're seen in the line up here or just because you have to stay here, they think "oh well" – it's an assumption on their part that you're up to something. That's the only negative part I don't like about the cameras.

The shelter clients felt that the cameras were an extension of mode of vilification they were subjected to by virtue of their homeless, "street" status. The surveillance cameras in Kelowna are stationed at the bus terminal and Leon Avenue, where much of the drug trafficking, after-bar violence, and vandalism occur. However, these areas are also where shelter clients come for food and shelter, or where they can find a bench to rest on between being moved on by police or local security firms. Participants view the cameras in terms of a conflation of the homeless with "problem" populations:

Derek: Well, the only reason they're putting them in, the cameras, downtown, is because of the homeless. They consider the homeless being the drug users and drug dealers.

Trevor: Exactly, paint everybody with one colour eh?

Douglas: And that's the whole concept of it...

I conducted both focus groups with shelter clients before I spoke with the seniors, so I had the chance to ask the seniors about the link between perceptions of "street" people, and CCTV cameras.

R: Let me give you an argument...I was interviewing one of the clients of support shelters downtown...he objected to video surveillance cameras because he said Leon and Abbott gets on the news all the time because of the drugs and whatever...the problem with the camera is that everybody gets tarred with the same brush. What would you say to him?

Brenda: I'd agree with him, poor chap.

Jane: Yeah...because you'd think "oh there's a scumbag", why's anybody going to hire him?...

Greg: If the appearance of the person is like a street person or a druggie, then he's going to get targeted in the same class. If he dresses appropriately, and goes to get a job...then I can't see where being on camera or anything like that would make a difference.

It is acknowledged that, although there is no evidence that the cameras are used to persecute homeless people, their location, and a general association of CCTV cameras with crime, has a stigmatizing effect on people dwelling in those areas who fall into a particular "street" classification, owing to their appearance. Although seniors report no concerns about appearing on camera, they understand why shelter clients might be concerned that their appearance would result in their classification as somehow undesirable.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The data presented in this chapter show that public CCTV monitoring is understood in different ways. Opinions about CCTV surveillance are articulated in terms of certain assumptions regarding the purpose, administration and efficacy of the cameras. Yet, these assumptions vary considerably within and between population samples. Most participants hold the commonsensical belief that cameras help in some way. However, discussions about *how* CCTV helps engendered debates that raise questions about the wider implications of public CCTV monitoring.

Levels of awareness of Kelowna's public CCTV monitoring, or a lack thereof, are significant to debates about public consultation sessions. Not only were participants generally unaware of the scope of CCTV cameras, but few had ever had experience with them personally. In fact, few participants were aware of an instance where cameras were

used for the purpose of policing or maintaining safety. One shelter client speculated that the frequency of groups of homeless people being dispersed and asked to “move along” had increased since the cameras were established, but assertions of this nature were corroborated with few experiences or substantive facts. The participants were interested in learning more about the cameras, and I was asked repeatedly to give information about their scope and efficacy. However, shelter clients were more interested in knowing about the specific uses and locations of the cameras, due to suspicions that the cameras were there to target them or their behaviours. Seniors were curious about the cameras, but held two assumptions that allayed any concerns about the CCTV monitoring: first, that the cameras were there to target certain problematic others; and, second, that the relevant authorities had completed necessary due process before installing the CCTV scheme.

Opinions about CCTV cameras often depended upon the prior establishment of certain problems or crimes. For example, the problem of conspicuous drug use was a commonly enunciated justification for public CCTV. Yet, the strongest opinions about public CCTV cameras were articulated in relation to stereotypical (e.g. “six black rapists”) and emotive (e.g. James Bulger, “80 year-old man getting stomped and robbed”) crimes. Seniors especially approved of public CCTV monitoring as a response to the “transient problem”, yet on reflection, identifying the particular dimension of harm embodied by transients proved elusive. However, none of the participants linked the presence of public CCTV monitoring to an increase in their own perceptions of safety in the downtown. In fact, shelter clients identified ways in which the cameras could contribute to the problems they experienced in the downtown, such as police harassment and being identified as criminals and drug-users through association. Shelter clients

identified some populations as problematic in the downtown in a similar way to the seniors. However, a fundamental difference is that seniors maintained a narrow typification of downtown problems understood in terms of problematic populations such as transients, and panhandlers, whereas shelter clients recounted facing a far more diverse range of problems, such as harassment, the inaccessibility of services, the lack of places for homeless women to find lodging, and so on.

During discussions some participants began to qualify their support for CCTV cameras, as one shelter client remarked,

Mark: I don't want them putting in cameras if they're not laying out their outlines and parameters.

Seniors admitted that their generally high levels of support for CCTV monitoring depended upon assumptions that the relevant authorities had gathered the proper research and evidence supporting the suitability of CCTV surveillance in Kelowna.

Emma: Well, if we trust them to...if they've truly done their research and their work and they think it's a good idea. (...)

R: Would they have to prove it to you or would you take their word for it?

Muriel: They'd have to...I don't know, discuss in council publicly wouldn't they?...Can't make a snap decision on something like that.

A common reason for support of the CCTV cameras was expressed negatively through the "nothing to hide – nothing to fear" aphorism. A general idea that CCTV cameras work, coupled with a positive self-representation as someone the cameras would not be interested in, allowed many participants to dismiss concerns about CCTV. The latter reasoning was utilized by all of the senior citizens. Some shelter clients expressed similar

sentiments, but were far more wary about the potential for the CCTV cameras to single them out for targeting.

I do not claim that all of the participants changed their opinion about public CCTV cameras as a result of the focus groups. However, I draw two tentative conclusions about opinions of CCTV. First, a number of assumptions pertaining to the presence, capabilities, modus operandi, specific objectives, efficacy, and success of public CCTV are inherent to the forming of public opinions. The clarification of these issues through comprehensive public information efforts would both inform realistic expectations of public CCTV monitoring, and minimize misconceptions as to its scope, purpose and efficacy. Second, comprehensive, inclusive public consultations could aid authorities in understanding the diversity of concerns among local populations. This would be beneficial in at least two ways: public CCTV programs could be established with objectives based on empirically substantiated public concerns, and reservations and fears about the uses of public CCTV cameras could be addressed, and necessary assurances made.

## Chapter 5

### Interpretive Analysis

#### **Introduction: From Description to Interpretation**

In Chapter 4, I provide a descriptive analysis of themes to emerge from the focus groups. In this chapter, I offer an interpretive analysis of these themes. I explain my observations about how public CCTV and downtown problems are understood using a framework informed by the sociology of governance and moral regulation. I demonstrate that downtown problems are understood in terms of a collection of discourses that culminate in a moral dialectic, whereby downtown populations are sorted into favourable and unfavourable groupings. Specifically, I present data to show how participants' constructions of public CCTV monitoring pits desirable residents against undesirable others. That is, the ways participants understand and evaluate public CCTV depend on self-understandings in relation to negative depictions of transient populations. In order to theorize ways in which opinion is articulated, I employ the analytic concepts of *interpretive repertoire* and *evaluative rationality*.

The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I elaborate on my empirical and theoretical orientations, and I rationalize the transition from descriptive to interpretive analysis. I do so through a discussion of certain emergent themes that are central to participants' understandings of public CCTV monitoring. In the second section, I introduce my theoretical framework through a discussion of governance and moral regulation. I discuss how governance through moral regulation involves discourses of

problem definition. This discussion rationalizes my selection of discourse analysis as an appropriate method of analysis. The remainder of the second section explicates the specific method of discourse analysis. I explain how my analysis uses the concept of interpretive repertoire (Potter, 1996). Finally, the third section presents an interpretive analysis of the data informed by the established theoretical framework.

### *Themes of Analysis*

The descriptive analysis presented in the previous chapter was designed to reveal patterns in the interpretive repertoires of public CCTV monitoring. I recognize that opinions about public CCTV are intrinsically linked to the ways problems are perceived in downtown Kelowna. Participants' explanations of downtown issues consistently involve references to problem populations.

In this chapter, I use three main themes arising from the descriptive analysis in Chapter 4 to interpret the data. I do so to better understand how downtown is made intelligible to the participants, and how CCTV figures in this understanding. The first theme concerns a common tendency among participants to invoke a contrast between types of people through positive and negative representations (e.g. local families, drug-users, transients). Second, these contrasts are enacted through certain themes (e.g. open drug-use, gatherings of people in parks and streets), suggesting a repetition of discursive resources used to make sense of downtown problems. Third, seniors' accounts of the problems differ from shelter clients in terms of the representational content they use to make judgments about the different populations in the downtown. Whereas shelter clients tend to discern between types of "street" people in order to make judgments about

problems, I find that seniors tend to rely on typifications that conflate various groups of “street” people into a general problem population.

Both seniors and shelter clients employ two discernable forms of knowledge in order to explain and evaluate CCTV surveillance cameras. First, stylized representations of crime and disorder are discussed as reasons for surveillance cameras. Second, ideas about the efficacy of cameras are formed through references to wider representations of CCTV (e.g. news coverage featuring CCTV footage, media reporting and other communications of the “success” of CCTV in Britain), rather than to any local sources of information (e.g. police reports, public presentations/consultations about CCTV). Participants express opinions about CCTV by linking these two forms of knowledge to their perceptions of problems in Kelowna.

Although shelter clients and seniors draw on similar types of knowledge in order to explain public CCTV, there are noticeable differences between groups’ opinions about the cameras. Seniors tend to evaluate CCTV as a favourable response to problems in the downtown, whereas shelter clients report objections to the cameras based on assumptions that they disproportionately targeted “street” populations – regardless of actual levels of criminal behaviour, or diversity within “street” populations.

### **Governance, Moral Regulation and Discourse**

To understand how downtown Kelowna is imagined by participants, I draw on the sociologies of governance and moral regulation. Governance describes any activity taking place within a field of power by which social actors “steer” the actions and behaviour of others. Power, in this sense, is understood as the ability to influence the

behaviour of others, or to be acted upon. Although governance might involve forms of executive administration such as state government, properly understood, it encompasses any interaction, whether at a political, interpersonal, or representational level, through which influence is exerted over others. This definition is indebted to Foucault's conception of power as "microphysical" (1997) – dwelling not in discrete moments of influence, but in the "infinitesimal mechanism" (Foucault, 1972, p. 98) of power relations that engender possibilities of influencing. In this sense, to govern is not to produce a single effect, but rather "to structure the possible field of action of others." (Foucault, 1982, p. 221).

Governance, then, simultaneously involves structuring power relations and acting through them. Power relations are mutually constitutive of the possibilities for action of both the governed and the governing; "the government of the self is integrated with the government of others" (Foucault, 1989, p. 296). Governance always involves a dialectic, whereby formation of the self is intrinsically linked to the regulation of others. In other words, the struggle by which the structuring of power relations takes place involves a form of reflexivity, or self-understanding, which is productive in the construction of individuals as "subjects".

One type of governance is moral regulation: a "form of politics in which some people act to problematize the conduct, values or culture of others and seek to impose regulation upon them" (Hunt, 1999, p. 1). The defining characteristic of projects of moral regulation is the centralization of normative criteria of "right" and "wrong" by which power is brought to bear on different individuals (i.e. moralization). Foucault understands these "dividing practices" (Foucault, 1982, p. 210) as involving three moments: the

development of normative categories, the sorting of people in terms of these categories, and the legitimation of their differential treatment. Projects of moral regulation are not “events”, but rather “ongoing contestations that involve a continuous, and more or less coercive, suppression of some identities and forms of life and the encouragement and enhancement of preferred forms” (Hunt, 1999, p. 15). In other words, ordinary moral regulation cannot be thought of as particular instances of the moralization of certain individuals and groups. Rather, moralization is a long-term project through which normative categories take shape and shift. Self-formation in the context of moral regulation is understood as the constitution of subjectivity in relation to normative categories through variously sorting, acting upon, and interacting with typified others (and, necessarily, a typified conception of self).

One way moral regulation takes place is through processes of problematization (Hunt, 1999). Problematization occurs through “the deployment of distinctively moral discourses which construct a moralized subject and an object or target which is acted upon by means of moralizing practices.” (Hunt, 1999, p. 6). Following Purvis and Hunt (1993, p. 476), discourse can be thought of as specific “linguistic or semiotic vehicles” through which thinking is organized. In simple terms, problematization through discourse involves laying claim to the problematic nature of others through indicating the damaging consequences of their behaviour, or even their very presence. Following the construction and contestation of moral categories, and the processes of locating individuals in these categories (i.e. subjectification), problematization is “linked fundamentally to the quest to impose order on, or to ‘sort out’, disorderly phenomena” (Hier and Greenberg, 2002, p.

492). As Foucault maintained, there is a universal human imperative to dialectically order the experiential or social world (Foucault, 1995).

### *Discourse Analysis*

Revisiting the themes in the descriptive analysis, I examine how discourse operates to construct public CCTV monitoring as an intelligible object for the participants. Conclusions drawn from the descriptive analysis suggest that public CCTV monitoring is understood fundamentally in terms of certain modes of problematization of the downtown area. Practitioners of discourse analysis recommend selecting data most prominent in the construction of the phenomenon in question (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 74-5). I therefore decided to bracket data on the construction of downtown problems that were not articulated to understand public CCTV cameras (e.g. problems to do with traffic and the lack of social services).

Discourse analysis differs from other methods of social research in that it prefigures certain philosophical assumptions. As Davis and Phillips (2002, p. 6) explain, “traditional qualitative approaches often assume a social world and then seek to understand the meaning of this world for participants”. However, discourse analysis assumes that the social world is itself constituted as intelligible through the reproduction of language and texts. Therefore, discourse analysis does not reveal aspects of phenomena in themselves (i.e. “downtown problems” and “public CCTV monitoring”),

but rather examines how language and text are employed in order to understand phenomena.<sup>47</sup>

I employ two analytical concepts to interpret the data: interpretive repertoires and evaluative rationality. For Potter (1996), discourse analysis involves identifying interpretive repertoires, understood as “systematically related sets of terms that are often used with stylistic and grammatical coherence and often organized around one or more central metaphors” (1996, p. 131). I formulate the concept *evaluative rationality* to explain the ways CCTV is meaningfully constructed, and imbued with negative and positive connotations. Potter asserts, “discourse analysis resolutely steers clear of cognitive reduction, instead treating purportedly cognitive phenomena as parts of social practices” (Potter, 1997, p. 158). Observing Potter’s comments, “opinion” cannot be thought of as an individual achievement. Rather, conceptualizing opinion in terms of discourse is necessary. I do not argue that peoples’ opinions about phenomena are non-existent, but rather that opinions are intelligible inasmuch as the phenomenon in question is inserted into pre-existing interpretive schemes. An evaluative rationality is a discursive configuration in which evaluation of phenomena becomes possible by virtue of an articulation with existing discourses. For example, in the sentence (taken from a newspaper headline), “Gang silence on 11-year-old’s murder”,<sup>48</sup> the negative connotations of “gang” and “murder”, in relation to the “innocent” 11-year-old’s death,

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<sup>47</sup> This methodological position derives from structuralism, and in particular, Ferdinand de Saussure’s linguistic structuralism. Saussure introduced a relational theory of linguistics that theorizes meaning as nothing essential in itself, but as arising from a “series of differences of ideas” (Saussure, 1959, p. 120).

<sup>48</sup> This story, taken from *The Guardian*, August 24, 2007, concerns the apparently random gunning down of an eleven-year-old boy in Liverpool, by other youths who fired a gun as they rode by on a BMX bicycle.

render an implicit evaluation that their “silence” is something that ought to be condemned. Therefore, evaluative rationalities involve the discursive location of the phenomenon in question within a moral narrative with the effect of rationalizing a negative or positive judgment.

My analysis proceeds in three parts. First, I analyze focus group talk in order to explain the problematization of Kelowna’s downtown in terms of moral regulation. Second, I analyze the specific ways that opinions about public CCTV monitoring are enunciated. Third, I apply the theoretical framework to explain differences in evaluative rationalities pertaining to the application of public CCTV monitoring.

### **Analysis 1: The Moral Dialectics of Downtown**

Certain interpretive repertoires (also known as discourses [Potter, 1996, p. 129]) are employed in understanding problems in Kelowna’s downtown. A prominent discourse involves the construction of problematic populations. Recognizable, stylized representations, such as “gangs”, “crack-heads”, “rednecks”, and “criminal elements”, emerged as central to descriptions of downtown problems. The terms “gangs” and “crack-heads”, for example, are imbued with pre-established cultural connotations, such as violence and drug-abuse, respectively. The episodic folklore of related social problems, such as “swarming” (Josset, 2006) and “the crystal meth plague”, both invoke and contribute to these representations. In Kelowna, specific and generalized local problems are understood predominately through the “transients” metaphor, as shown in the following senior’s account.

Greg: And walking into the park...the main park down there...which used to be *the* main place for people to go,

and now you hesitate to go because of the transients and the drug problem.

In the quotation, a reluctance to visit the park is rationalized in terms of the presence of transients. Note that it is unnecessary for Greg to articulate the link between transients, drugs and people's avoidance of the park. Rather, this is implied in Greg's use of an established interpretive repertoire prefiguring pejorative connotations of transients.

Another dimension of the construction of problems in the downtown is the enunciation of a tension between pejorative populations and "decent", preferred members of the public.

Muriel: Kerry Park was a very big hangout for the illegal selling of drugs going on right under the noses of the people...the park is now much better, they cleaned a lot of it up...Now people can actually go and they can actually walk dogs now in certain times of the day... and the city is trying to get back to the way it used to be when the citizens can enjoy the park.

In this instance, Muriel, a senior, articulates problems in the park through an opposition between "drug-dealers" and the preferred "dog-walkers". Although the phrase, "enjoy the park", could conceivably apply to the imbibing of recreational drugs, Muriel is obviously using the distinction between drug-takers and dog-walkers to construct a normative vision of the park. This vision involves an implicit distinction between "acceptable" and "unacceptable" uses of public areas. The discursive framing of populations in this type of opposition is a prominent way of constructing problems employed by both senior citizens and shelter clients. Peter, a shelter client and self-confessed drug-user and thief, employs a similar interpretive scheme to explain negative perceptions of the downtown.

Peter: Because families don't want to come, you know they don't come down here to see some crack-head doing the

chicken, or some junky smashing up, or in other cases me smashing someone out or something, you don't want to see that downtown.

However, Peter's inclusion of himself in the problematized population is exceptional. In the majority of cases, the opposition is invoked in such a way that the speaking participant is constituted as belonging to the preferred population. A shelter client, Anthony, discerns an opposition between downtown populations thus:

Anthony: I actually feel a lot safer here with the boys than those guys who come out of the bars, I find them more dangerous than the guys I live with.

The problematization of downtown Kelowna is not enacted through an objective awareness of certain levels of crime and disorder. Rather, participants construct the downtown as problematic in terms of its conformity, or nonconformity, to a particular normative vision.

Harry: Certainly the TV gives a graphic depiction of the druggies, the baggies being actually dealt in the downtown area. You can see it on TV. Anywhere at all, you get this information. Not only do you see it – you hear about it certainly, and you read about it.

As indicated by the latter excerpt of a senior's account, for the participants, negotiating downtown Kelowna's correspondence to a normative vision is mediated through a convergence of certain modes of representation: local discourses pertaining to the downtown area (e.g. media, friends' accounts, local folklore) and interpretations of certain visual signifiers (drug use, gathering gangs, disheveled appearances) through relevant interpretive repertoires. The significance of certain visible cues in constructing problems is neatly illustrated in the following shelter client's observation.

Joe: It comes down to...the citizens, like you said earlier, if they don't see it, they don't care about it. Like if you're smoking crack on the street – people are gonna go “I don't want that”. If you go inside your house, people don't care because they don't see it.

The problematization of downtown Kelowna can be understood as involving a dialectical relationship involving the moralization of certain populations. Participants explain downtown problems by adopting subject positions in terms of a normative vision of downtown. The vision involves stereotypical representations of “decent citizens” and “families” versus “drug-addicts” and “criminals”. These representations are part of long-term projects of moralization that predate public CCTV cameras. The process of subjectification, however, is different for seniors than it is for shelter clients. For seniors, favourable self-positioning via the moral dialectic is seemingly unproblematic. I interpret this as a result of the fact that seniors' appearances, behaviours and demographic characteristics are unambiguously detached from a particular, dominant mode of representation of problem populations in Kelowna. However, the subjectification of shelter clients is more nuanced. One shelter client participant, Peter, describes his various offences nonchalantly, yet expresses a moral judgment about certain types of drugs addicts (“crack-heads”). Another, Jacob, enthuses about the availability of drugs in Kelowna, yet vilifies violent crime (“stompings”).

Hunt (1999) argues that individuals can adopt nuanced moralized subject positions arising from dominant normative visions, or reject them through alternative interpretations as a form of resistance to certain aspects of moral regulation. Generally, shelter clients report that discourses constructing normative visions of downtown Kelowna view some of their characteristics and behaviours as inherently problematic.

However, as I illustrated in chapter 4, they respond in turn through alternative interpretations that problematize others (police, dangerous drivers, criminals, certain “types” of drug addicts, etc.).

### **Analysis 2: Understanding and Evaluating CCTV**

In this section, I revisit data relating to understandings of the purpose of public CCTV cameras to explore the ways CCTV is understood in relation to existing discourses. I find that participants generally understand public CCTV monitoring in Kelowna via discourses of local and generalized crime and disorder. When asked where she thought Kelowna’s public CCTV cameras are located, one senior based her guess on the prior problematization of local problems.

Muriel: I could guess where they needed one...they had to keep the bus stop free from small gangs of threes and fours.

Another senior, who was aware of the locations of the cameras, explicated their location through a similar reference to the established concern about drug dealing and addiction in the downtown.

Greg: A drug area like we have over on Leon Avenue, there was a camera there monitored 24 hours a day.

Shelter clients also rationalized the positioning of the CCTV cameras in relation to the drug problem.

Trevor: But there’s cameras all up and down here. Those cameras can zoom in on your shoelaces.

Peter: Can you fucking blame them man?...Kelowna’s gone fucking down since that crack’s been around.

In these three excerpts, preexisting problems are articulated to understand public CCTV cameras. The articulation of cameras with “gangs” and “drug areas” belies a commonsense notion that public CCTV is a response to these problems. However, this understanding relies upon interpretive repertoires pertaining to downtown problems. It does not rely on explicit technical reasoning pertaining to the *ways* cameras respond to these problems. In simple terms, many utterances about public CCTV reveal an implicit assumption that cameras “work” in the interests of normative visions of the downtown.

The following quote from a senior, in which CCTV surveillance is linked to the solution of problems in the park with no explicit causal explanation, relies on an evaluative rationality pertaining to the ability of CCTV cameras to prevent certain problems.

Greg: The transients and the drug problem. It’s in the park. So, surveillance...I think they’re stepping up the surveillance in the last year, and I believe it’s getting better.

Public CCTV cameras are, for the most part, evaluated similarly through the articulation of disparate knowledges pertaining to their efficacy. The two following quotes from shelter clients reveal the types of knowledges drawn upon in order to understand public CCTV as effective against crime.

Bob: In Sydney, Australia, or actually it was in England, the crime rate dropped 50% after they put the cameras in.

Joe: In England if there’s a criminal that does something, they can follow that person for miles and miles, automatically.

Following a pattern recognized in SPSPC interviews with CCTV proponents, references to the use of CCTV in other contexts (i.e. in Britain, in relation to terrorism,) is a

fundamental resource for participants' evaluations of CCTV cameras. In the coming quotes, seniors link representations of the use of CCTV camera footage in the aftermath of the July 7th terrorist attacks in London, to the establishment of public CCTV systems in Canada.

Jane: Well I was very impressed with the way the cameras had worked after that last bombing on the subway and the bus...

R: Do you think terrorism is a good argument to have more surveillance in Canada?

Greg: Yes.

Jane: Yeah. Yeah, especially if they're using us as a stepping stone.

The latter quotations demonstrate how knowledge about public CCTV in Canada is often constructed around extra-local representations of the "success" of video surveillance. In addition to a discourse of Britain's CCTV use, participants draw on various media representations of CCTV technology to form opinions about Kelowna's public CCTV scheme. One senior made numerous references to the uses of ATM CCTV systems in apprehending criminals.

Greg: Back to the camera in the ATM machine: How many times have they seen on TV the person that they're after? No matter where you go, you're going to get the same opinion that surveillance helps.

Shelter clients also drew on wider cultural representations of CCTV cameras to form their views.

Trevor: Like Baitcar Dot Com, right?

Evaluations of public CCTV surveillance are intertwined with the construction of CCTV in cultural and media representations. But public CCTV is rarely evaluated through reference to research about CCTV, documented instances of the efficacy of CCTV cameras, or personal experiences attesting to the utility of CCTV.

More effective still than cultural representations, the linking of public CCTV cameras to particularly emotive forms of crime is effective in constructing positive evaluations of Kelowna's CCTV program. Instances of changing opinions are especially illustrative of the preference of certain evaluative rationalities in constructing public CCTV surveillance.

Joe: I was totally against the cameras, but after hearing the guys talking about safety...

Joe, a shelter client, undergoes a change of opinion after an earlier discussion about CCTV as a response to particularly objectionable crimes.

Jacob: I think they're a great idea.

Joe: Yeah?

Jacob: The rapists and killers and cowards that come up behind people with baseball bats need to be controlled.

Joe's stance toward cameras had to that point been largely articulated in terms of a discourse about "the right to privacy", but his peers' rationalization of public CCTV with reference to stylized representations of crime caused Joe to realign his interpretation.

In periods of moral regulation, problematization can take the form of the construction of a grievance against a stylized group (Hier, 2007). The articulation of public CCTV cameras with particularly stylized representations of harm via the transients signifier was a prominent evaluative rationality used to legitimize support for CCTV in

Kelowna. Senior participants understand public CCTV cameras as a response to a perceived failure of certain populations to self-regulate. Shelter clients employ similar interpretive schemes, yet they are more nuanced and subtle due to the precarious proximity of their own modes of cultural expression to negative normative visions.

Public CCTV is also legitimized through unambiguously unfavourable representations of crime and atrocity. According to Innes (2004, p. 352) “people tend to construct their understandings of crime and disorder, and thus their perceptions of criminogenic risk, around certain ‘signal’ incidents.” Throughout these focus groups, public CCTV is evaluated in terms of an implicit ability to intervene in particularly affective instances of crime. The affective dimension of these crimes (i.e. child-murder, rape) is shown to overrule relatively “trivial” objections to public CCTV cameras (i.e. privacy, cost). Participants are able to evaluate public CCTV monitoring in terms of signal crimes through an implicit assumption in articulations of public CCTV cameras with crime, especially violent crime, that CCTV “works” to control these problems.

### **Analysis 3: Public CCTV and Perceptions of “Street” Populations**

I draw two observations from the preceding analysis. The first observation is that problems in Kelowna are constructed through a normative vision of downtown that involves a moral dialectic pertaining to preferred and pejorative populations. Populations are interpreted as problematic through interpretive repertoires that involve negative normative connotations of particular cultural signifiers such as drug use, “strung out” appearances, or groups of people in the downtown. These interpretive schemes are relative rather than absolute. For example, shelter clients may draw on different

knowledges in order to construct problem populations (i.e. Peter's distinction between intravenous drug users and "crack-heads") than seniors.

The second observation is that public CCTV monitoring is rationalized as a response to Kelowna's problems through references to discourses of CCTV in Britain, CCTV in relation to particular types of crime, and wider cultural representations of surveillance cameras in news media, etc. However, the types of crime and deviance drawn upon differ between the seniors and shelter clients. The former rely on simplistic typifications of downtown problem populations, whereas the latter distinguish between issues in the downtown, and tend more often to rationalize public CCTV through references to highly stylized signal crimes. In this discussion, I employ these two conceptual schemes to understand a particular mode of opposition to public CCTV cameras in Kelowna: namely, the notion that public CCTV cameras contribute to a general vilification of downtown "street" populations.

Throughout the focus groups, shelter clients report on a generalized negative representation of homeless and other "street" people in Kelowna. As these shelter clients note,

Peter: They don't want to do nothing for the homeless, they think we're garbage.

Adrian: ...but there's a certain level of assumption about us, we're expected to do something.

I discern a certain reflexivity on behalf of the shelter clients that their interpretations are secondary to those deployed in the dominant political discourse in Kelowna. The reflexive idea among shelter clients that dominant discourses construct "street" people as a morally unfavorable imagined community is inherent to many understandings of public

CCTV. One shelter client attributed the presence of the public CCTV cameras entirely to suspicions about homeless people.

Douglas: Well, the only reason they're putting them in, the cameras, downtown is because of the homeless. They consider the homeless being drug users and drug dealers.

Clients link CCTV to an extension of the criterion of criminality to include aspects of the cultural inventory of homeless people, as this shelter client notes.

Trevor: That's another thing, if you're using the cameras to catch drug dealers, and that's what they say or if they're using them to catch prostitutes that's cool, right? But if they're using them to catch people who need to sleep in the park that's another thing.

Seniors similarly recognize that "street" populations in Kelowna are susceptible to negative normative judgments due to aspects of their appearance, behaviour and activities. One senior argues that clothing in particular is a visible cue for normative judgments.

Greg: I think also that it depends upon the appearance of the person. If the appearance of the person is like a street person or a druggie, then he's going to get targeted in the same class. If he dresses appropriately, and goes to get a job, if his appearance is right, and he's qualified, then I can't see where being on camera or anything like that would make a difference.

Negative representations of "street" populations find their counterpart in the construction of preferred others. Shelter clients understand the cameras as operating within a hierarchy of interests, differentiated in terms of social status.

Trevor: The people here think we don't have a voice until we have jobs.

Adrian: I like what he's saying, I was going to say that but I couldn't find the words. I think...well just what he's saying, I think the cameras might work for them but they won't work for us.

Seniors' acceptance of CCTV cameras is often rationalized through self-identification as preferred members of the downtown.

Maude: As a law-abiding citizen, they don't bother me I'm not doing anything. I think they're an excellent idea.

I argued previously that the moral dialectic involved in the dominant discourse involved the problematization of certain visible and behavioural cues (back-packs, disheveled clothes, gathering in groups, sitting on the floor downtown). Public CCTV, as a visual medium, is understood as complicit in the symbolic construction of general "street" populations as problematic.

Trevor: I'm on camera, and I'm getting lumped into a category with the rest of them.

Shelter clients are concerned by the ability of public CCTV cameras, as a visual medium, to sort downtown inhabitants in terms of certain visible cues. For example, some clients express concerns that the interactivity of public CCTV with "street" populations at a symbolic level, leads to selective policing.

Joe: What I want to know is, when they're watching these films, who are they going after? They might see some certain person, or...a citizen who makes a lot of money, an upper class citizen, might do something wrong, come out of a bar, get into a fight, steal a newspaper, whatever the case may be right? They might let that slide. But they see another guy, on the other side, guy who's supposed to be a bum or poor person – whatever you may call him – he does the same thing and he gets picked up for it. How do we know what they're doing? We don't know where they're

targeting, they're just targeting one type of people and not the other.

Cameras are also understood by shelter clients as complicit in the realization of normative visions of downtown that exclude "street" populations.

Trevor: Great real estate moves, it's centrally located. Location, location, location. We've chased everybody out so it's now clean, it's now safe, we chased everybody out of there, so, you can go to the park after work and take a jog, and, it's a great selling point. Stuff like that.

I previously argued that different people and populations construct moral visions of the downtown in idiosyncratic ways. However, Curtis' (1995) reading of Foucault suggests that certain discourses attain prominence by virtue of their enunciation within synchronic configurations of power. What this means is that although projects of moral regulation are enacted through "microphysical" dynamics of power, in any spatiotemporal location dominant normative visions arise to suppress certain behaviours and modes of expression. The shelter clients' interpretive repertoires, involving subtle differentiations between downtown populations, can be conceptualized as marginalized or "subjugated" (Foucault, 1972). In Kelowna, the transients discourse is a privileged mode of problematization, as evinced by the prominence of the discourse in the rhetorical justification of Kelowna's downtown public CCTV monitoring program.

## **Conclusion**

Kelowna's downtown is constructed differently by different populations, but a particular, dominant normative vision is implied in the accounts of seniors and shelter clients. This normative vision – involving the problematization of "street" populations

through the transients signifier – is intrinsic to the promotion and establishment of CCTV in Kelowna. I identify two central components to the interpretive repertoires constitutive of the normative vision of Kelowna: first, an interpretive scheme employed to understand downtown areas and inhabitants in terms of certain visual signifiers; and, second, the insertion of populations, according to these visual cues, into a moral dialectic pertaining to the acceptable use of downtown spaces. Seniors' self-identification as preferred members of the downtown are evident in their simplistic typifications of downtown problems. But shelter clients recognize that they are understood in terms of discourses of problematization, and therefore take efforts to discern themselves from others through alternative normative schemes.

The efficacy of public CCTV cameras is understood in terms of disparate knowledges pertaining to crime and disorder. Participants evaluate cameras through reference to extra-local representations of CCTV use, and through the commonsensical notion that cameras “work”. Understandings of public CCTV as a nondescript ameliorative phenomenon allow it to be unproblematically inserted into local discourses of problems in the downtown. These understandings are orchestrated around dominant normative visions of the downtown, inasmuch as cameras are universally understood as targeting those populations negatively construed through the moral dialectic. Even though shelter clients construct their own visions of downtown spaces, anxiety about cameras centre on the belief that they are an extension of a certain pejorative vision of downtown populations.

I argue that the social construction of public CCTV monitoring in Kelowna can be understood in terms of the governance of downtown populations through a pre-existing

project of moral regulation. Both seniors and shelter clients understand public CCTV as a normalizing technique of governance, whereby various problematized behaviours and actions are brought to light and acted upon. These understandings are themselves an effect of power, in that the moralization of downtown Kelowna through the “transients” signifier has contributed to defining the very possibilities of “knowing” about public CCTV.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion: Implications of Research

In this final chapter, I discuss the implications of my findings. This discussion is divided into four parts. First, I elaborate on the political significance of this research. In particular, I argue that adequate public consultations have an important part to play in the future establishment of public CCTV monitoring programs. Second, I discuss the wider sociological implications of the research. Third, I discuss the achievement of this study in terms of public sociology. Finally, I offer a brief, reflexive account of the limitations of this thesis, before suggesting fruitful directions for future empirical research based on the findings of this study.

### **Political Significance: The Need for Adequate Public Consultation Research**

In Chapter 2, I outlined the existing political apparatus for the regulation of public CCTV surveillance in Canada. I demonstrated that, currently, public CCTV monitoring programs are governed by a set of non-legal provincial and federal privacy guidelines. Local authorities and other proponents of video surveillance programs legitimize CCTV schemes through adherence to these guidelines. In each version of these guidelines, there is a requirement that adequate public consultation is conducted as part of the process of preparing for the establishment of a CCTV monitoring program. As a result, public opinion about public CCTV is politicized with respect to the establishment of CCTV programs.

Authorities have hitherto failed to adequately incorporate informed public opinion into processes of CCTV establishment. Yet, CCTV programs continue to be rhetorically justified through reference to public opinion and public interests. This study was designed to generate data on the public opinion of public CCTV in order to bring substantive data to the claims made in CCTV promotional rhetoric. Based on the exploratory analysis of data pertaining to the public CCTV monitoring program in Kelowna, I reach three tentative conclusions (outlined in a dedicated subsection below). First, public CCTV monitoring has little or no effect on perceptions of safety. Second, the information drawn on to make evaluations about the efficacy of public CCTV monitoring is based on media and other representations, not actual research or evidence. Third, adequate public consultation can ensure that the public are better equipped to form opinions and expectations about CCTV. The latter may best be realized by incorporating into public consultations diverse actors from publics with varied interests, as well as relevant experts in related issues such as privacy, law and the realistic efficacy of public CCTV monitoring.

### *Perceptions of Safety*

The notion that public CCTV monitoring contributes to public perceptions of safety is almost always invoked by authorities in promotional rhetoric. I find that, in Kelowna at least, this claim is unsubstantiated. Seniors generally support the CCTV program in Kelowna. However, they do so based upon assumptions about the effect of CCTV cameras on crime, not because CCTV cameras make them feel any safer. That is not to say that safety is not a concern for seniors in the downtown; some report avoiding certain areas, especially at night, based on impressions of types of people thought to

represent an unspecified threat. However, I have shown that these understandings are tied to wider representations intrinsic to the problematization of downtown Kelowna. Some seniors acknowledged that perceptions of safety were negatively impacted by local discourses concerning transients. The presence of CCTV cameras was not reported to affect these perceptions of safety. In fact, many safety concerns in downtown Kelowna are unrelated to concerns about harmful others. Shelter populations in particular report issues such as dangerous drivers and abusive law enforcement officers as more of a concern in this regard. Falling victim to a hit-and-run was perceived as more problematic than dangerous individuals.

*Great Expectations: Assumptions about the Efficacy of CCTV*

Authorities generally report high levels of public support for CCTV programs. This study corroborates these claims. Most of the focus group participants favour public CCTV cameras for the purposes of crime control. Several participants adopt more positive stances towards the cameras as the focus groups progress. However, support for public CCTV is justified in two ways. First, participants are more likely to support public CCTV monitoring if it is articulated in relation to particularly stylized or emotive forms of crime. I use Innes' (2004) concept of "signal crimes" to demonstrate that public understandings of social problems are easily oriented to representations of crime with a strong affective dimension. Participants are more likely to approve of public CCTV if it can be reasonably argued that it has an ameliorative effect on this type of crime. Positive evaluations of the public CCTV scheme in Kelowna are often rationalized in relation to particularly abhorrent incidents (e.g. rape, child murder, assaults on seniors).

Second, public opinion about public CCTV monitoring in terms of its efficacy in preventing, or aiding in the detection of, certain forms of crime and disorder, is formed through disparate knowledges pertaining to the efficacy of CCTV. News media representations and representations of the “success” of CCTV in other places, such as Britain, are among the few sources participants draw upon to evaluate public CCTV as a crime control tool. The SPSPC study demonstrates that similar knowledges are inherent to political processes that spawn public CCTV programs. It is problematic that these forms of knowledge are currently privileged over dedicated research for at least two reasons. First, public expectations are likely to be out of sync with the actual utility of public CCTV monitoring. Second, public CCTV monitoring may, as a result of these expectations, be invested in and established as an inappropriate response to a community’s real crime problems and public safety issues.

*Informed Choice Vs. Raw Claims: The Public Consultation Imperative*

This study is unequipped to measure or detail the uses of public CCTV monitoring programs. Evidence suggests that public CCTV monitoring is extremely useful in preventing certain types of crime such as localized vandalism and theft of/from vehicles in parking lots (Gill and Spriggs, 2005). The problem I identify in the claims of authorities, and the understandings of the public, is that somehow public CCTV has come to be understood as an effective response to a range of crime and disorder. Although research may yet conclude that public CCTV is an effective general crime deterrent/detection tool, current indications are that expectations cannot be empirically substantiated (ibid.).

However, expectations about efficacy are not the only assumptions pertaining to public CCTV monitoring systems that may be misaligned with actuality. Participants also exhibit a range of assumptions pertaining to the characteristics of the CCTV program in Kelowna. With the exception of an ex-RCMP officer and one other senior, none of the participants were aware of the precise scope of the CCTV program. Participants also tended to assume that public CCTV was live monitored and extensively reviewed. However, the RCMP camera is only sporadically live-monitored, and the City Council CCTV camera is monitored by a receptionist in between her other official duties. The defeat of the 2003 Charter challenge may have signaled a hiatus in the debate about public CCTV as a legitimate policing tool despite implications for privacy, but the privacy guidelines in effect contain stipulations that the public should be aware of the precise scope and nature of the surveillance to which they are subjected.

I conclude that, if public CCTV monitoring is to continue to spread as a crime response tool in Canada, it ought to do so in tandem with thorough, inclusive public consultation, for at least three reasons. First, public opinion about public CCTV monitoring should benefit from an awareness of research pertaining to the efficacy, privacy implications, and any other issues that may concern citizens who are asked to allow local authorities to begin CCTV monitoring schemes. I anticipate that such public consultations will have the corollary effect of ensuring that authorities themselves are equipped with more information and research to enable them to make the complicated decision as to whether public CCTV is a proper response to the real problems in their community. Second, adequate and inclusive public consultation sessions will ensure that public awareness about public CCTV cameras is of a high and detailed level. Currently,

Kelowna abides by privacy guidelines in that signs are displayed in the areas under surveillance. However, my research indicates that signs do not guarantee adequate public knowledge. Third, public consultations can have the important role of addressing the prominent concerns certain populations have about the implications for themselves of video surveillance cameras. Support shelter clients in Kelowna may be homeless or needy for a variety of reasons, but all are compelled to gather in certain areas to take advantage of support services that cater for their needs. Shelter clients in Kelowna are aware of certain negative representations that implicate them in terms of their appearance, behaviour, or very presence in certain areas downtown. They have concerns that public CCTV cameras may negatively affect them in numerous different ways. Many of them do not have addresses and therefore cannot respond to census questionnaires, or easily access news media reports or public information broadcasts. These vulnerable populations in particular would benefit from inclusive public consultations.

I suggest that public consultations could be improved in several ways. First, consultations could be publicized more thoroughly. Efforts could be made to advertise consultations over a variety of media. Also, ways to notify shelter client populations and other downtown dwellers could be developed, for two important reasons: first, downtown populations are more likely to come into daily contact with, and be affected the most by, public CCTV programs; second, these populations sometimes have difficulties accessing media that other citizens may easily be able to access. Second, public consultations should involve a substantial public information dimension pertaining to the specifics of the proposed CCTV plan, including a presentation of the relevant evidence and research employed to rationalize the adoption of CCTV as a response to specific, local problems.

This measure would assist publics in forming realistic expectations of public CCTV cameras, and help to dispel ambiguities over the uses and effectiveness of the cameras.

Third, public consultations should involve extensive forums and discussions bringing together multiple publics with either a stake in the downtown area, or an expertise about some aspect of CCTV. Local business leaders, citizens, privacy advocates, politicians and academics with relevant research agendas would be suitable candidates for consultations.

In light of the latter point, I conclude that sociologists in particular have a role to play in the future establishment of public CCTV programs in Canada. Sociologists can become involved in at least four ways: First, through public speaking on the subject of CCTV and related aspects of surveillance. Second, through becoming involved in public consultations to offer findings of relevant research. Third, by writing op-ed articles and conversing in the media. In this capacity, sociologists would be particularly useful in rationalizing “common-sense” assumptions about CCTV that I have shown to be critical in public opinion about CCTV. Finally, through conducting focus groups, interviews, and other forms of research with individuals who experience CCTV as a part of their daily existence, in order to uncover implications of this growing phenomena for ordinary members of the Canadian public.

### **Public Sociology of CCTV**

In the Introduction to this study, I discuss my intention that this study be, at least in part, a work of public sociology. Public sociology is any sociology oriented toward bringing public knowledge and sociological knowledge together for the purposes of developing better mutual understandings of a phenomena, and/or furthering a particular cause, or

helping to equip a public in a particular political endeavor. I argue, in the light of the observations and conclusions I draw above, that this study is a contribution to public sociology in at least two respects.

First, due to shortcomings in existing provisions for public consultations, publics have very few resources available to them in order to understand public CCTV cameras. In fact, this problem can be expressed conversely: publics have very many resources available to them in order to understand public CCTV cameras, but as I have demonstrated, these resources are not always helpful in constructing informed opinions. Through this study, I have, in a modest way, attempted to counter this tendency by initiating these discussions with four groups of people in Kelowna. Through the discussions, the participants were able to compare and share opinions and understandings of public CCTV. I learned that public CCTV is understood in very ambiguous terms, but through these focus groups, I was able to offer the benefit of my knowledge of several academic studies about public CCTV, as well as my extensive experience investigating CCTV for the SPSPC project.

Second, I intend to make this study available to all of the participants involved, the authorities in Kelowna, and any other party interested in the subject of public CCTV monitoring. Burawoy (2004) stresses the role public sociology has to play in the stimulation of inclusive debate and dialogue, owing to the marginalization of certain voices in modern political configurations. In response to limited provisions for publics to become involved in the politics of public CCTV monitoring, I intend this study to help to politicize marginalized voices in two ways. First, this study will be made available to authorities and citizens in other cities where CCTV is being considered. Therefore, the

opinions and understandings of the shelter clients and seniors in Kelowna will hopefully be incorporated into decision-making about public CCTV in other cities where public CCTV monitoring is currently established, or at some stage of the planning and implementation process. As stated in Chapter 1, authorities often express the need for research on public opinion, so it is likely that they will be receptive to this type of study. Second, throughout this study, I ensured that the participants were aware of the particular stipulations about public consultations, and the right for the public to be informed in full about the surveillance practices to which they are subjected. I hope that, as a result of involvement in the focus group, should any participant who desires to learn more about public CCTV monitoring in his/her locale, or who wishes to become involved in a future public consultation, or even write to the city council to request information, that he/she will do so better informed in some way from participation in the study.

### **Sociological Implications**

This study advances the sociology of CCTV in at least two ways. First, this is not the first study to link public CCTV monitoring to moral regulation and the ordering of downtown spaces (see Walby, 2005). However, this study is the first to demonstrate how public CCTV becomes active in projects of moral regulation by virtue of its insertion into moral narratives pertaining to normative visions of problem populations. The problematization of marginalized groups in the downtown is an established pattern in processes of CCTV establishment (Coleman, 2005; 2004; Coleman and Sim 2002). However, CCTV is often conceptualized in these instances as a social-ordering mechanism deployed in the interests of dominant ideologies. What I try to do is show how CCTV itself is constructed

in relation to interpretive repertoires that make sense of downtown areas as a whole. I argue that the moral dialectic employed by individuals to discern desirable and undesirable inhabitants of downtown spaces involves the shared interpretive repertoire of the transient. Seniors and shelter clients are constituted, in different ways, as ethical subjects through their self-positioning in relation to pejorative representations understood under the transients signifier. However, public CCTV is understood by shelter clients as a threat to the distinctions they make between themselves and negatively-judged others as it is understood as operating in terms of a dominant normative vision of downtown that operates in terms of certain visual cues. Shelter clients' anxiety can be conceptualized as the result of their understandings of public CCTV pressing them close to the pejorative side of moral dialectic. In this sense, I suggest that public CCTV itself can be understood as a social problem by certain populations of the downtown.

Second, I advance efforts to understand public CCTV in terms of "signal crimes" (Innes, 2004) – particular events or representations of crime that signify threats to socio-normative order sufficient enough to warrant unprecedented responses. Hier, Greenberg, Walby and Lett (2007) demonstrate the role that certain affective crimes and tragedies may have in mobilizing efforts to establish public CCTV programs. My contribution is to demonstrate that "signal crimes" can play an integral part in the formation of public opinion about CCTV. Unambiguously unfavourable representations of crime (i.e. Jamie Bulger, violent attacks of seniors) are often drawn upon to understand CCTV. Implicit in this articulation is the corollary assumption that CCTV cameras are an effective response to this type of tragic/horrific occurrence. This relationship takes on significance when similar articulations become active in the establishment of further public CCTV

monitoring programs, as was seen recently in Toronto in the case of the shooting of Jane Creba.

### **Reflections and Further Areas of Study**

In hindsight, I acknowledge two missed opportunities in this study. First, my decision to conduct focus groups with seniors and shelter clients proved to be analytically fruitful. However, I recognize retrospectively that the study would have been improved had I managed to conduct focus groups combining members of both populations. Often, during a focus group, I found myself playing “devil’s advocate” in order to put some common difference between the opinions of shelter clients and seniors into dialogue. At times, a consensus was difficult to challenge. Some of the more interesting dynamics of the focus groups were instances of changing opinions. I could have maximized these instances with mixed groups. However, difficulties in securing groups of shelter clients to meet at a particular time and place might have proved an insurmountable challenge in this respect.

Second, the study was limited in scope in terms of sources of public opinion. The study was originally intended to include members of the business community and several students. However, despite many attempts, I was unable to convince more than two business people to meet at the same time. This was due to a practical oversight on my behalf: planning the focus groups during the peak of a busy holiday season. However, although I did manage to conduct four focus groups with local students in Kelowna, the practical limitations of an MA thesis prevented me from including these data in the study.

I make the following five recommendations for further study based on my findings. First, in order to better analyze the process of opinion change in terms of the

interpretive repertoires drawn on to construct evaluative rationalities – a series of focus groups partnered with preceding, and follow-up individual interviews would allow for a more comprehensive investigation of this phenomenon. This would allow an exploration of “raw” opinions about public CCTV, and a reflexive exploration of the ways opinion changed as a result of the focus group interactions. Second, focus groups comprising multiple population types would produce richer, and less repetitive data. Third, studies in cities other than Kelowna would be an essential next step. In particular, I predict that focus groups in cities that are yet to undergo processes of public consultation would provide useful data to use in the planning of public consultations. Fourth, efforts should be made to include women clients of support shelters, and other female downtown populations (e.g. sex workers, homeless women), of differing ages. Data on women’s perceptions of public CCTV cameras may offer very different and important insights into the understanding of public CCTV cameras. And finally, further studies would benefit from including members of local authorities in the focus groups, not only to encourage a diversity of opinion, but also to maximize the dimension of public sociology through the direct integration of marginalized voices with those equipped to make decisions about public CCTV that have more complicated and profound consequences than they are perhaps aware.

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