

a struggle for equality that reaches for something greater than what the state can possibly deliver.

The book is successful at demonstrating the value of resistance not just as a social relationship or an element of Canadian history, but as something that shapes an individual life. Neigh's work details the deeply personal reasons that people are drawn to activism and social protest. The interviews at the heart of this book personalize activism, and in the larger sense, the national history that envelops (and sometimes overcomes) activists. Neigh recovers these voices – and this is in itself a valuable activist project – and turns them to the larger task of speaking to Canadian history. In the process, the book also provides a varied vocabulary for how we talk about activism and what it means to be politicized. At times Neigh is self-conscious about the differences between his connection to activism compared to the role that struggle played in the lives of his subjects. Lynn Jones of Nova Scotia distilled this divide while reflecting on a lifetime of anti-racist organizing in Nova Scotia: 'you call it activism; I call it surviving' (107). Ultimately Neigh brings each set of interviews around to answering a bigger question – why people struggle as they do. The different answers emphasize the value of the activist history in Resisting the State.

Comack, Elizabeth. 2012. *Racialized Policing: Aboriginal People's Encounters With the Police*. Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing. ISBN 978-1-55266-475-9. Paperback: 22.95 CAD. Pages: 254.

**Reviewed By Ted McCoy**  
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Elizabeth Comack's *Racialized Policing* arrives at a moment of heightened concern and awareness over the troubling relationship between Aboriginal people and police forces across Canada. The issue reached a crisis point in early 2013 with international pressure from Human Rights Watch over RCMP abuse of Aboriginal women. These demands proliferate amidst ongoing calls for a national inquiry into missing or murdered women from Aboriginal communities across Canada. These issues also are being folded into the growing Idle No More movement which presents a timely opportunity to focus anti-colonial protest on problems of race in policing and criminal justice. Comack's research serves as a valuable primer for this project. The book convincingly argues that policing in Canada is inherently racialized – understood as the manner in which racism infiltrates policing, and in turn, racializes First Nations people.

Moreover, Comack points to larger systemic structures of racism that are reproduced by policing in Canada. In this sense, *Racialized Policing* provides a broader context and historical overview for understanding the current flashpoints in the relationship between Aboriginal people and the police.

The book explores the relationship between First Nations people and police in multiple jurisdictions. An excellent chapter on racial profiling in Ontario expands the scope of the material on Aboriginal people to include Black communities. Comack explores the controversy ignited in Toronto and Kingston and the telling denials of both police and the public that racial profiling happens in Canada. In the face of anecdotal evidence that is routinely refuted, Comack points to the larger systemic basis of racism and how it is manifested in the practice of policing.

After drawing on the historical record of Aboriginal-police relations, Comack offers detailed examinations of three contemporary cases – the shooting of J.J. Harper by Winnipeg police in 1988, the freezing deaths of Aboriginal men in Saskatoon after being left in isolated areas outside of the city, and the shooting of Matthew Dumas in Winnipeg in 2005. Juxtaposed in this way, Comack illustrates a pattern of abuse and a framework by which these incidents can be understood as a reflection of systemic racism. As she admits, these arguments are bound to be unpopular, particularly in a political climate in which the police are represented as unquestioned guardians of public safety. However, the evidence Comack assembles is too overwhelming to ignore. The arguments she advances about racism require little in the way of academic theorizing, although Comack provides thoughtful analysis throughout the book. These examples are devastating because they reveal a brutality that would be senseless if not for the overwhelming implications about race and racism in Canadian society.

A striking commonality between the examples assembled by Comack is consistent unwillingness by police to acknowledge that systemic racism exists. This manifests itself in multiple ways, from the everyday attitudes that presume criminality, poverty and dependence, to systemic practices that have resulted in tragic or deadly outcomes. This “discourse of denial” often shifted blame to Aboriginal people for their own victimization and suggests that the disconnect between racialized policing and how police view themselves continues to contribute to this problem. The way Comack lays out this recent history might also provide context to current calls for a national commission into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The book suggests that we have traveled this road before. Each of its case studies resulted in official inquiries of various stripes, and yet the systemic nature of racialized policing prevails. Even in criminal trials where police are indicted and convicted, police forces offer staunch resistance to the implications of racism.

The city of Winnipeg is at the centre of much of the racialized policing Comack investigates. In Chapter 6 she draws on the findings of interviews with 78 individuals from Winnipeg’s inner-city. These interviews acknowledge the growing reality of urban

poverty, crime, and violence in the lives of First Nations people. This reorients our attention away from reserves and rural settings and illustrates a different manifestation of colonialism in urban Canadian society. This shines a light on not only the problematic relationships between Winnipeg police and Aboriginal residents, but also the larger process by which urban spaces become racialized. Comack connects these trends to larger structural developments. Growing economic inequality across Canada and the neoliberal dismantling of the social welfare state are not abstract phenomena in Comack's account – they contribute directly to how Aboriginal people experience poverty and the criminal justice system. The larger argument made by Comack is that the police are heavily implicated in reproducing these outcomes. The experiences of the subjects in this chapter make this connection explicit and this material is among the most obvious strengths of Comack's investigation.

The contemporary examples chosen by Comack are effective, but as she points out, they also reflect a long history in which police have maintained an upper hand in a very unequal relationship with Aboriginal people. Comack suggests that one way forward would be reframing the central issue facing Aboriginal people as a problem of inequality that results in impoverished social and economic conditions. This too is at the core of what Idle No More might accomplish with sustained pressure. Comack's book is a timely suggestion that the structures of criminal justice should be called into question and subject to demands for a new path forward.

Luxton, Meg and Mary Jane Mossman, eds. 2012. *Reconsidering Knowledge: Feminism and the Academy*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing. ISBN 978-1-55266-476-6. Paperback: 29.95 CAD. Pages: 168.

**Reviewed By Dayna Nadine Scott**  
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The book, and the lecture series at York University that spawned it, were conceived as an opportunity to look back on the themes and ideas put forward in a publication called *Knowledge Reconsidered: A Feminist Overview*, that was produced by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) in 1984. As Mary Jane Mossman (my colleague at Osgoode Hall) and Meg Luxton explain in the Introduction, the CRIAOW publication, and others like it, came in the context of a developing understanding in Canada and the United States that feminist knowledge had 'perspective transforming' elements and therefore, instead of being simply 'tacked on to