Steven Downing, PhD

Associate Professor, Criminology, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at University of Ontario Institute of Technology

Oshawa, ON, CA

Criminologist explores the intersection between culture, media and perceptions of justice

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Methodologist and Theoretician, Steven Downing, PhD, applies theories of crime to online and real-life settings, where he qualitatively examines subcultural and social control constructs surrounding deviant and criminal behaviour. An Associate Professor in the Legal Studies Program of the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, his interdisciplinary research agenda spans legal studies, criminology, and sociology; and focuses on the intersection between society, culture, and digital and emerging technology. He strives to develop an understanding of how the digital world overlaps with cultural issues.

Co-creator of UOIT's Digital Life Research Group, his collaborative cyberbullying research has been widely cited. Dr. Downing's latest research examines adult bullying within the context of reality television, and includes a case study of a reality TV celebrity who has been victimized both on- and off-screen. He aims to shed light on the need for enhanced rights and protection from exploitation, harassment and maltreatment from the public, production companies and studios among North America's reality TV labour force. He will further study the bullying of individuals in the public eye through social media.

Immersed in another critical body of research, Dr. Downing explores the policy and contemporary issues of racial profiling and police violence within Canada's Greater Toronto Area. Through indepth offender interviews, his qualitative study of the factors that determine whether offenders in high-crime neighbourhoods decide to co-operate with police, led to his published research on the 'Stop Snitching Code.' His research continues to inform debate, and explore ways for the public to gain police trust through possible citizen review boards and mediation.

Interested in the critical assessment of injustices within the system, he completed his Bachelor of Arts in Crime and Justice Studies; his Master of Science in Applied Sociology, during which he was awarded a three-year graduate fellowship; and his Doctorate in Criminology, all at the University of Texas at Dallas. Following a year as an Assistant Professor in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati, Ohio, Dr. Downing joined UOIT as an Assistant Professor in 2008, and was appointed Associate Professor in 2014. He has helped shape UOIT's highly method- and theory-focused Legal Studies program, and is passionate about supervising the work of graduate students.

Education/Learning, Law Enforcement, Legal Services, Program Development, Research

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Qualitative Methods, Sociological Theories of Crime, Cybercrime, Subcultural Studies, Theories of Justice, Ethics of Care, Street Crime, Game Studies

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American Society of Criminology, Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, UOIT Digital Life Research Group

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Prison-Themed Video Games: Peacemaking and Social Justice Opportunities
71st Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology

Methods of Studying Cyberbullying: Critiques and New Directions
70th Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology

Racialized Borders: Hypothesizing the Diasporic Implications of Discriminatory Surveillance at Canadian Borders
Borders, Walls and Security Conference

Panel Chair, Advances in Qualitative Methods in Criminology, Space, Time and Reflexive Interviewing: Implications for Qualitative Criminology
68th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology

Why did "Cyberbullying" Supersede Hate Crime? Mass Distraction and the Tyler Clementi Case
67th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology

University of Texas at Dallas
PhD Criminology

University of Texas at Dallas
MS Applied Sociology

University of Texas at Dallas
BA Crime and Justice Studies

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