# What Voice and Whose Story?
# Applying Inoue's Habits of White Language to Mainstream Media Coverage of Police Violence in Ontario

*Emily R. Blyth*
Simon Fraser University, Canada

*Abstract:*

The persistence of police violence despite decades of criticism from impacted communities points to the systemic nature of discriminatory policing which is rooted in historic and ongoing colonialism, racism, and settler White supremacy. As settler conservatism constitutes the dominant political ideology in Canada, society and state institutions are influenced by this mode of thought, including policing and media institutions. While mainstream media coverage of police violence that does not scrutinize police actions is often explained through efforts to uphold media objectivity, as an institution that is steeped in settler conservatism it is important to understand how standards in media reporting may ultimately reproduce White supremacy. Asao B. Inoue speaks to the Habits of White Language whereby he identifies six patterns which, when present in a text and regardless of author intentionality, suggest that the text may contain and produce White supremacy (2021). Through secondary data analysis, this article maps the Habits of White Language onto the qualitative themes identified in a 2020 thematic discourse analysis of initial mainstream media reports on police use of lethal force in Ontario, Canada. Thus, the previously identified trends in mainstream reporting styles are explicitly framed within understandings of White supremacy.

*Keywords*:     policing; use of force; white supremacy; discourse; media; representation; framing.

**Introduction**

The inequitable nature of harm police cause in the geopolitical nation-state of Canada, while often overshadowed by national narratives of multiculturalism and Canadian exceptionalism (Pasternak et al., 2022, p.1), is pervasive and disproportionately affects groups most impacted by historic and ongoing patterns of colonialism and racism. While the negative health impacts of police encounters explored in this paper are well known, calls for change have not seen considerable impact. Community organizing has led to some reforms in policing policy, such as body cams, crisis intervention training, and cultural safety training, but these symptomatic approaches have had little systemic effect (Nortey, 2022). The persistence of this issue is clear as the highest number of deaths by lethal force in Canada in the last 20 years was reported in 2022, with increased racial disparities across the data (Tracking (In)Justice, 2023).

The resiliency of policing institutions in the face of over 50 years of public demonstration and institutional reformation points to the systemic nature of discriminatory police violence, a violence rooted in the histories and ongoing power dynamics of colonization, racism, and settler White supremacy. Hegemonic views reflect and reinforce dominant belief systems in society and counter-hegemonic views work in opposition to the dominant belief system. As settler conservatism constitutes "the dominant political mode of understanding in Canada," the resulting hegemonic ontologies defend "a racial hierarchy in which the culture, values, behaviours and wealth associated with whiteness shape the normative milieu" (Monaghan, 2022, p. 13). Understanding White supremacy as "the defence (or reproduction) of these values" (p. 13) and as systemic in nature, we look beyond the penal system and into media institutions to better understand how such values may be reproduced in the public forum. By mapping qualitative themes initially collected in 2020 from online text-based media initial reports on police use of lethal force to Asao B. Inoue's Habits of White Language (HOWL) (2021), this report explicitly frames the hegemonic reporting style revealed in the 2020 data within understandings of White supremacy.

**Policing in Canada as a Source of Health Inequity**

The outcomes of policing clearly constitute a health inequity along a number of metrics. Policing has been strongly linked as a social determinant of health (Alang et al., 2017, p. 662) and a public health issue (Cooper & Fulillove, 2016). Nonetheless, it remains necessary to establish policing as a source of health inequity in light of hegemonic views that equate policing with safety.

Despite the fact that there is "no government database listing deaths at the hands of the police available to the public in Canada" (Singh, 2020), available literature reveals the extent of the inequality that Indigenous, Black, and Mad (a term chosen to refer to those experiencing psychiatric distress due to its "long history of positive and person-centered discourses" (Price, 2011, p. 11)) individuals Canada face at the hands of police. CBC's investigation *Deadly Force* (Singh, 2020) tracks demographic data in cases of lethal force in Canada from 2000-2020. While this database has its own limitations and is no substitution for national accounting, such reports help overcome the lack of institutional data to confirm what communities have long known:

police in Canada kill people who are Black and Indigenous, and those who are experiencing mental health distress/addiction, at consistently and significantly higher rates than members of the White population who are not exhibiting mental distress or symptoms of addiction.

Figure 1 uses Singh's database and general population statistics to visualize these discrepancies whereby, over the last 20 years, Indigenous people in the geopolitical nation-state of Canada have been the victims of 16% of recorded instances of killings by police in Canada yet make up only 4.2% of the nation's population. Black Canadians who make up 8.6% of the killings by police constitute only 2.9% of the population. Further, while records show that one-third of Canadians will be affected by mental illness in their lifetime (Government of Canada, 2020), more than two-thirds of those killed by police have been Mad individuals. Thus, based on population, Black, Indigenous and Mad individuals are greatly overrepresented in police killings. While greater proportionality would not justify police violence, in a society where Indigeneity, Blackness, and Madness were not factors in rates of lethal force we would expect more agreement between population size and frequency of lethal force within each group. That this agreement does not exist demonstrates the inequity of police use of lethal force.
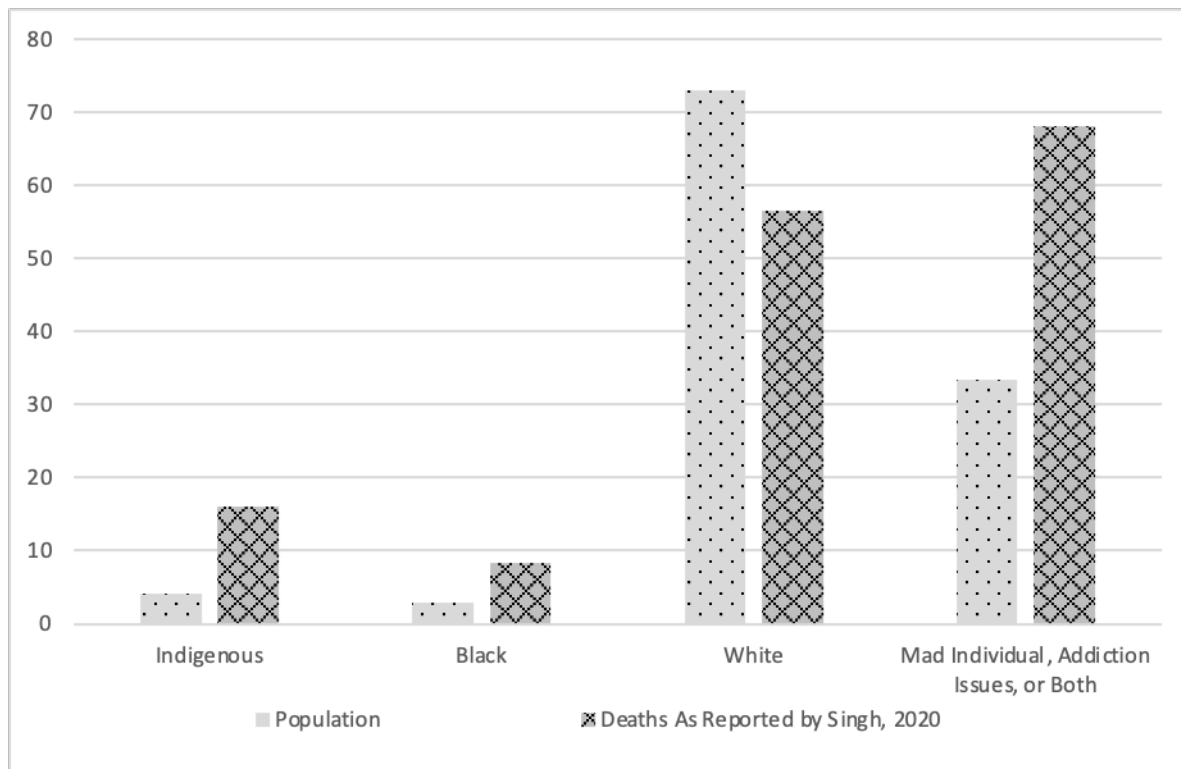


Figure 1: Percentage of Population vs. Percentage of Police Killings
in Canada by Race & Mental Status Based on Data from Singh, 2020.

The mortality rates associated with lethal force are one of many statistics that further support the view that policing constitutes a health inequity. These risks include, but are not limited to, physical injury at the hands of police, traumatization through racist public reactions, economic and financial strain, community disempowerment, and the distinct psychological and emotional impacts for those living with the risk of inequitable policing and watching friends and

family experience that same risk (Alang et al., 2017). On their own, policing encounters are associated with anticipatory and intrinsic stress (Alang et al., 2021). So, groups who are disproportionately stopped by police are thus also disproportionately subjected to the known stress associated with police encounters (Comack, 2018; Warde, 2012).

Beyond causing psychological harm, increased police encounters are connected to increased rates of arrest, conviction, and incarceration. Such systemic criminalization of people who are Black or Indigenous leads to disproportionate contact with the prison system, a system known to cause long-term health disparities (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2018). The most recent *Annual Report* from the Office of the Correctional Investigator shows that in 2021 Indigenous people represented 32% of the total prison population in Canada, a percentage that continues to increase despite overall decreases in the prison population and despite systemic efforts to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Canadian prisons (Zinger, 2022). A 2020 Ontario Human Rights Commissions report shows that "Black people, particularly Black males, are even more likely to be proactively arrested, charged and subjected to uses of force in a wide range of police interactions" (p. 12).

Across data on systemic injustice in policing, there are intersectional harms that must be considered. Identity is not monolithic: people existing at the intersections of Black, Indigenous, and Mad identity face immense risk at the hands of police as risks compound and interact.
Take one extended example that illustrates the compounding and multi-dimensional health impacts stemming from police violence. Those who are Black, Indigenous, and/or Mad typically experience more negative contact with police (Alang et al., 2021). The "anticipatory stress" ( p. 2) over such encounters is associated with increased anxiety and depression, and Black individuals have been shown to have greater odds of depressed mood associated with this anticipatory stress than White individuals (p. 9). In addition, disproportionate exposure to prisons is associated with an increased prevalence of mental disorders and substance abuse (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2018). Police contact with racialized groups is likely to increase mental distress; increased contact with police also leads to increased incarceration which leads to increases in mental distress; mental distress is likely to increase police contact. It is easy to see how negative health outcomes can compound across intersectional identities and across risks. As a result, the risks associated with police contact can feed into a cycle of contact, harm, and oppression.


## Policing and the Media

Considering policing inequities and the role of the media in the Canadian public forum, it is important to examine how media framing impacts wider understandings of police in Canadian society. The question of framing has been backed by decades of communications research revealing that media can influence audience perception by emphasizing certain values (Nelson & Oxley, 1999).

Studies that specifically examine how police interactions are framed by mainstream media help to unpack the role of narrative style in conveying information to the public when police cause harm. Fridkin et al. (2017) use a multimethodological approach to show that in one

instance of police violence, framing that emphasized law and order increased audience support for the police, while framing that emphasized police brutality increased support for the person who was harmed. Across similar framing divides, Ziems and Yang (2021) employ a robust text-based analysis to reveal distinct framing strategies that emphasize criminality in conservative texts that address police interactions and underlying systemic injustice in liberal texts.  While both articles focus on the impacts of text-based framings, Henderson et al. (2021) extend their analysis to the role of visual framing. Their analysis shows that in coverage of police violence against Black individuals, normative visual framing increases positive views of the Black community, and delinquent framing reinforces existing negative stereotypes that criminalize Blackness. Thus, these trends illustrate the ways that framing can impact how audiences evaluate police violence on a case-by-case level and can further reinforce general ideologies around policing and criminalization on a more systemic level.

In Canada, recent studies have examined the framing employed by police and police unions when engaging with the media to offer important insights into the origins of more explicitly hegemonic police framings in the media. Police unions have been shown to leverage a myriad of print and digital communications to actively construct and promote strategic police ideologies (Duncan & Walby, 2022, p. 95). Such strategic tactics can also be seen in the narratives put forth in police communication in media interviews, press conferences, and press releases following lethal force. These techniques include euphemisms that obfuscate the use of force or offer limited/vague details on the incident (Walby & Alabi, 2022). Importantly, these findings share similarities with the techniques that Fridkin et al. (2017), Ziems & Yang (2021), and Henderson et al. (2021) identified in general mainstream media. This may come as no surprise as general news coverage draws on information from police-originated communications. Nonetheless, given that these techniques are used first by police as a "risk-mitigation approach apparent in these communications, which attempts to engender sympathy for police" (Walby & Alabi, 2022, p. 44), it is important to both note and question the ways that such framing may be reproduced in mainstream media.

**Reframing the Inoue's Habits of White Language**

Originally formulated to describe the impacts of language expectation, use, and assessment in the classroom, this paper applies Asao B. Inoue's Habits of White Language (HOWL) towards a thematic analysis of text-based media reports on police use of force. This paper draws from Inoue's *Above the Well: An Antiracist Literacy Argument from a Boy of Color* (2021), the most up to date articulation of HOWL at the time of publishing.

While the context of this paper differs significantly from that of their original articulation, the application of HOWL is supported by the connections that Inoue makes between the politics of language and police violence in a 2019 keynote address, *How Do We Language So People Stop Killing Each Other, or What Do We Do About White Language Supremacy?* as well as his later suggestion that "the presence of one habit in a text or judgment doesn't always equate to being White supremacist or producing White supremacy, but it often can" (2021, p. 17). Inoue goes on to suggest that, regardless of author intentionality, the difference between a text that is White supremacist or produces White supremacy and one that is not usually "is in what that instance of language or judgement produces in the places it circulates" (p. 17). Accordingly,

through applying HOWL to the identified trends in media coverage on police violence, this paper further asks if these trends exemplify HOWL in a way that "produce[s] a racialized hierarchy in society" (p. 17) and so could be seen to reinforce or reproduce White supremacist world views. Table 1 summarizes these trends as they are understood within the context of this work.

**Methodology**

To better understand how more hegemonic framings of police violence in mainstream media could act as a site that promotes national conservatism and reinforces White supremacy, secondary data analysis was applied to situate thematic coding of news coverage within Inoue's HOWL. The original dataset was collected and analyzed based on initial (within two calendar days of a killing) text-based coverage of lethal force from all available news sources in Ontario in 2020, regardless of media positionality (Blyth, 2021).

The reports include a mixture of trends across frameworks that Henderson et al. (2021) describe as deviant vs. normative, Fridkin et al. (2017) as law and order vs. police brutality, and Ziems and Yang (2021) as conservative vs. liberal. Nonetheless, trends such as using euphemisms and vague details to describe police agency and criminalization to describe those who have been harmed dominate this data set and can be found in every article. The original study included a second dataset that explored Twitter reactions to the same instances of lethal force and uncovered clear counter-hegemonic trends that align more closely with the normative, police brutality, and liberal framings described in previous research. This dichotomy signalled the mainstream media dataset as an appropriate site to apply HOWL: a site that showed signs of language trends capable of reproducing the hegemonic values that Inoue associates with White language, i.e., trends that have the potential to reinforce White supremacy.

This analysis aimed to identify whether mainstream media coverage of police violence could be considered a site that promotes or reinforces White supremacy, using Inoue's HOWL as a framework. To determine this, the previously identified mainstream reporting trends were first mapped onto the Habits of White Language, showing thematic agreement that suggested the high possibility that HOWL is present in the standard reporting style (see Table 1).

| Habit from Inoue, 2021 | Contextualizing Quotes (Inoue, 2021) | Mapped trends from Blyth, 2021 | Postulated Project Relevance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Unseen, Naturalized Orientation to the World | "This is an orientation, a starting point, of one's body in time and space that makes certain habits, capacities, practices, languages and ideas reachable." (p. 19) | Trends in source including: A.      police/police spokesperson B.      SIU/agency spokesperson C.      Family/friend D.      Community Member E.      Unrelated | These trends demonstrate whose voice and what orientation is privileged and help suggest what source framings are most likely to be reproduced. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | witness<br>F.     Community Expert | |
| 2.<br>Hyperindividualism | "[A]ppeal to ideals of universal truths and knowledge that come from inside the individual. This personal insight is often understood as universal insight…Individual rights and privacy are often most important" (p. 20) | L.     Agency for death/actions directly attributed to police officer in question.<br>VS.<br>M. Agency for death deferred (through passive voice used in description of killing/officer in question or otherwise deferring agency of death/killing). | These trends can work together to decide whose individual rights are privileged in these reports, unpacking the ways that reports can protect police privacy and limiting their agency/blame while invisibilizing the individual who has been harmed. |
| 3.<br>Stance of Neutrality, Objectivity, and Apoliticality | "Facts are just facts, not created or manufactured by people or processes or language. Contexts are deemphasized or ignored." (p. 20-21) | N. Distancing rhetoric (vague, clinical, detached, otherwise indirect).<br>VS.<br>O.     Reference to inequitable police use of force, killing or the over criminalization of marginalized groups. | These trends can work, often under the name of media objectivity, to present lethal force as apolitical and commonplace. |
| 4.<br>Individualized, Rational, Controlled Self | "Individuals have problems, making solutions individually-based. Thus, both success and failure are individual in nature." (p. 21) | H.     Incriminating description/rhetoric surrounding the victim.<br>VS.<br>I.     Positive or humanizing description of victim. | These trends can work to place blame on the individual, effectively criminalizing those who have been harmed and justifying harm done as the fault of the individual. |
| 5.<br>Rule-Governed, Contractual Relationships | "Ideal relationships are understood to negotiate individual needs, individual rights, which are apolitical and universal. Meanwhile, socially-oriented values and questions are less important and often understood as inherently | J. Positive description of police/officer in question.<br>VS.<br>K. Critical description of police/officer in question. | These trends can serve to emphasize the societal role of police as justification that promotes harm done in the course of police work as commonplace necessary in a law-governed society. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | political (and therefore bad or less preferable)." (p. 22) | | |
| 6. Clarity, Order, and Control | "Rigor, order, clarity, and consistency are all valued highly and tightly prescribed, often using a dominant standardized English language that comes from a White, middle- to upper-class group of people." (p. 23) | G. Distancing the dead from the conversation (through omission/clinical, or indirect language). VS. I. Positive or humanizing description of victim. | These trends can work together to create a clinical and standardized description that removes attention from the person who has been harmed. |

Table 1: Mapping HOWL to Previously Identified Trends

The original data set was coded with both potentially hegemonic and counter-hegemonic themes. Theme I is applied to HOWL habits 4 and 6 to support comparison, while the first six themes are grouped to describe the article information sources. In any given category, high prevalence of hegemonic themes and low prevalence of counter-hegemonic themes suggests the presence of the related HOWL habit.

| Habit | Theme | Position | % of articles exhibiting theme | Follows Patterning for HOWL? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | A | Hegemonic | 68% | Strong |
| | B | Hegemonic | 80% | |
| | C | Counter Hegemonic | 16% | |
| | D | Counter Hegemonic | 25% | |
| | E | Indeterminate | 32% | |
| | F | Counter Hegemonic | 16% | |
| 2. | M | Hegemonic | 82% | Moderate |
| | L | Counter Hegemonic | 52% | |
| 3. | N | Hegemonic | 84% | Strong |
| | O | Counter Hegemonic | 9% | |
| 4. | H. | Hegemonic | 89% | Moderate |
| | I. | Counter Hegemonic | 55% | |
| 5. | K. | Hegemonic | 20% | Weak |
| | J. | Counter Hegemonic | 16% | |
| 6. | G. | Hegemonic | 34% | No. |
| | I. | Counter Hegemonic | 55% | |

Table 2: Themes by Positionality Indicating Patterning for HOWL

Overall, the distribution of trends for most habits showed moderate (2) to strong (2) patterning for HOWL which suggests the presence of multiple elements of HOWL throughout the dataset.

**Results & Discussion:**

While the analysis suggests the presence of HOWL, what remains is to determine "what that instance of language or judgement produces in the places it circulates" (Inoue, 2021, p.17) and thus whether the articles can be seen to reinforce the colonial status quo and "produce a racialized hierarchy in society" (p. 17). In short, the impact of the habits with moderate-strong patterning for HOWL can all be seen to reinforce world views that uphold white supremacy within the media reports.

Trends related to the first habit show a clear privileging for institutional voices over the voices of impacted community members. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU), while created to provide police oversight, is an institution embedded in the same systematic issues that shape policing. The result of this can be seen through, for example, the SIU's low conviction record, with only 3% of cases seeing charges in 2021-2022 (Martino, 2023). Considering this, the sources most commonly drawn on for information in this dataset (police and the SIU) are highly likely to reflect pro-police frameworks.

While not as strong, trends related to the second habit speak to the protection afforded to police when describing the harm they commit. In this sense, while police are at times directly associated with killing, they more often are protected from this direct association. Trends related to the third habit speak to the tendency to omit information that is needed to contextualize police violence in preference for language that can be seen as an unbiased presentation of the facts of the event. By not embedding reporting within the context of inequitable police violence, the systemic nature of the issue is ignored, the issue itself is rendered commonplace and acceptable, and police violence is not coded as violence at all.

Trends related to the fourth focus not on explicitly protecting the police but on justifying police actions and using criminalization to cast blame onto those harmed by police. There is a long history of criminalization casting certain groups, including Indigenous and Black populations, into categories of otherness that relegate them as less worthy of state protection (Maynard, 2017). This pattern of criminalization upholds even practices of lethal force through justifications that blame the individual who is harmed without regard for systemic factors.
In the face of policing practices that inequitably harm racialized individuals, upholding the status quo around policing serves to uphold racialized hierarchies. The judgements produced through these trends are clear and consistently function on a binary that protects police and contributes to the invisiblization of those that police harm. Embedding trends from the dataset within HOWL highlights how baseline reporting styles and framing can serve to preserve current hierarchies and ideologies and render police violence illegible. Thus, by reframing trends in media reporting on lethal force through HOWL, it is made clear that hegemonic trends in media reporting have the potential to reinforce, reproduce, and promote White supremacy.

This potential is, perhaps, of greatest importance to journalists and communications professionals who will continue to report on police violence. Claims for media objectivity should

be checked in relation to who that objectivity protects and what framing may unknowingly be reproduced through efforts to present information without bias. One promising intervention is the newly added *Inclusive Story Telling* section of the 56th edition of the *Associated Press Stylebook* (APS). The guide now advises against the use of vague language that removes agency from police when reporting on police violence and suggests instead that, when presented with vague information from police sources, reporters ask for details and make it clear in their coverage when those details are not provided (Associated Press, 2022). This change works against the trends discussed in this analysis and provides practical means to detach from police-originated framings that minimize police violence. Stakeholders such as journalists and the Canadian Press Stylebook should seriously consider adopting these standards towards more balanced reporting. Such changes could have compounding impacts by first addressing unbalanced reporting and ultimately promoting wider understandings of inequitable policing as an urgent public health concern.

**Limitations**

A point of distinction should be made regarding media coverage. The texts addressed in this paper that can be seen to bolster a positive police image consist of news reporting on specific incidents of violence. However, this is not to suggest all mainstream coverage bolsters such views. The integral value of CBC's *Deadly Force* (Singh, 2020) offers one clear counter-hegemonic example.

As HOWL and the initial thematic analysis were developed independently, the application makes some generalizations and is an imperfect approximation of intricacies within the data and HOWL itself. Nonetheless, the groups for application persist logically and the insights generated through using this framework point to potential benefit of applying HOWL in a range of contexts.

Additionally, while there are clear similarities that allow for general comparison across studies, the articles reviewed in this paper employ different thematic analysis schemas. This includes categorizations from Walby & Alabi (2022), Blyth (2021), Duncan & Walby (2022), Henderson et al. (2021), Ziems & Yang (2021) and Fridkin et al. (2017). The lack of consistency may reflect the transdisciplinary nature of research that examines the human impacts of police violence in media, with these articles spanning criminology, communications, and computer science, and points to the importance of a more coordinated interdisciplinary approach to the issue.

Finally, this research would benefit from more collaboration with members from impacted populations. While we know that hegemonic reporting is likely to enforce bias in hegemonic populations, we do not know how it impacts populations with counter-hegemonic values around policing. It is vitally important to acknowledge and better understand the sociopsychological impacts of such mainstream reporting on populations that are already under the anticipatory stress of policing. Further, while the changes to the APS are a great start, community-informed standards akin to McCue's 2022 *Decolonizing Journalism: A Guide to Reporting in Indigenous Communities* with a specific focus on police violence are needed for grounded and balanced reporting frameworks.

**References**

Alang, S., McAlpine, D., & McClain, M. (2021). Police Encounters as Stressors: Associations with Depression and Anxiety across Race. *Socius*, *7*, 2378023121998128. https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023121998128

Alang, S., McAlpine, D., McCreedy, E., & Hardeman, R. (2017). Police Brutality and Black Health: Setting the Agenda for Public Health Scholars. *American Journal of Public Health*, *107*(5), 662–665. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2017.303691

Associated Press. (2022). *The Associated Press Stylebook: 2022-2024*. Basic Books.

Blyth, E. R. (2021). *Exploring Online Narratives of Inequitable Policing in Ontario: An Analysis of Tweets and Initial Web-Based News Articles in 2020*. https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/38804

Chadha, E. (2022). *Human rights under pressure – from policing to pandemics: Annual Report 2020–2021* (Annual Report). Ontario Human Rights Commission. https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/human-rights-under-pressure-annual-report-2020-21

Comack, E. (2018). Corporate Colonialism and the "Crimes of the Powerful" Committed Against the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. *Critical Criminology*, *26*(4), 455–471. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-018-9414-y

Cooper, H. L. F., & Fullilove, M. (2016). Editorial: Excessive Police Violence as a Public Health Issue. *Journal of Urban Health*, *93*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-016-0040-2

Duncan, J., & Walby, K. (2022). Police Union Political Communications in Canada. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *62*(1), 90–105. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azab043

Fridkin, K., Wintersieck, A., Courey, J., & Thompson, J. (2017). Race and Police Brutality: The Importance of Media Framing. *International Journal of Communication (19328036)*, *11*, 3394–3414.

Government of Canada. (2020, October 8). Mental illness in Canada. *Government of Canada Data Blog*. https://health-infobase.canada.ca/datalab/mental-illness-blog.html

Henderson, L., Tukachinsky Forster, R. (Riva), Kalili, L., & Guillory, S. (2022). Visual Framing Effects of News Coverage of Police Use of Deadly Force on Intergroup Relationships. *Howard Journal of Communications*, *33*(1), 24–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2021.1927261

Inoue, A. B. (2019). How do we language so people stop killing each other, or what do we do about white language supremacy. *College Composition and Communication*, *71*(2), 352–369.

Inoue, A. B. (2021). *Above the well: An antiracist literacy argument from a boy of color*. The WAC Clearinghouse ; Utah State University Press.

Kouyoumdjian, F. G., Cheng, S. Y., Fung, K., Orkin, A. M., McIsaac, K. E., Kendall, C., Kiefer, L., Matheson, F. I., Green, S. E., & Hwang, S. W. (2018). The health care utilization of people in prison and after prison release: A population-based cohort study in Ontario, Canada. *PLOS ONE*, *13*(8), e0201592. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0201592

Martino, J. (2023). *SIU Annual Report 2020-2021* (SIU Annual Reprot). Special Investigations Unit. https://www.siu.on.ca/en/annual_report_2020.php#s_13

Maynard, R. (2017). *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada From Slavery to the Present*. Fernwood Publishing.

McCue, D. (2022). *Decolonizing Journalism: A Guide to Reporting in Indigenous Communities*. Oxford University Press.

Monaghan, J. (2022). "Uphold the Right" Police, Conservatism, and White Supremacy. In *Disarm Defund Dismantle: Police Abolition in Canada* (pp. 12–18). Between the Lines.

Nelson, T. E., & Oxley, Z. M. (1999). Issue Framing Effects on Belief Importance and Opinion. *The Journal of Politics*, *61*(4), 1040–1067. https://doi.org/10.2307/2647553

Nortey, R. (2022). A History of Toronto Activism against Anti-Blackness. In *Disarm Defund Dismantle: Police Abolition in Canada* (pp. 19–27). Between the Lines.

Pasternak, S., Walby, K., & Stadnyk, A. (2022). Introduction. In *Disarm Defund Dismantle: Police Abolition in Canada* (pp. 1–11). Between the Lines.

Price, M. (2011). *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life*. University of Michigan Press.

Singh, I. (2020, July 23). Deadly Force. *CBC News*. https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/features/2020/fatalpoliceencounters/

Strickler, R., & Lawson, E. (2022). Racial conservatism, self-monitoring, and perceptions of police violence. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, *10*(2), 254–275. https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1782234

Tracking (In)Justice. (2023, February 10). Police-involved Deaths are on the Rise, as are Racial Disparities in Canada. *Findings & Analysis*. https://trackinginjustice.ca/analysis-increase-in-deaths-and-racial-disparities/

Walby, K., & Alabi, B. (2022). Examining Press Conference and Press Release Accounts of Canadian Police Shootings. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, *64*(1), 30–52. https://doi.org/10.3138/cjccj.2021-0021

Warde, B. (2012). Black Male Disproportionality in the Criminal Justice Systems of the USA, Canada, and England: A Comparative Analysis of Incarceration. *Journal of African American Studies (New Brunswick, N.J.)*, *17*(4), 461–479. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-012-9235-0

Ziems, C., & Yang, D. (2021). To Protect and To Serve? Analyzing Entity-Centric Framing of Police Violence. *Findings of the Association for Computational Linguistics: EMNLP 2021*, 957–976. https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2021.findings-emnlp.82

Zinger, I. (2022). *Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator 2021-2022* (No. 49; Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator). Office of the Correctional Investigator of Canada. https://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/rpt/annrpt/annrpt20212022-eng.aspx

**About the Author**

**Emily R. Blyth** is a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University who researches the health impacts of media exposure to police violence. With a B.A.H. in Linguistics from Queen's University and an M.A. in Communication and Culture from York University, Blyth leverages her interdisciplinary perspective towards addressing the complex and pervasive issue of discriminatory policing in Canada. As a White settler scholar, she approaches her work understanding her privilege growing up without fearing the police. Her SSHRC-CGS funded doctoral research examines the harms associated with media exposure to police violence and turns to those most impacted by discriminatory policing to envision reporting standards that would support state accountability and community solidarity.

*Citing this article:*

Blyth, Emily, R. (2023). What Voice and Whose Story? Applying Inoue's Habits of White Language to Mainstream Media Coverage of Police Violence in Ontario. *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition*, *15* (1), pp. 83-95.