



**THOMPSON  
RIVERS  
UNIVERSITY**

**Faculty of  
Arts**

# **The Work of Arts:** **A Snapshot of Existing and Emerging** **Research Strengths**

Dr. Richard McCutcheon, Dean on behalf of  
The Faculty of Arts

to

The Strategic Research Plan Advisory Committee

April 7, 2021



# Presentation Outline:

- Areas of existing and emerging research strengths in the Faculty of Arts:
  1. Human Rights and Social Justice
  2. Cultures, Communities, and Creativity
  3. Human, Social, and Physical Development
- Opportunities and directions

# Human Rights and Social Justice

- New MA program in development
- Existing strengths in:
  - *international human rights, past and present*
  - *environmental well-being and quality*
  - *children, youth, and social justice*
  - *gender, equity, and economic precarity*
- Current and future potential in this area for:
  - *collaboration across faculties (Law, Education, Tourism, and Social Work)*
  - *enhanced community engagement and student research training, contributing to the TRU Strategic Change Goal to “Lead in community research and scholarship”*

*One motivation I've always had in looking at the past is asking 'Why do people do such horrible things to one another?' - That's the big question behind my research... [and]... one would hope that my kind of research could lead to different solutions in the future.*

*~ Dr. Wilson Bell*

# Cultures, Communities, and Creativity

*Our work can't change how many kids are abused, but we can help change the experience of kids in the justice system, to make it smoother, so that reporting and intervention happens sooner and offenders know that their likelihood of being caught is greater and justice is served more effectively.*

*~ Dr. Heather Price*

- Existing strengths in:
  - *“Culture and Communities: Children and the Law” (Canada Research Chair)*
  - *creative practices, studies, and community engagement*
  - *decolonization, displacement, and critical studies*
  - *narratives, justice, and social change*
- Current and future potential in this area for:
  - *extensive undergraduate student research and future graduate student training*
  - *commitment to building strength in Indigenous cultures and creativity (proposed Indigenous artist in residence)*

# Human, Social, and Physical Development

- Existing strengths in:
  - *health and well-being across the lifespan*
  - *strength in cognitive neuroscience*
  - *ecosystem health and environmental sustainability*
  - *issues in immigration, refugees, and networked society*
- Current and future potential in this area for:
  - *significant depth with \$300,000 investment for weather station to support climate change research across Arts and Science*
  - *growing focus on restorative justice and alternative forms of conflict amelioration*

*I'm working to amplify [racialized migrant families'] experiences, perspectives, and responses not just to the injustices, but also the opportunities.*

~Dr. Jennifer Shaw

# Opportunities and Future Directions

- Establish administrative infrastructure to support MA in Human Rights and Social Justice (MA HRSJ)
- Pursue two additional graduate programs in areas TBD
- Continue to develop a web presence to showcase the breadth and impact of Arts research: <https://www.tru.ca/arts/research.html>
- Establish a Research Chair (possibly a Canada Research Chair) in Human Rights and Social Justice

*We're making a difference with the research we're doing... the information is getting to the people who need it so changes can be made.*

~Dr. Rochelle Stevenson

*Connecting people through research is powerful and having empathy and understanding is how we will begin to examine why many people are forced into situations beyond their control.*

~ Dr. Robert Hanlon

**Some Closing Thoughts...**





**~Thank You~**