

## **In memoriam: Professor Rick Ruddell**

In early January 2023, the criminological community lost a dear friend – Rick Ruddell, the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Chair in Police Studies in the Department of Justice at the University of Regina. Rick Ruddell’s scholarship focused on issues important to Saskatchewan but generalizable to a much larger criminological audience, including the impacts of resource-based booms on rural communities, community perceptions of law enforcement, policing rural and remote communities, including Indigenous communities.

Rick received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Saskatchewan (1982), a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Regina (1987), and received his Masters of Criminal Justice at New Mexico State University (1997) and a PhD. from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in Criminology and Criminal Justice (2003).

For many years (1984-2001), Rick was a front-line supervisor in the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing for the Province of Saskatchewan, Canada, and Director of Operational Research for Public Safety, Canada in 2009-2010. In between, he was an assistant professor of Political Science (Criminal Justice Program) at California State University, Chico (2002-2006) and then an associate professor there in 2006. In 2007 he moved to Eastern Kentucky University where he was an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice until taking up the Law Foundation position in 2010.

Rick was a highly productive scholar, publishing over 130 articles, technical reports, and encyclopedia entries, plus authored and edited 13 books. He is one of the pioneers in the development of rural criminology, especially his influential books on *Oil, Gas, and Crime: The Dark Side of the Boom* (Palgrave Macmillan) and *Policing Rural Canada* (de Sitter Publications). Other significant books include *Criminal Justice* (Oxford University Press) and *Contemporary Corrections: A Critical Thinking Approach* (Routledge).

There was no better colleague and academic partner than Rick Ruddell. He was an enthusiastic participant in recent internationally-based, collective efforts to build up the scholarly infrastructure of rural criminology through online participation in roundtables for the International Society for the Study of Rural Crime, and contributions to the *Encyclopedia of Rural Crime* (Bristol University Press, 2022). He was a founding member of the International Society for the Study of Rural Crime (ISSRC) and served on its executive committee.

Rick was a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for this journal, which is co-sponsored by ISSRC, the Working Group on Rural Crime for the European Society of Criminology, and the American Society of Criminology’s Division of Rural Criminology. Rick cheerily and promptly would provide sound and helpful blind peer reviews. Authors of articles published will not know whether he contributed to improving their publication, but he



certainly did. On one occasion in late 2022, when asked if he could oblige yet again, his only condition was the shouting of a beer when one of the editors might next be in Saskatachewan.

Nicholas ‘Nick’ Jones, Professor of Justice Studies at the University of Regina, offers this perspective of his time working alongside Rick:

I consider myself very fortunate to have had the immense pleasure of working ‘down the hallway’ from Rick at the University of Regina for 12 years. When Rick first applied to the position in our department, I was in awe of the impressive volume of work he had amassed in his career to that point. What I didn't know at that time was what a wonderful colleague and friend I was going to have the opportunity to work with on a daily basis.

His unmatched intellectual curiosity was contagious to the faculty and students he came into contact with. He was a gentle soul, with a brilliant mind. He was always willing to lend a hand, providing unsurpassed guidance and expertise. Despite his academic impressive academic body of work, Rick was one of the most humble individuals I have encountered. I will miss working with him, but more than anything, I will miss seeing him around the department and our frequent conversations over wings and beer.

Rick was, indeed, very charitable with his time. He was always available for media commentary – just before his passing, for instance, he was quoted extensively in the Canadian press speaking of the need to take longer-term views of homicide statistics. And he was known to host “ask me anything” sessions on Reddit, a classic example of how he would adeptly bridge the divide between academia and the wider community.

Rick leaves an impressive legacy, as both a scholar and a person – in particular in the field of rural criminology, in which he is easily considered a pioneer especially with his research into rural boom and bust economies. Above all else, Rick was a terrific person and a fabulous mentor to many. In the Aussie vernacular, Rick was a bloody good bloke.

Vale Rick Ruddell.

***Joseph F. Donnermeyer***