Policing and public health in 2019: Knowledge and collaboration top selections on the menu at Calgary and Edinburgh

Norman E. Taylor*

This article is related directly to the Law Enforcement & Public Health (LEPH) Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, October 2019.

Calgary in August

It has long been a high point on my professional calendar to attend the annual Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) conference and annual general meeting. This August marked my 18th consecutive attendance, hosted this year by the Calgary Police Service. In my mixed roles as a professional advisor, program director, and editor-in-chief, it often seems that more work gets done in those six days of formal meetings and informal networking than throughout the rest of the year.

Of course, that is not entirely accurate. Each new productive season that follows owes much of its workload to the new directions and initiatives that take shape around those many tables. This year, virtually every table was set for discussions on two themes that mark a significant evolution in policing since my earliest conferences: an almost insatiable hunger for knowledge and an omnipresent desire to collaborate with others outside the policing sector.

The latter stems from a growing appreciation among police professionals at all levels. Virtually none of the most pressing issues affecting the safety and well-being of Canadians can be addressed alone through the traditional core functions associated with the police. One defining example is the current opioid crisis, alongside other illicit drugs, manifesting as lethal epidemics affecting our communities. Only a few years ago, almost any gathering of police would have betrayed an ingrained bias for enforcement, often with zero tolerance for people who partake. Today, police have become widely convinced that criminal sanctions have been unsuccessful and even misguided, and that illicit drug use and its associated vulnerabilities represent a public health issue of epic proportions.

Solutions to the current drug crisis can only be found and operationalized in close partnership with health services, addiction services, social services, education authorities, and community-based organizations. This same observation was repeated at multiple committee tables addressing issues including intimate partner violence, cybercrime and child exploitation, guns and gangs, CSWB planning, mental health responses, and even the well-being of policing's own members.

Amid this growing array of collaborations-by-necessity enter the most imperative piece of modern kit: *knowledge*. I am always impressed by the professionalism and preparedness with which police members approach their jobs, and as they seek to engage across multiple sectors, it is in their very nature to come prepared. Thus, their appetite and their respect for learning and research have never been stronger. Instinct and street smarts will always have their place in policing, to be sure. But many have recognized that if police are to engage effectively outside their sector and contribute fully to shaping public policy and practices with confidence, collaborative solutions will require validity, evidence, and authenticity.

Edinburgh in October

As I outlined in an earlier editorial, in our Issue 4(2), I am scheduled to attend the Law Enforcement Public Health 5th International Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, in mid-October (LEPH2019). The Journal will present a moderated session tracing the rapid uptake of collaborative public health approaches to community safety and well-being occurring across Canada. Our distinguished panellists will share their insights on the challenges and successes they have encountered, each of them as a recognized leader behind this movement.

I have very fond recollections of my time in Glasgow and Edinburgh nine years ago, where our study team from Saskatchewan encountered some very promising practices and some striking outcome improvements in violence and a host of other risk factors and indicators of well-being across Scottish society and, in particular, among the nation's most marginalized population groups. At the time, we were contemplating whole-of-system approaches for similar indicators in Canada, but we had no idea then whether the "partnership working" that defined the Scottish innovations would gain

Correspondence to: Norman E. Taylor, Journal of Community Safety & Well-Being, Community Safety Knowledge Alliance (CSKA), 120 Sonnenschein Way-Main, Saskatoon, SK S7M 0W2.
E-mail: ntaylor@cskacanada.ca ■ **DOI:** http://dx.doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.106

any traction back home, where siloed behaviour and systems-serving-systems were well entrenched. As it turns out, there was a pretty strong appetite for change. Who knew?

Unlike the CACP in Calgary, this will be my first full attendance at an LEPH event. I dropped by for the opening in Toronto, but health issues precluded my attendance beyond that evening. Much of what we will showcase about CSWB in Canada has been driven initially from the policing sector, albeit with the widespread and sustained participation of multiple human services once mobilization has been achieved. I am very much looking forward to a different conference experience in Edinburgh, one in which delegates and presenters from policing and justice have important roles to play, but where health, mental health, addiction, housing, education, and social services professionals and scholars appear to dominate the program, bringing perspectives and experience from multiple countries.

I recall some very good meals when I was last in Scotland. This time, while we look forward to sharing our Canadian story for 90 minutes on the Tuesday, I think our whole delegation is looking forward to a feast of learning from others throughout the several days of the event. And I strongly suspect those same two key selections from Calgary, the desire to collaborate and that hunger for knowledge, will once again top the menu at every table.

The *Journal of CSWB* at LEPH2019

Our Journal is an increasingly credible and global vehicle for the exchange of knowledge in the service of solutions to a wide range of policing and public health challenges and opportunities. The only peer-reviewed journal founded on the mission of multi-sector collaboration, our over 75 articles published to date sit firmly on the interfaces among these interacting human service systems. We are pleased that, in this current Issue 4(3), four of our papers have a clear connection to LEPH2019, with their authors serving as delegates, presenters, and panellists. We also have obtained a number of papers coming into the editorial process before and after the event, and we look forward to carrying the LEPH theme forward in several upcoming issues.

As always, we encourage our authors and readers in all CSWB and LEPH sectors to help us grow this global body of knowledge together.

Hope to see you in Scotland!

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES
The author has continuing business interests that include providing advisory services to communities, police services, and related human service agencies.

AFFILIATIONS
* Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being

TRUST

Voices of remanded women in Western Canada: A qualitative analysis

Daniel J. Jones,* Sandra M. Bucerius,[†] and Kevin D. Haggerty[‡]

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ABSTRACT

Comparatively little is known about how Canadian prisoners experience and make sense of their lives inside Canadian correctional facilities. Based on 39 qualitative in-depth interviews conducted with remanded women in a Western Canadian remand prison as part of the University of Alberta Prison Project (UAPP), this article serves to describe the five main issues that women in our sample highlighted about their incarceration and how those were shaped by their own backgrounds and life histories: 1) Victimization; 2) Distrust of the police, 3) Parenting while incarcerated; 4) Addictions and mental health; 5) Contextual benefits of prison. The implications of this work for criminal justice practitioners, policymakers, and scholars are discussed. Our findings serve to detail the commonalities between the women in an effort to provide criminal justice and social service actors with contextual background information about their clients. They show that the women lack access to the myriad social and institutional supports that so many people take for granted, including protection from physical and sexual abuse, access to stable housing, addiction support, medical and dental treatment, mental health supports, trauma counselling, and the like.

Key Words   Prisons; corrections; victimization; victim-offender overlap; female prisoners; police; addictions; remand

INTRODUCTION

Research on prison and incarcerated populations is a core sociological topic. Going back to Sykes' classic *Society of Captives* (1958) and Jacobs's subsequent *Stateville* (1977), prison research in the United States was once prominently ethnographic and in-depth. Through these classic works, generations of scholars and students garnered insights into the prison code, the dynamics between officers and prisoners, gangs in prison, and the lived reality of prison. Due to issues relating to access, funding cuts, and shifting methodological trends in sociology and criminology (Eason, 2017; Crewe, 2006), prison research after Jacobs's *Stateville* became more and more a view from afar, as researchers started conducting a higher percentage of research on prisons and incarcerated populations without necessarily entering prisons or talking to incarcerated people. In recent years, both in Europe and the United States, the tide appears to be turning, as we have seen a resurgence of researchers conducting research within the prison's walls (for example, McCorkel, 2013; Wacquant 2002; Crewe 2013).

In comparison with Europe and the United States, however, there has been little independent prison-based research in Canada. Traditionally, Canadian correctional ministries have been comparatively closed off to outsiders (Watson & van der Meulen, 2019; Pelvin, 2019), allowing for few independent research opportunities. Consequently, Canadians mostly rely on research that has been conducted either internally by correctional ministries or in close collaboration with correctional ministries, but in contrast to Europe and the United States, we have few independent examinations of how Canadian prisoners experience and make sense of their lives inside of Canadian correctional facilities. This is especially true for women (but see Comack, 1996).

In this article, we provide an overview of the main issues 39 remanded women in a prison in Western Canada highlighted about their experiences in a remand prison and how those were shaped by their own backgrounds and life histories. The article thus serves as a precursor to future works in which we will examine each of the highlighted themes in greater detail. Our purpose here is to raise initial awareness about the major issues these women indicated they faced

Correspondence to: Sandra Bucerius, University of Alberta Prison Project, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, Tory 5-19, Edmonton, AB T6G 2H4, Canada. E-mail: bucerius@ualberta.ca ■ **DOI:** http://dx.doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.103

while remanded in Canada and the main factors that shape their life experiences more generally. In this sense, we hope the article will be particularly useful for criminal justice and social service stakeholders interested in an overview of the circumstances that have shaped the lives of their potential clients. Given that women continue to be underrepresented in criminological research (Smart, 2013), this article also contributes more generally to our evolving understanding of female prisoners. We have chosen to present these insights by relying heavily on the words of the women we interviewed, given that members of this population rarely get to directly express their views and experiences.

METHODS

This article is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with 39 incarcerated women in a remand facility in Western Canada. The interviews were conducted as part of the University of Alberta Prison Project (UAPP) involving a much larger data set that includes a total of 587 interviews with incarcerated men and women across four prisons in a Western Canadian province. In addition to conducting qualitative interviews, we also collected demographic survey data and survey data about victimization. The larger data set also consists of qualitative interviews with 131 correctional officers. Given that the prisoner population in Canada is predominately male, the great majority of the larger data set consists of interviews with men. For the purposes of this article, we are concentrating on interviews with remanded female prisoners only. As research inside of prisons is almost non-existent in Canada due to the closed and risk-averse nature of correctional ministries, our study comprises the largest independent qualitative study on Canadian prisons in the history of Canadian criminology.

We received Ministry and research ethics approval from the University of Alberta for our study in 2016 and conducted the interviews used for this article in a four-week period in 2017. The interviews took place in a remand institution that housed 700 prisoners in total, about 80 of whom were women. Remand facilities differ from conventional prisons in that they house all adults awaiting trial, a group encompassing a range of individuals, from those arrested for impaired driving all the way to those accused of multiple murders or terrorism-related activities. People housed in remand tend to be housed there for a comparatively short time while awaiting their sentences (a few days, weeks, or months) compared with those in the federal system, where convicted prisoners might be serving sentences of many years (Reitano, 2017).

We entered the prison as a group of eight researchers (the two principal investigators and six research assistants). We made public announcements on the prison living units, explaining that we were conducting research on life experiences in provincial prisons, and asked for volunteers who might be interested in participating. Typically, one researcher conducted the interviews on one living unit, allowing us to disperse the team across different units and reach a broad cross-section of prisoners. At this particular prison, there were two living units housing female prisoners, the vast majority of whom were eager to participate.

We conducted one-on-one interviews in private rooms within the prison, usually on the living units. We guaranteed participants' confidentiality and anonymity and, with their permission, digitally recorded the interviews. We employed a generalized interview guide which asked a series of wide-ranging questions about prison life, gangs, group membership, victimization, and radical activity, among other topics. As is common in qualitative studies, we also gave our participants license to let their experiences shape the direction of the interviews, allowing their unique perspectives to come to the fore (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This provided us with a rich body of contextual data, which we further enriched through participant observation in each prison. Seeing us around the prison and understanding that we had no connection with the correctional ministry, yet were deeply interested in the life stories of the women and in highlighting their voices, the women soon saw us as what Bucerius labels "trusted outsiders" in the prison (Bucerius, 2013). Our research team was diverse in socio-economic background, race, ethnic background, gender, and sexual orientation, allowing us to overcome the potential limitations and interview biases associated with having just one interviewer. Our participants were not compensated for participating in the interviews because the correctional ministry did not allow for compensation. However, for both male and female prisoners and across all prisons that are part of the UAPP, we experienced widespread willingness to participate and were unable to accommodate everyone.

To ensure analytical rigor, we drew on principles and heuristic devices of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) when coding and analyzing our data set. During our coding phase, most themes and categories related to women's experiences emerged through answers and discussions around questions and prompts associated with the women's life experiences and their life inside the remand. Data collection and analysis were ongoing and intertwined, and we used a constant comparative method, where we compared our initial themes and codes with new emergent themes, adjusted interview protocols, identified patterns and gaps in our initial coding scheme, and developed new conceptual categories.

We used basic tabular data to identify similarities and differences in the data and to verify the overall strength of patterns in the data. This method also helped us to identify cases that deviated from our observed patterns. After we completed all of our interviews, five researchers coded a set of six randomly chosen interviews to determine whether our coding scheme to date had to be amended by adding categories. Once we reached between 85% and 90% overlap (i.e., intercoder reliability) on the six randomly chosen transcripts, we thematically coded the transcripts using the qualitative software tool Nvivo 11. Interviews with prisoners varied in length but averaged approximately 90 minutes.

RESULTS

This article provides a preliminary overview of the most pertinent themes that arose during our interviews. In future publications, we anticipate addressing each of the themes we are highlighting here in greater depth and with more nuance. The themes are: 1) Victimization, 2) Distrust of the police, 3) Parenting while incarcerated, 4) Addictions and mental health, and 5) Contextual benefits of prison. We address each of these in turn.

Victimization

A theme woven through many of the interviews concerned victimization. The fact that offenders might also have a history of personal victimization has become a central tenet of criminological research (Bottoms & Costello, 2010). Often referred to as the "victim/offender overlap," this phenomenon has been explored with different data sets in recent years (Agnew 2002; Broidy, Daday, Crandall, Sklar, & Jost, 2006; Jennings, Higgins, Tewksbury, Gover, & Piquero, 2010; Jennings, Piquero, & Reingle, 2012; Ouesy, Wilcox, & Fisher, 2011; Piquero, MacDonald, Dobrin, Daigle, & Cullen, 2005; Sampson & Lauristen 1990; Silver, Piquero, Jennings, Piquero, & Leiber, 2011). Many of these studies have focused on the statistical regularities in the victim/offender overlap and, in our study, the survey data showed that 74% of our sample reported histories of sexual abuse during their life course. Most of these individuals reported several or multiple victimization incidents; 81% of the women in our sample reported violent victimization at some point over their life course, again with many reporting multiple instances of violent victimization. The majority of women experienced some form of victimization (property, violent, sexual) before committing their first offense.

One key development frequently missing from such works, however, is the voices of the affected population, which can provide humanizing insights into dry statistical accounts that are often too easy to gloss over. Having a qualitative component to our study allowed us to gather more personal insights into these women's victimization histories. While such accounts can be unsettling to read, it is important that they be presented in order to accentuate the human realities of this pervasive pattern of personal victimization. Maria, for example, recounted the following details of her victimization history:

> In school I was more, uh, I was not listening and learning. I was more of "Oh my god, where am I gonna go after school, so I don't have to go home to get beat?" and stuff. That's the kind of stuff I had to worry about when I was a kid. So, I didn't pay attention in school. And at age eleven I was kicked out, beat up, and kicked out from my mom. Cuz' I was molested from my dad and she's drunk and she hit me in the head a couple times with a two-by-four and she whipped me with a hanger and called me a slut and told me I deserved what happened to me.

Natasha, another participant, described an unsettling pattern of sexual assault that comprised some of her earliest memories:

> From age three to seventeen, I got molested from a [male] family member. And, I started getting raped when I was six. And then I told my foster parent. I got the lickin' of my life and grounded for, like [pause] forever. I just, tried to get away but it just got ten times worse when I was ten. … I used to get raped by other people that would come to our house. And

then by the time I was sixteen, I was sold … into sexual relationships with other people.

One intriguing aspect of how women recounted their obviously shocking victimization histories is that they did not present them as excuses for their criminal behaviour. Rather, they were typically conveyed as matter-of-fact recollections of their traumatic life experiences, much in the same way one might recount a traffic accident. The fact that the interviewees regularly displayed such emotional detachment from what were often horrific experiences of abuse often made these stories even more difficult for some of the interviewers to process than if they had been presented in a style that was more stereotypically distressed.

Similarly to the two women above, Lucy describes multiple sexual victimizations over her life course, starting at the age of five:

> Lucy: Um yeah. I was probably like five. I guess, um, my step dad's family. And the first time it happened in a church actually. Being in the sex trade, I've had lots of customers, pimps.
>
> Interviewer: Before you were first charged, how often were sexual crimes committed against you?
>
> Lucy: A few times a week for so many years, and then it stopped obviously and then, after, actually it's been going on for a long time.
>
> Interviewer: After you were first charged how often did these things happen?
>
> Lucy: Same.
>
> Interviewer: It's consistent victimization?
>
> Lucy: Yeah, yeah. Girls who are escorts we get all sorts of shit like that. And it's just kind of part of it. And the pimps they don't really protect us that much. No, they basically... I have a pimp because I don't have, can't get a hotel room on my own. I know I'm always taken care of as in to always have drugs and a place to rest my head at night.

Here, Lucy seems to conflate her childhood victimization with her repeated and ongoing adult sexual victimization. And she acknowledges that her pimp provides her with minimal protection; he offers some of the bare necessities of life, in terms of providing a place to sleep.

Julianna, in reflecting on her life on the reserve, speaks of how she moved from one victimization circumstance to another:

> When I was with my mom, she always abused me, she always hurt me and um like she always beat me up. And then after I ran away, and then I was at this other house, and you know, I got abused there so much I don't remember it because you know, I was given pills and drinking you know. Yeah I was at this one house, I was abused and taken advantage

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[1] All names are pseudonyms.

of but I don't remember anything. I just remember I just woke up in my ex's room, yeah.

Again, the matter-of-fact tone of Julianna's account of her abuse creates the illusion of normality in what is actually a startling level of abuse: forms of victimization that ranged from theft of property to sexual violence and multiple reports of repeat victimization.

As stated above, the majority of women in our sample experienced their first victimization prior to committing their first criminal offence. Maria, Lucy, Natasha, and Julianna all exemplify this situation, recounting significant forms of trauma that occurred in childhood and would be classified as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Beyond the trauma of experiencing such events, these forms of victimization have also been shown to alter a person's brain chemistry in such a way as to make them more susceptible to illnesses such as diabetes and cancer, while also contributing to an inability to properly cope with stressors, something that can increase the likelihood that such individuals will be incarcerated and unemployed (Baglivio et al., 2014; Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015; Rossegger et al., 2009).

Distrust of the police

While the vast majority of women in our sample had experienced physical or sexual victimization, reporting such victimization experiences to the police was extremely rare. Many factors contributed to this reluctance to contact the authorities, including a belief that the police could or would do little to resolve their problems. Prior experiences with the police where criminal justice interventions proved to be ineffectual or even counter-productive played a role in these assessments. Lucy, for example, describes an instance where the police became involved with her abusive boyfriend, but the outcome of having tried to resolve this issue through the criminal justice system seemed pointless or absurd:

when my boyfriend split my head open and everything. He went to jail. He was only in jail for a week and that was it. Like, I did more time for fucking trafficking drugs than he did for actually really hurting me. So. Yeah. And I wasn't even the one that charged him; the cops charged him so, yeah.

Lucy, who had experienced multiple forms of victimization—including a history of sexual violence that dated back to when she was five—also highlighted the common belief expressed by the women that the police routinely discount the concerns of people who have marginalized personal background and life experiences. This can deter them from calling the police:

Cuz I don't think that they [the police] will listen to me anyways and I don't think anything would get done about it. And I just don't think it matters because I'm a girl addicted to drugs doing sex crimes. So, I just don't think it will matter.

For those who were heavily involved in a criminal lifestyle, talking to the police was anathema, going against the well-established norms against "ratting" (Natapoff, 2009).

Several women also described instances where they had been assaulted by the police, a situation which clearly undermines police legitimacy and precluded any prospect that the women would turn to the police for assistance. For example, in recounting her violent victimization experiences, Anna stated: "I've experienced it with a cop. Like when I came in this last time, the cops broke my collarbone and fractured by orbital bone when they arrested me."

Parenting while incarcerated

Another key theme raised by our participants related to parenting. As researchers in other contexts have pointed out, there are tremendous collateral negative effects on the family members of those who are incarcerated (see, for example, Comfort, 2007), particularly their children (Scharff-Smith, 2014; Wakefield & Wildeman, 2014). In keeping with the findings of previous research (Crewe, Hulley, & Wright, 2017), the women in our sample uniformly told us that missing their children is one of the hardest (often *the* hardest) aspects of being incarcerated. While some maintained contact with their children throughout their prison stay, others did not stay connected. For almost all women, however, their children represented the strongest motivation for personal change. A desire to "get better," to address their patterns of substance misuse, and move out of a criminal lifestyle for the benefit of their children was a consistent message in nearly all of our interviews.

Particularly demoralizing for incarcerated mothers was that they often felt they were judged by correctional officers and staff, who subtly or sometimes explicitly reminded them that they might not deserve to be parents or have access to their children. Anna, for example, refers to an incident from one of her previous periods of incarceration:

I had my daughter when I was in the pen [federal prison], my youngest daughter. I gave birth to her while I was serving a pen, a federal sentence. So I had to leave her at the hospital and then she'd come into the pen and visit me. And I brought back a program called the "mother child program." But I had guards come up to me and tell me that they didn't think that I deserved to have my child in there. And I looked at the guard and I said, "You know what? You're probably right. I don't deserve to have my child, but what makes you think she doesn't deserve to have me?"

While the mothers in our sample all suffer from not seeing their children, the children of the incarcerated women are themselves the collateral victims of the correctional system (Scharff-Smith, 2014). While some children may find themselves in a more safe or stable environment by virtue of being physically separated from their biological mothers, having an incarcerated parent has also been identified as an "adverse childhood experience," associated with unfavourable outcomes later in life (Murray, Farrington, & Sekol, 2012; Arditti, 2012). In discussing her efforts to maintain contact with her child, Josee identifies some of these challenges:

I call my mother. She [pause] uh [pause], she's special, let's just say. That's, that's one relationship that I uh, haven't been able to completely fix, right. Because of my past three years of being in jail, right.

She just, she's sour about it and I don't blame her. But I'm grateful and I'm thankful for her taking my son the past few years, right. So, um, it sucks and whatever but I still, I go out there and I go see him. I still have a relationship with my son. She doesn't deny me that type of access. She does uh, when I get in jail, when I go to jail, she does try and make it difficult because he's, he's to the age where he's gonna start to remember "where is she?" Which sucks, I understand.

Interviewer: Is that the hardest thing in here, not being able to see him?

Josee: When I go to jail, yeah. Because I don't, sometimes I don't really call when I'm in jail. Because I don't like to put my mother in that situation and I don't want to, it's just not personal enough, right. Because he, when I try calling in space/time right? So, you can see me, so to call on the phone is just, like, "why can't I see you?" Those are questions where it's hard for me to try and answer. And I don't want to lie to him, I don't want to lie to my son. I don't want to, I don't ever want to lie to him. When he's at an age where he can understand, where I can sit and explain to him, like that's different. I'll never keep a secret from my son, ever. His father, I will tell him fuck all though.

The situation Josee describes here is obviously painful for her, but she is also attuned to the adverse and perhaps traumatic outcomes it can have on her son, who cannot see his mother and has difficulty making sense of this situation and periods of non-contact (Murray & Farrington, 2005). Naomi raises similar issues relating to accessing her children:

Yeah, that's too, like they don't have visits and stuff. If there are visits, they're just through the T.V. screens that they have here. Yeah, and if they're in child welfare, they don't bring your kids here at all. That's something that I'm dealing with, cuz my kids are in child welfare, right? And they don't, I haven't seen my kids in almost a year. And now that I'm in jail, they look at you and they judge you. You know, just because they're dealing with some things that, you know, you didn't mean to do, or something that you didn't even do but you're just in here because of it. They judge you for that, and that's something that shouldn't happen. I don't think that's right for people to judge.

As Naomi points out, the child welfare system often becomes involved with the families of incarcerated women. The women in our sample often spoke of their children being placed in the care of family members, or, more consequentially, being taken from them and placed in foster care. Such removals were part of the traumatic shared victimization history of many women, as Lisa describes here:

Yeah, most of us have kids. I try not, me personally, I try not to talk about kids because most of these

women have their kids taken from them, right. Because like, being a mother, it's hard. It's hard to give away your kids, right. Nobody wants to give away their kids. Me, I'd rather give my son before I have the chance to neglect him any further. Cuz' my kids deserve the best and I'm not.

As Lisa states, many women in our sample had come to the harsh realization that they were not the best parenting option for their children, an insight that certainly compounded their guilt and stress relating to their parenting situation. At the same time, however, this did not detract from the role their children played in motivating them to live a life outside of the confines of the prison, crime, and addictions.

Addictions and mental health

Previous research has shown that there is often a connection between drugs and crime, something that is true for both men and women (Caulkins & Kleiman, 2014). A large body of research has demonstrated that substance misuse and mental health often go hand in hand in co-occurring disorders (Kessler et al., 1996; McNeil, Binder, & Robinson, 2005; RachBeisel, Scott, & Dixon, 1999), with prisons disproportionately housing people who fit this profile. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, many of the women in our sample emphasized how their addictions had affected their mental health and lives more generally, including having contributed to their criminal activities, incarceration, and, in many cases, the loss of their children.

We asked the women to estimate how many of the people on their unit struggled with addictions and substance misuse. Their answers typically ranged between 90% and 100%, with Rachel's answer here being representative of what we heard constantly from the larger sample:

Rachel: I would probably say 99% of us have addiction issues. There's probably one maybe who doesn't. You know what I mean. But that's rare. Because a lot of us do have addiction issues. It's like whether it's alcohol, whether it's stealing, whether it's just drugs or lying, you know what I mean. It could be several things.

Interviewer: Right. I guess I was thinking about more classical ones, the alcohol and the drugs. Is that still kind of dominant?

Rachel: Yeah it's more drugs though, now. Right, because now that crystal meth has become huge. Like, like everybody wants Prada shoes? Well everybody wants crystal meth, you know.

This theme of substance misuse was remarkably consistent, with Cora providing a particularly compelling description of the subjective experience of struggling with her addictions:

It's like, it's like a constant battle in your head. Like, like you're constantly battling yourself because [pause] and it's lonely. It's like super, it's super lonely. You have a hole inside of you, it's the best way I can

describe it. And you're constantly trying to fill that hole with something. And usually when you're in active addiction, that hole is still there and you're still trying to fill it with something. But the hole's gettin' bigger an' bigger an' bigger. And then when you sober up, that hole is still there. But then, you're struggling to find ways to fill it, and the hole's not getting bigger but still staying the same. So, it is a little bit better in sobriety but the hole's still there. It's like, once you take it too far, there's never turning back.

Given that the great majority of women in our sample reported having addiction and mental health issues, it was disconcerting how frequently they observed that the prison system provides them with few resources to address these issues. This insight, however, is in keeping with the recognized fact that the remand system is characterized by a general lack of programming. This includes services designed to address deeper traumas pertaining to the multitude of factors incarcerated women are dealing with, including victimization, the loss of their children, addictions, and mental health situations. What little programming existed was portrayed by the women as being cursory and infrequently available. Naomi provides a sense of this in her description of the quality of mental health services in remand:

> Interviewer: Yeah, what, what happens if someone um, really needs help? Let's just say you're, someone's suicidal, like can you, can you?
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> Naomi: Then they get put into the FMH [Female Mental Health] unit and get watched behind glass.
>
> Interviewer: So, there's no help, you don't get to talk to someone, or?
>
> Naomi: No, well they got a, um a [pause] what the hell is it? It's like a person that works with mental health, that's, they just call themselves mental health: "I work for mental health, and I'm just wondering how you're doing." They'll come by, and they'll ask you once a week.

The prison system in which these women are housed seems to be defined by twin historical trends that: on the one hand, deinstitutionalized people with mental health needs (Scull, 1984) while, on the other hand, over-criminalization of that same population (Freudenberg, 2002; Navasky, 2005). This is particularly concerning for Indigenous women, as they make up the largest growing group of incarcerates in the world (Kilroy & Pate, 2011).

Contextual benefits of prison

Prisons are frequently (and justifiably) portrayed as harrowing institutions, spaces that produce and exacerbate numerous physical, social, and psychological harms for incarcerated men and women. In the context of this received wisdom, one of the most unexpected findings of this project was how frequently the women participants suggested that they found prison desirable because it provided them with a number of pragmatic benefits. Upon reflection, this should not have been surprising.

The extent to which prison—or any institution—might be seen as appealing is contextual—and informed by an assessment of the viable alternatives. Most women in our sample lived precarious lives that were overdetermined by abuse, addiction, homelessness, and other forms of marginalization. It was these harsh realities of their lives outside of prison that dictated their consistent pattern of portraying prison as a temporary refuge (see also Frois, 2017). Our participants drew attention to many reasons why they saw prison as beneficial when compared with the realistic alternatives, and here we highlight three that were repeatedly mentioned: 1) Housing, 2) Personal victimization, 3) Substance misuse.

Many of the women in remand were precariously housed prior to being incarcerated. This might involve living rough on the street, squatting in abandoned houses, camping out in the local river valley, or "couch surfing" on any accommodations friends or acquaintances might make available to them. The constant stress of this situation, along with the attendant physical risks of homelessness, was frequently mentioned as helping to make prison a desirable alternative. As Victoria put it, "Before I got arrested this last time I … wanted to come back to jail because I didn't have a house. I didn't have a shelter. I didn't know when I was going to eat. I didn't know where I was going to shower."

Many of the women described continuously facing the prospect of being victimized outside of prison by a long list of people in their respective circles, including family members, friends, strangers, clients, and pimps. It was this routine pattern of victimization—often involving physical and sexual assault—that again helped to make prison appear a desirable alternative. Mary, for example, drew attention to the fact that she could somewhat relax and be less vigilant in prison against the constant prospect of being raped that she faced while living on the street:

> It's hard out there sometimes, right, cuz you're hungry, or you're wondering like, how can you stay up [awake] for the night. Like sometimes we have to do the meth or pint [methamphetamines] to stay up to go out there. For the girls it's hard. You have to do the drugs to stay up, cuz you can't fall asleep on the streets, you'll get raped, you know what I mean. The guys would take advantage of you or something.

Others saw benefits to being incarcerated as it forced them to confront their addictions, or at a minimum allowed them to temporarily "dry out." While there was little substance abuse programming in remand that they might take advantage of, they often portrayed the fact of being incarcerated as a "wake-up call," providing the stimulus to reflect upon their substance abuse and perhaps take steps to get clean. This concern was particularly acute at the time of our research given that the local drug scene had seen an influx of highly lethal synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl and carfentanyl (Bucerius & Haggerty, 2019), which was contributing to a rash of overdoses. In this context, many women suggested that being arrested broke a pattern of drug use that would likely have proved to be lethal. Vickie gives a sense of this situation:

> Yeah, I think jail is like a rehab, I think it's like a blessing in disguise honestly. A lot of people look

at it like "oh my God, like it's the worse place." But I feel like coming to jail like is a blessing honestly.

This theme was reiterated by many others, including Lucy, who observed,

I would say there was a huge benefit because I was so messed up with my mom passing away, I didn't feel like I had anything to live for. I've done more drugs in one day than I was ever doing before. I was doing more crime, more anything, and like I overdosed four times in one week and so I really think that if I didn't come to jail when I did then I probably would've overdosed and died. I find that that's good.

Amy reiterated this theme, noting,

I lost who I was. And so being in here like, I don't know [pause] jail kind of saved me, because if I wasn't in jail right now, I would probably still be getting high and still be in that abusive relationship. Like I'm actually kind of, kind of glad I'm now in here right now.

Dissecting these accounts of the benefits of prison makes it clear that incarceration becomes desirable to these women in a context where there is an absence of much-needed programming. As such, this is not a "good news" story about the desirability of prison, but rather a tragic account of the failure of social services on the outside to provide marginalized women with basic necessities relating to security, housing, and social welfare. We also suspect that this orientation to prison is a function of the fact that most women in remand are housed there for a comparatively short time. This comparative brevity might be what allows them to conceive of prison as a type of brief "time out" from the lives of precarity and vulnerability that they live on the street.

DISCUSSION

The dominant theme that emerged from the interviews with our sample of remanded women was that of victimization, which is in line with much of the existing research in other national contexts (Agnew, 2002; Broidy et al., 2006; Jennings et al., 2010, 2012; Ousey et al., 2011; Piquero et al., 2005; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990; Silver et al., 2011). The women we spoke with report a consistent pattern of victimization, much of which occurred before the onset of their own offending behaviour. Indeed, being victimized seems to be one of the most defining shared characteristic of the otherwise diverse prisoner population. At the same time, our qualitative interviews demonstrated a reticence to report instances of criminal victimization to police, suggesting that the majority of victimizations that prisoners experience will never be captured in official records (Bottoms & Costello, 2010; Cuevas, Finkelhor, Turner, & Ormrod, 2007; Daigle, Beaver, & Hartman 2008; Osgood, Wilson, O'Malley, Bachman, & Johnston, 1996; Pyrooz, Moule, & Decker, 2014; Shaffer, 2003; Smith & Ecob, 2007; Sullivan, Ousey, & Wilcox, 2016).

The majority of our participants were victimized during their childhood. This is particularly important to appreciate, as prior research has shown that experiencing trauma as a child, such as physical or sexual victimization, can be a contributing factor to future offending (Cuevas et al., 2007; Falshaw, Browne, & Hollin, 1996; Stewart, Livingston, & Dennison, 2008; Widom & Morris, 1997). In recent years, criminologists have suggested that adverse childhood experiences play a prominent role in leading people down the road to criminality (DeLisi et al., 2017). These comprise many of the forms of trauma identified by our participants. Consistent with our findings, research on adverse childhood experiences shows that previous violent and sexual victimization is acute among the female offending population (Altintas & Bilici, 2018).

The women in our sample tended to speak about their victimization experiences dispassionately, as others might recount a traffic accident or change of residence—as events that were consequential and unfortunate, but also as a common and unremarkable part of their lives. Being incarcerated with a group of women who share comparable histories serves to make victimization a common frame of reference consistent with their own life experiences.

In light of these pervasive patterns of victimization, it is perhaps not surprising that our second major finding was that the women were deeply cynical about the value of the legal system and did not see the police as having much legitimacy. There was a general air of mistrust among the women when asked about police and the state. This was often manifest in their belief that even if they did report their victimization experiences, no one would actually care or take them seriously. When the police *did* lay charges in the case of the man who abused Lucy, for example, the violence committed against her did not result in the type of sentence she saw as appropriate or sufficient to dissuade future attacks. Such beliefs were common, and often grounded in women's lived experiences of policing, something that could arguably contribute to future patterns of victimization, as the women seemed disinclined to contact the police even in extreme emergencies.

The third theme the women in our sample talked about at length concerned the challenges of being a mother while in custody, something that can produce additional forms of trauma for both mother and child. Having someone from your household incarcerated has been identified in the literature as yet another form of adverse childhood experience (Finkelhor, Shattuck, Turner, & Hamby, 2015; Hotaling, Lewis, & Smith, 1990) and something that can result in the unfortunate tendency of histories of abuse, victimization, and criminalization to repeat themselves across generations. From a labeling perspective (Hirschi, 1977), the shame felt by these women by virtue of being told by officials that they are not "fit" mothers or deserving to be in contact with their child can undermine their self-worth, reinforcing a sense that they are incapable of raising their children on their own.

The fourth major finding was that the women in our sample suffered from both addiction and mental health issues but lacked access to prison-based services that could provide appropriate counselling and harm reduction. While mental health services were available to women who were acutely mentally ill, most believed that better access to counsellors and psychiatrists for all women was desperately needed.

The final and perhaps most unexpected theme in the data relates to the fact that the women saw benefits to their own incarceration. While this appears paradoxical and perhaps perverse in light of the well-known "pains of imprisonment" (Sykes, 1958) and assorted personal and psychological harms associated with incarceration (Haney, 2003; Liebling & Maruna, 2013), the women were unambiguous on this point. Many saw remand as a "safe place," providing a "roof over our heads," and a place where they received "three meals a day" and could take steps towards addressing their substance misuse. What they were articulating, however, was ultimately not an endorsement of prison, but a condemnation of the level of services available to them outside of prison.

CONCLUSION

Canada is known internationally as a social welfare state. However, as we saw in our sample of 39 remanded women, due to their status as some of the most marginalized members of Canadian society, they were often disconnected from social services and assorted benefits that are the hallmark of the welfare state. Their lives were over-determined by intersecting dynamics of victimization, poverty, racialization, addiction, homelessness, and other axes of marginalization and vulnerability. As a result, one of the few places where the women in our sample made (temporary) connections with the social welfare system was in prison, although such contact was often tangential, and certainly inadequate.

In some interesting and perhaps unsettling ways, the experiences of the women we interviewed challenges some prominent characterizations of prisons in the critical literature. In her argument for prison abolition, for example, McLeod (2015) states that "incarceration and prison-backed policing neither redress nor repair the very sorts of harms they are supposed to address—interpersonal violence, addiction, mental illness and sexual abuse, among others" (p. 1156). While the women we interviewed by no means suggested that they leave the remand center rehabilitated, they consistently indicated that, on almost all the points raised by McLeod, they believed themselves to be safer and better served inside prison than outside. This is absolutely not an argument *for* prison, but it does suggest that a dispassionate evaluation of the full gamut of benefits and harms of incarceration as seen from the perspective(s) of prisoners is necessary. Writing at the historical moment when a good degree of cynicism had emerged about the prospect that prisons might play a role in "rehabilitating" people, Stan Cohen anticipated such a position. He suggested that we might need to re-calibrate our expectations about what progressive possibilities existed in prison and to concentrate on a realistic and modest assessment of what might be accomplished: "The good that might be done, would be to touch the 'incidental' problems which the positivist filter cannot but pick up: alcoholism, chronic ill-health, illiteracy and learning disability, psychological disturbance, ignorance or powerlessness about claiming welfare rights, legal problems, homelessness, etc." (Cohen, 1985, 257).

Listening with an open mind to the women in our sample detail the challenges that they faced suggests that their most acute problems were not the barbarity of the prison regime, despite the undeniable problems and frequent injustices characteristic of incarceration. Instead, the most heart-wrenching situations they faced typically related to a lack of access to the myriad other social and institutional supports that so many people take for granted, including protection from physical and sexual abuse, access to stable housing, addiction support, medical and dental treatment, mental health supports, trauma counselling, and the like. It is in this context of intersecting forms of victimization, substance abuse, loss of children, and mental health concerns that our findings must be understood. No one should conclude that the prison we studied treats the women in our sample well, but it does provide the bare necessities and forms of security that many of them cannot access while on the street. While some might be tempted to dismiss these virtues as inconsequential and not deserving of note, the women themselves certainly do not.

Following from this insight, our findings suggest that criminal justice practitioners, activists, and scholars might be best served by concentrating on the underlying issues that lead to incarceration. Unless these issues are addressed in advance and appropriate services are put in place, efforts towards decarceration risk returning the women we talked with to the street, a location many of them told us was more dangerous and intolerable than the time they spend in remand.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS
* University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, Yorkshire, UK; † Department of Sociology and Criminology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada; ‡ Department of Sociology and Criminology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada.

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TRUST

First nation policing program and policy-making

Dalton Breutigam* and Elisabeth Fortier†

ABSTRACT

The well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada has been impacted by the historical interactions between the federal government and Indigenous communities. There is currently an over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the justice system and a lack of police services meeting the cultural needs of First Nations communities. The Canadian government has instituted a program to assist in the appropriate delivery of police services to Indigenous communities through the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP). The purpose of this research is to explore how federal policing authorities make decisions about Indigenous policing, specifically the FNPP. Various methods of research were used, such as searching through publicly available federal policy documents and data. These resources were acquired by requesting information through the Access to Information and Privacy Act. The findings of this research demonstrate that the FNPP attempts to undertake consultations for the development of appropriate policies for First Nations communities. However, this consultation can be undermined by groupthink in small communities. Consultations might be improved using the Delphi principle, a method that assists in developing suitable policies for policing. The relevance of this discussion extends beyond the important issue of Indigenous over-representation in the justice system, also addressing the need for effective community policing for the unique circumstances of each community. Balancing community-focused expert advice using the Delphi method, and considering the risk of groupthink, consultation processes may allow individual communities to move towards effective policing using the FNPP.

Key Words   Indigenous; community policing; policy-making.

INTRODUCTION

Historical Context of the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP)

The relationship between the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Canadian government has been mired in distrust and mistreatment. Historically, the Canadian government instituted the residential school system, which removed children from their homes in First Nations communities to attend residential schools. The purpose of these institutions was to assimilate youth and disconnect them from their families and culture. The dominant European culture in Canadian society was foisted upon them (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015), families of Indigenous communities often being forced to surrender their children to police acting as agents of the state. These children were abused physically, mentally, and emotionally at residential schools (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015, p. 15). Indigenous peoples of Canada are still healing from the impact of forced assimilation, and the resulting social determinants of health continue to play a significant role in their health outcomes. This historical impact has resulted in a cycle of abuse which has led to an increase in criminal and gang activity as Indigenous youth search for a sense of belonging (Chrismas, 2012).

The lasting effects of colonialization are still felt throughout modern Canadian society. In the context of the justice system, Indigenous populations are over-represented. Despite consisting of only 3% of the national population, Indigenous peoples make up 18% of the population in federal correctional institutions (Reasons et al., 2016). Within provincial correctional centres, Indigenous populations consist of 24% of those in custody. The imbalance of Indigenous men and women in custody is even more striking in the Prairie Provinces. Indigenous peoples make up 16% of the population of Manitoba—but 71% of those housed in correctional institutions, according to 2005/2006 statistics (Reasons et al., 2016). The history and legacy of colonialism is still a prevailing factor within Indigenous communities. The role of the police in contributing to colonialization has resulted in distrust between Indigenous peoples and police organizations. To conduct change at a meaningful level and create inclusive policy between Indigenous peoples and police organizations, policymakers

need to develop culturally appropriate policing measures addressing reconciliation and the needs of the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2008, Indigenous peoples and the Canadian government began to construct a healing relationship (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015). The Commission concluded that being aware of the past and establishing appropriate methods of change were needed to bring both groups together (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015). One of the recommendations made by the Commission to the government is the need to address issues of over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the Justice system. In response, communities and leaders have requested an increase in the use of restorative justice and healing practices based on traditional Indigenous laws (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015). The Government of Canada and police services throughout the country have recognized that increased community involvement would help them better meet the needs of the communities they serve.

METHODS

To further explore policy making regarding the recruitment of officers in the federal police force, an Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) request was submitted. The request was to provide information regarding policy analysis, decision making, and what led to the development of policy in community policing and recruitment and retention of RCMP members and cadets from 2010 to the present. The request was made to demonstrate the need for transparency in policy making at the federal level especially regarding policy guiding police services for Indigenous communities. This information is not readily accessible, and sharing it provides an opportunity for ongoing reconciliation between the government and Indigenous communities. The information gathered from this ATIP request was useful for data collection and can inform our understanding of policy making at the federal level. One hundred forty-three pages of data, including emails, PowerPoint presentations, and various reports, were analyzed by independent reading, then comparing and amalgamating the findings. These results were integrated into the text to share the most important facts relating to the research question and information on community policing policy in Canada.

FNPP and Community Policing

The FNPP is based on the idea that police services are more effective if provided by officers with language skills and cultural values similar to the Indigenous community being policed (Ruddell & Lithopoulos, 2011). Therefore, to better meet the needs of First Nations communities across the country, the Canadian government began implementing the FNPP in 1992. The goal of this program was to ensure that sufficient policies and strategies were established to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples involved in the justice system and law enforcement. The Government of Canada sought to develop self-determination within these communities through a joint effort across all levels of government (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013). On the road to self-determination, the FNPP emphasizes the need to assist Indigenous communities in the development of their own self-administered police services,

which would replace current policing agencies in some communities (Ruddell & Lithopoulos, 2011). A primary component of the FNPP is the responsibility of the Government of Canada to establish financial relationships with provincial and territorial governments in order to institute tripartite policing agreements between Indigenous communities, provincial/territorial governments, and the federal government (Kiedrowski, Petrunik, & Ruddell, 2016). The financial cost of these agreements is shouldered by the federal government assuming 52% and the provincial and territorial governments paying 48% (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). This financial agreement is an incentive for First Nations communities to establish their own self-administered policing services (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). By 2016, the FNPP had grown to cover 453 communities of the total 686 in Canada (Kiedrowski et al., 2016).

Decision making in the FNPP is achieved through the "Logic Model" of policy theory. The Logic Model's intended purpose is for the successful delivery of policing services to ensure public safety through the FNPP (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). The Logic Model is broken down into three components: policy formulation, program development, and program delivery. During the formulation of policy, consulting stakeholders are identified as an essential step to effectively implement the FNPP. Reaching out to stakeholders ensures that the resulting policy becomes evidence-based and grounded in lived experiences (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). Stakeholder consultation is maintained throughout the delivery of the agreements (Kiedrowski et al., 2016).

Throughout its existence, the FNPP policy has been amended on multiple occasions to ensure continued delivery of effective service. In 1996, three components were included within the pre-existing policy to ensure the public had access to police services with appropriate standards to ensure public safety. The police providing services to Indigenous communities are required to meet necessary elements of effective service to communities to ensure a strong sense of public security and personal safety (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). The FNPP is committed to increasing the promotion and aid to communities on their journey to self-governance. This engagement has been demonstrated by the creation of an atmosphere that fosters a police service accountable to its communities. In addition, the FNPP continues to strive to implement programs in ways that foster mutual respect and the involvement of First Nations people in decision making (Kiedrowski et al., 2016). When the FNPP was updated in 2014, additional policies were put in place stressing the need for professional, dedicated, and responsive policing to Indigenous communities. While serving these communities, officers must be self-aware and react to the cultural needs and characteristics of the communities they serve (Kiedrowski et al., 2016).

The FNPP actively engages the population in the justice system through its Self-Administered Agreement with the federal and respective provincial/territorial governments. However, it remains unknown whether Indigenous officers provide more effective services to First Nations communities than do non-Indigenous police officers. Despite attempts put forth by the federal government, the FNPP has been criticized as not currently meeting the needs of or providing adequate resources to the communities that receive services through the program. The Minister of Public Safety, Ralph Goodale,

has promised that consultation with leaders of Indigenous communities will be conducted along with a review of the FNPP (Parry, 2016). Communities not satisfied with services provided under a Community Tripartite Agreement have opted not to renew contracts to receive policing from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Opaskwayak Cree Nation, a community located in northern Manitoba, recently chose to pursue a police service outside those provided by the federal government. This community will now be receiving policing services through the Manitoba First Nations Policing Services (MFNPS). A contributing factor in this decision was the composition of the MFNPS being 70% Indigenous officers. The community stated that Indigenous officers will better understand the needs of their community, which will assist them in building trust (Opaskwayak Cree Nation, 2019). Further, due to budgetary restrictions, the FNPP has not been fully implemented in Indigenous communities throughout Canada. In 2014, the FNPP had reached agreements in 60% of 688 communities. Funding to the FNPP stalled in 2007, preventing access to communities needing the provided service (Public Safety Canada, 2016).

A solution to the gap in the establishment of the FNPP is instituting community policing, allowing police to work alongside communities in areas outside of law enforcement. At the local level, community policing varies from region to region; therefore, it is important to strengthen local policies to reflect local issues (Linden, Clairmont, & Murphy, 2001). Community policing policy has allowed the RCMP to increase the recruitment of officers who can relate to the needs of local communities. A goal of this policy is to increase the accountability of police agencies and the involvement of the community in the justice system (Glowatski, Jones, & Nicholas Carleton, 2017). Furthermore, the federal government has modernized its recruitment process to reduce barriers to joining its federal police force. For example, they have eliminated the physical abilities test, increased resources for recruitment of applicants, and increased human resources. This move aims to recruit a diverse pool of applicants including Indigenous peoples in an effort to better connect with First Nations communities and improve police services. In 2017–18, 453 of the 11,335 applicants to the RCMP self-identified as Indigenous. Of those applicants, 32 Indigenous applicants were selected to complete police training, demonstrating a 7% acceptance rate. Community policing allows for a strong connection to be formed in the communities and a rebuilding of trust between Indigenous communities and law enforcement.

Community policing is a unique approach to law enforcement in which not all communities require an identical level of service by law enforcement. The FNPP has established that there is a need for the involvement of First Nations peoples in the development of policy in relation to policing. When developing policies, it is recommended to locate and involve "experts" who can assist in developing policy for the intended communities and those that deliver police services. Experts are not limited to scholarly individuals and, in the context of Indigenous communities, may include a wide array of individuals to involve in the process. Teachers, elders, community members, and the chief and council can be consulted to formulate policy. By consulting the targeted communities of policy, decision-makers can gather information about their world view and culture that will influence the delivery of police services.

Delphi Technique

The Logic Model used in the development of policy in relation to the FNPP has identified the need to consult Indigenous stakeholders. Questioning experts within the context of information gathering in methods such as the Delphi technique helps guide discussion in relation to the proposed problem. Using techniques such as the Delphi method will assist decision-makers in drafting suitable policy. The initial step in this technique is to determine a clear problem and define it (Loo, 2002). Defining a specific problem allows policy makers to determine a projected outcome of the exercise. Throughout the process, policymakers may conduct several rounds of questions to stimulate discussion. In relation to the delivery of police services within Indigenous communities, policymakers may probe firsthand accounts from the experts. Considering the world view of the participants is essential to ensure the relevance of policy in the real world. Recruitment of participants from both sides of the service provided, for example, both civilians and law enforcement, will ensure the moderator will have a broader view of the problem and possible outcomes.

The Delphi technique can be used to propose possible scenarios to the participants. These proposed scenarios give each participant the same foundation on which to build their response and reasoning (Loo, 2002). Within the context of police service delivery, the cultural background of responding officers has been identified as a critical issue to Indigenous communities. As stated previously, the Opaskwayak Cree Nation community has decided to not renew their contract under the Community Tripartite Agreement and to instead seek services from the MFNPS, which is composed of 70% Indigenous members (Opaskwayak Cree Nation, 2019). The moderator may pose the question of how a police officer's ethnicity and cultural background affects the delivery of police services. The moderator may use probing questions to prompt answers concerning the reactions and perceived view that civilians have of officers and vice-versa.

Organizational values also have an impact on organizational atmosphere and structure. Large police organizations, such as the RCMP, have historically been configured according to a bureaucratic-military model that persists in the modern structure of the organization. The military model is centered on a strong central government, with a focus on control, discipline, and training (Linden et al., 2001). To better meet the cultural needs of communities through the delivery of police services, decision makers and individuals implementing and executing policy must have a shared understanding of the intended outcome of policy. Further, the organizational setting and background of individuals within an organization can affect the thought process behind decision making. Homogeneous ethnic and cultural organizations and groups containing individuals with specific world views can result in the conformity of groupthink. Police services in Canada suffer from a lack of diversity within their organizations. As an example, 90% of the Nunavut territory is populated by Indigenous peoples while only 12% of the police in the region are of Indigenous descent (Marcoux, Nicholson, Kubinec, & Moore, 2016). Without the evaluation of alternative approaches to a solution, groupthink can develop. Symptoms of

groupthink involve the isolation of policymakers from outside consultation and individuals with a differing world view (McConville, 2011). With a large majority of police agencies consisting of individuals from a non-minority background, there is a prevailing outlook stemming from similar beliefs. This sharing of similar beliefs results in policy making that excludes outside thought and potential problem-solving avenues. Consultation of culturally diverse groups and outside agencies assists policymakers in the prevention of groupthink. It is necessary to raise objections and provide alternatives to policymakers (Janis, 1971). The inclusion of Indigenous peoples in policy making allows for the representation of outside views in decision making.

CONCLUSION

The Canadian government has increased its consultation with Indigenous peoples in the development of policy making. Indigenous communities historically have a difficult relationship with the federal government; these experiences have resulted in a negative view of authority and law enforcement. To assist in the delivery of police services in these communities, policymakers have identified the need to consult with community stakeholders. This has led to the inclusion of cultural practices in decision making. The FNPP attempts to undertake consultations for the development of effective policies for First Nations communities; however, this consultation can be undermined by groupthink in small communities. Consultation might be improved by the Delphi technique, a method that can help develop an effective policy for policing. This discussion addresses not only the issue of Indigenous over-representation in the justice system but also includes the need for effective community policing for the unique circumstances of each community. Using community-focused expert advice through the Delphi method and taking into account the risks of groupthink, consultation processes may allow individual communities to move towards effective policing using the FNPP.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES
The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest. The opinions and ideas expressed in this research do not represent the views of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Government of Canada.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS
* Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, ON; †McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

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STRENGTHS

The looking ahead project: A lesson in community engagement and positive change

Paul E. Pedersen*

This article is related directly to the Law Enforcement & Public Health (LEPH) Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, October 2019.

ABSTRACT

In response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls movement across the country, the Greater Sudbury Police Service initiated a community engagement approach to build a project with the goal of reducing violence against Indigenous women and girls. Recognizing a need for dedicated staff to lead this project, the Greater Sudbury Police Service and the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre partnered and made application to receive Federal Government Justice Canada Funds to hire a violence prevention coordinator. This individual, through a Memorandum of Understanding, would be employed by both the Friendship Centre and the police. The violence prevention coordinator teamed up with the police aboriginal liaison officer to bring the project to life. Resisting any sort of "top down" approach, Indigenous women, girls and agencies formed part of a working committee that was asked to answer a question about what can be done to work proactively and reactively to help reduce the possibility of violence at a local level. The project, which was focused on building spirit, on culture and ceremony, on listening to what people with lived experience felt would be helpful, was created and titled the *Looking Ahead to Build the Spirit of Our Women—Learning to Live Free From Violence* Project. The suite of achievements, accomplishments and activities is comprehensive and growing every day and includes a strategy document and the release of a missing persons toolkit. An outcome from this project is this example of how community engagement strategies, when properly applied, can yield success which would be impossible through any single agency approach.

Key Words   Missing; murdered; indigenous women; girls; violence; spirit; culture; police; community engagement; missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls; MMIWG.

A CALL TO ACTION

Police services everywhere continue to hear the calls to connect better with communities, to engage with people in a meaningful way, and to partner and collaborate with other agencies, service providers, interest groups, and individuals with lived-experience—all presumably with the intended benefit of building community safety and well-being. However, police services also hear these calls because the public expects to have a voice in setting priorities for and making public policy decisions about all public services, police services included. To that end, through the *Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act* in Ontario, police service boards are required to prepare Strategic Plans to address the objectives, priorities, and core functions of the police service and to consult with a variety of community stakeholders to create that plan.

Consultation is mandatory, and the public expects to have a voice, yet meaningful citizen engagement continues to

present challenges for police services. This can be attributed to a host of reasons, not the least of which is an increasingly polarized public that continues to struggle with far left and far right approaches and ideologies to such complex issues as opioids and mental illness, and similarly polarized positions on Indigenous issues. Agreement and consensus are often elusive.

One such challenge facing not only police services but also the entire nation relates to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). A national inquiry resulted in a report with 231 recommendations; the Office of the Independent Police Review Director Report, *Broken Trust – Indigenous People and the Thunder Bay Police Service*, in Ontario resulted in 44 recommendations; and the Pickton Inquiry in British Columbia put forth 63 recommendations. All of these reviews speak to systemic failings which have led directly to the loss of lives. It seems almost trite to emphasize that protecting lives is inherently essential to building community safety and well-being, and if these aren't seen

Correspondence to: Paul E. Pedersen, Greater Sudbury Police Service, 190 Brady Street, Sudbury, ON P3E 1C7
E-mail: paul.pedersen@gsps.ca ∎ **DOI:** http://dx.doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.101

as calls to action for those in the business of safety, it is difficult to think of any greater call. The factors that have led to the current situation in this country are far too involved to address with any merit in this article; suffice it to say that colonialism and the 60s Scoop, laws and agreements, the lack of Nation-to-Nation relationships, power imbalance and a host of other inequities ranging from education, to income, to land, have all contributed to this narrative. It should also be acknowledged that the conditions behind this narrative have not impacted exclusively women and girls, but also Indigenous men and boys for generations.

Against this backdrop, it would be very easy to step aside and say this is too big, too complex, involves too many actors and agencies, involves too many tiers of government, too many nations, this is impossible to address, especially at a local level in a relatively small community. Yet in Sudbury, on the Robinson-Huron Treaty lands, people have come together and are bringing about change with a goal of reducing violence against Indigenous women and girls.

This paper will look at one specific project through the lens of citizen engagement, highlighting some work that is the direct result of listening to the voices of people outside of the policing community, informing shared objectives, priorities, and activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: WHAT WORKS?

Police services are public organizations, that much is obvious. It is incumbent upon the Greater Sudbury Police Service (GSPS), as a public organization, to work with and for the communities we serve. The challenge is that we serve many communities, and not exclusively geographic communities. There are also communities of interest, communities of religion, and communities of culture. One might argue that citizens align with those communities even more so than with their location-based neighbours. Police effectiveness is, in part, measured by public satisfaction based on the question of whether or not people believe their police service is meeting their needs. Community policing and the latest iterations of community mobilization and engagement models acknowledge that the police cannot deliver on expectations without help from the citizens it serves. The question of how best to engage the public in the business of public organizations can be answered by reviewing some of the literature on the subject, much of which informs us of not only what has worked, but also what has not worked.

Many past approaches to implementing solutions to problems facing our communities could have been described by the acronym "DAD": Decide on a course of action; Announce the decision; Defend the decision from the ensuing protests. In reality, this approach is still widely used today. This inefficient system can be replaced by an approach described by the acronym "PEP": Profile the community, together; Educate each other about the issues and alternatives; and Participate with the community for joint problem solving (*Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide*, 2002).

How, then, do we implement effective citizen engagement techniques that actually improve the business of community safety and well-being? The research and literature on these subjects are deep and rich. Based on research, a number of guidelines have been developed, all with common themes,

which will ensure the legitimacy of the process used. Pierre Hamel (2002), studying the Montreal experience at the end of the 1980s, identifies a set of skills, methodologies, and procedures for public consultations that include the following:

1. The process of public consultation must be credible
2. The initiators of the public consultation must appear to be sincerely committed
3. The actors involved must show transparency
4. There must be follow up to the public consultation process so that the citizens feel that they contributed.

Katherine Graham (1998) lists what makes public participation effective as follows:

1. There must be a "contract" identifying the limits of the process
2. The timing is important. It must be undertaken before key decisions have already been made
3. The process must be community based. Identifying who is the community is important
4. The public participation process must be connected to the political process
5. The use of technology must include flexibility of methods and timing
6. It must be a mutual learning process.

The International Association for Public Participation lists the seven key principles to guide public participation:

1. The public should have a say
2. The process must include a promise that the contribution will influence decisions
3. The process must meet the needs of the participants
4. The process must involve those potentially affected
5. The process must define how to participate
6. The process must provide information to participants so that they can participate in a meaningful way
7. The process must communicate how the participants' input affected the decisions. (*Consulting Citizens: A Resource Guide*, 2002)

While certainly up for debate, what comes through in a review of the literature about the elements which must be present to provide the best opportunity for effective citizen engagement are three recurring components: 1) A "contract" outlining the expectations, 2) Clear communication of information, and 3) Follow-up to the process (Pedersen, 2005).

LET OTHERS LEAD

In 2014, as the new Chief of Police with the Greater Sudbury Police Service and coming from over 30 years of policing in the Greater Toronto Area, I was, to be blunt, naive to many of the issues facing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. I had never heard of Turtle Island, wasn't clear on the purpose or benefits of smudging, and truly had no appreciation of the impacts of history previously described on Indigenous people and communities. I am still, candidly, very much on a learning journey. My education was founded in the colonial system, and the literature review referenced with respect to

citizen engagement came before I came to Sudbury and as such formed part of what I brought with me; however, this paper isn't about me. Perhaps the most I can take credit for is recognizing that there was much I didn't know and that I needed to listen to move forward. I knew that I didn't have answers, but I did know that we needed to engage with others.

I once learned a phrase that resonated well with me about a way to get answers and solutions from people about problems or issues that affected them: "We listened and gained a corner on the obvious" (Born, 2008).

What does it mean to listen and gain a corner on the obvious? Perhaps it means that for some in our communities, they hold the answers, the solutions for many of the problems, and it may even seem obvious to them. For those of us who are in the position and have the authority to develop and implement solutions, perhaps we need to listen more to what is obvious to others.

This, not coincidentally, is emphasized in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' *Final Report,* which says, "It is … vitally important that we listen to Indigenous Women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in addressing this pressing issue, as they are the experts and have the solution and important roles to play in ending this violence" (2019).

With that statement in mind, I will also take credit for asking one question. Hearing about the early steps of the National Inquiry, I asked one question of Constable Grant Dokis, a leader long before I came to Sudbury and the officer who held the position of Aboriginal Liaison Officer: "Is there anything we can or should be doing here about MMIWG?" Grant paused and replied that he thought things were pretty good in Sudbury: we had over 20 years of solid relationships with various Indigenous agencies, groups, and people; we had an Aboriginal Community and Police Advisory Committee; and we had an award-winning Aboriginal youth and police ride-a-long program. In his view, there was very little controversy in our community. One could argue there was no gap that needed to be addressed. Sudbury wasn't on the front page of any publications, we weren't under any directed reviews, and no one was ordering us to do anything. The National Review had yet to begin, so there were no recommendations to follow. Perhaps there was nothing that we needed to do specific to MMIWG.

Actress Ethel Barrymore is credited with saying that "the best time to make friends is before you need them," and we decided that perhaps this was the ideal time to reach out to people in the Indigenous community to hear what they had to say. We agreed that we could wait for several years for the recommendations of an inquiry or we could start to do more work today. We could wait for controversy or we could get out in front of the trends. With that, Grant paused again, deep in thought, and stated that he would connect with some Elders and gain some insight with respect to how to move forward and whether to move forward. He came back a little while later with the feedback from the Elders and indicated that we would be well received if we started to move forward with developing some sort of MMIWG Strategy, in full partnership with the Indigenous community.

What should be made clear is that, at this point, we had no idea what direction this would take, there were no preconceived objectives, no goals, no concrete plans or contracts.

We simply wanted to know whether there was anything that the police and the Indigenous community of women and girls could do together to strengthen community safety and well-being for Indigenous women and girls.

As a first step in the citizen engagement process, Constable Dokis arranged for a Town Hall-style meeting at the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre and invited any Indigenous community members to come forward with their thoughts on what could and should be done to improve safety. Constable Dokis, our Missing Persons Coordinator Constable Katherine Hucal, and I met with approximately 50 predominantly Indigenous women for a very positive interactive question-and-answer session.

The result was support to move forward with a working group/committee that included Indigenous community members to help build a strategy. That strategy would become a contract that outlined goals, objectives, and activities and had clear communication about intent and roles and responsibilities. The strategy could then be referenced for follow-up to ensure all were on course. In short, the strategy would be built with the principles of effective citizen engagement in mind.

A joint working committee was established consisting of members of the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, the Greater Sudbury Police Service (GSPS) and Indigenous community members. As part of their commitment to ensuring the safety of Indigenous women and girls, the committee submitted a proposal for funding to Justice Canada that would provide for the recruitment of a paid civilian coordinator for a two-year period. This was an innovative and unique approach to staffing as the individual would have two employers, the police and the Friendship Centre. The idea of partnering an Indigenous social worker with an Indigenous police officer to co-coordinate a program intending to build strength and resiliency and reduce violence to Indigenous women and girls, even before the National Inquiry began its work, was unique, to our knowledge. We knew of no other Ontario police service that was partnered with a Native Friendship Centre to deliver community safety and well-being programs.

In April 2016, the Aboriginal Women Violence Prevention Coordinator (AWVPC) was selected and began work. She would work in partnership with the GSPS Aboriginal Liaison Officer, a social worker, and a police officer together in the same office. Essentially, this individual would have both the Greater Sudbury Police Service and the N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre as employers. This meant that the project would be led by two Indigenous women, a recommendation that resonated throughout the National Inquiry Final Report. They began the engagement process by connecting at the grassroots level with Indigenous women and girls and with the leaders of Indigenous organizations seeking solutions to aimed at reducing or preventing further victimization.

BUILDING THE PROJECT

Through workshops and focus groups, the project came to life under the name *Looking Ahead to Build the Spirit of Our Women— Learning to Live Free from Violence.* For the first year, the AWVPC coordinated numerous learning and training opportunities for community members and professionals, including GSPS employees. The approach has been holistic and respectful of cultural values. Feedback from community members was

directly responsible for ensuring that the strategic pillars of the initiative were built from the Seven Grandfather teachings and that the Medicine Wheel guided the publication and was included in the document. Participants experienced sweat lodges, pipe ceremonies, Medicine Wheel teachings, creative writing, sharing circles, water walks, education on lateral violence and Indigenous culture training with George Couchie, a cultural trainer and educator.

This approach has had significant successes in the area of establishing and building respectful relationships and earning the Indigenous community's support of and participation in the project, which, in turn, lends authenticity to our grassroots approach. Meetings were held monthly, and a first-year anniversary celebration included numerous community partners from the Friendship Centre, Indigenous Health Centre, post-secondary educational establishments, and the families of MMIWG.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

At the end of year one, an official Strategy document was unveiled which includes a number of goals and actions. Each of these has been built with the feedback and support of community members and coordinated through the working group.

One of the goals that came from the community was to build a resource for family members of Indigenous women and girls to provide them with information on what to expect during a missing persons investigation by police. To that end, we are now in the process of having the MMIWG missing person toolkit approved by community partners and released publicly later this year. This toolkit puts information in the hands of family members whose loved ones are missing or have been murdered, including information about not only the resources available but what to expect from investigative processes, coroners' investigations, forensic reports, and court processes.

Two well-attended conferences have been hosted through the project, with hundreds of Indigenous community members, including families of people who have been murdered or are currently missing, in attendance. These conferences relied heavily on ceremony and healing while also bringing forward learning sessions from facilitators and keynote speakers including Tanya Talaga, author of the award-winning book *Seven Fallen Feathers*.

Learning included receiving more knowledge about culture, about survivor truths, about the impacts of colonization and the 60s scoop, about life before contact, and about lived experience after contact. The learning also included lessons specific to police about the importance of objective and nonjudgmental investigations and about power imbalance.

The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and included testimonials such as the following: "[The] violence prevention initiatives are felt by many in the community. By [targeting] culture as the main focus as well as understanding the roots of violence, many Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) community members are learning to love themselves and offer love unto others."

Two very significant additions to the police service came through this project. They are significant in that Indigenous communities have said that one step in building trust, and a trusting environment, between police and the community is for the community to feel welcomed and see evidence of that inside the walls of the police station. One of these additions was to have a territorial acknowledgement displayed in the front lobby of the station. The journey to create this acknowledgement is a citizen engagement lesson in itself. Territory acknowledgements were gathered from various official offices within the area, the City's acknowledgement, opening remarks from a local Member of Parliament (MP) or Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP), and these were blended and then brought to Elders and to the Chief and Council of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapitae First Nations for review. This process was slow and well thought out, involved many revisions and much discussion, and, when complete, the acknowledgement was translated into Ojibwe. From that, the words were engraved in stone and the stone was set in a carved woodwork stand and displayed at the very entrance of the front lobby of the police station.

> *The Greater Sudbury Police Service strives to build positive and respectful relationships with the original inhabitants of this land including First Nations peoples, Métis peoples and Inuit.*
>
> *It is in this spirit that we, as a Service, honour and acknowledge that we serve in this land that is cared for from time immemorial by the Anishnawbek people of the Three Fires Confederacy.*
>
> *We further acknowledge this land as "The Dish With One Spoon," and the Robinson-Huron Treaty region. ~ In peace, our first duty. 2017.*

The other addition to the police service was the creation of a Sacred Medicine garden built on the staff lunchroom patio. A metal drum was purchased through the *Looking Ahead to Build the Spirit of Our Women—Learning to Live Free from Violence* project funds, and this would be the base for the garden. The Métis Nation of Ontario supplied paint and brushes for the project. Rocks were placed in the base with the soil on top. The rocks came from Atikameksheng. Community members offered sage, and a cedar tree was transplanted from Atikameksheng. Tobacco was offered to the Creator for the tree.

The garden was painted by local Indigenous high school students, high school support staff, the Aboriginal Community Police Advisory Committee, GSPS Officers, and the GSPS Summer Student with the Aboriginal Liaison Unit.

Tobacco was laid underneath the garden before we planted. In June 2019 shortly after the unveiling, we received our copy of the MMIWG Inquiry Report *Reclaiming Power and Place*, and with it we received strawberry seeds. The seeds were also planted in the garden.

The design of the planter is of the Medicine Wheel, with pictures related to the Medicine Wheel teachings, the Seven Grandfather teachings and our GSPS Rich Values. The unveiling included a ceremony and territory acknowledgement. It was windy and sunny, the right feeling for positive change.

Through the Project, both the Aboriginal Liaison Unit and the AWVPC have been involved in numerous speaking engagements. They have co-hosted drum "birthing" workshops for youth who have been in conflict with the law,

and they have printed a collection of poetry from women in the community entitled *I Am Not a Poet*, which has allowed women to express themselves in a unique medium. The Project participated in joint training initiatives with the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres focused on reducing incidents of abuse against Indigenous women. It has been part of the planning committees for local "Sisters in Spirit" awareness events for four years in a row, it has organized several sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies for women, and it took part in the Walking with Our Sisters Moccasin Vamp Art Commemoration Installation. The list of achievements, accomplishments, and activities is comprehensive and growing every day.

Overall, our successes have been rooted in the community, founded on listening and acting upon needs identified by community members, on having the AWVPC work with the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, a sworn member, and on conducting our work with a holistic approach.

CONCLUSIONS

This project was created without the benefit of any of the recommendations from the Inquiry or Inquests that have since been released. That being said, the achievements of this project have come to life through the principles of effective citizen engagement. In the first instance, a "contract" was created which saw the Friendship Centre and the Police make application for federal funding to hire a coordinator for the project. This application clearly set out roles, responsibilities, and expectations that ensured the voices of Indigenous women and girls would lead to outcomes. The engagement process ensured clear communication and education about the issues. This is where police did the listening, as Indigenous women and girls know the issues. Finally, follow-up continues in the form of a documented strategy that includes testimonials and a section on monitoring progress.

> Recognition of community variation and plurality of community interests makes it even more important that the police become more sensitive to all group interests in the community they serve and devise flexible policies and programs which can meet and mediate community differences. (McKenna, 2000, 258)

This was achieved by resisting a top-down approach to problem solving. Instead of police saying that they know what survivors and families of victims need, this strategy was led by Indigenous women. It was created by listening to hear what is obvious to others, and by following the leadership of Indigenous women and girls. The work is ongoing and the outputs have been numerous. In some instances, individual support is being provided to victims of crime; in other instances, groups of women have come together

to express themselves through poetry. All of the efforts are focused on building spirit, spirit that existed but that all too often had been suppressed.

Longitudinal studies looking at the outcomes of the initiatives built through this project would help to clarify whether the lofty goals of increased freedom from violence have been achieved. Those outcomes should be compared with other communities without this work for increased validity. The project team is currently engaged with academic institutions to explore those possibilities.

What began as a quest for an answer to a rather simple question about what we can do in our area while national inquiries and inquests progress has yielded an impressive suite of activities that have brought people and communities closer. It has seen Indigenous communities and police staff work more closely together than ever before and it has yielded positive feedback at every stage. This work highlights the fact that there are people and there are entire communities who are willing to step forward, to mobilize and engage in the business of community safety and well-being when the principles of effective citizen engagement are practiced and when flexibility is put in the hands of those who often see the solutions as obvious.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE
The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

AUTHOR AFFILIATION
*Greater Sudbury Police Service, Sudbury, Ontario.

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Using multi-agency, multi-professional collaboration to reduce serious violence and organized crime

Rachel A. Staniforth,*† Una Jennings,*† Jamie Henderson,* & Simon Mitchell*‡

This article is related directly to the Law Enforcement & Public Health (LEPH) Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, October 2019.

ABSTRACT

Serious violence and organized crime have been rising both nationally and in Sheffield, contributing significantly to increasing knife and gun crime, which results in threats to community safety and well-being.

A multi-agency project with stakeholders across all levels of command and co-located operational staff was established to undertake collaborative activity that would protect the public by pursuing offenders as well as preparing for and preventing serious violence and organized crime: Fortify. Using a 4P approach, Fortify worked across professional and organizational boundaries to disrupt serious violence and organized crime.

Relationships between partners have improved substantially through increased communication and understanding of the different roles, perspectives, and levers of each partner. A recent Home Office locality review applauded our partnership. Intelligence sharing has improved, leading to increased disruptive activity, including increased seizure of money, drugs, and firearms, as well as more arrests and safeguarding referrals. The number of mapped Organized Crime Groups (OCGs) operating across the city has reduced from 19 to 12. Processes and procedures have improved, reducing duplication and holding of information in silos. Community groups are more engaged, allowing us to address serious violence and organized crime in partnership. We propose to undertake action research with the involvement of all partners to provide more robust evaluation of our initial findings.

We have found that collaboration between Police and Partners increases collective responsibility and facilitates success in tackling serious violence and organized crime.

Key Words   Partnership; collaboration; community safety; community well-being.

Serious violence and organized crime have been rising both nationally (Home Office, 2018b, 2018c) and in Sheffield, contributing significantly to increasing knife and gun crime, which results in threats to community safety and well-being. In tandem, public concern is also rising, along with media and government interest, culminating in the proposed legal duty for organizations to work in partnership to reduce serious violence (Home Office, 2019).

Violence escalated in Sheffield in early 2018, with a number of linked offences starting with a serious assault on a main road in Sheffield, quickly followed by a string of violent offences, including stabbings, firearms discharges, and damage to residential properties. Concerned partners from a wide range of organizations and professions came together and agreed that this escalation must not continue and that immediate action was required to address a

number of elements, including Organized Crime Groups (OCGs) and urban street gangs; the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable people (including "cuckooing," where the home of a vulnerable person is taken over for the purpose of drug dealing); the illegal drug trade (including "County Lines," where illegal drugs are exported out of bigger cities into one or more smaller towns in the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines—OCGs often exploit children and young people to do this); criminal use of firearms; and those making a financial gain from crime (asset recovery, money laundering).

A multi-agency project with stakeholders across all levels of command and co-located operational staff was established to undertake collaborative activity that would protect the public by pursuing offenders, as well as preparing for and preventing serious violence and organized crime: Fortify.

Correspondence to: Rachel Anne Staniforth, Shepcote Lane Police Station, Sheffield, S9 1RF, United Kingdom.
E-mail: rachel.staniforth@southyorks.pnn.police.uk ■ **DOI:** http://dx.doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.102

METHOD

A 4P approach was adopted (Prepare, Prevent, Pursue, and Protect) (Home Office, 2018b) and a fifth "P," partnership, is embedded across everything we do. A command structure was established with multi-agency and multi-professional partners involved at Strategic, Tactical, and Operational levels. Partners involved in Fortify include the following: Sheffield City Council: public health, social care, early years, the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST), the Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) team, environmental health, trading standards, community safety; South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue; Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS Trust; Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group; Youth Justice Service; Probation; Pupil Referral Unit; Learn Sheffield. The involvement of partners in Fortify fluctuates depending on the issue being addressed, and work is ongoing to further include education, primary care, the mental health trust, and the ambulance service.

There is the option for all partners to be co-located as a team at a local police station in order to carry out disruptions to serious violence and organized crime. Disruptions include not only traditional enforcement disruptions but also novel disruptions by partners, for example, tenancy withdrawal, closure notices, and fines, using all levers possible.

Partners recognize the need to work with communities that are disproportionately affected by serious violence and organized crime. Increasing confidence and strengthening resilience in these communities is key to reducing the impact of serious violence and organized crime in partnership. Fortify coordinated community meetings in five key areas of the City to establish a network of key contacts, increase the two-way flow of information between communities and partners, support individuals to report issues (increasing intelligence), and provide opportunities for joint working. The value of working collaboratively with local communities has also been recognized in a local report (Mason et al., 2019).

By collaborating across organizational and professional boundaries, partners gain a sense of collective responsibility. All Fortify partners are engaged in sharing information, making disruptions, and attempting interventions to protect vulnerable adults and young people. This has given us a comprehensive understanding of serious violence and organized crime in Sheffield, which is expanding daily. Information sharing was improved between organizations, with intelligence reports now being submitted by more partners in the correct format, enabling increased mapping and knowledge of the OCGs and how those on the periphery are involved, where their reach is, and possible ways to intervene.

Increased connection between partners was facilitated through two off-site training days, one at tactical level and one at operational level. Knowledge of different perspectives gained during these days has been key to collaboration. Understanding the capabilities and focus of our colleagues has enabled us to better work together. Feedback from the off-site days was focused around the positive impacts of networking and building relationships with colleagues. We are building a database of all operational staff involved in Fortify that will enable greater communication by phone and e-mail. During the off-site training days, the team learned from the Regional Organized Crime Unit (ROCU) about county lines and CCE.

The team was also educated on the impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) throughout a person's life-course and informed of proposals for the inception of a Navigator programme launching in Accident & Emergency later this year. Attendees focused on how to improve collaboration, and many ideas were suggested at both off-site days for discussion at strategic level.

RESULTS

Relationships between partners have improved since the inception of Fortify. Previously, operational staff had only communicated via referrals. Social workers and police officers had not spoken directly to each other. Now, however, a sense of collective responsibility has been created at all levels. Fortify is becoming a way of working, in that these issues are recognized as the responsibility of all, every day. There is a can-do attitude among partners, and "not my job" is not welcome.

A "Locality Review," conducted by the Home Office in February 2019, showed us to be ahead of the game in comparison with most areas of the UK. The review highlighted the advanced status of partnership arrangements in Sheffield, citing the comprehensive knowledge built up by partners sharing data and intelligence. The Home Office also highlighted and welcomed the increased focus on criminal exploitation and the work we are doing to improve the way in which we respond to this issue, as well as our move to prevent problems from escalating by sharing information and responding positively to early signs.

There has been increased disruptive activity in the pursue strand of Fortify. Activity has increased following an expansion of intelligence reports, which has resulted in more seizures of money, drugs, and firearms, as well as more arrests and safeguarding referrals. Eighty-five members of Sheffield OCGs have been sentenced to time in prison. Collective efforts to tackle the criminal use of firearms has seen 16 guns recovered so far in 2019, which can now no longer be criminally used to cause or threaten violence. A refreshed focus on tackling some of the root causes of organized crime has seen an increase in recorded offences of drug trafficking, indicating increased enforcement activity allowing identification of offenders and recovery of drugs (includes possession with intent to supply, supply, and conspiracy to supply).

The number of mapped OCGs operating across the city has reduced from 19 to 12. During the same period, the MoRILE (management of risk in law enforcement) scoring matrix (Home Office, 2018a) shows a reduction of over 60% in the harms and risks posed by our OCGs, measured against our capacity and capability to respond.

Safeguarding referrals have increased. Although there are several variables involved, we can intimate that this increase is due to a greater understanding of children involved in serious and organized crime as criminally exploited victims. This understanding has also been expanded to potential for harm for children linked to those already involved, such as siblings and friends. Further work is required to explore thresholds for safeguarding action to take place and alternative activity that could support children and young people. We have begun work with the voluntary and community sector to identify options for alternative provision.

Processes and systems have improved. More partners are now sharing intelligence. Previously, there was an intelligence black hole where information remained in silos. Now there is an approved way of sending intelligence anonymously from partners to police that allows a fuller picture to be built of situations in the city. It also allows communication between prevention agencies, helping to ensure children on the periphery of serious violence and organized crime can be protected.

Previously overlooked community groups have been engaged in this work and are eager to support in any way possible. Interested primarily in safeguarding children, they have asked for training to support parents. The groups were impressed with what we knew about the areas they lived in and that we can give comprehensive feedback about their communities.

DISCUSSION

By working together across organizational and professional boundaries, Fortify has created a sense of collective responsibility from all partners. Better relationships have led to increased intelligence and increased disruptive activity. Safeguarding referrals have increased, highlighting potential previous under-reporting. Community groups that had been overlooked are now engaged, and we can reach affected communities more comprehensively.

The flexible approach taken by Fortify has been credited as the cause of its success so far. Key elements of this approach that will continue include: regular face-to-face meetings at all levels of command; permission to fail, learn, and try again; encouraging creativity and innovation; and giving operational staff the freedom to try new things.

This approach is working in Sheffield. It is important that successes in practice are shared with other organizations and areas that wish to make the same improvements. It is acknowledged that the results from this work are not generalizable. It may be that some elements can be replicated and evaluated for success in a similar trial-and-error approach. Evaluation is proposed in the form of action research, due to the complex nature of the work. A multi-agency steering group is currently being established to manage the action research process.

CONCLUSION

Through our continuing action research, we aim to determine that collaboration between Police and Partners increases collective responsibility and facilitates success in tackling serious violence and organized crime. We also encourage further research by others into this and similar collaborative, multi-agency efforts, with a view to learning the ingredients for success for agencies involved, and for community safety and well-being outcomes.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES
All authors are directly involved in this work and are employed by organizations that form part of the multi-agency partnership. All authors are determined to make change that translates into better lives for the communities in Sheffield and as such are not under any influence to alter or present the work differently to reality. A trial-and-error approach is something that has been applauded as useful in this work. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS
*Fortify, South Yorkshire Police, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, United Kingdom; †South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit, South Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire, United Kingdom; ‡Community Safety, Sheffield City Council, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, United Kingdom

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