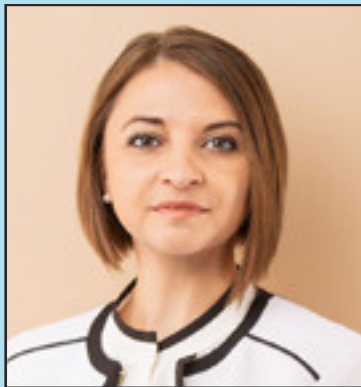# 5th Annual
Canadian Forensic Psychology
Virtual Conference | February 7, 2025

Keynote Speaker

Eight Best Practices for Forensic Psychological Assessment

Dr. Tess Neal
Associate Professor and Dean's Professor, Iowa State University

Invited Symposium

Suspect Interviewing: Charter Rights, Coercion and Confession Evidence

Dr. Joseph Eastwood

Dr. Christopher Lively

Dr. Kirk Luther

Ms. Madison Hynes

The conference will be of interest to anyone who works in forensic mental health, justice-involved populations, law enforcement, or the administration of justice, or is planning to pursue a career in one of these fields.

Event Details

Date: February 7, 2025 **Time:** Noon - 5:00 p.m. AT
Fee: Free | Register for Zoom link
Registration until February 6, 2025

The Dept of Psychology at Saint Mary's University offers an undergraduate Certificate of Forensic Psychology and an MSc in Applied Psychology (forensic psychology stream), along with its undergraduate and other graduate programs. For more information visit www.smu.ca/psychology/

Welcome

We are advocates, learners, researchers, and educators in Forensic Psychology at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We are pleased to welcome you to our 5th Annual Canadian Forensic Psychology Virtual Conference!

We would like to begin by acknowledging that Saint Mary's University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded land of the Mi'kmaq Nation. We encourage you to spend time recognizing and appreciating the land that you are currently situated on. Access the link: https://native-land.ca/ for an interactive map that works with Indigenous communities beyond colonial boundaries to map territories, languages, and treaties worldwide. We acknowledge that the acts of colonialization have made inequities for Indigenous peoples, yet despite this, Indigenous peoples continue to amplify strength and bravery in celebrating cultures and communities. We hope to provide a safe space for all to be welcomed and treated with the respect and care they deserve.

We are thrilled to have such a talented group of presenters gathered here to share insights, exchange ideas, and foster collaborations. Featuring a lineup of esteemed keynote speakers, panel members, and researchers, we hope to provide a space that allows us to learn from one another, grow as individuals, and build connections that extend beyond the confines of the conference. We want to express our deepest gratitude to our peer reviewers, conference moderators, and all those who have contributed to making this event possible.

Thank you for participating in our conference, and enjoy the day!

Sincerely,

Maryann Pitre	Dr. Veronica Stinson	Dr. Marguerite Ternes
Conference Coordinator	Conference Co-host	Conference Co-host
MSc Student	Professor	Associate Professor

SCHEDULE

February 7th, 2025

*Note: Times are in Atlantic Standard Time. The keynote speakers will be in Room #1. All presentations will be about 10 minutes with questions at the end of each session.

12:00 PM — Overview

12:15 PM — **"Eight Best Practices for Forensic Psychological Assessment"**
Dr. Tess M.S. Neal

1:15 PM — Presentations

Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
IPV/Sexual Violence 1	**Prison Systems and Rehabilitation**	**Misconceptions/ Misunderstandings and Public Perceptions in the Courtroom**	**Investigative Interviewing**
Underwood	Barry	Han	Ferguson
Reid	Filoso	Reeves	Villeneuve
Widmer	Giesbrecht	Tart	Chaisson
	Vinter	Cardoso	Dion Lariviere

2:30 PM — Break

2:45 PM — **"Suspect Interviewing: Charter Rights, Coercion, & Confession Evidence"**
Dr. Joseph Eastwood, Dr. Christopher Lively, Dr. Kirk Luther and Madison Hynes

3:45 PM — Break

4:00 PM — Presentations

Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
Police Work/Investigative interviewing	**IPV/Sexual Violence**	**Forensic Mental Health**
Reilly	Moghimi	Canning
Gryshchuk	Swanek	Doyle
Yeast	Melnyk	Healey
Ogunseye	Nelson	Eke

5:00 PM — Closing Remarks

DR. TESS M.S. NEAL

Tess M.S. Neal, PhD is an associate professor and Dean's Professor of psychology at Iowa State University. She is a scientist; a licensed clinical psychologist trained to assess, diagnose, and treat mental and behavioral disorders; as a forensic psychologist trained to bring psychology into legal contexts. She studies the nature and limits of expertise. Her basic work focuses on understanding and improving human judgment processes – especially among trained experts, and her more applied work focuses on improving forensic and legal experts' judgments in particular. Her work has been funded by multiple grants from the National Science Foundation and she has published nearly five dozen scientific papers. She is a fellow of both the Association for Psychological Science and the American Psychological Association, and she completed a Fulbright Scholarship in Australia in 2022. She is the incoming Editor-in-Chief of the journal Psychology, Public Policy, and Law.

PRESENTATION:

Eight Best Practices for Forensic Psychological Assessment

This presentation will review the state of forensic psychological assessment, including an overview of its history and current strengths, as well as where we have room for improvement. We distill decades of scholarship from and about fundamental basic science and forensic science, clinical and forensic psychology, and the law of expert evidence into eight best practices for the validity of a forensic psychological assessment. We argue these best practices should apply when a psychological assessment relies on the norms, values, and esteem of science to inform legal processes. This presentation is based on a free article published in the Annual Review of Law and Social Science. Portions of this original synthesis were prepared simultaneously for the Annual Review article and for a report commissioned by the independent public inquiry by the Government of Canada and Province of Nova Scotia called the Mass Casualty Commission. In this workshop, we provide a template with 117 questions developed in order to make the 8 best practices more concrete for psychologists to use to evaluate their own reports and/or others' reports.

Neal, T.M.S., Martire, K.A., Johan, J.L., Mathers, E., & Otto, R.K. (2022). The law meets psychological expertise: Eight best practices to improve forensic psychological assessments. Annual Review of Law & Social Science, 18, 169-192. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-050420-010148

"Suspect Interviewing: Charter Rights, Coercion, & Confession Evidence"

DR. JOSEPH EASTWOOD

Dr. Eastwood is an Associate Professor in the forensic psychology program at Ontario Tech University in Oshawa, Ontario. He conducts and publishes research on the topic of investigative interviewing, including comprehension of interrogation rights, memory enhancing procedures, and persuasion within suspect interviews. Along with his research, Dr. Eastwood has been active in delivering evidence-based interview training courses and seminars to law enforcement, governmental, and private sector organizations.

DR. CHRIS LIVELY

Dr. Christopher Lively is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Applied Forensic Psychology Program in the Psychology Department at St. Francis Xavier University. His research interests pertain to the study of human behaviour within the criminal justice system (broadly defined), with a special focus related to investigative interviewing practices (i.e., within policing, judiciary, and parole board realms), assumptions pertaining to legal decision-making (e.g., alibi assessments, jury decision making, eyewitness testimony), and legal rights comprehension for adults and youth.

DR. KIRK LUTHER

Dr. Kirk Luther is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Carleton University. He research is in the area of investigative interviewing, with a focus on improving practices for vulnerable populations. Dr. Luther has extensive experience delivering evidence-based interview training to practitioners worldwide. His research has influenced global investigative interviewing practices and has been incorporated into training programs, such as the Méndez Principles on Effective Interviewing.

MADISON HYNES

Madison (Madi) Hynes (she/her) is a PhD candidate in social psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). She holds a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Psychology (2020) and a Masters in Applied Psychological Science (2022), both from MUN. Her research interests lie in forensic and legal psychology, with a particular focus on jury decision-making. Her research investigates what Canadian prospective jurors actually know or believe about police interrogation and confessions, aiming to assess whether laypeople know the content of expert testimony on coerced confessions. She also explores how different types of courtroom evidence, such as DNA and confessions, can shape perceptions of guilt and verdict outcomes in criminal trials.

ROOM 1
IPV/SEXUAL VIOLENCE 1

An Evolving Geographical Analysis of Serial Sexual Offences Committed by Russell Williams

Robson Underwood, *St. Francis Xavier University*
Margo Watt, *St. Francis Xavier University*
Christopher Lively, *St. Francis Xavier University*

The case of former Colonel D. Russell Williams, one of Canada's most notorious serial murderers, continues to intrigue researchers (e.g., Brankley et al., 2014; Jantzen, 2017; Watt, 2023); largely due to its many unique features. The present study is part of a larger retrospective analyses (temporal, geographical, psychological) of the Williams case inspired, in part, by new reporting. Such an approach allows for the complementary application of experimental-deductive and clinical-inductive models. The present study specifically examined Williams' journey-to-crime pattern and compared it to findings from previous serial sexual offender spatial behaviour research (Synott et al., 2018). Using the agreed statement of facts for his 82 fetish burglaries, 2 sexual assaults, and 2 sadistic sexual murders (R v. Williams, 2010), offences were categorized based on crime type, distance travelled from each of his two residences to crime and disposal sites – Orléans and Belleville, ON. As predicted, results show that Williams' sexual homicides involved significantly longer journeys-to-crime (Mdn = 59.70 km) as compared to fetish burglaries (Mdn = 0.50 km). Williams' demographic and murder profiles (e.g., presumed age at crime cycle onset, crime duration of 2007-2010) distinguish him from Synott et al.'s sample of 59 serial killers whose median journey-to-crime distances for both body disposers and non-body disposers were 12.16 and 11.05 km, respectively. Such retrospective analysis can help us to better understand escalation patterns in sexually motivated offences, generally, and further our insight into the unique psychopathological profile of Russell Williams, specifically. This is increasingly important in light of a recent report from a potential victim of Williams from the 1980s, which fits his geography and modus operandi. If this report is confirmed, it could represent the first step in a process of piecing together a true timeline of the onset and duration of Williams' crime cycle.

Keywords: Serial Sexual Offending, Geographical Analysis, Journey to Crime, Criminal Escalation

Credible or Culpable? The Influence of Attitudes and Celebrity Status on Blame Attributions

Nadia Reid, *MacEwan University*
Anika Anderson, *MacEwan University*
Nicole Tews, *MacEwan University*
Kristine Peace, *MacEwan University*

Allegations of sexual violence, particularly in highly publicized cases involving celebrities, have come under intense scrutiny in recent years. In such cases, laypersons and professionals form opinions regarding who is to blame, often independent from available evidence. Despite the prevalence of celebrity cases, research is lacking as to how defendant and/or complainant fame influence legal judgments. Further, preexisting attitudes such as just world beliefs and rape myth acceptance could interact with fame to alter beliefs concerning sexual violence allegations. As such, the current study examines the influence of attitudes and celebrity status on beliefs and blame attributions. Participants reviewed a vignette depicting a sexual interaction, later reported as nonconsensual, that varied according to complainant and defendant celebrity status (famous/not famous) and evidence directionality (guilty/ambiguous/not guilty). They completed the Narrative Believability Scale (NBS-12) and provided ratings of the interaction (i.e, consent, severity, blame). Attitudes concerning belief in a just world (BJW) and rape myth acceptance (RMA) were assessed and evaluated concerning influence on belief and blame variables. Data collection is ongoing, and preliminary analyses will be conducted on a sample of approximately 800 undergraduate participants obtained thus far. We anticipate that high BJW and RMA scores will be associated with less belief in complainant allegations and greater victim blaming. Blame attributions also may vary in accordance with celebrity status. We expect that when defendants are described as celebrities, those with higher BJW and RMA scores will be more likely to engage in victim blaming. How complainant celebrity status further impacts this relationship is unknown given that this has not been considered in previous studies. These results have important implications for how our preexisting attitudes influence interpretations of assault allegations, and how fame or status could lead to impartiality in the criminal justice process.

Keywords: sexual violence, blame attributions, attitudes/beliefs, celebrity status

Examining Police Officers Utilization of the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment: Assessing Risk Mitigation Strategies to Reduce Intimate Partner Violence

Denika Widmer, *University of New Brunswick - Saint John*
Mary Ann Campbell, *University of New Brunswick - Saint John*

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) stands as a pervasive global health concern, with frontline police officers in Canada assuming a significant role in its management. The Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) instrument has been introduced in New Brunswick to aid police officers with gauging risk levels and formulating effective risk management strategies for IPV cases. However, there is a research gap in understanding the extent to which police officers utilize the ODARA to inform their decision-making processes when addressing IPV incidents. The current study examined 227 IPV case files ranging from 2016 to 2018 from a New Brunswick police organization. These files consisted of occurrence reports and details related to both victim and suspect characteristics. Follow-up files were examined for subsequent police charges following a suspect's index IPV case until 2023, with an average follow up period of 6.34 years. Results indicated that police officers used the ODARA in 87.7% of cases and often completed the assessment on the same day as the index offence (Mdn = 0). However, multivariate analysis of covariance revealed that the ODARA did not have a statistically significant impact on the number of risk management strategies employed by officers in response to IPV calls. Furthermore, logistic regressions revealed that specific types of risk mitigation strategies do not predict suspect recidivism. The current study aimed to contribute to the limited research on the practical application of the ODARA in the field. Implications of the current findings contribute valuable insights to the enhancement of current IPV intervention strategies and can inform revisions to existing protocols.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, risk assessment, risk management, police officers

ROOM 2
PRISON SYSTEMS AND REHABILITATION

Emotion-focused interventions for justice-involved mothers: A scoping review

Bridget Barry, *Saint Mary's University*
Chloë Fuller, *Saint Mary's University*
Meg Ternes, *Saint Mary's University*

It is estimated that upward of 85% of incarcerated women are mothers, and many have complex histories of trauma, substance use, victimization, and/or mental illness. Mother and child separation has adverse outcomes, including depression, trauma, and grief. While some research examines skills-based parenting programs (i.e., focusing on child development, communication, nutrition) for justice-involved mothers, further understanding is needed of existent emotion-focused interventions that target emotional well-being, child custody loss, and grief associated with mothering from prison. We identified a need for a synthesis of international research on this topic. We used the Joanna Briggs Institute Methodology for scoping reviews. We included studies surrounding any prison or community-based program that targets emotions associated with experiences as a justice-involved mother, in English, of any methodology. Following a search of PubMed, Web of Science, and PsycInfo databases, collecting all identified citations, and removing duplicates, 2637 titles and abstracts were screened by two reviewers against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The full texts of 87 relevant sources were retrieved and assessed in detail, with any reasons for exclusion recorded. Disagreements between reviewers were resolved at each stage of the selection process. The final sample included 19 studies. While data is currently being extracted and analyzed, preliminary results suggest that some existing parenting programs for justice-involved mothers target emotional well-being in addition to parenting skills, with some studies finding that such programs improve maternal mental health (e.g., depression) and stress. Social support was found to be an important aspect of these programs. Findings will be discussed in relation to the importance of offering interventions to justice-involved mothers that explicitly target grief, loss, and emotion regulation.

Keywords: mothers, incarceration, parenting programs

Substance use frequency, device-sharing, and substances used among federally incarcerated people in Canada: Results from Correctional Service Canada's 2022 National Health Survey

Daniella Filoso, *Correctional Service Canada*

Kayla Wanamaker, *Correctional Service Canada*

Marie-Pierre Gendron, *Correctional Service Canada*

Sara Johnson, *Correctional Service Canada*

Substance use and device sharing are more common in correctional than community settings (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2004; Poulin et al., 2007; Wood et al., 2005). Studying how widespread these risk behaviours are among people who are incarcerated (PWAI) is important for optimizing the health and treatment of infections among these individuals, as most eventually return to the community, thus having a direct impact on community health and safety (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2016). The purpose of Correctional Service Canada's (CSC) National Health Survey was to update the estimated frequency of risk behaviours among PWAI to help inform healthcare services. The current presentation will include findings related to substance use. More specifically, we will present on substance ingestion methods, substances used, and device sharing. Participants (N = 413) were PWAI who completed a self-report questionnaire, understood French or English, were continuously incarcerated for six months prior to the study's launch, consented to participate, and reported substance use within the previous six months. Among people who smoked (n = 323/413; 78.2%), the largest proportions reported smoking every day (n = 102/323; 31.6%) and using marijuana (n = 199/323; 61.6%). Among those who snorted (n = 260/413; 63.0%), the largest proportions reported snorting one to three days a week (n = 73/260; 28.1%) and using bupropion (n = 88/260; 33.8%). Among those who injected drugs (n = 51/413; 12.3%), the largest proportion reported injecting one to three days a week or less than one day a month (n = 13/51; 25.5%) and using methamphetamine (n = 24/51; 47.1%). Nearly four-fifths (n = 30/51; 58.8%) shared their needle. Results from this presentation can be used to improve harm reduction strategies and practices and inform programming initiatives for PWAI.

Keywords: Substance use, Needle sharing, Health of incarcerated persons

A new typology of men who perpetrate intimate partner violence: Differentiating perpetrators based on criminal history and antisocial attitudes

Crystal Giesbrecht, *University of Regina*

Leslie Anne Keown, *University of Regina*

Kaila Bruer, *University of Regina*

Latent class analysis was used to create a new typology of perpetrators of intimate partner violence (IPV) using data collected with the Service Planning Instrument (SPIn™) from 7,781 men involved with community corrections in Alberta. Men in the sample were classified using seven variables: criminal history, failure while on conditions, violations of protection or no-contact orders, procriminal attitudes, antisocial peers, social/cognitive skills, and aggression/violence. The resulting typology included three classes: High Criminal History—High Antisocial Attitudes, High Criminal History—Low Antisocial Attitudes, and Low Criminal History—Low Antisocial Attitudes. The three classes were compared on external variables linked to general and IPV recidivism (including history of violence, substance misuse, childhood trauma, mental health conditions, homicidal ideation, and employment problems). The High Criminal History—High Antisocial Attitudes class displayed the highest prevalence of all external variables, the Low Criminal History—Low Antisocial Attitudes class had the lowest rates, and the High Criminal History—Low Antisocial Attitudes class scored intermediate to the other two classes. The three classes were also compared on four dichotomous measures of reoffending at both one and three years. The High Criminal History—High Antisocial Attitudes class displayed the highest rate of recidivism on all four measures. The Low Criminal History—Low Antisocial Attitudes class had low rates of all forms of recidivism. Given the distinct differences between the three classes in terms of static and dynamic risk factors (i.e., criminogenic needs) and risk for reoffending, this typology is expected to have utility for case management with men who have perpetrated IPV.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, typology, recidivism, offenders

Experiences of autistic individuals in UK prison-based sexual offending interventions

Luke Vinter, *University of Derby*

Research indicates that autistic people are no more likely to engage in crime than neurotypical people. However, in the minority of autistic people that do engage in crime, evidence has suggested that sexual crime is one of the more common forms of offending committed by those individuals, increasing evidence suggests that autistic individuals have qualitatively different experiences of prison compared to other neurotypes. Despite this, limited research has investigated how prison-based rehabilitation is experienced by autistic individuals, and how best to work with those individuals during offending behaviour interventions. The present study (i) explored how prison-based interventions to address sexual offending are experienced by autistic individuals with sexual offence convictions and the staff who work with them, and (ii) identified the features of prison-based sexual offending interventions that can be challenging or beneficial for autistic individuals with sexual convictions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the UK with 12 autistic men serving prison sentences for sexual convictions, and 13 members of prison staff involved in prison-based rehabilitation of men with sexual convictions. This presentation will summarise the themes that were identified through a multi-perspective phenomenologically-informed thematic analysis of interviews. These themes highlight some of the key issues relating to the format and delivery of offending behaviour interventions, as well as the impact of the broader prison context on rehabilitation. Findings from this study have informed practical recommendations for how best to work with autistic individuals with sexual offence convictions in prison-based interventions.

Keywords: Autism, Neurodiversity, Rehabilitation, Prison, Responsivity

ROOM 3
MISCONCEPTIONS/MISUNDERST ANDINGS AND PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS IN THE COURTROOM

Fore! Does For-warning Inoculate People Against the False Balance Effect?

Tianshuang Han, *Memorial University*

Brent Snook, *Memorial University*

There is overwhelming consensus in the scientific literature that deception detection via nonverbal cues is futile. However, merchants of doubt often promote misconceptions and dubious practices regarding non-verbal lie detection. One strategy they used is to create a fake debate by balancing empirical findings with myth (e.g., "the body never lies"). We examined if balanced message decreased perceived expert consensus and if forewarning people about the strategy inoculated them against the negative impact. We first asked participants about their personal belief and belief in expert about non-verbal deception detection. Then we randomly assigned participants (N = 307) to read one of five media reports, which revealed that experts reached a high consensus level (nearly 90%) that non-verbal cues are unreliable indicators of deception. Following the survey data, we gave participants either (1) no comments, (2) equal number of comments from two experts on both sides of the issue (3 agree vs 3 disagree), (3) more consensus-supporting comments(5 agree vs 1 disagree), (4) an equal number of comments from two experts on both sides (3 agree vs 3 disagree), along with a forewarning about "fake debate" strategy or (5) more consensus-supporting comments(5 agree vs 1 disagree), along with a forewarning about "fake debate" strategy. We found that participants tend to hold pre-existing misbelief that non-verbal cues are reliable indicator of lies. While reading the data on expert consensus somewhat debunk their beliefs, the inclusion of opposing opinions alongside the data reduced the positive impact of the information. That is, presenting any two-sided message decreased perceived scientific consensus on a high-consensus issue even when people have access to the data. We also found that presenting a balanced message reduced people's policy support in favour of scientific consensus (i.e. non-verbal cues cannot detect deception accurately). Forewarning has minimal effect. Implications were discussed.

Keywords: false balance, forewarning, perceived expert consensus, deception detection, science communication

Blinded by Science: Neuroimages Interfere with Judgments of Expert Psychological Testimony

Savannah Reeves, *University of North Carolina Wilmington*
Bryan Myers, *University of North Carolina Wilmington*

Neuroimages accompanying expert testimony have led to increased perceptions of understanding the testimony that do not match actual understanding (Ikeda et al., 2013). Weisberg et al. (2008) found that when reading articles that contained either good or poor research, participants rated the poor research as of greater quality and trusted the findings more when it was presented along with an unrelated neuroimage. If evidence such as neuroimages reduce jurors' capacity to judge the reliability of the testimony (i.e., its probative value), then it can be considered prejudicial (FRE, 403). To test the potential prejudicial effects of neuroimages, the present study involved 159 death qualified participants who were randomly assigned to watch expert psychological testimony that varied neuroimages (absent/present) along with testimony strength (weak/strong) in the context of a capital trial. Testimony strength was manipulated by the degree to which accompanying evidence was consistent with the conclusions of the expert. After reading the guilt phase fact summary and rendering a verdict, participants then read the penalty phase facts of a capital trial, watched the videotaped expert testimony which concerned the defendant's alleged traumatic brain injury, and rated the level of defendant cognitive impairment and the quality of expert testimony on a series of 5-pt scales. Significant interactions were found between neuroimage presence and testimony strength on both ratings of defendant impairment and ratings of expert testimony quality. Specifically, the strong testimony was rated significantly higher than the weak testimony on both defendant impairment and expert quality when the neuroimage was absent, but these conditions failed to differ when the neuroimage was present. The findings suggest that the visual presentation of brain images, and the scientific aura they project, may detract from the ability to distinguish between reliable and unreliable expert psychological testimony.

Keywords: neuroimages, expert testimony, juries

Leading by Example: Mitigator Examples in Capital Trial Jury Instructions Influence Mitigator Perceptions

Kenzie Tart, *University of North Carolina Wilmington*

Bryan Myers, *University of North Carolina Wilmington*

Currently in the U.S., 27 states offer the death penalty (DPIC, 2024). Juror instructions on mitigators differ across states, including whether an example of a mitigating factor is provided. The examples used in juror instructions typically fall into one of two categories: (1) defendant mental state or intoxication and, (2) defendant character. Because mitigating factors are often poorly understood by jurors (e.g., Reifman et al., 1992), it was hypothesized that the example of a mitigator provided in juror instructions may frame juror perceptions of whether a particular fact about the defendant warrants a reduced sentence. To test this, a total of 143 death qualified college students participated in an online study where they read a brief murder case vignette, were informed the defendant was found guilty, and were tasked with a sentence recommendation. All participants read the same mitigation definition, but depending on condition, read one of three mitigator examples (no example, mental state example, defendant character example). All participants then rated the strength of 14 different mitigators (7 mental state items and 7 defendant character items) on a 5-point scale. Mitigation strength rating scores for the averaged 7 mental state items (alpha = .81) and the averaged 7 defendant character items (alpha = .87) were computed. A 3 (example: no example/mental state/defendant character) by 2 (mitigator type: mental state/defendant character) mixed factorial ANOVA revealed a significant interaction whereby mental state mitigators were rated as significantly stronger than defendant character mitigators, except when participants read the defendant character example. What jurors consider to be a strong reason for a reduced sentence can be influenced by the examples provided. Given concerns that the death penalty be applied uniformly, (e.g., see Furman v. Georgia and Gregg v. Georgia), the findings here highlight the importance of uniform examples.

Keywords: mitigators, capital trials, juries

Compensation and Reintegration After Wrongful Conviction: Does Race Matter?

Carina Cardoso, *Ontario Tech University*
Taya Henry, *Ontario Tech University*
Ecaterina Litvin, *Ontario Tech University*
Kimberley Clow, *Ontario Tech University*

Wrongful convictions are a significant issue within the criminal justice system that disproportionately affect racialized individuals (Erentzen et al., 2021; Gross et al., 2022; Roach, 2023). While wrongfully convicted persons have to deal with consequences including wrongful imprisonment, financial hardships, and psychological trauma, racialized individuals face additional difficulties, such as heightened stigmatization and barriers to reintegration and compensation (Howard, 2019; Pacholski & Anderson, 2023). Although there are documented differences in the treatment of racialized individuals, experimental research findings in this area are mixed with some studies finding greater support for wrongfully convicted persons who are minorities in comparison to Whites (e.g., Clow et al., 2013; Salerno et al., 2023; Smalarz et al., 2023). Thus, this study aimed to further explore the role of race in shaping public perceptions and willingness to support exonerees. Undergraduate students were randomly assigned to read a news article about a recently released exoneree who was Black, White or Indigenous. Following this, they were asked to report their views on the exoneree's deservingness of compensation and reintegration support. Preliminary analyses (data collection is still ongoing) found a significant effect of race on compensation, wherein participants were more likely to suggest higher compensation for Black exonerees. These findings will be discussed in the context of previous experimental findings and the racial disparities experienced by wrongfully convicted minorities.

Keywords: wrongful conviction, exoneration, compensation, stigmatization, racial bias

ROOM 4
INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING

Interpretation in Suspect Interviews
Brooklyn Ferguson, *Ontario Tech University*
Amy-May Leach, *Ontario Tech University*
Katrina Villeneuve, *Ontario Tech University*
Claudia Mcarthur, *Ontario Tech University*

The Quality of Interpretation in Suspect Interviews There is limited research on how the presence of an interpreter affects an interview (Ramos-González et al., 2016). Research conducted with legal professionals in other countries suggests that the quality of interpretation may be poor (Goodman-Delahunty & Howes, 2019). Police officers' attitudes towards interpreters appear to be positive, however (e.g., Shaffer & Evans, 2018). Here, we examine the quality of interpretation and attitudes toward interpreters in a Canadian context. Method Canadian police officers will be asked to complete a 78-item online survey using Qualtrics. We will be analyzing a subset of Likert questions about officers' opinions and previous experiences related to interpreters. To assess interpretation quality, we will examine officers' experiences with interpreters reporting statements verbatim, reporting statements accurately, adding details, and omitting details. To determine how interpretation affects the quality of interviews, we will analyze perceptions of interpreters' fluency in English, the flow of the interview, and control over the interview. Finally, to assess officers' attitudes, we will examine whether interpreters are viewed as trustworthy, impartial, and a good use of resources. Data collection is underway. Expected Results In keeping with previous research (e.g., Krouglov, 1999; Tipton, 2019), we hypothesize that police officers will report that the interpreted messages are of low quality. We also predict that police officers will report that the interview is low-quality when interpreters are present (e.g., Driskell et al., 2013; Lai & Mulayim, 2014). Finally, as in previous studies (e.g., Wakefield et al., 2015), we hypothesize that police officers will report that they have an overall positive view of interpreters. Conclusion Establishing officers' perceptions of interpretation is crucial when considering the fairness of investigative interviews. Our work might help identify consequences and barriers to interpreter use. In turn, those data can inform police strategies and policies to improve suspect and witness interviews.

Keywords: Interpreters, Interviewing, Police, Suspects, Quality

Revisiting Apologies: Examining the Presence of Apologies and Apology Prompting in Investigative Interviews

Katrina Villenueve, *Ontario Tech University*

Amy Leach, *Ontario Tech University*

Logan Ewanation, *Ontario Tech University*

Brian Cutler, *Fielding Graduate University*

We examined the presence of apologies in police interviews. In phase one, investigative interviews were coded for the presence of apologies. Apologies in a broad sample of interviews has received very little attention in the literature. Therefore, this was an exploratory analysis. One hundred seventeen police suspect interviews were included in the assessment (Mage = 33.46 years, SDage = 13.32; Males = 98, Females = 19). Of the 117 interviews examined, 47 included at least one suspect apology. The coded apologies were further assessed for the presence of prompting (i.e., instances of the interviewer prompting the suspect to provide an apology). Of the 47 interviews containing suspect apologies, 14 of them also contained at least one prompt by the interviewer. In phase two, potential predictors were assessed to better understand apologies occurring during interviews. Apology predictors included the demographic factors 'suspect age' and 'suspect ethnicity'. Predictors of legal apologies are a novel topic, and very little research on their effects exists. Therefore, these are primarily exploratory analyses, and we do not have specific expectations regarding which factors might predict apologies in this context. We used a logistic regression to examine this group of factors. Neither the suspect's age nor ethnicity was found to have any statistically significant predictive effect on apologies. These findings suggest that while apologies do occur in suspect interviews, it is unclear whether specific factors might predict them. To date, relatively little is known about the number of apologies and their underlying nature across a broad sample of suspect interviews, irrespective of guilt. Our research offers a more nuanced analysis of legal apologies and a better understanding of whether their presence can be predicted.

Keywords: Apologies, Police Interviews, Forensic Psychology, Psychology

Increasing Information Elicitation in Witness Interviews

Harper Chaisson, *Carleton University*

Matthew Caines, *Carleton University*

Tianshuang Han, *Memorial University of Newfoundland*

Brent Snook, *Memorial University of Newfoundland*

Jessica Lundy, Graduate Student, *Carleton University*

Kirk Luther, Faculty, *Carleton University*

Joseph Eastwood, Faculty, *Ontario Tech University*

Quintan Crough, Graduate Student, *Ontario Tech University*

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Obtaining detailed and accurate information from witnesses is often crucial in criminal investigations. However, police have reported dissatisfaction with the quality and quantity of information provided during investigative interviews. To improve information elicitation, researchers have developed techniques based on social proof theory—the idea that individuals in unfamiliar situations look to others' behaviors to guide their own actions. The current study compared the effectiveness of three social proof techniques for enhancing witness recall in investigative interviews. A total of 131 participants recruited from three Canadian universities viewed a video of a mock crime and were interviewed using one of the following techniques: (1) the Mock Transcript technique, where participants viewed a lengthy transcribed statement from a fake previous participant, (2) the Model Statement, where participants listened to a recording of someone providing a detailed account of a witnessed event, (3) the Demonstration for More Detail (DeMo) technique, where the researcher demonstrated how to provide fine-grained information, or (4) a control condition, where participants were simply asked to provide a free-recall of the witnessed event. The results showed that the DeMo technique meaningfully increased the number of correct details recalled compared to the control condition. There were no meaningful differences in the number of incorrect or confabulated details, or in recall accuracy across the conditions. Since one of the participating research labs has yet to complete data collection, we plan to conduct a re-analysis once the full sample is available. This study is the first to compare these social proof techniques, thus addressing a key gap in the literature.

Keywords: investigative interviewing, witness interviews, information elicitation, social influence

Police Interviews with Older Adults in Ontario, Canada: An Examination of Questions and Responses in a Real-World Sample

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Investigative interviews to gather information about crimes against older adults are crucial yet challenging. Aging adults are not only vulnerable to crimes such as maltreatment, neglect, and fraud, but they may also face physical, cognitive, and social changes that can complicate the interviewing process. This highlights the need for law enforcement to adapt their interviewing practices to accommodate both healthy older adults and those with cognitive impairments. Despite this, limited research and evidence-based guidelines exist for this population. This study examines police interviewing practices with older adult victim interviewees of fraud, physical assault and sexual abuse across Ontario, Canada. Our sample consists of transcripts from 15+ real-world interviews with older adults between the ages of 73 and 99 years old. Two coders analyzed the interviews to assess the frequency of various types of questions (e.g., rapport-building, free recall, directive, and suggestive questions) and examine response patterns (e.g., response length, central vs. peripheral details). Preliminary findings reveal that forced-choice questions were most common (36.24%) but often yielded shorter responses (M = 14 words). Conversely, open-ended questions, though used sparingly (6.08%), elicited the longest and most detailed responses (M = 33 words). These results align with previous findings that forced-choice questions, while effective for specific details, limit response depth. These results highlight the need for more evidence-based approaches tailored to the needs of older adult interviewees in police interviews.

Keywords: Investigative Interviewing, Older Adults, Police Practices

ROOM 1 POLICE WORK/INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING

Officers use of Crisis Intervention Strategies as a Moderator for Odd/Unusual and Aggressive Behaviour

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In recent years, mental health crisis calls have received media attention due to high profile cases (e.g., Chantel Moore and Rodney Levi). Subsequently, officers' use of force during such calls is highly scrutinized. Research suggests that police not only use more force when a person is experiencing mental illness and/or in crisis but do so with higher severity (McTackett & Thomas, 2017). Additionally, a previous study found that when persons in crisis display odd/unusual or aggressive behaviour, there was increased odds of use of force by officers (Reilly & Campbell, 2024). However, a factor that may mitigate the need for force is police use of crisis intervention skills (Huey et al., 2021). As such, the present study assessed the use of crisis intervention strategies as a moderating factor in use of force actions in the context of calls reflecting odd/unusual and aggressive behaviour in 200 New Brunswick police mental health calls from 2020-2024 [52% male; 82% identified as White/European; age ranged from 10-87, M = 31.9]. The crisis intervention competencies were clearly displayed to an effective degree as consistent use of these strategies were used regularly throughout call interactions (68%, n = 136). In contrast, use of force (29%, n = 29), aggressive behaviour (17.5%, n = 35), and odd/unusual behaviour (14%, n = 28) was not overly present during the interactions. Hayes Moderation PROCESS analyses indicated that crisis intervention strategies did not significantly moderate the relationship between displays of odd/unusual behaviour or aggressive behaviour and use of force. Overall, utilization of crisis intervention strategies did not change the direction and/or strengthen the relationship between odd/unusual behaviour/aggressive behaviour and officers' use of force. These findings suggest that there are limitations to the use of crisis intervention skills in mitigating harsher police responses to persons in crisis, potentially when behaviours are interpreted as threatening or when a person may be more challenging to engage due to their mental state.

Keywords: Mental Health Crisis Calls, Crisis Intervention Strategies, Use of Force, Aggressive Behaviour, Moderation

Sense of Safety Among Atlantic Canadian Police Officers

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Many studies established that stress and fear hinder police officers' decision making and lead to poorer job performance among other consequences (Carvalho et al., 2024; Verhage et al., 2018). Thus, the goal of this study was to capture the sense of physical safety experienced by police officers (N = 120) in Nova Scotia, both inside and outside their workplace and to identify factors that contributes to or reduce this sense of safety. Officers were asked to measure their sense of physical safety on a scale from 0 = "not safe at all" to 4 "extremely safe". On average, officers felt moderately safe when working inside their organization; however, they felt less physically safe when working outside their workplace. Officers also provided open-ended comments explaining their reasons for feeling physically safe or unsafe, which were thematically analyzed. Eight themes emerged from these responses. The two most common reasons for feeling unsafe included a lack of manpower within the police agency and, consequently, having limited to no back-up when on calls, as well as having faulty and dated equipment (e.g., radios with a short battery life). Other themes included a lack of support from management, unpredicted nature of police calls, lack of training, lack of trust that fellow officers are sufficiently trained to mitigate safety issues, perceived lack of public respect, and a fear of retaliation for past arrests and charges. These findings indicated that police officers' sense of safety was most often impacted by organizational stressors (e.g., understaffing and a poor quality of equipment), and less frequently impacted by operational (e.g., the nature of calls), and personal (e.g., fear of retaliation) stressors. Police leaders should consider these factors and address them where controllable, to enhance officers' sense of safety given that fear is associated with negative personal and organizational outcomes.

Keywords: Physical safety, stressors, job performance

The Phased Interview Model (PIM) of Suspect Interviewing: Evaluating the Model and Preliminary Observations in Real-World Interviews

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Contemporary approaches to suspect interviewing increasingly favor psychological techniques to foster cooperation and garner useful information. In 2014, the RCMP introduced the Phased Interview Model (PIM), a non-accusatory approach based on rapport building to collect voluntary information from suspects. Despite nationwide implementation, the PIM has yet to be evaluated by a third-party. The current study was the first to examine a sample of 12 PIM interviews of homicide suspects in British Columbia. The primary objective of this research study was to examine the presence of information-gathering techniques (e.g., rapport, appeals for information) and violations of the confession rule (e.g., coercion, promises/trickery) to see if interviewer behaviors align with the protocol. A novel coding scheme was created based largely on previous research, while also considering the information-gathering techniques taught in the PIM training. The second objective was to explore possible relationships between these interview techniques and the amount of useful, verifiable, and original information provided by suspects. Results demonstrated that PIM interviewers utilized a variety of appropriate rapport building techniques, overtly upheld suspect rights, and gathered information as trained within the model. There were however a few instances of maximization techniques (e.g., emphasizing conviction likelihood based on quantity of evidence). Statistically significant correlations indicated that certain rapport-building behaviors (e.g., informing the suspect, asking personal questions) were positively associated with investigation-relevant information (IRI). However, no other techniques demonstrated a significant positive correlation with IRI. The presence of suitable rapport building techniques along with compliance with the Canadian confessions rule provides initial support that interviewers are being mindful to use techniques taught in the model, reducing the likelihood of involuntary and inadmissible information. Findings of this study and the methodology employed can inform the evaluation and training of effective and safe interviewing approaches.

Keywords: Investigative Interviewing; Phased Interview Model; Rapport; Investigative-Relevant Information

"I am not their enemy": A Qualitative Exploration of Police Officers' Perception and Attitudes on Investigative Interviewing in Nigeria

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Investigative interviewing researchers have advocated for a shift from confrontational techniques to information-gathering techniques. Even with abundant research on investigative interviewing across the world, it is difficult to ascertain whether police investigators are applying these well-researched techniques in their practice. This current study used a semi-structured interview to examine the practices, perceptions and challenges of 12 police investigators (Mage = 42 years) in Lagos, Nigeria. All participants (5 Females, 7 Males) ranked rapport-building as highly essential in interviews and discussed various rapport-building behaviours they utilize. Content and thematic analysis will be used to provide additional insights into the collected data.

Keywords: Investigative Interviewing, Police interrogation, Rapport building techniques

ROOM 2
IPV/SEXUAL VIOLENCE 2

Building trust and addressing challenges in research with individuals who have engaged in intimate partner violence (IPV)

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Background: Intimate partner violence (IPV) research often focuses on survivors/victims, while those who have engaged in IPV remain underserved and underexplored. This imbalance creates challenges in understanding causes of IPV and its prevention. Building connections with this group is particularly difficult due to stigma, safety concerns, and systemic barriers. This study explored service needs for survivors/victims (n=15) and those who engaged in IPV (n=15) while emphasizing safety, confidentiality, and trust-building. Methods: We implemented safety and confidentiality measures to ensure a trauma-informed and non-judgmental environment. Eligibility for individuals who engaged in IPV was limited to those referred to or who had completed a rehabilitation program. All interviews were conducted virtually, allowing participants to protect their anonymity by turning off cameras or changing display names. Language adjustments were critical; we avoided potentially stigmatizing terms like "perpetrator," instead referring to individuals as having "engaged in the act of IPV." Gatekeepers played a key role in facilitating trust and access to this group, and frequent team discussions helped identify and mitigate biases during recruitment and data collection. Results: Building relationships with individuals who engaged in IPV revealed unique insights into their motivations, challenges, and perspectives. Non-judgmental language and trauma-informed approaches enabled participants to express their experiences and propose solutions. These findings highlight the need to build trust and address stigma to create spaces where individuals can safely discuss the factors leading to IPV. Impact/Action: The root of IPV survivorship and victimization lies in understanding perpetration. A rehabilitative approach when working with individuals who engage in IPV can uncover systemic issues and contribute to violence prevention. This study demonstrates that trust-building, thoughtful language, and safety considerations are critical to addressing underserved populations and advancing IPV research.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, perpetration, qualitative research, research engagement

I Hereby Consent: Exploring the Roles of Dark Tetrad and Other Personality Traits, and Sexual Preoccupation in Sexting Consent

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Research has shown that the dark traits are associated with increased sexual violence and sexting coercion while honestly/humility, conscientiousness, and openness to experience are associated with decreased non-consensual intimate image sharing. What is less known is how these traits influence attitudes around sexting consent specifically. Undergraduate participants (N = 783) were presented with demographic questions, the Short Dark Tetrad (SD4), the HEXACO-60, the Sexual Preoccupation subscale of the Sexuality Scale, and the revised Attitude subscale of the Sexual Consent Survey. Using two linear regressions separated by the Dark Tetrad or HEXACO, participants' attitudes towards sexting consent were analyzed. The first regression with the dark tetrad traits showed that higher sexual preoccupation and increased sadism were associated with less positive attitudes towards sexting consent. The second regression with the HEXACO showed that higher sexual preoccupation was associated with less positive attitudes towards sexting consent, while increased honesty/humility, emotionality, and openness to experience were associated with more positive attitudes towards sexting consent. Gender was not significant in either regression. Our results show how different personality traits relate to seeking sexting consent and how the frequency of one's thoughts of sex may play a part. Given that sexual preoccupation was one of the largest standardized effects, future work should delve into why exactly being more preoccupied with sex may result in individuals being less inclined to seek consent in their online sexual encounters.

Keywords: Dark Tetrad, HEXACO, Sexting Consent, Sexual Preoccupation

Research framework for engaging intimate partner violence survivors as partners in empowering collaborative transformation: The RESPECT Study

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Background: The few available studies of IPV survivors/victims' involvement in research as participants suggest that they are motivated to contribute to research and most find it a positive experience. In other fields, researchers have developed models for service users to be more fully involved in the research process, from design through dissemination, resulting in research that optimizes knowledge mobilization and improves services and outcomes. Objective: This study seeks to explore approaches to engaging survivors/victims in IPV research and to develop an ethical, equitable, and evidence-based framework for survivors/victims to become full partners in the research process. Method: By conducting a rapid scoping review, evaluating participatory models from other fields, and hosting a collaborative event with researchers and survivors/victims, we are co-creating a participatory framework. Results: We will present the preliminary results of a rapid scoping review focused on the extent to which survivors/victims' have been involved participatory research. Impact/Action: It is anticipated that this work will have an immediate impact how researchers engage with survivors/victims of IPV who wish to contribute to research.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, survivors/victims, co-research, participatory research

Beyond Boundaries: Exploring Coercive Control in Queer and Non-Queer Persons

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Recent empirical studies have established coercive control (CC) as a form of intimate partner violence (IPV) and as a predictor of future physical violence. Awareness of and responding to CC within the Canadian legal framework is also increasing, considering the recent passing of Bill C-332 that aims to criminalize CC. However, CC research has primarily focused on heteronormative experiences and has only begun to address how these behaviours may differ in queer relationships. Our conceptualization of CC may be influenced by beliefs about IPV, relational entitlement, and internalized homophobia. This presentation will profile these experiences across sexual and gender diverse persons and examine attitudes about both victimization and perpetration of IPV. Data from over 600 participants (collected from university, online, and queer community members in contact with Canadian pride centres) has been collected. Analyses are forthcoming, and demographic, experiential, and attitudinal relationships from this sample will be included in this talk. We anticipate that higher scores on the measures of violence justification, victim blaming, and relational entitlement will correlate with greater use of CC strategies within relationships and less reported victimization in general. However, within the queer community, the role of internalized homophobia may facilitate the minimization of CC behaviours, both in terms of victimization and perpetration. This research is important for understanding factors that influence how queer and non-queer participants experience CC and inform efforts for changing the narrative about relationship violence and transformative interventions, as well as informing broader conversations about legislative and judicial responses to CC.

Keywords: coercive control, intimate partner violence (IPV), queer / 2SLGBTQ+ community

ROOM 3
FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH

Determinants of readiness to implement forensic patient-oriented research: a study of barriers and facilitators in a high-secure hospital

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Patient-oriented research (POR) is a participatory approach that engages patients as active partners throughout the research process, including setting research priorities, conducting research, and translating findings into practice and policy. However, forensic patients are rarely engaged in research to explore what matters most to them, and limited guidance exists on how to effectively engage them. Implementing POR in forensic mental health settings is uniquely complex, where distrust, discrimination, power imbalances, and restrictive practices create challenges to meaningful engagement. Despite this, successfully engaging forensic patients in research can foster a sense of empowerment, enhance self-esteem and feelings of self-worth, and build valuable skills. It also promotes strengths-based, recovery-oriented care and supports the democratization of research practices and knowledge in secure forensic contexts. In 2023, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care (Waypoint), a 315-bed tertiary mental health hospital in Penetanguishene, Ontario, Canada, received a Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant to develop and implement forensic POR (fPOR) practices. As part of this initiative, our fPOR team conducted a qualitative study to explore Waypoint's readiness to implement POR, with the aim of generating knowledge that can facilitate tailoring of effective fPOR implementation strategies by exploring the determinants influencing implementation. We conducted 33 exploratory interviews with inpatients, frontline staff, security personnel, hospital leaders, clinicians, and researchers, examining the barriers and facilitators to implementing fPOR. Using an interview guide adapted from the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research, we identified three key themes: "Navigating a climate of distrust, discrimination, and restricted autonomy," "hearing and interpreting patient voices," and "experiencing a slow shift in the tide." Our team is now using these insights to develop a practical toolkit to support participatory research practices. Our presentation will delve deeper into these themes, and will also highlight the toolkit's dimensions and approaches to implementing it at Waypoint.

Keywords: patient-oriented research, participatory research, forensic mental health, high secure hospital, implementation

Patient trajectories in the Ontario Forensic Mental Health System: Associations with ethnoracial status, country-of-birth, citizenship, and official language fluency

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Stephanie Penney, *Centre for Addiction and Mental Health*

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Racialized and immigrant populations face numerous systemic inequities in Canada, including reduced access to preventative mental health services and disproportionate representation in the criminal justice and forensic mental health systems (Government of Canada, 2023; Morgan & Hutchinson, 2010; Penney et al., 2019). Despite these disparities, little is known about how ethnoracial status and related factors (e.g., country of birth, citizenship status, and official language fluency) impact the trajectories of clients in the forensic mental health system. This presentation will discuss findings from a study investigating the impact of such factors across key time points in clients' trajectories of forensic care, including the time to first hospital discharge/community living, as well as to conditional and absolute discharge. File reviews were conducted for 283 forensic clients who were found not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder (NCRMD) between 2015 and 2020 in Ontario. The majority of forensic clients in the sample were non-White (55%, n = 158), and 41% (n = 115) were born outside of Canada. One-quarter (28%; n = 40) were not Canadian citizens, and 6.3% (n = 18) were not fluent in either English or French. Results showed that ethnoracial status was not associated with the length of time spent in the forensic mental health system. However, being born outside of Canada, not being a Canadian citizen, and a lack of fluency in either official language were associated with longer stays. Further, when taking into account factors that could influence release decisions, such as violence risk, primary diagnosis and index offence severity, being born outside of Canada and language fluency remained significant predictors of longer stays in the forensic mental health system. The presentation will expand further on how these factors may impact key points in care trajectories as well as implications for mitigating potential inequities in care.

Keywords: Forensic mental health, NCRMD, race, ethnicity, migration

Do evaluee's risk, psychiatric and protective characteristics correspond with the setting they are referred to for a court-ordered forensic assessment? Comparing correctional, inpatient and outpatient settings.

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Julian Gojer, *Royal Ottawa Health Care Group*
Madison McAskill, *Institute of Mental Health Research at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group*
Emily Doyle, *Institute of Mental Health Research at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group*
Michael Seto, *Director - Forensic Mental Health Research Unit, Institute of Mental Health Research at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group*

A common and important forensic mental health service is performing court-ordered assessments, such as those for criminal responsibility and fitness to stand trial. These assessments can be conducted in different settings varying in security, clinical service, and intrusiveness. Though some evaluees require a secure setting due to a lack of capacity to cooperate or their risk of harm to others, others would benefit from being assessed in an outpatient setting. Outpatient settings can free up beds, can be less traumatizing for patients (Jones et al., 2010) and are substantially cheaper (Chaimowitz & Ferencz, 1999). Level of risk, clinical state, and protective factors (e.g., social support) should logically be associated with the setting selection. For example, higher risk individuals would be expected to be assessed in custody, individuals with higher clinical needs would be expected to be seen as inpatients, and individuals with the most protective factors would be expected to be seen as outpatients. This presentation will discuss findings from a study of 506 evaluees who received a forensic assessment in one of three settings in Ontario, Canada: correctional custody (n=142), inpatient (n=244), and outpatient (n=120). Preliminary results suggest few pairwise differences between inpatients and correctional evaluees. As expected, outpatients had the lowest violence risk score and were least likely to have a criminal history. Outpatients were also less likely to have a history of psychiatric treatment, but were more likely than in-custody evaluees to be diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Outpatients were more likely to have been employed and be in a romantic relationship at the time of their index offence(s). The presentation will expand on these univariate comparisons to identify the unique contributions of sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender), risk, clinical state, and protective factors in multivariate analyses.

Keywords: forensic assessment, criminal responsibility, fitness to stand trial, forensic mental health system, violence risk

The Trajectories and Outcomes of Ethnoracial Individuals within Forensic Mental Health Systems: A Literature Review

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Lindsay Healey The University of Ottawa's Institute of Mental Health Research at The Royal

The Canadian forensic mental health system (FMHS) serves a diverse population, including a disproportionate number of racialized and foreign-born individuals (Bourque et al., 2011; Cantor-Graae & Selten, 2005; Government of Canada, 2023; Penney et al., 2020). Racial and ethnic factors have been found to influence individual's experiences in the FMHS, with overt and subtle biases in clinical care potentially leading to inequitable outcomes. This presentation will summarize a comprehensive literature review synthesizing existing international literature on the trajectories and outcomes of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) individuals in forensic mental health systems, with the goal of informing the design and delivery of more effective, efficient, and equitable services in Ontario. The literature review included 46 sources published between 2003 to 2024 from both national and international contexts. The majority of the sources were quantitative primary studies, in addition to other systematic reviews, literature reviews, and one qualitative study. Findings highlight that BIPOC individuals encounter unique challenges in the FMHS, with factors related to their ethnoracial minority status often complicating their navigation of the system. Although there is variability in outcomes and trajectories across different groups, the evidence demonstrates that racialized individuals face systemic disadvantages in the FMHS. Based on these findings, several implications for improving the FMHS were provided, including recommendations for policy, service delivery, and future research to address disparities and promote equity within the system.

Keywords: BIPOC, forensic mental health system, ethnoracial status