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Hierarchies tend to form in almost any social setting and surely prisons are no exceptions. The big puzzle, for scholars and observers, is to uncover the main determinants of hierarchy. It’s a puzzle, in part, because of the difficulty for scholars to enter prisons and investigate these sorts of questions. But it’s also a matter of research design; a network approach is most suitable in uncovering social hierarchies and yet, it has rarely been implemented in the prison context.

**A NETWORK APPROACH TO UNCOVER HIERARCHY**

We entered a Pennsylvania prison to study a “good behaviour” unit, in which 205 inmates lived together. We met with 70% of them, showed each a roster of all other inmates and asked them who, in the unit, “you feel are the most powerful and influential?” The more nominations an inmate receives, the more consensus there is that the inmate has high status. Using their answers, we were able to reproduce the power and influence network of inmates in this study (Figure 1).

First, notice that the graph is sparse: inmates obtained, on average, less than one nomination from the study participants. Second, the unit contained mostly low-status inmates who were not perceived as powerful or influential by any respondents, as only 49 inmates (24%) received at least one nomination. Finally, consistent with a hierarchical structure, there was a near complete absence of reciprocity: only 1 of the 129 ties reported was reciprocated. None of the “core” nodes (in black, Figure 1) connect to the 67 peripheral nodes, another sign of hierarchy and deference.

**HOW DO INMATES GET POWER AND INFLUENCE?**

The study also included a qualitative component to help answer this question. Each inmate who was nominated as powerful and influential had at least one reason provided by fellow inmates for his high status. Twelve response categories emerged (Table 1). Here we found strong evidence that unit inmates perceived as high status were “Old Heads”: older inmates who had accumulated substantial institutional knowledge over the course of lengthy prison terms. One quarter of the responses were subsumed in the largest response category, “Age, Time-In, and Prison Wisdom.”

The salience of “Old Heads” in the inmate narratives provides a key theoretical insight that we subsequently confirmed in multivariate analyses, which predicted a power nomination in the network (via Exponential Random Graph Models). Even after controlling for race and religion homophily, both age and time spent on unit emerged as strong predictors of social status in this unit.

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**Table 1. Categories for Power and Influence Open-Ended Attributions (n=376)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age, Time-In, and Prison Wisdom</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He has power.” “Elder.” “Lots of time in.” “He is an old head.” “He is older.” “He has an understanding of how everything runs”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He is very charismatic.” “Religious.” “He’s trustworthy.” “He knows the rules” “Very respectful.” “He’s humble.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher and Role Model</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A teacher.” “Gives good advice.” “He’s a problem solver on block.” “Will help.” “He mediates between guys”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationships with Guards/Staff</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Personable with guards.” “He has pull with CIs.” “He is respected by guards.” “Always seems to be talking to the guards.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intelligent or Educated</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Smart guy.” “Reads a lot.” “Well educated.” “Has knowledge of religion.” “He went to college.” “He’s well educated.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Prison Group Leader</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Prison Group Involvement</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Does active planning games.” “Cares about others.” “He plays sports.” “Guard’s friend.” “He is a key worker as he is involved.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Personal Friend or Shared Characterian</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He is my brother.” “He is a musician and he is a musician.” “You knew him for a long time.” “Good friend.” “I saw his cells.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Street Reputation or Gang Leader</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Has a reputation.” “Has a gang.” “Well respected on the street.” “He’s a man of few words.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Controls Prison Resources</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He runs the store.” “He is the boss.” “He is powerful.” “He’s comfortable, active guy.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Feared</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A lot of people fear him”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Other and Miscellaneous</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He’s influential.” “He’s a leader.” “He doesn’t have any filter.” “Known his father.” “Not my personal, just Made is his.”</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

This exciting project examines the needs of Indigenous students at SFU using community-based participatory research methods. Indigenous and Canadian history, including residential schools, colonization, assimilation and intergenerational trauma, have a direct relationship with the over-representation of Indigenous peoples in all aspects of the Canadian criminal justice system. However, Indigenous students tell us that not all faculty address these notions in ways they perceive as meaningful, respectful, and culturally appropriate.

In this project, and in keeping with SFU’s Aboriginal Reconciliation Consultations, we explore Indigenous student experiences in classroom environments to address their needs and concerns about what is, or is not, happening, and to build upon what we currently do well. Our research principles are specifically designed to transform our Indigenous student collaborators from research subjects to active and equal co-creators of knowledge. Indigenous students are involved in all aspects of the study: in planning and creating research instruments; in data collection, transcription, data analysis; and in preparing and disseminating findings. In addition, we are committed to ensuring that the project includes Elders as appropriate, is culturally sensitive, and honours Indigenous traditions to the fullest extent possible.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

An early part of this collaborative research process allowed our team, including Marcia Guno, annie ross and Joanne Nelson, the privilege of providing a plenary session at SFU’s Teaching and Learning Centre’s 16th Annual Symposium, Voices of Diversity and Inclusion: Vulnerabilities, Tensions, and Opportunities.

In this interactive information sharing session, we invited our workshop participants to share their knowledges of and questions about Indigenous student classroom needs and experiences. The session was opened and closed by Elder Margaret who spoke of her lonely journey at the University of British Columbia years ago when she was the only “brown” student; she expressed her delight in witnessing the work going on now as more than 70 participants engaged in an animated discussion. For us, we see this session as the beginning of a very important conversation which we all have a responsibility to continue.

Project funded by a Teaching and Learning Development Grant from SFU’s Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines.

Studies of suicide in metropolitan areas often identify iconic bridges as the largest and most consistent suicide hotspot, making them ideal candidates for targeted prevention strategies through environmental design. By applying geospatial and statistical tools to eight years of province-wide data, this research aims to quantify the amount of energy exertion for this type of behaviour, and to produce a baseline for the minimum distance travelled by jumpers. Demographics and the environmental backdrop of bridges are also taken into consideration.

**METHODS**

After gaining access to classified bridge jumping records from the Office of the Chief Coroner, the principal investigator created a new database of fatal suicide jumping cases using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 software (n = 145). Victim demographics and information about the suicide was collected, anonymized, recoded, and transferred into this new dataset. Decimal degree coordinates were manually taken from the center of every suicide location and residential home addresses of the deceased, offsetting them by 5m to the nearest road as a means of further anonymizing this data. Using DMTI BC Road Network base maps, the shortest distances between the home addresses and their suicide location were calculated using ArcGIS 10.3 Network Analyst tools to generate a baseline for the minimum distance travelled by road. Commuter networks were considered, alongside one-way streets, restricted road access, and other variables that would impact pathway navigation and usage.

**JUMPING BEHAVIOURS**

Results show that 96% (n = 141) of bridge jumping behaviour takes place at one of twelve iconic bridges in the Metro Vancouver Regional District, with 29% (n = 42) of them taking place at Lions Gate Bridge. These travelled jumpers are investing energy, time and resources in their site selection, and in some cases, flying or sailing to reach these bridges. In many cases, their route involves them travelling over one or more bridges before reaching their destination. Convenience jumpers choose the location closest to home, accounting for 4% of cases (n = 6). There is a substantial difference in energy exertion patterns, which suggests that there are two distinctive types of suicidal behaviours taking place. Demographics, bridge types, and other variables are discussed in the article.

The British Columbia Coroners Service (BCCS) is not responsible for, and expressly disclaims, any and all interpretations made in this document. All queries should be directed to the author and not BCCS.

BACKGROUND

The rate with which pre-trial detention is used across most common law jurisdictions has been increasing. In Canada, the rate has tripled over the past 30 years and the proportion of prisoners in pre-trial detention is higher than in other jurisdictions. Contrary to the presumption of innocence, many accused will spend time in pre-trial detention and if released on bail will have a number of restrictive conditions routinely imposed. Using data collected from observations of 152 days of bail hearings in 11 courts in Ontario, Canada, this paper argues significant efforts to control and monitor behaviour are being used outside of a finding of guilt.

RESTRICTING LIBERTY PRIOR TO FINDING GUILT

Most accused are ultimately released on bail subject to supervision and conditions of release. Conditions of release restrict the liberty of accused prior to a finding of guilt and tend to prohibit behaviour that is not in and of itself criminal. For example, speaking to certain people, entering a particular boundary or consuming alcohol. Once imposed, however, it is a criminal offence to fail to comply with any of these conditions. The result is the criminalization of non-criminal behaviour through conditions of release, which creates additional opportunities to accumulate criminal charges. This threat of sanction while intended to encourage compliance results in the return of many accused to remand and bail court. While conditions of release are imposed to reduce risk, it is unclear if conditions improve public safety.

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SHIFT TO REGULATING THE PRESUMED INNOCENT

The growth in the use of pre-trial detention and the use of conditional release on bail suggests a shift in legal practices away from properly punishing the guilty to regulating and possibly punishing those who are supposed to be presumed innocent. Rather than reserving interventions, surveillance and punishment for the post-conviction stage, the state is applying controlling penal techniques, imposing wide-ranging restrictions on the liberty of people, with the threat of further criminal sanction and heightened surveillance. The result is a blurring of the lines between the presumed innocent and the proven guilty.

Sadistic offenders are often described as individuals who are forensically aware, who carefully plan their offenses, and preselect the location of their crime. These actions suggest that these offenders possess knowledge or an understanding of police investigative practices and have developed strategies to avoid police detection. Despite the fact that sadistic offenders are often described as possessing investigative awareness and conscious of behaviors adopted to avoid detection, no studies to date have examined if investigative awareness is a distinctive feature of sadism.

**STUDY AIMS**

The current study examined whether strategies associated with investigative awareness constitute a feature that can distinguish sexual homicide offenders (SHOs) from non-sadistic SHOs. Utilizing a sample of 350 (250 = solved, 100 = unsolved) cases of sexual homicide from Canada, offender’s crime scene behaviors, victimology, and location before, during and after the crime are examined to determine investigative awareness. Additionally, days until body recovery and case status (solved vs. unsolved) were used to indicate detection avoidance.

**RESULTS**

Our findings demonstrate that SHOs are more likely to be sadists when they use strategies to avoid detection. More specifically, sadistic SHOs are more likely to carefully preselect deserted locations to encounter their victim and dump their bodies. Moreover, sadistic SHOs are more likely to exhibit forensic awareness by acting upon their victim and/or their environment (e.g., disabling the victim’s telephone or car, or using police scanners to track police movement), destroying or removing evidence (e.g., cleaning or setting fire to the crime scene), and using other precautions such as staging the crime scene or protecting their identity. Lastly, despite bodies being recovered faster in cases of sadistic SHOs, these offenders are more likely to avoid detection.

**CONCLUSION**

The current findings have important implications for the understanding of sadism as well as the identification of sadistic offenders by both clinicians and the police. Specifically, this study supports the notion that sadistic offenders are more “rational” offenders who pose a greater risk for evading police detection based on conscious efforts to impede police investigations. This is especially concerning for police, as this population is generally believed to be at a considerable risk for recidivism and thus creates a serious threat to public safety.

Our findings also add to current research that highlights the importance of behavioral differences between SHOs. The study shows that not all SHOs present investigative awareness and that not all of them are capable of avoiding police detection. However, the study also shows that the SHOs who display behaviors related to investigative awareness are more likely to be sadists. We believe this constitutes another objective feature easier to use than the current diagnostic tools used to identify sadistic offenders.
BACKGROUND
Sentencing in Canada is beset by many problems, yet one weakness stands above the rest: the high number of Aboriginal persons in prison. Aboriginal over-incarceration was first recognized by the federal government in 1984. Since then, remedial reforms have been few and modest in scale. The only legislative attempt to address the problem emerged in 1996 when Parliament codified special consideration for Aboriginal offenders at sentencing. This led to several Supreme Court judgments (including R. v Gladue [1999] and R. v Ipeelee [2012]) which were specifically intended to ameliorate the problem of Aboriginal over-incarceration.

Have these reforms succeeded? This study documents trends in Aboriginal admissions to sentenced custody. The objective in this descriptive account is to understand Aboriginal incarceration by placing its current position in a historical context.

The Aboriginal admission rate-ratio for provincial custody – namely the population-based proportion of Aboriginal admissions compared to the proportion of non-Aboriginal admissions – was 5.68 in 2001. This means that Aboriginal persons were almost six times more likely to be admitted to prison than non-Aboriginal Canadians, based upon their general population statistics. This over-representation of Aboriginal persons was worse in 2006 (7.82) and worst in 2011 (rising to 9.12).

There was great variation in admission rate-ratios among provincial/territorial jurisdictions. In 2011, the Aboriginal rate-ratio was 2.93 in Newfoundland. In Saskatchewan, the rate-ratio was 19.95, meaning that Aboriginals were close to 20 times more likely to be admitted to prison than non-Aboriginals in that province.

ANNUAL ADMISSION TRENDS: 2000 TO 2014
Over the most recent four years (2011 to 2014), the volume of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal admissions declined. Non-Aboriginal admissions fell 25% – from 60,638 to 45,737. The volume of Aboriginal admissions to custody declined by 32% – from 24,161 to 16,309. Yet the proportion of Aboriginal admissions was significantly higher at the end of the 15-year period. The percentage in the most recent quadrennial (2011 to 2014) was 27%, notably higher than in the first four-year period (2000 to 2004) where it was 16%.

Trends among the provinces and territories revealed considerable variation. In Quebec, Aboriginal admissions rose from 2% in 2000 to 3% in 2014. Trends in British Columbia were of greater concern. In 2000, 20% of admissions to provincial custody were by Aboriginal offenders. By 2014, this statistic had increased to 34%.

EXPLAINING THE TRENDS
Aboriginal over-incarceration has become worse over the past decade, even though the total volume of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal admissions has declined. Yet explanations for these trends remain elusive. One possibility is that the statutory provision and subsequent direction of the Supreme Court have been inadequately implemented by lower courts. Another possible explanation is that the modest nature of the statutory provision means that it was never likely to significantly reduce the over-incarceration problem. A final, more radical, possibility is that the problem is beyond the power of the courts to remedy. Our preliminary conclusion is that the federal and provincial governments need to consider all three levels of explanation in order to devise an appropriate remedial solution.