

Research Portal

Application - Insight Development Grants

Identification

Applicant

Family Name: Haggerty

First Name: Kevin

Middle Names: D.

Current Position: Full professor

Primary Affiliation: University of Alberta

Department/Division: Sociology

Application

Application Title Corrections in the Time of the Opioid Crisis

Committee 17 - Law and criminology

Joint or special initiative Select

Is this a [research-creation project](#)? Yes No

Does your proposal involve [Aboriginal Research](#) as defined by SSHRC? Yes No

Scholar Type

Are you an [Emerging Scholar](#) or [Established Scholar](#)? Established

Confirmed Scholar Type Established

Established Scholars: Proposed Versus Ongoing Research

Established Scholars: Proposed Versus Ongoing Research

To date, Dr. Haggerty's career has primarily been defined by a series of research and theoretical interventions pertaining to surveillance, risk, governance, visibility, and privacy. Much of that work has concentrated on the operation of surveillance from the perspective of police officers, private security operatives, and national security personnel. The research proposed for this IDG, and which will constitute a considerable portion of Haggerty's future research trajectory, is a marked departure from that previous research in several different respects.

For the foreseeable future, Haggerty plan's on studying prisons, prisoners, and correctional officers. For the past 18 months, he has been part of a research team studying aspects of prison life in Alberta. This project has given him preliminary insights into the lived realities of prisoners and correctional officers, and also highlighted some of the distinctive pragmatic issues involved in conducting prison research. However, his contributions to that project has tended to be somewhat in-line with his previous research interests, in that he has been focused on how correctional officials are responding to radicalization, gangs, and security-threat groups.

The project proposed here represents a more serious and sustained move on his part towards prison research. There is a voluminous literature in criminology, sociology, and penology on prisons and correctional institutions. This includes substantive studies of prison life, but also vital reflections on the pragmatics and ethics of prison research. Dr. Haggerty's knowledge of many of these resources is still somewhat rudimentary. One benefit of this proposed project is that it will provide him the opportunity to immerse himself in this literature.

The analytical focus for this research is also a significant departure, in that it is concerned with drugs and narcotics. Having never been a 'drug researcher,' this represents a new direction in Haggerty's research. Relatedly, an underlying ambition helping to motivate this project is a concern to inform the development of 'harm reduction' practices. The drug situation in prison, particularly as it relates to new and particularly dangerous opioids such as fentanyl and carfentanyl, cries out for empirical research to set the stage for possible harm reduction measures—something that is now lacking in provincial prisons. This connection with 'harm reduction' research and practices is yet another change in the direction of Dr. Haggerty's research.

The specific aim of Insight Development Grants is to provide "support to explore new research questions and/or approaches that are distinct from the applicant's previous/ongoing research," which is clearly the case for Dr. Haggerty at this stage of his career.

Administering Organization

Organization University of Alberta

Department/Division Sociology

Invitations

Role	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Department
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Activity Details

Certification Requirements

Does the proposed research involve humans as research participants? Yes No

Does the proposed research involve animals?

Yes No

Environmental Impact

A. Will any phase of the proposed research take place on federal lands in Canada, other than lands under the administration and control of the Commissioner of Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut, as interpreted in section 2(1) of the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012](#) (CEAA 2012)?

Yes No

B. Will any phase of the proposed research take place outdoors and outside of Canada?

Yes No

C. (i) Will the grant permit a designated project, as listed in the CEAA 2012 [Regulations Designating Physical Activities](#) (RDPA), to be carried out in whole or in part?

Yes No

OR (ii) Will any phase of the proposed research depend on a designated project, as listed in the RDPA, being carried out by a third party? [Regulations Designating Physical Activities](#)

Yes No

Keywords

List up to 10 keywords that best describe the proposal.

Prison, Opioids, Harm Reduction

Disciplines

Indicate and rank up to three disciplines relevant to your proposal, with #1 the most relevant and #3 the least relevant.

1. Criminology Penology, Corrections
2. Sociology Health Systems and Society
3. Criminology Social Control

Areas of Research

Indicate and rank up to three areas of research relevant to your proposal, with #1 the most relevant and #3 the least relevant. If you select "Not Subject to Research Classification" in #1, the system will automatically remove any other areas of research when you save this page.

1. Health
2. Law and justice
- 3.

Temporal Periods

Indicate up to two historical periods covered by your proposal.

	From		To	
	Year	Period	Year	Period
1.	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
2.	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	

Geographical Regions

Indicate and rank up to three geographical regions relevant to your proposal, with #1 the most relevant and #3 the least relevant.

1. Western Canada
2. North America
- 3.

Countries

Indicate and rank up to five countries relevant to your proposal, with #1 the most relevant and #5 the least relevant.

1. Canada
2. United States
3. United Kingdom
- 4.
- 5.

Revisions since previous application

Summary of Proposal

Canada is in the midst of an opioid crisis that in 2016 produced approximately one third more fatalities than died in traffic accidents. In April 2016, the British Columbia government declared an opioid public health emergency, and in 2017 the Alberta government did the same. A key contributor to the escalating levels of opioid addiction and fatalities has been the emergence of the synthetic opioid fentanyl and its analogues, such as carfentanyl. These drugs are exceptionally potent and potentially lethal. Inexpensive street versions have been rapidly incorporated into many North American illicit drug scenes.

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The risks associated with opiate use are not distributed evenly, but are most pronounced for marginalized and vulnerable members of society. Prisons figure prominently in this equation, as they tend to house a disproportionate number of individuals with histories of substance use/abuse, street-involvement, and mental health issues. Prisons consequently appear to be acute 'concentration points' for the use and attendant risks of powerful new synthetic opioids.

Our study aims to answer the question: 'How has the illicit introduction of the powerful opioid fentanyl and its 'analogues' such as carfentanyl, altered life in Alberta's prisons? To do so, we will focus on three subsidiary questions:

- 1) What is the current situation in prison as it relates to fentanyl use, interdiction, and harm reduction measures?
- 2) How has the threat posed by fentanyl changed the prison subculture and how prisoners relate to each other?
- 3) How has the threat posed by fentanyl altered the occupation of correctional officer (CO)?

This project grows out of research we have been conducting for the past 18 months focused on the dynamics of 'extremists,' 'gangs,' and 'security threat groups,' in Alberta prisons. Drugs have not been our explicit research focus, but prisoners and COs routinely mentioned the diverse, unpredictable, and often alarming ways fentanyl is transforming prison life. The proposed research is designed to systematically foreground this issue through an in-depth study focused on how fentanyl/carfentanyl is altering life in one provincial prison in Alberta. It is designed to build towards meaningful prison-based harm reduction initiatives.

This project will employ a (sequential) mixed methods approach, combining a quantitative survey, qualitative interviews, and ethnographic observations to answer our research questions. We will survey and interview a large subset of male and female correctional officers and prisoners on a number of topics pertaining to the fentanyl situation in prison.

In part, the aim in conducting such research is motivated by a recognized need to provide harm reduction health services to people who use drugs without necessarily requiring abstinence. Offering such services in prison, however, can be controversial and logistically difficult. Consequently, we seek to develop the type of understanding of the unique challenges, routines, logistics, predispositions, of the target group along with an understanding of the organizational context in which harm reduction services might be provided, all of which are crucial to the success of any health services provided to vulnerable populations.

The findings will be of interest to a range of interdisciplinary academic audiences and also to a large number of community and governmental agencies concerns about prisons, health, and harm reduction. Some of the knowledge users and stakeholders who have expressed an interest in our findings include Alberta Corrections, Alberta Health Services, Edmonton Police Service, Correctional Services Canada, the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse, and prisoner/health activists.

Roles and Responsibilities

Dr. Kevin Haggerty (Principal Investigator) and Dr. Sandra Bucerius (co-applicant) will employ a team approach. Together, they bring to this project a wealth of research experience, including having interviewed over 600 prisoners and 100 correctional officers in four Alberta prisons on issues around security threat groups, including gangs and radical groups. Having spent weeks at each prison over the past year, they have built strong rapport with prisoners and correctional officers across the province. Together, they have also led a large quantitative survey in two of these prisons on victimization and offender overlap. They lead a team of six research assistants who have helped conduct this prison research, and who have an excellent understanding of coding and data analysis, and extensive experience in prisons as research settings. Two of these research assistants will work alongside Haggerty and Bucerius on the Insight Development Grant.

Both researchers have an excellent record of communicating their research findings in top academic venues, presenting their findings regularly at their discipline's key academic conferences, and have written numerous reports and shared their work with non-academic audiences—highlighting best practices that can be implemented by target audiences, such as correctional officials across Canada. Both are members of CRISM—Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse—and have strong connections to and networks with various stakeholders involved in activism around harm reduction and those who work with individuals who use opioids, including PASAN (a community-based organization exclusively providing HIV and HCV prevention, education and support services to prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families), 'Moms Stop the

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Harm' (a community group advocating for opioid-related harm reduction measures), the Addiction section of Alberta Health Service, Alberta's Opioid Emergency Response Commission, and the Opioid Dependency Clinic in Edmonton. Most importantly, they have a strong research relationship and ongoing research agreements with Alberta Corrections Alberta Corrections, and connections with other criminal justice actors, such as the Edmonton Police Service and the Calgary Police Service. Lastly, they each take student mentoring extremely seriously, having lead large research teams employing numerous undergraduate and graduate students and having co-authored with graduate students throughout their careers. As a research team, Haggerty and Bucierius will both administer the surveys with prisoners and correctional staff and officials alongside the two experienced graduate students. They will also provide the opportunity for two senior undergraduate students who have won scholarships for a summer research internship to shadow Bucierius and Haggerty in the survey and interview process. This will provide invaluable training for these two individuals. As for the qualitative interviews, both researchers will interview prisoner and correctional officers, as they each have experience working with marginalized populations and have interviewed many high-ranking gang member and avid drug users in their current prison project as well as interviewed security officials and correctional officers. One of their two graduate research assistants, William Schultz, worked for five years as a correctional officer and brings tremendous institutional knowledge to the project. He will interview correctional officers alongside Haggerty. Their other PhD student on the project, Ashley Kyle, has extensive experience interviewing prisoners and will conduct interviews (and surveys) with prisoners alongside Bucierius. Both researchers will be heavily involved in data entry, coding, and analysis. The two graduate students will also be involved in these research activities, and two additional graduate students will be involved in transcription, data coding and analysis, as well as transcription. Both researchers will equally contribute to this project. However, as the PI, Haggerty assumes the main responsibility for the project - 51%, while Bucierius assumes 49%. Both entered equally into the research agreement with Corrections Alberta. This proposed research will become the main research project for both researchers for the next two years and will shape a good portion of Haggerty's future research. Bucierius and Haggerty will each contribute 70% of their time to this project. Both researchers have a significantly reduced teaching load over the next few years, allowing them to dedicate one semester each year fully to the project.

Details on both researchers:

Dr. Kevin D. Haggerty is a Killam Research Laureate and Canada Research Chair. He is professor of sociology and criminology at the University of Alberta, and editor of the Canadian Journal of Sociology. His research has been in the area of policing, surveillance, governance, and risk. He is a member of CRISM as well as a Senior Academic Member of the Canadian Research Network on Terrorism, Security and Society (TSAS). In addition to authoring numerous peer reviewed articles he has authored, co-authored or co-edited nine books dealing with various aspects of crime control and also graduate education. Together with Dr. Bucierius, he is currently editing the Oxford Handbook of Ethnographies of Crime and Criminal Justice. With Dr. Bucierius, he is also co-leading the SSHRC, Killam, and TSAS supported "Alberta Prison Project," a large study on Canadian prisons with a focus on security threat groups in prisons. Methodologically speaking, all of his previous research is directly relevant to the proposed study. He is experienced in coordinating a large research team and training students in interviewing, transcription, and data analysis. Substantively speaking, Haggerty will delve into new fields by focusing on drugs. Dr. Sandra Bucierius is an associate professor at the University of Alberta with an outstanding research and publication record. She sits on the editorial board of the flagship journal of the discipline Criminology and is an executive board member of TSAS. She is the principal investigator of the Alberta Prison Project – the largest qualitative study on Canadian prisons in the history of Canadian criminology. Her research accomplishments have been recognized by the Martha Cook Piper Research Award, given out by the University of Alberta to two researchers across all disciplines within the first ten years of their academic career who have shown outstanding promise as researchers. Bucierius has a wealth of experience studying criminally involved populations, including drug dealers and users. Her 5 year-long urban ethnography with second generation immigrant drug dealers led to her first book project: Unwanted – Muslim Immigrants, Dignity, and Drug Dealing, published by Oxford University Press in 2014. Bucierius also co-edited (with Professor Michael Tonry) the Oxford Handbook on Ethnicity, Crime and Immigration (Oxford University Press 2014) and has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. Bucierius has shared her research widely within the academic community as well as with several national governmental bodies in Canada, including Public Safety Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), among others. She is experienced in coordinating a large research team and training students in qualitative interviewing, coding, and qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

Roles and Training of Students

Two graduate students will be centrally involved in this project: William Schultz, a 1st year PhD student, and Ashely Kyle, an incoming PhD student. Each brings invaluable experience to this project, including having interviewed amongst the most hard-to-access prisoners in our study on security threat groups in prisons. Mr. Schultz also draws on his past work experience as correctional officer (CO). He interviewed over 80 COs for his MA thesis – a population traditionally not open to researchers. Both have advanced training in qualitative methods, including interviewing, coding, and data analysis. Ms. Kyle also has quantitative skills and teaches the lab component of our department's quantitative methodology courses. Schultz and Kyle will be involved in all aspects of the research project. To date, each has helped conceptualize the research program, draft the research ethics application, and craft the first iteration of our interview prompts and questionnaire. Before entering the field, they have said they would like to volunteer for at least two weeks at Edmonton's 'Street Works' needle exchange program to gain more 'on the ground' exposure to the pragmatic issues involved in drug use. In the prisons, they will conduct surveys and interviews with prisoners and COs, with Schultz concentrating primarily on COs. They will work collaboratively to develop a coding scheme, help code and analyze the data, have the opportunity to present findings at the American Correctional Association meetings, and use the data for their qualifying thesis, with Kyle being primarily interested in the survey data and Schultz being interested in the qualitative data. We will provide opportunities to co-author in academic outlets, and will train the students on translating findings for stakeholders. Consequently, they will receive invaluable training in how to conceptualize and conduct an empirical research project from start to finish. They will also attend the workshop, and Schultz will have the primary lead in organizing that meeting. Two additional incoming graduate students will help conduct surveys and design the coding scheme. As such, they will receive first exposure to prison related research and will be trained for the larger project that will develop out of this IDG. Two undergrad students will shadow Drs. Haggerty and Bucierius in the execution of surveys. Over time, they will learn to take the lead on asking some of the survey questions and will be trained in data input.

Graduate education and mentoring are among my most important professional contributions. My students have regularly been awarded SSHRC funding and have secured some of the most prestigious awards available, including Killam Memorial Scholarships and the Governor General's Gold Medal—the highest award offered to any graduate student at the University of Alberta. I co-publish in truly collaborative ventures to enhance my students' scholarly development, build their CV's, and expose them to the vagaries of academic writing and publishing. Since 2001, I have co-authored 24 publications with 15 different graduate students.

I have published works on teaching, research ethics, and surviving graduate school. This notably includes three articles in the Times Higher Education and the 2010 article "Tough Love: Professional Lessons for Graduate Students," which appeared in The American Sociologist. My co-author (Aaron Doyle) and I published the book 57 Ways to Screw Up in Graduate School (University of Chicago Press), which distills a series of real-life lessons about graduate education for the next generation of academics. In 2014, I received the University of Alberta Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and in 2015 was awarded the Killam Award for Excellence in Mentoring.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

We aim to mobilize our findings across 6 audiences: 1) academics; 2) Alberta Corrections; 3) Alberta Health Services (AHS); 4) prisoner advocates; 5) students; 6) the public:

- We will invite stakeholders to a symposium at the CRC as part of our iterative data collection and analysis conformation. Participants include representatives from Corrections, 3 remand prisons, AHS, PASAN (a prisoner support organization), 'Mom's Stop the Harm' (an advocate group for opioid-related harm reduction measures) and CRISM (Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse). Holding it in Dec. 19 will allow stakeholders to offer constructive feedback and implement best practices as soon as possible.
- In July 2020, we will submit our final report for Alberta Corrections, CRC, Correctional Services Canada (CSC) and AHS, all of whom have indicated strong interest in our findings. It will a) raise awareness about the extent of the opioid situation in prison, b) inform correctional officials (COs) about possible harm reduction measures, c) help shape opioid related training, d) suggest polices for a safer

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environment for prisoners and COs.

- Our students and we will present at the American Correctional Association in Jan 2020.
- As of Oct. 2019, we will co-author 4 articles for top journals amenable to open-access formats, such as Addiction; Criminology, and Punishment & Society.
- Our co-taught undergrad class on prisons will be informed by our findings.
- We have presented at cross-cultural roundtables, and events by Public Safety, CSC, Edmonton Police Service, Privacy Commissioners and the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. We will share our findings with similar bodies and are invited to present to Alberta's Opioid Emergency Response Commission.
- Two graduate students will use parts of the data set for their theses.
- We have previously worked with journalists from The Atlantic, BBC, and CBC and expect they will be eager to highlight our key insights for the public.

Expected Outcomes

Scholarly Benefits

Indicate up to three scholarly benefits of the proposed project. (required)

1. Knowledge creation/intellectual outcomes
2. Student training/skill development
3. Enhanced research collaboration

Summary of Expected Scholarly Outcomes

This project will produce novel and difficult to obtain insights into life in Canadian prisons and the opioid crisis unfolding behind prison walls.

A series of traditional scholarly outputs will result from this project, most notably co-authored publications in prominent academic venues such as Addiction, Punishment and Society, and Criminology.

It will also provide valuable experience and training for a set of graduate students involved in the study, and give them the opportunity to publish co-authored papers related to this research. Where relevant, the students will also use some of the data for their theses.

The study will also provide Dr. Haggerty the opportunity to build expertise in a new substantive area, allowing him to immerse himself in the existing scholarly literature on prisons and incarceration, and to form new connections with stakeholders and knowledge users in the areas of prisons, health, and substance misuse.

Societal Benefits

Indicate up to three societal benefits of the proposed project.

1. Quality of life / well-being
2. Enhanced policy
- 3.

Summary of Expected Societal Outcomes

This project is focused on learning about the opioid situation in Alberta's prisons, but is also motivated by a desire to build towards meaningful in-prison harm reduction measures. There is considerable societal benefit to efforts designed to curb the mortality and morbidity associated with opiates as they affect some of our most vulnerable members of society. In the long run, this project will serve as the pilot project to collect more systematic quantitative data on the appetite for harm reduction measures in prison. To do so, however, we first need to learn about the complexities and nuances involved in drug use in prison,

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and how opioids are affecting and threatening both correctional officers and prisoners.

Audiences

Indicate up to five potential target audiences for the proposed project.

1. Canadian government
Provincial/territorial government
2. Practitioner/professional/industrial associations
3. General public
4. Not-for-profit/community organizations
- 5.

Summary of Benefits to Potential Target Audiences

Correctional officers would benefit from any steps towards making the opioid situation in prison better understood and more manageable.

Correctional officials are eager to develop 'best practices' for the opioid situation in prison. The detailed insights derived from this study could be instrumental in helping to devise such measures.

Prisoners - The quantitative instrument will assess what types of harm reduction measures prisoners want and are open to.

Health officials will benefit from learning the scope of the opioid situation in prison and also from greater understanding of prison life in Alberta. Such concrete insights are necessary in order to devise any successful model of service delivery aimed at vulnerable populations.

Health and prisoner activists would benefit by virtue of the attention our research will draw to the serious problems affecting their constituencies.

Funds Requested from SSHRC

Year 1

Personnel costs			
Student salaries and benefits/Stipends	Number	Amount	Justification
Undergraduate			
Masters			
Doctoral	2	\$16,792.00	The negotiated rate at the University of Alberta for a graduate student stipend (salary and award) is \$8,396 for 192 hours - 30 interview hours each for 20 interviews each @1.5 hours with prisoners and COs at Calgary Remand Centre (CRC) = 60 hours total (2/day) - 100 surveys each = 200 hours, (6/day) - 30 hours each to input 630 surveys = 60 hours - 14 hours (2 days) each to develop coding scheme and establish intercoder reliability = 28 hours - 96 hours to transcribe 16 interviews @1.5 length

Subtotal		\$16,792.00	
Non student salaries	Number	Amount	Justification
Postdoctoral			
Professional/Technical Services	1	\$10,296.00	44 interviews in total @ 1.5 hours each @ 6 hours per interview = 540 transcription hours @ \$26/hour = \$10,296
Other			
Subtotal		\$10,296.00	
Travel and Subsistence Costs for Research	Number	Amount	Justification
Applicant/Team Member(s)	2	\$7,500.00	Data collection travel to CRC and back: 600 km @ 1 cars @ \$0.50/km: \$600.0 x 3 (the research stays will be five days each, for three weeks in total) = \$900; hotel for 2 researchers in Calgary for 15 days @ 160/night x 2 rooms = \$4,800.00; subsistence cost for 2 researchers for 15 days in Calgary @ 60/day/person as per University of Alberta regulations = \$ 1800.00.
Student(s)	4	\$5,700.00	Data collection travel to CRC and back: 600 km @ 1 cars @ \$0.50/km: \$600.0 x 3 (the research stays will be five days each, for three weeks in total) = \$900 hotel for 4 students in Calgary for 15 days @ 160/night x 2 rooms = \$4,800.00
Subtotal		\$13,200.00	
Travel and Subsistence Costs for Dissemination	Number	Amount	Justification
Applicant/Team Member(s)			
Student(s)			
Subtotal		\$0.00	
Other Expenses		Amount	Justification
Supplies		\$2,590.00	Nvivo license for Haggerty and Bucerius (@\$700) and two research assistants (@\$280 each) Printing costs for 630 surveys a \$1 each = \$630
Non-disposable equipment		\$3,480.00	2 laptops @ 1,500.00 for data analysis/transcription for two grad students = \$3000.00 4 digital recorders for interviewers @\$120 = \$480

Subtotal	\$6,070.00
Grand total year 1	\$46,358.00

Year 2

Personnel costs

Student salaries and benefits/Stipends	Number	Amount	Justification
Undergraduate			
Masters			
Doctoral	2	\$16,792.00	UofA regulation: \$8,396 for 192 hours of grad student support -14 hours (2 days) for graduate student for organizing the work shop in year 2 -30 hours for graduate student for filing surveys, organizing coding, and helping to write up report for corrections -2 graduate students coding 25 prisoner interviews each and 15 correctional officers interviews each @ 2 hours per interview = 160 hours -transcription costs for remaining 20 interviews @ 1.5 hours each = 180 hours
Subtotal		\$16,792.00	

Non student salaries	Number	Amount	Justification
Postdoctoral			
Professional/Technical Services			
Other			
Subtotal		\$0.00	

Travel and Subsistence Costs for Research	Number	Amount	Justification
Applicant/Team Member(s)	2	\$4,170.00	Conference travel to the American Correctional Association meetings in San Diego in January 2020 for Haggerty and Bucerius Airfare@\$800x2 = \$1,600; lodgings for four days @ \$ 220/night = \$1,760; subsistence @ \$ 60/day for 2 researcher = \$ 480; conference fee \$330 for researchers = \$660
Student(s)	2	\$2,800.00	Conference travel to the American Correctional Association meetings in San Diego in January 2020 for two grad students. Airfare@ \$800x2 = \$1,600; lodgings for four days @ \$ 220/night = \$880 (students share room); taxis \$100; conference fee \$110 for students = \$220
Subtotal		\$6,970.00	

Travel and Subsistence Costs for Dissemination	Number	Amount	Justification
Applicant/Team Member(s)	2	\$620.00	Symposium at the Calgary Remand to present and discuss findings. 2 hotel rooms @160/night 1 car 600 km @ \$0.50/km: \$300
Student(s)	2	\$460.00	1 hotel room for students @160/night 1 car 600 km @ \$0.50/km: \$300
Subtotal		\$1,080.00	
Other Expenses		Amount	Justification
Supplies			
Non-disposable equipment			
Symposium to discuss and disseminate findings		\$1,200.00	food and catering for about 20 people
Symposium to discuss and disseminate findings		\$2,500.00	Travel for PASAN representative from Toronto \$600 airfare Hotel costs for one representative each of PASAN, "Moms stop the Harm", the Opioid Emergency Response Committee, the Edmonton Remand Centre, the Red Deer Remand Centre, Alberta Health Services, CRISM (Canadian Research Initiative on Substance Misuse) and three representatives from the Ministry of Corrections in Edmonton @160/each 3 cars from Edmonton @600km @\$0,50 per km = \$900
Subtotal		\$3,700.00	
Grand total year 2		\$28,542.00	
Grand total		\$74,900.00	

Funds from Other Sources

You must include all contributors (e.g., individuals, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic foundations, private sector organizations) that are providing contributions for the project. Indicate whether or not these contributions have been confirmed.

If a funding source is not listed, you must:

- (a) type the source name in Funding Source
- (b) identify the contribution type
- (c) enter an amount.

If you have received, from a single funding source, more than one contribution of the same type (e.g., cash) and confirmation status, you must combine these into one entry (e.g., two \$20,000 confirmed cash contributions from a university become one \$40,000 confirmed cash contribution).

For examples of Canadian and international sources of eligible cash and/or in-kind support, see [SSHRC's Guidelines for Cash and In-Kind Contributions](#).

Note: All contributions must be indicated in Canadian currency.

Funding Source	Contribution Type	Confirmed	Year 1	Year 2	Total
University of Alberta	Cash	Yes	\$16,792.00	\$0.00	\$16,792.00
Details	396 hours of graduate student support as per negotiated UofA rules, funded through the University of Alberta - 2 graduate students @ 100 hours each for conducting surveys = 200 hours (this implies doing 8 surveys a day) - 2 graduate students x 14 hours (2 days) each to develop coding scheme and establish intercoder reliability = 28 hours - 1 graduate student for 96 hours each to transcribe 16 interviews @ 1.5 hours @ 6 hours each (15 minutes spoken transcript equals 1 hour transcription time)				
University of Alberta	Other awards	Yes	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Details	The University of Alberta Undergraduate Research program has agreed to fund two undergraduate students who will have the opportunity to work on the project full time for two months and shadow the researchers and graduate students. Eventually, the students will learn to ask some of the survey questions.				
					\$0.00
Details					
Grand total					\$26,792.00

Reviewer Exclusion

Excluded Reviewers

Exclusion Type	Family Name / Collaboration	First Name	Initials	Organization	Department	Email
Individual	Stehr	Nico		Zeppelin University	Sociology	nico.stehr@zu.de
Individual	Deflem	Mathieu		University of South Carolina	Sociology	deflemm@sri.soc.purdue.edu

Objective

Our study aims to answer the question: ‘How has the illicit introduction of the powerful opioid fentanyl and its ‘analogues’ such as carfentanyl, altered life in Alberta’s prisons? To do so, we will focus on three subsidiary questions:

- 1) What is the current situation in prison as it relates to fentanyl use, interdiction, and harm reduction measures?
- 2) How has the threat posed by fentanyl changed the prison subculture and how prisoners relate to each other?
- 3) How has the threat posed by fentanyl altered the occupation of correctional officer (CO)?

The study is also a building block towards a much larger research project we plan to submit for SSHRC and CIHR funding on prisons, opioids, and harm reduction, and as a means to forge connections with a new group of researchers, stakeholders, and knowledge users.

Context

A recent United Nations report found Canadians to be the world’s second largest per-capita consumers of opioids (Weeks and Howlett 2015). In 2015, Canadian doctors wrote enough opioid prescriptions to prescribe opiates to one in every two of Canada’s 36 million individuals (Howlett et al. 2016). This has contributed to a well-publicized health crisis in Canada, with 2,861 Canadians dying from opioid overdoses in 2016. Approximately 1,000 more individuals died of an opioid overdose that year than died in traffic accidents in 2015 (Transport Canada 2017). Health officials expect to conclude that more than four thousand Canadians died from overdoses in 2017 (Public Health Agency of Canada 2017), with over a thousand having occurred in Western Canada alone, despite increasingly urgent government interventions (Special Advisory Committee on the Epidemic of Opioid Overdoses 2017).

A key contributor to the escalating levels of opioid addiction and fatalities has been the emergence of the synthetic opioid fentanyl and its analogues, such as carfentanyl (World Health Organization 2017, Global Commission on Drug Policy 2017). These drugs are exceptionally potent, with fentanyl being 100 times more powerful than morphine and carfentanyl a staggering 10,000 times more potent than morphine (PubChem 2017). Physicians prescribe fentanyl to patients experiencing chronic or acute pain, while carfentanyl is used to tranquilize large animals, such as elephants. Russia has also weaponized carfentanyl, spraying an aerosol version into Moscow’s Dubrovka Theater Center in 2002 to incapacitate Chechen rebels who had taken more than 800 people hostage—126 of whom died from inhaling the drug (Wax, Becker, and Curry 2003).

In China, underground laboratories produce inexpensive street versions of these opioids and analogues (McLaghlan 2017), which have been rapidly incorporated into many North American illicit drug scenes. Comparatively inexpensive, fentanyl and carfentanyl provide an immediate rush and intense high, but also come with considerable risk of addiction, overdosing, and death (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention 2017b). Users can overdose in seconds, which is almost instantaneous as compared to other opioids such as heroin, which can require several minutes for someone to overdose (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention 2017a).

The Canadian opioid crisis has been most acute in the Western provinces, specifically British Columbia and Alberta. In April 2016, the British Columbia government declared an opioid public health emergency. In the adjacent province of Alberta—which has a population of roughly 4 million and where this research will take place—there were 368 opioid-related deaths in 2016, up from only 6 in 2011 (Alberta Health 2017). In May of 2017 the Alberta provincial government declared opioids a public health crisis and formed an opioid emergency response commission.

As is common with many public health emergencies, the risks associated with opiate use are most pronounced for marginalized members of society (Shi and Stevens 2010). Prisons figure

prominently in this equation, as they tend to house a disproportionate number of individuals with histories of substance use/abuse, street-involvement, and mental illness (Bland et al. 1998). Men and women in prison also suffer disproportionately from a range of related health concerns, including HIV, Hepatitis C, and tuberculosis (Kouyoumdjian et al. 2016, Dufour et al. 1996, Poulin et al. 2007). Prisons consequently have a disproportionate number of opiate users and appear to be acute ‘concentration points’ for the use and attendant risks of powerful new synthetic opioids.

On any typical day in Canada there are over 40,000 men and women held in Canadian prisons, the majority of whom are incarcerated in provincial institutions (Reitano 2017a). We know little about their day-to-day experiences. Only a small amount of independent prison research has been conducted in Canada (e.g., Weinrath 2016), and the research that has been done tends to be based on surveys or administrative and health data. Qualitative research on prisoners in Canada is characterized by a comparatively low number of participants interviewed outside of prison after they have been released (e.g., Ricciardelli 2015, Ricciardelli, Maier, and Hannah-Moffat 2015). Calls for new independent social science research into the on-the-ground actualities of prison life (Simon 2000, Wacquant 2002) have gone largely unanswered across the country. Internationally, a small body of social science research has explored the place of drugs in prison (Crewe 2005, Kolind and Duke 2016, Mjåland 2014, Wheatley), and some Canadian researchers have studied the status of harm reduction measures in Canada’s federal correctional system, although without having access to prisons (Watson 2016, Van der Meulen 2017). That said, the situation with fentanyl and carfentanyl appears to be dramatically different from previous drug crises, and is of such recent origin that there is no on-the-ground empirical research studying how these opioids are altering the lives of prisoners and correctional officers (COs), and the experience of incarceration more generally.

The proposed research grows out of a project my collaborator (Dr. Sandra Bucerius) and I have been conducting for the past 18 months. Our research team has been empirically studying the dynamics of ‘extremists,’ ‘gangs,’ and ‘security threat groups,’ in Alberta prisons. To date, we have conducted in-prison interviews with 601 prisoners and 105 COs across four provincial prisons in Alberta, Canada, making it the largest independent qualitative study of prison life in the history of Canadian Criminology.

Drugs have not been our explicit research focus, but prisoners and COs routinely mentioned the diverse, unpredictable, and often alarming ways fentanyl is transforming prison life. This proposed study is designed to systematically foreground this issue. Our understanding of the prison/drug situation is inevitably preliminary at this stage, but a few points stand out. Despite efforts by COs to control the drug trade, opioids, and particularly fentanyl, are often widely available and readily consumed in Alberta prisons. This situation appears to be related to a number of factors, including the drugs’ low cost, the ease with which it can be smuggled, and the subjective appeal of fentanyl intoxication. It is also the result of the fact fentanyl is increasingly laced into many street drugs, to the point, as one prisoner told us, ‘it’s all fentanyl.’ This widespread prevalence of fentanyl in other street drugs is confirmed by police and medical examiners (Potkins 2017, Miller and Ireland 2017). Unlike the federal correctional system (Watson 2016) however, there are few if any harm reduction initiatives in Alberta’s prisons designed to reduce the risk of in-prison drug use or address the needs of prisoners seeking to manage their addictions.

Although Alberta Corrections does not release statistics on opioid overdoses, our conversations with COs, managers, and health practitioners suggest the number of overdoses in a given month on a particular prison unit (typically housing between 50 and 80 individuals) ranged between zero and 9, depending on the facility. A startlingly large number of prisoners recounted how one of his or her friends or associates in prison overdosed.¹ As one prisoner told us, *“I’ve got half a dozen friends that died in jail from it. I’m not exaggerating, I’ve had three really close friends that died in jail.”* One

¹Not all individuals who overdose will die as a result, and prisoners often refer to someone ‘having died’ if they overdosed and were resuscitated, as is the case with this prisoner.

woman I interviewed had overdosed on fentanyl twice in the previous two weeks. Allegedly, not all deaths are accidental: interviewees told us that some prisoners have weaponized fentanyl, deliberately providing their rivals lethal doses: “*Not every overdose you see is actually an [accidental] overdose. It’s called ‘Mr. Murder’ for a reason.*”

Fentanyl’s potency also influences COs. The fear they might be exposed to airborne carfentanyl, absorb fentanyl through skin contact, or be targeted by prisoners for an overdose, is pervasive. Dozens of Albertan officers have been hospitalized due to inadvertent fentanyl exposure (Grant 2017, Bell 2017). Many prison staff anecdotally told us in our current research that they are not afraid of gang violence but are afraid to conduct essential duties like searches due the threat of exposure. These fears have bred discussion about illegal strikes. Staff concerns also endanger prisoners, as some officers insist on first donning protective equipment before entering the cell of a prisoner who is overdosing. Collecting such gear during a health emergency reduces response times by minutes—an eternity when it comes to determining whether an overdose victim will live, die, or have brain damage.

The proposed project is a one-prison study designed to provide a more sustained examination of these and other developments. The focus is on how fentanyl/carfentanyl is altering life in prison, and garnering insights we plan to develop in a larger SSHRC/CIHR funded study of multiple prisons. The overall motivation is to build towards more meaningful prison-based harm reduction initiatives.

Three strands of theory inform our project. The first is derived from the large body of ethnographic research detailing some of the lived realities of prison life (Sykes 1958, Jacobs 1977, Sparks, Bottoms, and Hay 1996, Fassin 2017). A central ambition of such research has been to understand any connections between life inside prison and the wider society. While prisons are often seen as insular ‘total institutions’ set apart from outside culture and routines (Goffman 1961), a considerable body of research has interrogated this stark inside/outside dichotomy (e.g., Hunt et al. 1993). We see our focus on the implications of the introduction of powerful new opiates into prison as extending this line of analysis, as such drugs highlight both the permeable physical boundaries of prisons, and how aspects of life on the street are imported into prison.

The second theoretical influence draws from the ‘harm reduction’ approach of public health practitioners. Harm reduction builds upon the insight that drug use is a human constant (Courtwright 2001). The aim of this approach is consequently to provide evidence-based health services to people who use drugs without necessarily requiring abstinence. It employs a realist/pragmatist orientation to health services designed to prevent morbidity and mortality associated with illicit drug use and connect people experiencing problematic substance use with treatment and other health and social services. Considerable scientific evidence speaks to the value of assorted harm reduction measures, including opiate substitution, professional training, user-directed drug/safety education, needle exchange, making opioid receptor antagonists (narcain) available, and drug purity testing. And while there is some success internationally in providing such services in prison (Sander et al. 2016), doing so can be politically controversial and logistically difficult. Consequently, the third overarching theoretical influence shaping our ambitions is ‘implementation science’ (Damschroder and Hagedorn 2011, Proctor et al. 2011). Such research recognizes that providing evidence-based services to vulnerable individuals typically requires detailed understanding of the target population, including an appreciation for their lifestyle, unique challenges, routines, logistics, predispositions, and the organizational context in which services are provided, as all such factors can play a key role in any treatment successes or failure. It is here where the types of nuanced qualitative and ethnographic research undertaken in our study (research objectives #2 and #3) are particular germane, as they promise to shed crucial light on a range of contextual, organization, group-related, and logistic factors that would need to be taken into account in order to pave the way for successful prison-based harm reduction.

Methodology

This project will employ a (sequential) mixed methods approach, combining a quantitative survey, qualitative interviews, and ethnographic observations to answer our research questions. This reproduces the strategy our research team has used successfully in previous prison research. We have already secured approval from Alberta Corrections and the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board.

Prison officials are often loath to provide independent scholars access to secure institutions (Doyle and Ericson 1996, Schlosser 2008, Bosworth et al. 2005), making it notable Alberta Corrections has granted us unfettered access to both prisoners and COs at the Calgary Remand Centre (CRC). This facility employs approximately 200 COs and houses 600 male and 100 female prisoners awaiting trial. The remand prisoner population is comprised of people who have missed paying speeding tickets all the way to those accused of multiple murder.

The CRC is an ideal research setting for this project. There is almost no research on remand prisons (Irwin 2013, Weinrath 2009), despite the fact that on any day more prisoners are held in provincial remand (60%) than in sentenced facilities (Reitano 2017b). With a high volume of prisoner turnover, remand prisons also typically have a greater problem with illicit drugs than do sentenced facilities. CRC is also one of the few provincial prisons to house female prisoners. This is particularly important given female prisoners have traditionally been found to have higher levels of substance use/dependence than male prisoners (Fazel, Bains, and Doll 2006), and women's routes to prison are highly gendered. Women's experiences of prison, and their needs while incarcerated, also differ significantly from those of male prisoners (Carlen 1988, Hannah-Moffat 2001). As it is located in Alberta—a province at the epicenter of Canada's opioid crisis—studying this prison can provide vital early insights into a problem that is expected to intensify and expand across the country. Pragmatically, studying the CRC is also logical, as we have an unprecedented level of research access to a site within practicable travel distance to the full research team—making the project manageable while keeping costs within reasonable limits.

We will recruit prisoner participants through our REB-approved strategy of making announcements on the living units. Prisoners will self-identify if they are interested in participating by signing either their name or identification number onto a sign-up sheet. We will also post notices on the bulletin boards, informing prisoners about the study. We will interview prisoners on all units excluding the mental health unit, which typically houses between 0 and 10 prisoners.

To understand how new opiates are transforming prisons, it is vital to also include the views and experiences of COs. Frequently neglected in prison research (Liebling, Price, and Shefer 2010), COs have unique concerns about, and insights into, the drug/prison nexus, and can also be a vital conduit for (or barrier against) the introduction of meaningful harm reduction measures. We will recruit officers in several ways: 1. All officers working at CRC will receive an email informing them of our project and inviting them to participate. 2. The PI will make a brief recruitment announcement during the 'muster' meeting at the beginning of each shift, 3. We will recruit additional individuals through non-probability, theoretical sampling—i.e., 'snowball' sampling (Warren 2001). Although snowball sampling depends on relationships amongst research participants, its utility for accessing suspicious, hard-to-reach populations is widely accepted (Wright et al. 1992). Variations of this approach have been used in other prison studies (Fassin 2017, Kruttschnitt and Gartner 2005, Allen Sloan 2016), and have proven useful for examining tightly-controlled subcultural groups within the criminal justice system (Chan 1996, Crawley 2012, Miller and Selva 2001, Waddington 1999).

We will conduct the prisoner interviews in a private room adjacent to the living units. Interviews with COs will take place in offices within the prison or in nearby coffee shops. With the consent of participants, interviews will be digitally recorded. All interviews will be strictly confidential and meticulously conform to the Tri-Council research ethics policy, including standards for anonymizing data and ensuring the identities of all participants remain confidential. Data will be stored on password protected files on an encrypted computer.

To meet objective #1, we plan to conduct a census of the complete prisoner and staff population of CRC. Survey participants will be asked a series of standardized questions, responses to which will provide baseline data about prisoners, COs, and their respective experiences with, and views on, drug use in prison. We are aiming for a high response rate (70%, approximately 490 prisoners and 140 officers), which is essential for sample representativeness. While both prisoners and COs are often perceived to be reluctant research participants (Liebling, Price, and Shefer 2010, Copes and Hochstetler 2010, Schlosser 2008), we are confident we will secure this level of response. A sizeable number of correctional officers are deeply concerned about the fentanyl situation, and we have no doubt many will be eager to speak with us on this topic. In addition, we have a graduate student working on this project who was previously a CO, something that in the past has allowed us to easily build rapport with COs. Our experience with prisoners is that when provided strict confidentiality assurances by a trusted, experienced, and independent research team, they are also keen to participate, often speaking candidly about deeply personal and sometimes highly incriminating matters. On some units where we have conducted interviews related to gangs and security threat groups, 100% of the 60 or so men on the unit volunteered to participate, with many thanking us for an experience they found enjoyable or even cathartic (Small 2017). Given that both offender and CO populations in Alberta are predominately male, we anticipate a sample approximating this gender profile. A high response rate will also ensure an ethnographically diverse sample in both prisoners and staff.

The Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) is providing us with statistical expertise in helping craft the surveys and interpret the eventual findings. Slightly different surveys will be used for prisoner and staff, but questions for all participants will revolve around their experiences with illicit drugs, experiences with overdoses, knowledge of (or experience with) harm reduction, current level of concern about the health and other risks associated with opioids, etc. For COs, additional questions will pertain to their professional experiences and training. Where appropriate, questions will be structured using a 5 point Likert scale in order to weigh the strength of our participants' responses (Preston and Colman 2000).

To reach objective #2 and #3, we will identify a subset of participants from our quantitative sample for qualitative interviews. We will focus on those who are most knowledgeable about, and experienced with, different aspects of the prison drug situation. Our sample will include approximately 50 prisoners and 30 officers, numbers typically seen as sufficient to reach thematic saturation (Small 2009). These 'problem-centered interviews' (Witzel and Reiter 2012), will provide participants with prompts they can speak to pertaining to drugs as they relate to prison culture, routine, prisoner/guard relations, security dynamics, relations to prison gangs, etc.

Audio recordings will be transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically using Nvivo 11 coding software. A group of four researchers will develop our data coding scheme. Once we reach 95% overlap in how we code the transcripts, we will co-code the entire data set. During the axial coding stage, we will make explicit connections between categories and subcategories and clarify relationships between categories. During the selective coding stage, Haggerty and Bucerus will work independently, selecting and identifying the core category and systematically relating it to other categories.

Additionally, significant elements of the prison subculture can be understood through observing simple, everyday routines in the prison (Drake, Earle, and Sloan 2016, Wacquant 2002), and this is no different for the drug situation (Crewe 2006). Observing officers and prisoners interact and go about their day will provide considerable insights into how fentanyl shapes diverse aspects relating to prison culture, routines, interpersonal relations, architecture, security dynamics, logistic, and the like.

Deliverables	Target clientele	Expected output	Methodology	Expected completion
Product #1 Data collection	Prisoners, correctional officers (COs) and management at the Calgary Remand Centre (CRC)	Data collection	490 surveys with prisoners and 140 with COs; 50 interviews with inmates; 30 with COs at the CRC	October 2018
Product #2 and #3 2 peer reviewed journal articles	Academic community	Detailed analysis of survey data of COs and prisoners	Data analysis of all 140 surveys with COs and 490 surveys with prisoners	October 2019
Product # 4 Symposium	Representatives from Alberta remand prisons, PASAN, Mom stop the harm, Alberta Corrections, Alberta Health Services, CRISM, Alberta Opioid Emergency Commission	Sharing preliminary research results and best practises	Data analysis of surveys and interviews with COs and prisoners	December 2019
Product #5 4 presentations at the American Correctional Association	Academic community, practitioners, policy makers and activists	Preliminary research findings of both the survey data and the qualitative interviews	Data analysis of surveys with COs and prisoners as well as of the qualitative interviews with both groups	January 2020
Product # 6 and #7 2 peer reviewed journal articles	Academic community	Detailed analysis of all interviews	30 interviews with COs and 50 interviews with prisoners	March 2020
Product # 8 Research report	Alberta Corrections, Correctional Service Canada, Calgary Remand Centre, Alberta Health Services	Lay form summarizing results/high-lighted best-practises	Data analysis of all 140 surveys and 30 qualitative interviews with COs, as well as the 490 surveys with prisoners and the 50 qualitative interviews with prisoners	July 2020

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