Congressional “Ask a Criminologist” Series
Understanding Increases in Homicide Rates: How the Opioid Epidemic and Police-Community Relations Impact Homicides

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@CJRAliance    @COSSADCC
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Understanding Increases in Homicide Rates:
How the Opioid Epidemic and Police-Community Relations Impact Homicides

Shytiera Gaston, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Indiana University

Washington, D.C.
Tuesday May 22, 2018
U.S. Homicide Rates per 100,000 Population, 1960-2016

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reports
Race/Ethnicity & Homicide Rate Changes, 2011-2015
(% increase from 2014-2015)

Homicide Victims

Source: National Vital Statistics System

Homicide Offenders

Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports
Increase in Homicides, 2015-2016: Is there a nexus with the opioid epidemic?

Presented by: Richard S. Biehl
Mayor and Chief of Police
May 22, 2018
Initial Considerations

There is limited data collected that may establish the overall relationship of drugs to violent crime.

- Evidence of the relationship is established, at times, when a crime is reported/discovered or when an offender is arrested.
- The data collected does not reliably identify the frequency or nature of this relationship.

Weapon possession, and at times use, is an inherent element of drug selling/trafficking.

- Violence associated with drug selling is likely overshadowed by violence caused by those involved in the drug trade but unrelated to drug selling.
ACCIDENTIAL OVERDOSE DEATHS: VICTIMS’ HISTORY OF ARREST FOR CRIMINAL OFFENSES

Overdose victim data matched against any type of arrest for each specific individual from 2012 – 2017.

DATA ON OD DEATH VICTIMS WAS PROVIDED BY MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORONER’S OFFICE.
2017 OD DEATHS VS. ARREST HISTORY

ACCIDENTAL DOSE DEATHS

- 282 Dayton accidental overdose deaths were reported by the Montgomery County Coroner’s Office

144 ARRESTED INDIVIDUALS

- 144 of the 282 individuals (51%) have an arrest history with the Dayton Police Department
  - Any type of arrest, non-specific, since January 2012

473 BOOKING NUMBERS

- 473 unique booking numbers were created from the 144 individuals arrested
  - Any type of arrest, non-specific

195 SPECIFIC CRIME CATEGORY ARRESTS

- 195 (41%) unique booking numbers, for targeted crimes

SPECIFIC CRIME CATEGORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRUG RELATED</th>
<th>ALCOHOL RELATED</th>
<th>PART 1 VIOLENT</th>
<th>MENACING</th>
<th>WEAPONS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homicide reports were read in order to determine whether or not the crime consisted of elements that drug/s and/or alcohol were involved per the assigned detective.
THE DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED HOMICIDES, CONSISTED OF ELEMENTS THAT DRUG/S AND/OR ALCOHOL WERE INVOLVED PER THE DETECTIVE.
2012 – 2017 HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Toxicology Results

- DATA WAS PROVIDED BY MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORONER’S OFFICE’S TOXICOLOGY REPORTS; AND IS IN NO WAY AN INDICATION OF HOW EACH VICTIM PERISHED.
- DRUGS LISTED WERE FOUND WITHIN THE TOXICOLOGY REPORT OF EACH HOMICIDE VICTIM, HAVING METABOLITE TRACES OF LISTED DRUGS.

### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>HOMICIDE TOTAL</th>
<th>DRUGS FOUND</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THC</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHANOL</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>OPIATE (HEROIN)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>FENTANYL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>METHAMPHETAMIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>BENZO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COCAINE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

- *NA is when there were no tox report given or included with the report.
PART 1 VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS VS. OVERDOSE CALLS FOR SERVICE
### Part 1 Violent Crimes vs. Calls for Service

#### Table: Part 1 Violent Crimes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>P1 Violent*</th>
<th>Police OD CFS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1181</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>569</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>1042</td>
<td>884</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>985</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>1371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>2187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Graph: Part 1 Violent Crimes vs. Calls for Service

*Excluding Forcible Rape*
Key Observation

I would like to argue this afternoon that we know too little about changing crime rates, and know that too late, and that we should think about designing a much more ambitious research agenda to understand crime in its local context as our challenge for the next century.”

Declining Crime and Our National Research Agenda: A New Yorker's View

Jeremy Travis
Director, National Institute of Justice

Inaugural Lecture
The Jack and Lewis Rudin Distinguished Visiting Scholar Program
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
March 9, 1998
New York, New York
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