Rose and Mike

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SPEAKERS

Mike Adorjan, Rose Ricciardelli, Jenn Tostlebe, Jose Sanchez

Jenn Tostlebe 00:14

Hi, everyone, welcome back to the criminology Academy where we are criminally academic. My name is Jen Tostlebe.

J

Jose Sanchez 00:21

And I'm Jose Sanchez.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:23

And in today's episode we'll be speaking with professors Michael Adorjan and Rosemary Ricciardelli about research ethics in criminology.

J

Jose Sanchez 00:33

Mike Adorjan is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Calgary and fellow with the Center of criminology at the University of Hong Kong. His research and teaching focus on youth crime and cyber risk, fear of crime, and perceptions of police. He is currently a principal investigator on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funded insight development grant examining youth and cyber risk in

Canada.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:00

Rose Ricciardelli is Professor of Sociology, the coordinator for criminology, and co-coordinator for police studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Elected to the Royal Society of Canada, she is also the vice chair of the ARC NAC for the Canadian Institute for Public Safety research and treatment. Rose's research is centered on evolving understandings of gender, vulnerabilities, risk, and experiences and issues within different facets of the criminal justice system. Beyond her work on the realities of penal living and community reentry for federally incarcerated men in Canada, her current work includes a focus on the experiences of correctional officers and police officers, given the potential for compromised psychological, physical, and social health inherent to the occupations. Thank you so much for joining us, Mike and rose, we're excited to have you.

M Mike Adorjan 01:54

Thanks very much. Pleasure to be here.

R Rose Ricciardelli 01:56

I'm echoing Mike, it's pleasure to be here.

J Jose Sanchez 01:59

So just a brief overview of what we'll be covering today. So we're gonna be talking about research ethics. And so we'll ask Mike and Roses, a few general questions about research ethics, then we'll move into talking about a couple of book chapters that Mike and Rose were gracious enough to provide us with. We're going to talk a little bit about IRB, and then we'll talk some about a project that they're both currently working on and some of the ethics challenges that have come up with that project. And so with that being said, Jenn, you can go ahead and take us into it.

Jenn Tostlebe 02:38

Awesome. All right. Thanks, Jose. So first off, starting with some pretty general questions for both of you. Can you hit us with kind of the definition of research ethics, and then elaborate on why it's important to take, you know, these research ethics in criminological research importantly, or seriously,

M Mike Adorjan 02:58

it's a good question. And one, when I first started thinking about it, I thought, what is the formal definition because we, you know, you write so much about this thing, and you'd write around it and, and you assumed people understand, you know, what it is what it is about, in general, it involves norms for conducting research in a manner adhering to a code of conduct, moral principles, beliefs, it assumes that it relates to how participants are involved in the research, you know, it talks about inform, informing them about the research process, making sure that they're aware, in most research protocols, anyway, aware about what are the potential benefits of the research as well as the risks, and having that as a conscious, consciously in your mind as a researcher in the inception of a research project, from the point of an IRB, or REB application, but also beyond that, as well.

R Rose Ricciardelli 03:50

I think if I'm going to take it and expand on what Mike is saying, it's important to take research ethics in crim seriously. And it's important to take all research ethics and doing any research, particularly with human subjects seriously, of course, but in criminology, we're dealing with a range of different individuals with different degrees of vulnerability. And also when we're doing our work, exposure to potentially psychologically traumatic events is sort of the norm. So we have to be aware of that when we're doing the research because it's our obligation as researchers and it's near impossible to leave someone exactly as they were when we started an interview or a discussion of some sort. But the idea is that when we leave that environment, everyone should be in the same mental state as in the beginning. So it's important that we don't do damage in that sense. With criminological research we're dealing with imprisoned persons or formerly imprisoned persons, vulnerable populations, like sex workers, victims of violence, also those charged convicted of white collar crimes, those in organizational administrative positions, and basically ethical processes need to apply equally to anyone participating in the work.

J Jose Sanchez 04:53

Yeah. So, you know, Rose, you mentioned that we inherently deal with vulnerable populations. Based on what we do a lot of the time, you know, what are some other major or main ethical issues in this field that we should keep in mind when trying to come up with a research study?

R Rose Ricciardelli 05:12

I think one of the things will depends on what kind of research you're doing, right? So your your ethical concerns are going to be, what's going to arise in your ethics will vary depending on your methodology. Right, so I'm going to talk more about qualitative research in that concept. And when we're, when we're looking at the main ethical issues, I think what we want to be really clear on is not just that we don't impact people negatively, but we also want to make sure that we're not impacting life trajectories or processes. And especially when we're doing work that's more ethnographic in nature, by being part of something by participating by being there by talking to individuals, you're always you know, balancing the insider outsider position, and, and how you're going to frame or be framed within that. And you're also going to have to recognize and be very attuned to the tensions around the impact you're having on the individuals, when we go into these ethnographic type experiences as well, there's a real big challenge, because people are not actively consenting to be part of your ethnography. It's a different kind of ethics and a different kind of process. So I'm thinking of an example in my head of when I did an ethnography in the summer 2019, I was there, and everyone around me knew who I was and why I was there. But I still to this day, can't say for certain, for example, did in the ethnography I was participating in a training program. So did the trainers I had, did they agree to have me in there, or were they told I was supposed to be in there. And for all the recruits around me that I was participating with, I would lay witness to a lot of events that would happen to them personally in their personal lives. And they may agree and consent and be like, it's okay for you to be doing this. But that doesn't necessarily mean that these very changing moments in their lives are things that I should be reporting on or talking about or telling their story. Because consent is a very, it's a negotiated process that once you have it, it doesn't mean it's a free for all, you still need to be respectful of things that might be outside those boundaries and be respectful of the confidentiality, and ensuring that people are, are their identities are not disclosed. Mike, what are you thinking some of the main issues?

M Mike Adorjan 07:19

There's a few again, I agree that it depends on the exact nature of the study, you might be working with police or with a policing organization or correctional organization, where there are some, you know, some degrees of vetting, you know, you have the university review process, of course, that that that's involved, as well as the review process is germane to those organizations, historically, and I know there are some some questions that you may have about the you know, the origins of research ethics boards, and these sorts of things. And there's a chapter actually, in our book that examines that by Mark Israel about the history of correctional research in the United States, that would certainly not be allowed today. But there were ethical sign offs on research. The processes, you know, didn't amount to. So for particular example is the way that the research process is

you might have an informed consent, and it might look like informed consent on paper. But if you have, let's say, a certain correctional organization, or prison administration, saying that there has to be a prison officer, a correctional officer there in during the interview, that may create certain dynamics, it may not but you know, there may be some dynamics there that affect the interview. So issues of coercion, especially when you have the inside these so called Total institutions in a Goffmanian sense, where there may be coercion, more subtly imposed, there may be conditions on participants for, you know, conditions on the probation or parole conditions and these sorts of things. It may not be explicitly said, but you know, those sort of things need to be taken into account. And there's a lot more awareness of that today. But it gets back to a point that I'm going to get back to a few times is that the idea that once you have a rubber stamp of approval from an IRB does not mean that you don't have to think about ethics anymore. It's not. That's just the beginning of the process. And I think it's very important. Of course, there are issues with criminological research. There are examples of studies that are more covert studies, as Rose mentioned, in ethnography, most people will know perhaps who you are, and some people may not and there's degrees of freedom there. There are also studies for example, people who posed or had a job as a bouncer like, you know, you have a job at a nightclub or something like that. They got permission to do that. And yet their status as a researcher is covert is not aware. They're not known and so criminological. There's covert studies in sociology and psych as well. But in criminology, the issues around covert research are really interesting to consider. And they always is weighing the benefits of the research to wider communities and wider contexts, not just the particular participants involved, but researcher safety is also an issue. Often, IRB is do place the focus, rightly so, on the participants involved in the research. But if you're dealing with gang members or danger, so called dangerous populations, I think that it's important to spell these things out for IRB is to get the full context of of studies involved, as well. Rose mentioned some things about ethnographies in qualitative research. There's also issues in from quantitative and online surveys as well. I do conduct qualitative research myself. So I'm not speaking from personal experience here. But there are some interesting dynamics with online surveys, for example, there may be just germane risks tied to a server locations for surveys. I mean, it may well be that online surveys are not quite clear. If the surveys are in the United States, there may be certain implications for data privacy, privacy protections for participants, whereas the servers held in different national context, may, may have different risks or benefits, and then that may change servers, change on the dime, you know, a lot of the time. For online surveys, you know, it's very important to try to be clear about consent and to try to ascertain the target population. You know, sometimes surveys have online surveys have a bit of a consent form at the beginning to read off, but there are issues about the medium itself, of online surveys. So if there's an honorarium promised for participants, and they quit the survey early, it's often told they can quit anytime, just click off the box, how is that? How are they contacted? How is that

honorarium given to participants? And some, some of those issues are not germane, of course, to criminology, but they're important because the medium of online survey tools.

Jenn Tostlebe 11:40

yeah, but you just hit us with a lot of different points that I want to go back to what you're saying at the beginning how, and this is something you talk about in the chapter that I read that's authored by you from the book that, you know, just because you have that rubber stamp, things can look way different on paper versus when you're in, you know, the situation, whether that's quantitative or qualitative research, I think, and I don't know if this is something that you recommend, but in one of the projects that I work on, we had this question of, you know, how, how was the survey being or the research being told to our participants by the correctional officers, because it seemed like they were being told, different than we thought they were being told. And so like, we actually ended up asking both sides, like, how is this being conveyed to you and how are you conveying it to the people we're interested in interviewing and finding kind of this discrepancy. And so we ended up, you know, circling back and fixing it, and it ended up increasing, you know, our participation rate. And so I think, just like, that, was an interesting dynamic to experience because I hadn't experienced it at that point. And it kind of got into this weird, ethical gray area that kind of felt ish like coersion, even though, like, it wasn't fully, but it kind of started to feel that way. I don't know if that's something that either of you have done, where you've tried to figure out how it's coming across to the participants.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 13:14

It's actually a significant problem when you're dealing with lower rates of literacy as well. What ends up happening, and I've been in this situation where someone will describe the study and talk about it, and they'll get it wrong. And you sit down with someone who signed the consent form but isn't actually literate. So they're anticipating one series of questions like I remember sitting down with someone who thought it was about the reentry, when we were actually talking about their prison experiences. And it wasn't a significant problem, but you don't want to be you want to make sure that things are communicated clearly and correctly, because that could have impacted participation. And I think it's particularly important to recognize like sometimes the populations we're dealing with, do you have higher literacy challenges?

Jenn Tostlebe 13:57

yeah, definitely.

M

Mike Adorjan 13:58

I mean, those are really good points. Sometimes the institutional on submission systems, you know, where you put together, the applications do have specified sections for interme-, whether there's an intermediary involved, and how that intermediary is to be involved. And you need to elaborate on that. A lot of the times the ideal scenario would be, you know, an intermediary may help recruitment, but they have no ultimate knowledge of who ends up participating. Or if they do, then there needs to be that, explicitly stated in the consent form. There are also tools online about pitching things at people's level, especially research with young people. And it doesn't need to be, there's oral options for oral consent, of course, for people with problems with literacy, but also for young people. I'm guilty as charged about writing up a letter of introduction to research that sounds like it was, you know, written in some archaic sort of language, that's epistemological frameworks and the rest of this stuff like you know, it's not easily easily communicated and there are tools online that can actually check for the level, quote unquote, for who you're pitching it to. So those things are very important to consider. But you know, I mean, I think I think, Jen, what you're what you're getting at is this very point that, you know, ethics is going to be with you throughout, throughout the process, including when the project is, you know, the budgets done. And the project is concluded, and nobody necessarily has raised a complaint about the project, there still may be issues about clarity, transmitting, communicating with participants. And it's always, I think, a safe bet to reach out and talk with participants, like, was this clear? Do you need a you know, how was this conveyed? And also, there's always options for modifications to an ethics protocol, and changing those, depending on the nature of the study. So all of those things link up to what I what I call the ethical imagination, right, it is chapter that I wrote, I'm inspired by C. Wright Mills.

Jenn Tostlebe 15:50

Alright, so our next question is kind of so like, broadly speaking, what are some of the most common ways that researchers can cross ethical lines, whether you know, their meaning to or whether it's completely accidental.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 16:05

I think one of the places where researchers may cross ethical lines unintentionally, is in recruitment. I think that's kind of one of the most challenging. So for example, my institution does not allow snowball sampling. So you can't reach out to people in terms of so and I actually was in a debate just a couple of weeks ago, because of one particular study with my ethics board, where I didn't know what to do, we couldn't advertise the

study, except through the means that we said like through listservs, when we talked to people are we not allowed to tell them about the study? Like it seems like a really fine line in terms of what procedure determines as correct and incorrect. And I found this movement of not allowing snowball sampling to happen is really impacting more the graduate students than anyone else, because that's where how a lot of people build their samples. But in terms of broadly speaking to it, I do think probably one of the most significant places like even kind of too many follow up emails to get people to participate, could be breaching our ethical lines.

R Rose Ricciardelli 17:07
Excuse me, go ahead, Mike.

M Mike Adorjan 17:09
yeah, I think what I do in terms of, you know, outreach for participants, if it's an initial contact, a cold call, or something would be, you know, to reach out about a letter of information about the study that was vetted through a research ethics board, and maybe one follow up at most, you know, with that, and I recognize, especially, you know, these days, people are very busy and pulled in so many different directions and things like that. And it is interesting, though, that sometimes the variation, I guess this is going off topic a bit, but the variation on research ethics boards in terms of, you know, what's permitted or not, I should, I'll be fine to go on the record to say I've done snowball recruitment protocols that, you know, sail through an ethics process. So it is interesting, the different temperatures there in terms of what's permitted and not, but certainly, you know, just some of the general issues, I think I've mentioned a couple already just not updating or assuming that you've got the sign off, and then not updating based upon, you know, substantial changes. Sometimes there are, you know, very minor, maybe alterations that still require modification, just to make sure that you're covered, quote, unquote, in terms of the IRB, but also to make sure that that's conveyed to participants. So updating with amendments, you know, I think that those, those are some things that are very important. You know, I think that there's a lot of work now about knowledge exchange, and giving back to communities, especially research with indigenous populations. And I think that those are issues that I think are new, is relatively new in criminology research and sociology in general, about how not to just parachute into a community, parachute in quote, unquote, collect data, go back, write up a bunch of journals, and, you know, that's it, right. It's, it's more about, you know, trying to give back to communities, you know, and following through on that. So those sort of things, you know, post colonial approaches to research are very interesting, you know, to consider, you know, how those processes take place, and how they are or are not commensurate with current IRB protocols and

processes. I mean, these are these are very complicated issues. And I know, a little bit beyond the scope of what we're looking at here today. But these are certainly some of the challenges. I think, as we're going forward into the next few years.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 19:15

I actually like to just continue on, Mike was saying, I think one of the ethical issues that we never really consider in doing research, and it's not just criminology and criminological research, but also the ethics around knowledge mobilization. So it's one thing you write your paper, you know, ideal practice, you would think would be, you sent it back to the persons who, you know, oversaw or the partner organization that you were working with, and give them a chance to look at it. But we don't really talk about what happens when the research you're trying to mobilize is not research that anyone wants to hear about. Right? It becomes quite difficult and taxing and, and it becomes more challenging discussions and there's such a push now to mobilize our research. That there's a lot of pressure placed on that. So sometimes, you know, our attention and in the work that we're doing isn't going to be received well. And there's also the opportunity for words to be quoted in ways that may defy the meaning or the argument we're trying to present. And I think those are issues that are also ethical, but that don't receive the same degree of consideration. Another place where I think research can change is often we start off to study one thing. And our research, especially in qualitative research can reveal other challenges. And when you're working with a partner organization, you may have permission to do the research within the specific topic, but not necessarily where your research is bringing you. So that becomes a very bal-, like a very difficult balancing act to stay true to the study parameters, while still stay true to the voices of the participants.

J

Jose Sanchez 20:51

Yeah, this discussion has gotten me thinking about some of the work that I'm doing with David in Denver, especially, so one we just did, and I just submitted a paper for review, and I used snowball sampling for that paper. And it, you know, just like, it never occurred to me that, that that might be something to think about. I just always known like, Oh, you can ask people if they know, people that might want to participate. And then I think the other thing was, so it wasn't with this was with organizations. So these were people that work in different agencies. And I don't know, if you have any experience where you might view them a little differently than, say, if I was doing snowballing with gang members, and not people that are, you know, working professionally in an agency, I guess it's that's something that we should also, you know, keep in mind that just because they're not, you know, what we typically think of as a vulnerable population, that we shouldn't sort of just assume that they're going to be okay.

R Rose Ricciardelli 21:58
100%.

J Jose Sanchez 21:59
And then the other thing in with qualitative work is, you know, like you mentioned, things can change, and they can change pretty quickly. So, when COVID hit last year, my qualitative work shut down for a few months, because of it. And so, we sort of regrouped, then we decided, Okay, we're gonna now do research on how COVID is impacting these agencies that, that we're working with. But then we had to sort of, you know, submit IRB amendments, and then IRB was like, okay, so you're going to now study COVID, what are some of the implications of this, and then we had to come up with like, a new consent form for them. Because it wasn't in our original proposal. And so I that, you know, I had to add it, because I was the one sort of spearheading this effort, I had to really think through, what does my consent form need to say? And what are some of the potential implications that these questions may have on them and their organization? And how can I sort of keep them safe? Because, you know, their anonymity is my top priority, coming up with these questions.

R Rose Ricciardelli 23:08
Of course, right? Especially because there's risk if it's breached.

J Jose Sanchez 23:13
Right, like, if someone, like really disagrees with new COVID protocols, like, I don't want them, I don't want that to then , you know, sort of backfire on them. Because they were, you know, I told them, that they could be honest with me, and that I would make sure that they stay confidential. So you know, even though they're, like, you know, like this, quote, unquote, vulnerable population, there's still some dangers for them. By just answering my questions.

M Mike Adorjan 23:40
There, there's so many, there's a number of angles there, Jose, that we can we can explore certainly, one is the question of snowball sampling within organizations versus let's say, you know, members of a gang. I mean, certainly there are there are different, you know, levels of in terms of hierarchies and stuff like that that might be be relevant to a snowball sample, a dynamic within even a gang. I mean, there may be some sort of dynamics there

in terms of power dynamics and things like that, who participates and not certainly it applies to organizations. I mean, the idea there is if you do have an intermediary at an organization, that that's, you know, disseminating research information about your research, there are for the consent forms that I've produced in, in those sort of contexts, either myself or graduate students, there's a line in there normally about the fact that your participation will have no impact on your employment at this institution, organization, or will not impinge upon your, you know, your academic track record, if it's with a teacher recruiting students or, you know, so those sort of lines need if they're explicit in the application help to make it clear to those who are who are sending information out recruiting, as well as the those participants about that. The question of vulnerability is an interesting one, we make assumptions about who's vulnerable all the time. And I think that sometimes, you know, people, the people on research ethics boards are, you know, share these assumptions as we all do. And I think if the emphasis really is on the applicant, you know, the student or researcher, or faculty member to make it clear that, you know, I've done research myself with sex workers in Hong Kong, where I expected the application, go to a full board review not be go through a delegated, quote, unquote delegated process. And it did, which is fine. I mean, as it made sense, but I just took the care to spell out these are some of the, you know, issues in terms of distress to police and these sorts of things, spelling, those sorts of things out that the project was about perceptions of beliefs, and being clear about that on the application. And sometimes you can get into a process. And there are advantages to full board meetings where you can have the face to face. So many times an application I read, as a member of an IRB, REB, they call it in Canada, research ethics board, you're reading an application on paper that comes across a certain way, but you meet the researchers, you meet the students, and you have a very positive impression where it was negative or negative impression where it was positive, like, you know, sometimes it was it's a different dynamic, when you meet in person and that full board review, it's nerve racking process, is that the right way to put it because, you know, you're you're nervous about this board. And that's often like, you know, one of those, you know, scenes in Harry Potter, where you're going into the Dumbledore castle with a board of wizards and, you know, trying to judge you. But the point is that there's often an interaction, a rapport, where you can actually contextualize your research, right? And get that, get that feedback that's important and convinced others of that process as well.

Jenn Tostlebe 26:31

Yeah, there have even been situations that before like a full board, we've actually emailed someone, like the contact person we had on our IRB here to be like, how do we address this question? We're not entirely sure. Here's what we're doing. Like, Is that sufficient? Or do we need to change things? So yeah, I think, Mike, I think you're right on that taking advantage of those, even if it's not face to face, but the communication with people is

really helpful for your research.

J Jose Sanchez 27:01

Yeah, yeah, for sure. Okay, shall we move on to discussing some of your work in the book that you both have edited, so lived experiences. So the book is called Engaging in Ethics and International Criminological Research. Like I mentioned, Mike and Rose are the editors of the book. The first edition was published in 2016. And the book explores the personal experiences that scholars have encountered when dealing with ethical dilemmas during their criminological research, both in the field and while writing up results for publication. And from here, we're gonna talk about two chapters, one that was written by Mike and one that was co-authored by Rose, and we'll discuss those before moving on to our other topics. And so the first chapter will be Mike's and Jenn, you can take that away as well.

Jenn Tostlebe 28:01

OK, so this first chapter is called the ethical imagination, reflections on conducting research in Hong Kong, which was really interesting to read. And so to kind of give our listeners an intro into this chapter, Mike, can you just kind of describe, you know, what this project was, what the goal was, and then kind of like your methodological approach to give listeners an understanding of the ethics we'll go into.

M Mike Adorjan 28:27

For sure. You'd think that criminologists are interested in areas and populations of high crime, the dynamics of societies of cultures of control and all the rest of it. And that's, that's fine. I mean, it's equally fascinating to go to a society in a place like Hong Kong, special administrative region of China and find there's over 7 million people and they have a lower murder rate than many major cities, London, and you know, Paris and Toronto even. So what's going on? And, you know, when I got, I got, I was there for four years, and I was looking into these questions about what research has been conducted, you know, in terms of people's sense of perceptions of safety and security. And there's a relatively recent inclusion at the time of Hong Kong on the international crime victimization survey, where police, the Hong Kong Police Force was rated very highly compared to other major world cities, in terms of responding to crime, their efficacy in fighting crime, and very low rates of crime. And and there's gender dynamics there as well, where women would feel safe walking, you know, streets at night in areas that you might consider seedy or dangerous, you know, in other contexts. So, what's going on

there? Well, so I started looking at what research is there. And, as always, you know, you gravitate towards what's not done. And there was all these official police surveys and statistics, international crime victimization surveys, but no qualitative research on people's perceptions, from their experiences, from their attitudes towards these things. So the idea there I started playing around a little bit with focus groups at the time because I was conducting either qualitative interviews at that point one on one, but I expanded to focus groups because they're really interesting dynamics between people that you as a researcher can ask questions, but then there's a dynamic of interaction between the groups themselves, where they would, would would take, you know, different directions and sometimes spontaneous ways. And I wanted to get at people's reflections on safety and security in Hong Kong, including perceptions of police, but also crime, and all of those things from their own vantage point. So the qualitative nature of that study emerged as something that I didn't see existing research in Hong Kong, covering that ground in that way. So there's a couple publications that I can, you know, refer you to about that in terms of the findings, either in terms of, we're drawing that one point on kind of a signal crimes or broken windows angles for people's perceptions of safety, and then another article on perceptions of police. So that was the kind of gist of that.

Jenn Tostlebe 30:54

Cool, yeah, sounds like a really interesting project. And I didn't realize that actually, about Hong Kong that their crime rate isn't crazy high. Yeah. And four years, that's quite a long time to be there. So I'm sure you learned a lot.

M

Mike Adorjan 31:09

It isn't it isn't. I left right before the quote unquote, Umbrella Movement and protests in 2014, where I would have loved to stick around a little bit more just to get a little bit more direct research and communication with what was going on there. But ya no, it's a fascinating part of the world. It's, you know, a really interesting society and, you know, just from a criminological perspective alone, it offers different questions about conducting criminology outside the Anglo global north, conducting criminology in a comparative context, developing a global kind of sociological imagination about those things. That led to my questions about insider outsider dynamics that I wrote about in in that chapter.

J

Jose Sanchez 31:49

So, well, you did come across some ethical issues with the human research ethics committee at the University of Hong Kong, such as having all letters of information and

consent forms that have to be written in both English and then translated, and acquiring informed consent and focus group research. So in this chapter, the main ethical issue that seems you encountered in the field was related to your status as an outsider. And, so first off, what is this insider outsider problem in this type of research?

M Mike Adorjan 32:25

Yeah, I think it's something that I considered more in the process of, after the research to some degree into some degree, of course, during the actual application, and but it has to do not just with someone who is an expatriate in a foreign context, and these are things that could be dynamics of power, it could be related to age, could be related to gender, it could be related to, you know, all these different things that if you're, if you're actively reflexive, about your position in relation to the perspective of participants, it allows the research process to, to be engaged in a more ethical manner. Clearly, I would stand out, as you know, someone from either North America or somewhere, I don't necessarily come from a London accent when people identified me as, as you know, either Canadian, or somewhere in the States or something. I don't speak Cantonese, which is the dominant, you know, language in Hong Kong, except for a few, you know, bad words that students have taught me. So although you can get quite a lot of currency, quite a lot of social capital from introducing yourself and the bad words that you know, nevertheless, when it came to conducting the focus groups, it was very important that there was a team involved. So, this really is the dynamic of having, you know, the insider outsider, I should back up because I this is what I do. I go off on tangents here. But the insider outsider dynamics, I go back to Merton, that talked about that notion of sometimes you are an insider at an organization, let's say you're conducting research, where you're you have inside status, some sort of organizational power in terms of a hierarchy within the organization that matters, right in terms of your status as an insider. And often we feel as outsiders if I'm approaching, you know, the type of work that you're doing, Jose, I mean, I would be, you know, very much an outsider in terms of the populations that I'm recruiting. And there are advantages to that. Certainly, there's sort of, as Alfred Schutz and others, you know, in terms of talked about having being a stranger, being an outsider does have advantages, you can see things that maybe insiders don't. But there's, there's often we're both insiders and outsiders depending on on where we're positioned. So in this particular example, I was certainly an outsider, by the by virtue of the fact that I'm a Canadian in Hong Kong. I'm an outsider by the fact that I don't speak the language. I'm an outsider by the fact that I'm not quite aware of all the social norms involved in the way that maybe, you know, there's certain ways to approach people for the research that that may not apply in other cultural contexts. So it was important to me to first of all, I have a co-investigator, Professor Maggy Lee at the University of Hong Kong that we collaborated with and she can communicate in, in Cantonese, of course, and then also help with

designing the project, in the best way going forward But also the research assistants, you know, I think that what, I did not conduct the interviews, you know, we had the research assistant involved was a great help, invaluable to the project was able to communicate very clearly in some cases, in most cases, it did not present a problem. If I would, I would show up and introduce myself and I would say, ni hao, just, hello, greetings in Cantonese and talk about, again, at a couple words that I knew and things like that, try to make participants feel, you know, comfortable and explain the project. But the research assistant really just took the reins for that. And I would step back and you know, go grab a bite to eat or something and then meet up later. And that's kind of the way that worked. So it's either my co-investigator and or the research assistant. And they could most clearly convey the research process, in some cases. And I only found this out subsequently, some participants didn't know what my status was my role there. And so they recognized that I was a professor at the University of Hong Kong, but, you know, that might have generated some feelings of discomfort among participants. So I just kind of stepped back and I said, you know, this will be my research assistant will be, you know, taking the lead on this. And those were exceptional, really cases anyway, most of the times they weren't they weren't a problem, but it was a really about the process involved. And making sure that that this was, you know, research that could be conveyed clearly. So you get informed consent. Research where participants felt comfortable disclosing, you know, the information that they did, very briefly, although you're talking about the Hong Kong study, I have also talked with teenagers, about a variety of cyber risks in focus group research, where I am the older male researcher, and quite frankly, when you're talking to young people, you might as well be 21 and you're old already, you know, tick tock, you know, what, what is that? So you're asking participants questions about sexting, or, or cyber bullying, and these sort of things. So gender, age, all of those sort of things are still factors that are important to work out and to consider when you're conducting the research.

Jenn Tostlebe 37:06

Yeah, definitely. And I mean, you just touched on this. So I'll just kind of recap it and feel free to add anything to it. But you talk about in your chapter that during kind of like these team debriefing sessions, that's when you became aware of these perception that some of the participants were having of you. So you, you know, you kind of like, changed up how you were dealing with kind of the interactions, which sounds like that's when you started to take more of this background role during the focus groups. And that was, you know, part of this this ethics discussion that we're talking about, right?

Mike Adorjan 37:42

Yeah, it's a great example of where a modification would not necessarily be, not, be, not be necessary. In that case, there's no reason I would need to do a formal mod for that, whether I'm there or not, that's really, the basic idea was always we're going to be helping to conduct the group, my co-investigator, but just the small adjustments there, I think went forward in a good way into that, in terms of that research, it was a process that was, I think, the right decision at the time, based on the information that I got. And it's also the decision to have those meetings, those debriefs, I mean, those are things that are outside of an ethics protocol as well, but in the context of an outsider. So I was an insider in some ways, right? I had the university status as researcher, there's certain social capital that comes from that, accrues from that. But having those debriefs, having knowledge about how the research is going, being received by the participants was was really important to have and that is exactly the point that those things are outside of a formal ethics, rubber stamp, you know, for protocol.

Jenn Tostlebe 38:42

Right. Alright. So you term kind of this, or you coined this term, the ethical imagination. Can you discuss what that is and why it's helpful to use this ethical imagination throughout your research process?

Mike Adorjan 38:57

Yeah, it's definitely taken directly inspired by C. Wright Mills, sociological imagination, that's trying to understand how our personal troubles our problems are even cognitive patterns, if you like, although that goes a little bit beyond them, are necessarily understood within a social context, the historical context, context of power relations, politics, for example. And that wider sociological issue, like a very simple example, I would say is if I was experiencing unemployment, as that's a personal trouble for me, but if there's wider patterns of unemployment, that suggests some sort of wider structural patterning of these things. So applying to ethics, I thought that was an interesting way to discuss that because we often think of ourselves, ethics is something that impinges on ourselves as researchers, we have a very relatively atomistic view at times about that, rather than, you know, the ripple effects that these things can have. And just trying to extend that and looking at the history that got us here. Like why are these protocols in place, having a sense of situating ourselves within a historical context to look at why are we, you know, proceeding in this way or that way with informed consent or covert research or otherwise. And also to try to think beyond the the moment that we're in, in research, right? To think beyond that, you know, as Rose talked about earlier, in terms of

knowledge mobilization, in terms of community impact, all of those things extend beyond the formal borders of a research protocol. That I think is the spirit, if you like, of what Mills was getting at, in terms of sociological imagination. So I thought I kind of just borrowed his, his lingo there with that.

Jenn Tostlebe 40:35

Yeah, that's cool. And it's a good idea to keep in mind throughout, like you said, both of you have referred to this the entire process, whether you're, you know, thinking about it to begin with all the way through IRB through the research, and then while you're doing the write ups, and even Rose, yeah, you were talking about, you know, how people are interpreting what you're writing, which is an interesting point, and how to deal with that is a whole nother thing that, still trying to grapple with. But yeah.

J

Jose Sanchez 41:04

Alright, so now, we're going to sort of pivot a little bit, and we're going to want to talk about the chapter that Rose, you, you co-authored, but then also, there's a new project that both you and Mike are working on. Right. So before we get straight into the nitty gritty of that, can you give us a brief overview of this new project that you're working on?

R

Rose Ricciardelli 41:24

So I think it parallels a lot to the chapter in the edited collection looks at working in partnership with the RCMP, which is our federal police service. And this new project that we're working on, that Mike and I are actually both a part of, is working in partnership with Correctional Services Canada, as well as the local unions or the National Union of Canadian Correctional Officers. So it's very similar in scope in some ways, in terms of the greater partnership, but it also has its own dynamics and dimensions that come with it.

J

Jose Sanchez 41:54

Okay, so we can weave them both in? Yeah. I think that questions will lend themselves. Well, well, well, to that. So the first one, and I think this was one of the one of the key takeaways of your chapter was this idea of doing, instead of doing research on the police, or in the new study on, on correctional officers is doing research with them. Right? Can you tell us a little bit about this, like the difference between the two,

R

Rose Ricciardelli 42:23

No matter what, I'm an outsider to an organization's we're always an outsider. So we're doing research in certain ways on specific topics. But there's different ways of doing research. And I think what really I'm trying to get at with that this differentiation, is when you're doing research on the police, you're taking, you're taking your critical perspectives, etc. And you're examining what is happening within the policing side, when you're working with the police, when you're working in partnership, which requires a degree of like an appreciative inquiry taking from [INAUDIBLE] where you take the time to actually try to understand the different actions in which the organization is taken. And then you try to understand how that impacts what is actually happening and the dynamics that emerge. So you're working with them because your understand their objectives and goals. It's not shaping your research in any way. But your point is not to just you don't start at a point of criticism, you start at a point of understanding, because often what I find is what happens when you talk to the police organization, for example, you'll be talking to constables, and then you'll talk to some superintendents, and then you'll talk to an inspector. And then you know, and you kind of work your way up until you're talking to the Assistant Commissioner, etc. And each person in each layer has a different perception of sort of what's happening. When you take appreciative inquiry, you can understand even the disconnects within the organization and how different things get passed down, and how that can impact you know, those front hand experiences that we're actually studying. So rather than working specifically on the individuals and just studying them as this specific group, you try to work with them in order to have a more fruitful study.

J

Jose Sanchez 44:00

So are there any differences in ethics with these two approaches?

R

Rose Ricciardelli 44:06

I think ethically, they require some of the same, but this is where ethics, like our regulated ethics and our personal ethics kind of come together, right. So in that context, when you're taking an if you're using an appreciative inquiry in the work you're doing, and you're looking at it ethically, you're understanding all the different voices across the entire organization, and then you're moving forward in that regard. In the same context, if you're doing research on the police, then you're only specifically focusing on the exact voices that constitute that sample. So the other things that are going on in that bigger picture, are harder to conceptualize in the same way. And where it becomes ethically challenging is if you're not noticing kind of the systemic and these greater understandings that are happening and that are also driving your research findings. You're not necessarily giving a fair representation to the individuals you're actively studying. So I think I think it does

impact your ethics in many ways.

Jenn Tostlebe 45:04

So, another key point that you talk about in this chapter, and it's pretty prevalent throughout a lot of research is this need for transparency and open communication, especially with the different agencies. And so was there ever a time in this project from the book or in the project that you're both working on right now, where you felt like you needed to, instead of being super open with the agency or with your participants that you needed to play some cards closer to the vest to avoid, like impacting, you know, your study, impacting the integrity of the research.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 45:38

So the one thing I can say, when studies are this big, so the current study looking at correctional officer recruits and following them for 10 years post deployment into prisons, so we're seeing how they change over time, because of their career. We have about 400 participants in the study. And we're following them for a lengthy period of time. And we're working with different sections within the organization. So we're working with research, with human resources, with learning and development, we're in all these different things. And what's most important in this is complete transparency. Because if you try to hold any cards close, and you're dealing with so many people in such a large study, it's best to just be very clear. And in that context, in Canada, in particular, there's, you'll hear if it's working with police, you'll hear about challenges of access, if it's working with corrections, they're kind of amplified, these challenges of access. And I'm sure it's the same everywhere, although we feel it's worse in our own, in our places. But one of the things that I'm trying to do is to to continue the transparency, not just in terms of how I work with the organization, but how we put the research out there. So for the first time in my life, I've written a protocol paper. And you know, we've gone over this protocol paper and, you know, incorporated and we'll publish our protocol, our full protocol for the study. And this actually does a lot to manage this perception of lack of transparency, because not only is the study totally out there for everyone to criticize, but also it shows the transparency with the correctional service organization, in letting us be this transparent about what exactly we're doing. And I think that helps, because if you keep it all, if you keep everything just out there, and you can hear the criticism that comes back, it gives you opportunities to make modifications and changes, and to highlight like the best ways forward. And it's difficult, it can get on your very last nerve. But at the same time, it's really important. And that transparency with the organization is so important. Because when you're doing research, especially qualitative research, and we talked about before your process and what you intend to find, and where you end up finding yourself focused, can change

slightly. So by keeping these by keeping communication very open, and everyone aware of what you're doing and what you're looking at, there's no surprises. Because the worst it would be I think, I don't know, because I'm not an organization. But I think it'd be really difficult to sort of, they said, okay, you're doing this work on mental health. And suddenly, everything that's coming out is everything else but mental health. So if you keep those lines of communication really open, and we say, okay, we're finding that these policies are really impacting stuff, therefore, it's having a negative impact on mental health. So we're going to unpack these policies, and see their impacts. And everyone's aware of it, it doesn't look like there's any surprises.

Jenn Tostlebe 48:18

Yeah, it kind of reminds me I don't know if either of you have heard of kind of this, like Open Science Framework where you put you know, your protocols, your methods, what you're looking at, your hypotheses all online, and then, you know, you can embargo it, but you know, it's all there for people to see, eventually. And I'm kind of curious, you know, I have never, Rose I've never heard of someone writing a protocols paper. But I think you know, I'm, yeah, I'm kind of curious if you know, that's where like research is kind of going, you know, trying to be more transparent and open about what you're doing. So make sure you're not crossing (A) any ethical lines but (B) you're also being true to your participants and yourself in your research.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 49:00

It's a different way of doing research. Protocol papers are not easy to write. They're lengthy, complicated. And then also, it doesn't make it easier when I have a big project, I have more amendments to my ethics, then anyone can even try to follow because every time I change anything, or do anything, or there's an adverse event, you have to report it back. So I think, I think it does, it is a movement towards Open Science. I felt for this particular project, because so for example, in Canada, there's another project is called the prison transparency project. And basically, it opposes this idea that prisons are not transparent enough. So by putting out a protocol paper, in this context, it's like, Hey, here's what I'm doing. Yes, I have access. This is exactly what the study entails. This is the relationship. This is how I've stayed at arm's length. I think in doing that, we create a better space for transparency. And I think it increases everyone's trust in the work that we're doing and it solidifies the partnership. So I think it's really important. It also makes ethically It's a lot easier.

J Jose Sanchez 50:01

So pulling from your study with the Mounted Police. And then this new project, what would you say are the most critical issues that you should think about when trying to conduct this type of research?

R Rose Ricciardelli 50:17

I think one of the biggest things that you need to be aware of, especially with these larger research projects, which have a lot of participants, you have to remember these people are even participating on their work time. So, confidentiality is easy to ensure. But beyond that, it's a little bit more challenging, and you don't want there to be any impacts. One of the things that I think becomes really important is when you have your methods and you know what you're doing, you stay very true to that. And you support that in moving forward and you make sure everyone around you is supportive and on the same page, because that's very, very important in order to avoid any of the pitfalls. Because, if you start allowing different things to start informing and shaping what you're already doing. So basically, I think it's important to kind of stand your ground with your projects, to be able to be fully aware, to be fully aware of what you're doing, why you're doing it, and to be able to explain that to communicate it. And as long as you're able to communicate that and everyone understands and people feel they can ask questions and follow up, I think you can avoid a lot of those pitfalls. But no matter what, there are going to be challenges. With any research, there are unexpected things happen and things adverse events happen, and you need to report them back. And you need to find a way to manage those adverse events, especially with a study with so many participants. There are a lot of adverse events, and especially when we examine trauma, so we explicitly study exposure to trauma, experiences of trauma, impacts on trauma. In the longitudinal study, we also do mental health screens. So not only do we screen, but we use a diagnostic screening tool as well in a what used to be a face to face interview. So we can actually give diagnoses of different mental disorders as they develop. So, there's a lot of there's a lot of things that create potential ethical spaces that need to be very, very carefully negotiated. So you know, one of the challenges we had is if we see someone who's struggling significantly, what are the protocols that we have in place ethically in order to get those individuals help?

M Mike Adorjan 52:12

Yeah, I mean, one of the things that I pick up from what Rose is saying is, is when you're choosing, we often have a vision of researchers as a lone wolf going out and doing these things independently. And lots of studies, of course, have co-investigators and a kind of a team, but selecting a team with a purpose selecting a team with specific expertise in

mind. And it goes back to that insider outsider dynamic. I mean, it's speaking just for myself, I have no knowledge whatsoever about mental health screening from a clinical, you know, background or expertise in that, but having people on board from that perspective that can identify those things. You know, we have a system in place where, if I conduct an interview with a correctional officer that is followed up with someone who does that clinical assessment, as clinical assessment, and so that, you know, that helps follow through on our ethical commitments for the research, and also recognizes that we can't do everything ourselves. So, we need that team in place situated the way it is, in order to help mitigate, you know, any issues going forward, especially with with a project that is focused really on primarily mental health for correctional officers.

Jenn Tostlebe 53:17

Yeah, I know, we didn't end up doing this study. But we went through all the IRB protocols, and we had a pretty decent section on suicide and suicide ideation. And we had to, you know, map out, you know, how we were going to deal with things as they came up, you know, what ethics, ethical guidelines are we going to take if someone says A versus B? And so yeah, those mental health issues are there a lot to deal with, but they're really important too.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 53:45

Those are the exact protocols? What do we do if someone's actively suicidal, right? They have active ideation, a plan and an immediate intent. So and in this study, it's really important, we know that death by suicide is quite high among correctional staff. My study is not immune to it, we still experience just like the stats, we have a representative sample. So we have experienced a variety of different adverse events. And you know, the ideal is, I wish we didn't have to learn from what happened, but to do our best to make sure it doesn't continue to happen.

Jenn Tostlebe 54:16

Right.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 54:18

There's also this other ethical side that I sometimes and it's part of doing research, and it's not covered in the IRB or anything else. But one of the things that we don't always think about is so we do these interviews, and you know, you have a sample of about 400. And

they're all talking about these traumatic exposures and all these things, then we have transcribers who are just transcribing away and we don't know how it's impacting them. And the researchers working with all this data. So, it also there's this vicarious impact that I think we have to be cognizant of with our research teams, but it's outside it's kinda like what you were saying how your IRB didn't really care about your safety in some context, right? It's, you know, how do we how do we also make sure That we keep the mental health of the people working with us as optimal as possible.

Jenn Tostlebe 55:05

Yeah. Besides that I had never even thought. Because Yeah, I've used transcribers and you know, other people outside of the immediate interviewing research team to do data analysis and cleaning. Yeah. Lots of different components all working together.

M

Mike Adorjan 55:21

So, IRBs will definitely ask you, but, sorry, Rose. Point about the transcribers, they will often have a separate confidentiality form for transcribers. And sometimes that's a requirement depending on the nature of the study, in terms of do, you know, the transcribers are beholden to not disseminate the findings and things like that. But yeah, their mental health is not on that radar for the nature of the study. And it falls again, back to that point about ethical commitments, moral commitments that are not necessarily relevant for modification, or for things like that, where the primary focus is on research participants, and rightfully so it's just the blind spots that that creates in terms of others involved in the project.

J

Jose Sanchez 56:04

Yeah, this jus reminds me when I was working as a transcriber, for a project on patrons on trans people, and I was transcribing a focus group and I was like, Whoa, this is rough. Like, I got to like, pause it and just sir, walk away for a second because some of those stories were really...

R

Rose Ricciardelli 56:24

The stories are colorful, right? Yeah. And a colleague of mine said the other day, as criminologists, we tend to be pretty okay with that sort of stuff. But we don't know who we don't know the scope of it on the team. And you might think you're okay, hearing stuff, but you might not be, right? We can't determine how we react to things or how other people

react to what they hear.

J Jose Sanchez 56:45

Yeah. And like, so. Like, you know, I do research mostly on gangs. And I'm, like, completely fine doing research on gangs. But when I have to step into someone else's research area, like hate crimes, I'm like, this is kind of why I don't do hate crime research. I don't know that I have the stomach for it.

M Mike Adorjan 57:03

Yeah. So yeah, we can go the full 15. And it's all good. I mean, it's it's a good conversation. And as I expect, that goes off in different directions, but important ones as well. You can't anticipate how you're going to receive information as you're getting it right. So if you and you're dealing with hate, you're dealing with things like violence, maybe descriptions of violence might be a trigger for somebody but not another person. I think it's you know, there's an ethical considerations involved with RA training, research assistant training, in terms of understanding what the requirements are, and confidentiality and so forth, but also what you're going to potentially be exposed to. And you can't ultimately preempt that, but you can just say, hey, look, this is the general scope, and then let the RA decide for themselves about that. So I mean, those are good points, Jose, about, you know, it's important research, and you want to have this [INAUDIBLE] sort of empathetic understanding and empathy is not sympathy and but at the same time, it's very difficult to sometimes tease those things apart, as well. So those are good points.

J Jose Sanchez 57:59

Okay. So for this, there's no question given everything that we've talked about. And this goes out to both of you, can you maybe give us a few do's and don'ts when it comes to ethics and conducting research in criminology?

M Mike Adorjan 58:14

Yeah, there's a couple of things that might overlap with what we've said. I mean, do treat ethics is a process, I think, is one takeaway point about that. Don't assume a signed consent form indicates a quote unquote, green light to neglect ethical processes, or at least not actively consider them during the course of a research, do consult advance with an IRB or your supervisor regarding specific concerns, I think the best thing and another thing that's come up is the communication. The IRBs are often the number of people with a various range of expertise, the scope of your project probably falls within one of those. It

may be also practical, I would say if I'm gonna be succinct about it, don't censor your any potential idea, you know, really is what it comes down to. There are limitations if you're an undergraduate student, if you're a master's student, you got limited scope of time. If you do course based, you know, sort of ethics certainly in an undergraduate level or graduate level, there's going to be limits on what you can do. So if you're going to be planning to go into a prison conducting research, expect a lengthy process of approvals, modifications, etc, rejections even, you know, needing to pivot to different sample altogether, right? I mean, these are sort of things even at the graduate level, the PhD level, you're planning for four years, probably longer, about a certain ethics, you know, research process, you should be flexible in your design that because if you want to, you know, interview, you know, sex offenders, you might might be open to pivoting to organizations that work with sex offenders, as just one example. But nevertheless, I think it's important not to just say are the IRB is going to censor this, I'm not going to do it, because that ultimately engender is a culture of self censorship, basically. And I think that that, in my experience, and you know, I think that being transparent on an application, being as clear as you can about what you're doing, actively cogitating through what what are the risks, what are the benefits, and putting those through help, you know, help you get success in doing what you want to do, maybe not the exact thing you want to do, ultimately. But I think that it's really important that we not treat IRBs as the enemy of the research we wish to do. But in partnership, but we have to, you have to also step up to communicate clearly. And actively consider, you know, for at the University of Calgary, our research ethics protocol form, the very first screen is about research from the participants perspective. So, actively considering the research from the participants perspective, goes a heck of a long way to help justify, rationalize the research process. And that's often not an application for funding, where the application for research funding will have certain details in the methods. But abstain, often sometimes even neglect, capturing the research process from the perspective of participants themselves. So those are some general do's and don'ts that I had in mind.

R Rose Ricciardelli 1:00:55

Yeah, I would agree. And then also, maybe if we take our perspective of the research ethics board, and all research ethics, or ethics boards across the organizations, and kind of look at them as less of an obstacle, but more of just a way of verifying our methodological processes to ensure that we're doing the least amount of harm possible, I think it makes it a more palatable experience.

Jenn Tostlebe 1:01:16

Alright, so since we're kind of there, let's jump into, you know, the last couple of minutes

that we have talking about IRB or ethics review boards. So for people who aren't, you know, familiar with these, they're committees that review and monitor research involving human subjects, they have the authority to approve, require modifications, to research proposals or disapprove of research altogether. So overall, as both Mike and Rose have hinted at, you know, their goal is to ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of the subjects involved in the research. And so both of you have served on your respective universities boards, can you talk a little bit about who all, you know, serving on these boards, and then just briefly what each of your roles were.

R Rose Ricciardelli 1:02:06

So my ethics board, it's pretty, it's pretty large, and it has representation from all over the faculty and then different faculties within the university. And what I did in my role was I was reviewing ethics applications and putting out commentary for things that needed to be corrected for lack of a better word or thought out in some way, or if there were any tensions or, and then also, we check for adherence to the regulations of the board. So, you know, to be honest, we check are the correct statements in or is the consent form following the template, etc?

M Mike Adorjan 1:02:41

Yeah, yeah, the boards are composed often a faculty members volunteering to be on on the board in a range of expertise, the ideal scenario is to have boards with sufficient numbers of expertise from qualitative and quantitative, you know, two different types of backgrounds, so that so that there's enough members of the community are often invited as well, explicitly so that there are community members reviewing applications, a large part of it is looking through delegated reviews, meaning, you know, reviews that come in that do not require a full board hearing, the risks are relatively minimal compared to other projects, but still require, you know, checking through, a thorough check through. And there are as well, as indicated, there are certain forms to go through to make sure all the templates are complete, and these sort of things, but also sometimes clarification of certain things. And often there was a bit of a back and forth, there are different boards to I mean, it keep in mind that there are health research ethics board for health studies, clinical clinical based research ethics boards, the ones that Rose and I have been involved with a deal with human participants, and research protocols involving human participants. And so yeah, so I think that I would say a minimum number of applications come to a full board review. And that might be that as board member, you're required to go to a, you know, these often once a month, but sometimes once every couple months or so, researchers come in and discuss the research. And then there's often discussion basically about, about, you know, what are the issues involved? And how are those if any

issues need to be resolved, how are they going to be resolved, and so forth. And there's often like, we have the protocols and procedures in place in the Canadian context, I'm sure it's elsewhere, that you can refer to in terms of, you know, everything from recruitment, to dissemination to you know, as I mentioned earlier, these new questions regarding online surveys and things like that, so,

Jenn Tostlebe 1:04:33

yeah, big job.

M

Mike Adorjan 1:04:36

Yes, it's quite time consuming, but it's often it turns you on to what other people are doing in the faculty and outside of your faculty actually. And there's often I feel more engaged with what people are doing and the processes that they're engaged with. And they're often really very fruitful discussions, you know, in terms of, there are retreats and you know, conferences and things like that, where you get to learn different things about different aspects that you never really even considered right, this issue earlier that we brought up about RAs, that could be a retreat that could be an issue or take up the majority of a discussion, one of the board, and maybe new protocols and processes will be put in place because of that discussion.

J

Jose Sanchez 1:05:15

Right. So you both have sort of touched on this, and I'm sure all four of us have heard or read the stories of, you know, the researchers that you review boards and serve like a nuisance or like this roadblock that they have to get over. Or that they're, you know, bureaucratic and slow. But what would you say is, like your top recommendation for researchers when dealing with review boards, you know, to sort of avoid these negative experiences.

R

Rose Ricciardelli 1:05:47

Patience, just wait it out and try to change the lens in which you interpret the feedback. Yeah.

M

Mike Adorjan 1:05:55

Yeah, if you receive feedback that might strike you as not considering certain angles that

you've considered, etc. It's like those emails that the advice is just to wait a couple days before any sort of response. And think it through to discuss things with your supervisor, and you know, and others, and often there are like, even with the general peer review process, there are some times comments that you know, that you can just flat out disagree with or so forth. But overall, there's often good ideas there as well. My takeaway would be for research approaching research ethics boards, of course, these are necessary from the Stanford Prison Experiment on, you know, the need for these things is become obviated, and they're not going away. And I don't think they should. there's a there's a role that they play. But if you think as participants, you place the primary, primary attention on how the participants are going to be involved in the project, think as the participants involved, how are they recruited? How are they communicated with? What are the processes in place going right through to the end of the study, and even beyond the end of the study that helps board members have respect, I think for applicants who go through the effort for doing those things, and not just ticking boxes?

Jenn Tostlebe 1:07:02

Yeah, definitely. All right. Well, that is all the time that we have. Thank you so much to both of you for talking with us about this and providing you know, your insight, personal experiences, and then recommendations, you know, do's and don'ts list, dealing with IRBs. These are big questions that we're dealing with. So it's an important conversation. Is that anything that either of you would like to plug, you know, papers coming out any research, ethics type things,

R

Rose Ricciardelli 1:07:31

etc? No, I just I want to say thank you, again, for having us on the show. We really appreciate it. Yeah,

M

Mike Adorjan 1:07:37

it's been a pleasure. I could talk and I'm sure Rose is the same for another couple hours, just on these things. I mean, it's what we love doing. And hopefully the advice is practical and applicable, right, whether you're a graduate student or full profit, I mean, these are important things to discuss. And thanks for your time and energy to put together the podcast. I'm sure it's going to be valued.

Jenn Tostlebe 1:07:58

Yeah, we hope so. And then our final question is, where can people find you if they want to reach out ask any questions about this, or the research that each of you are doing?

R Rose Ricciardelli 1:08:08

I'm best by email. So just through my email, do you want me to see my email?

Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:14

It's up to you. We'll put it on our website, too. So, okay.

M Mike Adorjan 1:08:17

Yeah. Same for myself, I'm always I always welcome. You know, feedback, questions, comments, email is best. So just look for the link, wherever that is.

Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:25

Okay. Perfect. Yep. On our website. And thank you to both of you again. We really appreciate it.

M Mike Adorjan 1:08:31

Awesome. Thanks, Jenn. Thanks Jose. Yeah. And best of luck to you for your research.

R Rose Ricciardelli 1:08:37

You both if you ever need anything you guys know how to get us.

Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:40

Yeah, absolutely. I'm really excited to hear more about your corrections project. That sounds like a big undertaking, but a really important one. So

Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:49

Definitely. Thank you guys. Okay, thank you very much.

Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:54

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