

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making

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Abstract

It has been well-established that Indigenous peoples in Canada are overrepresented in every level of corrections, including provincial/ territorial and federal, in youth, male, and female populations. Despite the national attempts to address the overrepresentation, success has been limited. One factor contributing to the overrepresentation is that Indigenous offenders are less likely to be granted parole than non-Indigenous offenders (Office of Correctional Investigator, 2020). The current study examined racial and political biases that may contribute to racial disparity in parole decisions. Results indicate that while there was not a main effect of offender race on parole decision, there were significant associations between conservative attitudes, Indigenous resentment, and parole decisions. Findings suggest racial bias may be introduced through conservatism, and influence parole decisions indirectly.

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Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making

Conditional release is a policy within Correctional Services Canada (CSC) that was developed to help facilitate community reintegration for an offender¹ deemed a manageable risk while providing additional support and supervision. Most offenders are eligible for some form of conditional release during their sentence, whether parole or statutory release (CCRA, 1992). Contrary to public belief, parole is not automatically granted to an offender. There is a process by which an offender must apply and be deemed a manageable risk within the community by members of the Parole Board of Canada (PBC) (PBC, 2011). The process of conditional release offers the offender the opportunity for gradual reintegration into the community, which is associated with a decreased likelihood of reoffending (Zinger, 2012).

An unfortunate reality of the Canadian criminal justice system is that it is susceptible to systemic racism, wherein the Indigenous population in Canada is overrepresented in the criminal justice system (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2020). One factor that contributes to the overrepresentation of Indigenous offenders in correctional institutions is that Indigenous individuals are less likely to receive conditional release, meaning that a more disproportionate number of Indigenous offenders are remaining incarcerated for a higher portion of their sentence (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2020). The difference in parole rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders may suggest the potential for personal bias on the part of the decision-makers. One avenue of potential bias could be political orientation, as criminal justice opinion can be influenced by political views (Aarten et al., 2015). The present thesis will use a community proxy sample to investigate whether there is a difference in parole decisions

¹ The term “offender” is used to describe an individual who was charged and convicted of a criminal offence and was chosen to be consistent with CSC terminology.

based solely on the factors of race and evaluate participant political orientation to assess whether there is a correlation between political beliefs and parole decision-making. Being able to check for racial discrepancy in parole decision-making is one way that the federal government can address the deep systemic racism, disenfranchisement, and the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples active in the correctional system.

Correctional Services Canada

Before discussing parole in Canada, it is essential to introduce the system of government responsible for federal offenders in Canada. The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is the federal organization responsible for administering sentences imposed by the courts of those individuals serving a sentence of two or more years (CCRA, 1992). CSC's mission is to contribute to public safety by assisting offenders in becoming law-abiding citizens using appropriate intervention. With this in mind, CSC aims to balance the priority of public safety with the priority of offender rehabilitation (CSC, 2010). Short-term public safety measures include the separation of offenders from the public using correctional institutions, whereby the long-term public safety measures of rehabilitation can be addressed. Incarceration is meant to be a time-limited strategy, and so it is also imperative that offenders be provided with the interventions and resources required for a safe transition back into the community (CSC, 2010).

CSC operates within the legal frameworks previously established by other legislation, primarily the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (1992). The Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA) is legislation that was created with the intent to provide parameters to CSC operations and includes topics such as institutional and community corrections, and the conditional release, detention, and long-term supervision of offenders. Additionally, the CCRA outlined the role of the Correctional Investigator who is responsible for conducting investigations

into problems put forward by offenders regarding decisions and recommendations made by CSC (CCRA,1992). The CCRA, in part, exists to ensure the rights of offenders are being protected while they are in federal custody. Some offender rights outlined in the CCRA that will be addressed in this review include the consideration of the least restrictive approach to sentencing consistent with public safety, and the consideration of Indigenous culture and history when making decisions about an Indigenous offender, such as program assignment and conditional release (CCRA, 1992).

Overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the Federal Justice System

As was previously mentioned, Canada has a disproportionate number of Indigenous offenders in the criminal justice system (PSC, 2019). A recent report by the Office of the Correctional Investigator (2020) found that Indigenous offenders accounted for over 30% of all federal offenders, however, they only represent 5% of the Canadian population. There are many reasons for the overrepresentation of Indigenous offenders, including longer sentences and higher security classifications often assigned to Indigenous offenders than non-Indigenous offenders. Both long sentences and higher security classification result in more restrictive use of conditional release. This is because most forms of conditional release are available only after a proportion of the sentence has been served (e.g., full parole being after one-third of the sentence), meaning that longer sentences automatically result in more time incarcerated before the inmate is eligible for parole (CCRA, 1992). Additionally, while the granting of conditional release is not restricted to particular security classifications, security classification can influence the perceived risk of the offender by the PBC (Zinger, 2012), which can lead to offenders with higher security classifications being less likely to receive parole. Racial discrepancy in the approval of conditional release limits Indigenous offenders' ability to slowly reintegrate into the

community under appropriate supervision and support. It also continues an established problem of the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the correctional system. Given the significant overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system, the federal government has taken steps to address the effects of systemic racism (see Appendix A).

Parole Board of Canada (PBC)

The PBC is the independent branch of the Canadian government responsible for making parole decisions. Under the CCRA (1992), the PBC has the authority to grant, revoke, or deny an offender parole, and contributes to the protection of society and the rehabilitation of offenders while facilitating the offender's timely reintegration (PBC, 2011; 2020). The PBC is tasked with reviewing offender information relevant to assessing offender risk to reoffend and offender progress to make an informed decision as to whether the offender's risk can be managed in the community (PBC, 2020). PBC members are community members who come from a variety of backgrounds including policing, law, social work, education, business, and more, allowing for a variety of different perspectives and introducing a variety of different life experiences (PBC, 2011). Applications to become a PBC member are made available on the governmental website, thereby making them relatively accessible. The PBC website also includes the requirements to become a member, which include a university degree, and relevant experience in decision-making and interpreting legislation (Government of Canada, 2018). After the application is received, the applicant's knowledge of the roles of the PBC, societal issues in criminal justice, and the CCRA are assessed. During the application process, the applicant must disclose whether they have any potential conflicts of interest as it pertains to parole decision-making. After the applicant is assessed, the decision on whether to hire the applicant is made by the Governor in Council at the recommendation of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

(Government of Canada, 2021). As there is no single degree required to be a member of the PBC, all parole-related training regarding risk assessments and conditional release decision-making is provided by the PBC branch (PBC, 2011).

Appointment to the Parole Board

Historically the appointment to government positions, including to the Parole Board, has been fraught with controversy (Romauldi, 2020). For many decades appointments to the federal government have been made through the patronage of both the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party (Romauldi, 2020). Reviewing more recent history, Prime Minister Stephen Harper was criticized by the media and the public for prioritizing the appointment of his donors and supporters over other qualified applicants for government positions (*Harper's Patronage List: 111 Conservative Appointments*, 2012; Zimonjic, 2016; *Harper Cabinet Unleashes Floor of Patronage*, 2010; *Kettle Calling the Pot Black on Patronage*, 2009). Appointing a member of government based on financial support and partisan loyalty to the deciding party opens governmental actions and decisions to political and personal bias (Paparozzi & Caplan, 2009).

More recently, the succeeding Trudeau government has spoken out about patronage in government appointments and pledged to make the hiring process more transparent. To date, the Trudeau government has made government positions available to the public, increased application accessibility, established clearer hiring guidelines, and actively encouraged employee diversity (Government of Canada, 2018). While these changes may suggest a change in patronage appointments, a recent study by Romauldi (2020) found that there continue to be partisan appointments in the Trudeau government and that government appointments appear to be in the transitional stages of open and closed patronage. These findings indicate that political

orientation can still affect government appointments (Romauldi, 2020), and by extension appointments to the Parole Board.

Politics and Decision-Making

Given that there is evidence to suggest that government appointments have the potential to be granted based on politics (Romauldi, 2020), it is important to understand how individual political views and party affiliation can affect decision-making. Examining the influences of judicial appointment on judicial decision-making in Canada, Hausegger et al. (2013) found that there were significant differences in how judges voted in criminal and family law cases. Judges with Liberal Party ties were more likely to rule in favour of the defendant and decide against incarceration, compared to judges with Conservative Party ties. Judges with liberal ties were also less likely to support a woman in a family law case regarding custody compared to judges with conservative ties. These significant differences suggest that different political views may alter what factors are considered or how decisions are made by the decision maker. Overall findings suggested that political party affiliation was more influential than the party that appointed the judges (Hausegger et al., 2013).

While politics can affect decision-making, so can the influence of others. In the same Hausegger et al. (2013) study, judges from both parties would change their voting pattern if they were on a panel with a judge of the opposite party. When on a panel concerning criminal law, judges with Liberal Party ties were less likely to vote for the accused, seemingly adjusting their position to coincide with their Conservative counterparts. Similarly, judges with ties to the Conservative Party were likely to vote in line with Liberal judges in favour of the claimant in human rights cases. Another study conducted in the United States found that over one-third of parole decision-makers had been pressured or influenced to change their decision regarding the

revocation of parole after a parole violation (Jones & Kerbs, 2007). This external and internal pressure was reported in both instances where the parole officer was not originally planning to act (but was pressured to) and where the parole officer was originally planning to take action (but was pressured against) (Jones & Kerbs, 2007). Both these findings indicate that decision-makers can be influenced by outside and internal voices, suggesting that decision-makers have the potential to be pressured, or to pressure others, to act or vote in a particular way, opening them to political influence.

When considering politics and parole decision-making, it is important to understand the potential bias towards the justice system on the part of decision-makers. A study from the Netherlands investigated public support for suspended sentences, the participant's confidence in the justice system, punitive attitudes, and political orientation (Aarten et al., 2015). A suspended sentence is defined as a sentence served in the community while abiding by general and specific rules as dictated by the judge according to the offender's offence. Findings suggest that all three factors were significantly correlated to the support for suspended sentences. Specifically, they found that confidence in the justice system, lower punitive penal attitude, and more left-leaning political orientations were associated with more positive attitudes regarding suspended sentences. Furthermore, political orientation was found to moderate the relationship between suspended sentences and public support, wherein participants who were right-wing oriented who perceived the sentence as punitive were more likely to support the sentence. This means that some amount of difference in public support for suspended sentences between participants can be explained by the participant's political orientation. These findings support previously identified associations between conservative political views and support for punishment (Reppucci et al., 2009). A review of the research supports the suggestion that the punitive

measures conservatives advocate for disproportionately negatively affect racial minorities (Bennet & Walker, 2018). This summary explanation of racial coding in the United States' politics suggests that the overincarceration of African Americans began as a reaction to the civil rights movement. Bennet and Walker (2018) explain that after African Americans were granted civil rights, the white, conservative voting base was reorientated to focus on an anti-black 'law and order' agenda by vilifying black protestors as threats to the personal safety of white Americans. Authors continue to explain how politics can impact overall opinions on corrections (Bennet & Walker, 2018), and thereby can contribute to decision disparity.

A proposed explanation for the conservative endorsement of punitive attitudes is that conservatives perceive crime as a conscious decision of an individual due to poor moral character, as opposed to liberals who are more likely to perceive crime as a consequence of one's environment (Kornhauser, 2015). One study explored the conservative theory of deficient morality using the mentality of economic individualism (Kornhauser, 2015). Economic individualism is the belief that individuals are responsible for their own economic well-being and has been found to predict punitive attitudes. Kornhauser (2015) explained that the belief in individual responsibility for one's own economic well-being is connected to negative attitudes towards individuals of a low-socioeconomic class and/or experiencing poverty, and attributing crime to immoral disposition, which then increases endorsement of punitive attitudes. This attribution of crime to poor morality and poverty ignores outside influences that can increase an individual's likelihood of engaging in crime, such as trauma and substance misuse and a source of income. Kornhauser (2015) makes the connection that individuals who subscribe to economic individualism also often view crime as a result of individual moral weakness and that these weaknesses can be deterred through punishment and punitive measures.

Particularity relevant to the current study is a study on political support for punitive policy and racial resentment by Green et al. (2006). This study examined the relationship between conservatism, race resentment, and support for crime policy using an all-White American sample. Racial resentment was measured by participants' endorsement of symbolic racism, which is conceptualized as four main themes divided into internal and external symbolic racism. Internal racism included work ethic/individual responsibility and excessive demands, and external racism included denial of discrimination and undeserved advantaged. These items were created to measure race resentment of White people towards African Americans. Agreement with crime policy was measured using the endorsement of the four following policies: enforcement of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder, "three strikes" legislation, reducing poverty, and providing inmates with education and job training. Conservatism was measured by asking participants to rank themselves on a 7-point scale from liberal to conservative. They found that symbolic racism was a significant predictor of support for punitive policies and opposition to preventative policies (Green et al., 2006). They also found that conservatism was a significant predictor for policy endorsement, where conservatives more often supported retributive policies (i.e., the death penalty and "three strikes") and were less supportive of preventative policies (i.e., reducing poverty and providing education). The authors explained that the association between racism and punitive attitudes could be interpreted as a desire to protect 'moral values' by punishing offenders which disproportionately affect racial minorities (Green et al., 2006). Studying how race resentment and racism can factor into political orientation and policy support is relevant to the current study as it provides support that racism and political orientation can influence justice and correctional system decisions.

As previously mentioned, the CCRA (1992) cites parole and other forms of conditional release as important tools in offender reintegration (CCRA, 1992). To utilize it properly, factors used in parole decision-making must be examined for any amount of bias, whether implicit or explicit, on the part of the decision maker. Doing so allows parole decision-makers to focus on the factors associated with the offender being assessed and their case, thereby basing their decision on the merit and case of the offender rather than their personal views.

Conditional Release

Conditional release is a form of early, supervised release that most federal offenders become eligible for by either securing employment outside the institution, completing a certain amount of their sentences, or because of special circumstances (CCRA, 1992). Conditional release also serves to further offender rehabilitation using the least restrictive means necessary while ensuring public safety, per the Statutes of Canada, s. 718 (1995). Conditional release was implemented in the federal correctional system to systematically and gradually allow an offender of manageable risk to reintegrate into the community. One of CSC's most important mandates is to provide appropriate intervention to an offender with the overall objective being the reintegration of manageable offenders into the community.

As was previously mentioned, the overall goal of conditional release is to allow an offender to reintegrate into society while under the supervision and support of CSC (CCRA, 1992). This allows for the offender to practice applying the skills they were taught while incarcerated, while at the same time being closely monitored to ensure the safety of the community (CSC, 2010). The benefits of conditional release are numerous for the offender, CSC, and the community. Conditional release allows offenders the opportunity to leave the institution early if they are assessed to have manageable risks and have completed the

programming necessary to be rehabilitated by CSC standards (PBC, 2011). Conditional release can allow the offender to become familiar with the community while still being supported by CSC. This can then further encourage the development of prosocial interaction and community bonds, both of which have been associated with a lower likelihood of reoffending (Burnett, 2010). Finally, removing an offender from an institution may also remove them from negative peer influence (Burnett, 2010).

There are several different forms of conditional release, including temporary absence, day parole, full parole, and statutory release. Temporary absence is the first form of conditional release available to an offender and is either escorted by CSC staff or unescorted (CCRA, 1992). This form of release may be approved for different reasons including work in the community, contact with the family, or medical reasons (PBC, 2011). Typically, the first form of parole an offender becomes eligible for is day parole. An offender becomes eligible for day parole after they have served at least six months of their sentence or six months before their full parole, whichever is more (CCRA, 1992). If granted day parole, the offender stays at a designated halfway house and can be on their own during the day but must return to the halfway house in the evening. An offender becomes eligible for full parole after the completion of one-third of their sentence or after seven years, whichever is more. In full parole, an offender can reside in the community under the supervision of their community parole officer while abiding by the conditions of their release (CCRA, 1992). The last form of conditional release available for offenders is statutory release, which is automatically granted to most offenders after completing two-thirds of their sentence (CCRA, 1992). While offenders must apply and be approved for both day and full parole, offenders do not need to apply for statutory release, and it is automatically granted as long as the offender is not deemed a dangerous offender by a judge in a

secondary hearing held after their sentencing. Whether an offender is released on temporary absence, day parole, full parole, or statutory release, they are monitored by community parole officers and must adhere to the conditions of their release. If an offender is found violating the conditions of their release, they may be returned to CSC institutions (CCRA, 1992). An offender is only released from CSC supervision after they complete the entirety of their sentence (warrant expiry), whether in the community or an institution (CCRA, 1992).

Overall, it is important to understand that just because one is eligible for parole does not mean that the person applying automatically receives it. There are several factors considered during parole decision making including community and family support, program completion, and an established release plan (Samra-Grewal & Roesch, 2000; Silverstein, 2005). The most important factor in parole decision-making is whether the offender's risk is manageable within the community (Serin et al., 2000). This factor is based on the understanding that an offender in the community will always pose a risk, whether to themselves or others, however, the PBC is obligated to make the least restrictive determinations for the offender so long as they are consistent with public safety (CCRA, 1992). This means that if the risk to society is manageable, the offender should be permitted to reintegrate into society.

Conditions of Conditional Release

When an offender is granted conditional release, there are restrictions imposed upon them to manage their risk and for supervision (CCRA, 1992). Some conditions are imposed upon all Canadian federal offenders regardless of index offence or individual differences, and these include reporting to their parole officer, obeying the law and keeping the peace, not owning or possessing a weapon, and reporting any changes in their family, domestic, or financial situation to their parole officer (Government of Canada, 2018). Outside of the above standard conditions,

the PBC can impose any additional conditions they believe are reasonable and necessary to manage the risks of an individual offender. These additional conditions are often more personalized and are related to the offender's offence cycle or other perceived vulnerabilities to reoffend (Government of Canada, 2018). Victims are also allowed a degree of input when formulating additional conditions. Some examples of additional conditions include abstinence from alcohol and no contact with the victim.

An Overview of the Benefits of Conditional Release

Conditional release benefits CSC because it limits the number of offenders incarcerated in correctional institutions and therefore decreases the overall cost of running the institution. In other words, it is more cost-effective for the government to financially support appropriate conditional release than to keep offenders incarcerated until the end of their sentence (Zinger, 2012).

Conditional release also serves to benefit the offender, as it can aid in the facilitation of their rehabilitation. Research has demonstrated that early conditional release has the potential to decrease an offender's likelihood of re-offending, in part due to the gradual and supportive nature of their integration back into the community (Zinger, 2012). Furthermore, offenders released on day parole (91%) are more likely to successfully complete their supervision period than offenders on full parole (87%), and both forms of parole were more likely to complete their supervision than offenders on statutory release (65%) (PSC, 2019). Some reasons for this have already been mentioned, such as the additional support provided to offenders on parole compared to offenders who are released from an institution after their warrant expires.

Finally, conditional release benefits the community because it encourages offender reintegration in a gradual, supervised way, which is preferable to an offender being released on their warrant expiry without CSC support, and because it is associated with less of a likelihood of reoffending (PBC, 2011). Decreased reoffending is in the public's interest as it contributes to a safer community.

Factors Relevant to Parole Decision-Making

Given that parole is the better method of reintegrating an offender back into the public, several studies have been conducted in an attempt to understand what factors are considered relevant and the most important to parole decision-makers when granting or denying parole. Some factors are often identified as influencing parole decision-making such as index offence characteristics, institutional behaviour, and criminal history. Other factors, such as offender race, are less consistent in their significance to parole decision-making. The factors that have been identified as important in parole decision-making are briefly reviewed below before the focus turns to the factors of greatest relevance to the thesis: offender race and decision-makers' political orientation.

Index offence characteristics. Some of the most influential factors in parole decision-making are the characteristics of the index offence. The index offence is the offence for which the offender is currently serving their sentence. Some important index offence characteristics identified are offence severity, offence type, and sentence length. Offence severity in Canada, as calculated by the federal government, is determined by weighing a case based on the incarceration rate and the mean length of the prison sentence for that offence type (Statistics Canada, 2009). Different offence severity scales can also be used for research and analysis, such as the Cornell (1996) coding for violent incidents. Numerous studies have indicated that higher

offence severity is associated with a decreased likelihood of obtaining parole, and a lesser offence severity is associated with an increased likelihood of obtaining parole (Lindsey & Miller, 2011; Morgan & Smith, 2008). Some reasons for this include the perceived increased risk of reoffending and the attribution of the severity of the offence to the intrinsic qualities of the offender (Lindsey & Miller, 2011).

Offence type is classified in the Canadian *Criminal Code* (1985); however, offence type categories are generally broadened for research purposes. Some of the common categorizations used include sexual offence, violent offence, domestic violence offence, drug offence, and property offence. Some offence types have been frequently associated with a decreased likelihood of achieving parole, such as violent offences (Caplan, 2005; Gobeil & Serin, 2009) and sexual offences (Houser et al., 2019; Vîlcică, 2015). Violent offences have also been associated with an increased likelihood of intermediate sanction (sentence served in the community under more restrictions than parole) revocation (Henry, 2021). Some offence types have also been associated with an increased likelihood of parole, including drug offences (Tewksbury & Connor, 2012) and property offences (Vîlcică, 2015).

Sentence length has also been associated with parole decision-making (Caplan, 2005; Morgan & Smith, 2005a) for two identified reasons. The first reason is some parole decision-makers compare sentence length to time served to determine the ratio of the sentence served in an institution (Morgan & Smith, 2005a). The second reason is that some parole decision-makers will grant or deny parole to adjust incarceration length to what they consider appropriate (Turpin-Petrosino, 1999). On the first point, it is common for parole decision makers to evaluate the proportion of the sentence spent incarcerated, with total time served being identified as a significant factor in parole decision making (Lindsey & Miller, 2011; Morgan & Smith, 2005b,

2008). With this approach, offenders who have served more of their sentence incarcerated are more likely to receive parole (Lindsey & Miller, 2011). Addressing the second point, several studies have found that some parole decision-makers will assign parole according to how long the decision maker thinks the offender should be incarcerated for their index offence, regardless of the judge's decision. For instance, Turpin-Petrosino (1999) found that if a decision maker felt the sentence length for an offender was too short, they were less likely to approve parole. Additionally, if the decision maker felt the sentence length was too long, they were more likely to approve parole. This pattern was also identified by Ruhland (2020) while conducting a qualitative study on parole decision-making factors.

Institutional behaviour. The way an offender behaves while incarcerated can assist parole decision-makers in determining whether the offender has progressed in their rehabilitation and if they can be managed in the community. Numerous studies have revealed that institutional behaviour is a strong factor in determining parole outcomes. Studies that review overall offender misconduct while incarcerated find that the fewer instances of misconduct an offender has, the more likely they are to receive parole (Heubner & Bynum, 2008; Tewksbury & Connor, 2012; Vîlcică, 2015). One study by Caplan (2005) found that as long as an offender does not engage in misconduct, they are more likely to receive parole. He went on to explain that even if an offender has a 'neutral' institutional record, meaning that the offender did not have any notable instance of misconduct or outstanding positive behaviour, the increase in parole achievement likelihood is higher than offenders who engaged in misconduct (Caplan, 2005).

In addition to whether misconduct occurs, the severity and nature of the misconduct are considered. Similar to the findings above, offenders who engage in violent or severe instances of misconduct are less likely to be granted parole (Houser et al., 2019; Lindsey & Miller, 2011;

Mooney & Daffern, 2014). Another study also found that time since the last disciplinary action and parole can have a significant effect, with more time having passed since the misconduct increasing the likelihood of achieving parole (Morgan & Smith, 2005b).

Another institutional behaviour is an offender's participation in their assigned programming. Studies have shown that parole decision-makers strongly consider an offender's participation in their assigned programming as well as any additional programming the offender sought out. Low program attendance decreases an offender's likelihood of parole (Lindsey & Miller, 2011), whereas high attendance increases the likelihood of parole (Bulgar, 2016). In addition to attendance, the quality of offender participation is considered. A study by Tewksbury and Connor (2012) found that offenders who were more active in their programming and had a positive record of participation were more likely to be granted parole. That same study also found that offenders who participated in additional programming that was not mandated were more likely to be granted parole (Tewksbury & Connor, 2012). Similar to the findings on low attendance rates, offenders who are considered non-compliant with their programming (e.g., refusal to participate) were less likely to be granted parole (Houser et al., 2019; Vîlcică, 2015).

Risk to reoffend. The offender's perceived risk to reoffend is arguably one of the most important factors in determining parole decisions (CCRA, 1992). Offender risk is assessed by professionals, such as clinical psychologists, outside of the PBC who use risk assessment measures to quantify an offender's risk to reoffend (PBC, 2020). The professional then present their findings to the PBC member overseeing the case, and the PBC member considers the risk assessment when making their parole decision (PBC, 2020). While there are several risk assessment tools available, Ruhland (2020) found that the majority of parole decision-makers from his American sample reported not using them. The primary reason reported was because

the parole decision-makers felt they could better gauge an offender's risk and relied on 'gut instinct' (Ruhland, 2020). This finding is problematic as it exposes the decision-making process to inconsistency and individual bias on behalf of the decision-makers. Studies comparing the use of clinical judgement and structured tools have found that while structured tools have higher reliability and validity, the recommended approach to risk assessment is a combination of both clinical judgement and structured tools (Doyle & Dolan, 2002; Serin et al., 2000)

Other studies have found that an offender's level of risk is significant to the decision to grant or deny parole (Samra-Grewal & Roesch, 2000). Findings indicate that offenders with a higher risk level are less likely to be granted parole (Houser et al., 2019; Mooney & Daffern, 2014; Vîlcică, 2015). These findings are not surprising, as parole decision-makers often cite community safety and community management as crucial contributing factors to their decisions (Bulgar, 2016; Ruhland, 2020).

Correctional staff input. Correctional staff can range from individual case managers to the Warden of the institution. These staff members have the opportunity to interact with offenders while they are incarcerated and can observe their rehabilitation progress, in addition to testifying to their achievements and misconduct. Studies have shown that staff input from any level is a significant factor in parole decision-making, whether the staff is advocating for or against the granting of parole (Houser et al., 2019; Morgan & Smith, 2005a; Morgan & Smith, 2005b; Morgan & Smith, 2008). A study by Mooney and Daffern (2014) supports this, finding that an offender is more likely to be granted parole if their correctional manager submits a recommendation for parole approval. In addition, this study found that if an offender on parole has a hearing to determine whether their parole should be cancelled, positive input from staff decreases the likelihood that the offender's parole will be revoked (Mooney & Daffern, 2014).

Criminal history. While reviewing an offender for parole, it is also important to consider their criminal history, including previous sentences and prior parole compliance. An offender's prior convictions are significantly related to their parole outcome, with offenders with more prior convictions and serious prior convictions less likely to receive parole (Heubner & Bynum, 2008; Morgan & Smith, 2005a). Additionally, more prior convictions and serious prior convictions appear to be related to rates of parole cancellation, with offenders with more prior convictions and more serious prior convictions more likely to have their parole cancelled after a parole violation (Mooney & Dafferns, 2014).

Conditional release history can also be a relevant factor to consider when granting or denying parole (Bulgar, 2016; Morgan & Smith, 2005b). A study by Bulgar (2016) found that offenders who demonstrated prior work absence compliance during a previous sentence were more likely to be granted parole. Similarly, a large number of previous parole releases during previously served sentences is associated with a decreased likelihood of achieving parole (Morgan & Smith, 2005a).

Offender race. The race of the offender is another important factor to consider when investigating factors relevant to parole. Given the overrepresentation of racial minorities in correctional institutions (Douyon, 2016), it is important to consider whether offender race may influence parole decisions. If race is found to be a contributing factor to parole decision-making, it may indicate the presence of racial biases within the correctional and parole systems.

When looking at parole hearing wait times in the United States, it was found that Black offenders, followed by Hispanic offenders, spent more time waiting for a parole hearing than White offenders (Heubner & Bynum, 2008). Some researchers have found that which factors are considered important can differ depending on the offender's race, meaning that one factor can be

considered important for a White offender, but not important for a Black offender (Morgan & Smith, 2008; Samra-Grewal & Roesch, 2000; Silverstein, 2005). For instance, according to Morgan and Smith (2008), time since the last disciplinary action was only considered a significant factor for Black offenders in the sample, not White offenders.

The most overrepresented racial group in the Canadian correctional system remains Indigenous peoples, despite measures being taken to address the disproportionate number of Indigenous peoples involved in the justice system (see Appendix A; Officer of the Correctional Investigator, 2020). In addition to being overrepresented in the correctional system, Indigenous offenders are also more likely to receive longer sentences, be placed in higher-level security facilities, and are less likely to be granted conditional release (Gobeil & Serin, 2009; Mann, 2009). Indigenous peoples are less likely to be granted conditional release even when the index offence of the Indigenous offender is the same as a white offender (Gobeil & Serin, 2009).

Racial disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples can be observed throughout the justice system, from when they are first charged to when they are released. To compare sentencing decisions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders in Canada, Welsh and Ogloff (2008) performed a content analysis on judicial cases of both offender groups and coded the cases for current and past criminal history, reasons for sentencing, sentencing objectives, and sentencing information (e.g., disposition type, sentence length). Overall, the authors found no difference in sentencing decisions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders when the factor of race was isolated, however, they did find that Indigenous offenders were more likely to be convicted of serious offences and have an earlier and lengthier criminal record, all factors that influence sentencing decisions. While there was not a direct effect of race, the fact that Indigenous offenders are significantly more likely to commit more serious offences

and begin committing offences at an earlier age may inherently hold Indigenous offenders at a disadvantage during sentencing and parole hearings, as they tend to have a higher static (unchangeable) risk level due to the severity of their criminal history. When the judges explained their rulings, they often cited general deterrence as an important sentencing objective, resulting in longer sentences for offenders with criminal records. The authors explain that this approach to sentencing, in addition to ignoring Gladue factors (see Appendix A), can disproportionality affect Indigenous offenders, as they are statistically more likely to engage in criminal offending earlier and commit more serious crimes, thereby giving them a lengthier and more serious criminal record (Welsh & Ogloff, 2008). Furthermore, as was discussed above, longer sentences are associated with a decreased likelihood of parole, therefore the longer sentences assigned to Indigenous offenders may make it less likely for them to be granted parole.

While Welsh and Ogloff (2008) were unable to evaluate offender race in isolation, a study by Gobeil and Serin (2009) examining preliminary evidence and techniques used by parole board members for decision-making looked at racial differences in the decision to grant or deny day parole to offenders. The authors created six vignettes in which risk assessment, correctional staff recommendations and additional case information (e.g., risk assessment, release plan, and criminal history) remained consistent across the vignettes. The different vignettes portrayed the following offenders: female offender, male Indigenous offender, male sexual offender, male violent offender, male domestic violence offender, and male nonviolent offender. The survey also recorded what types of supplemental information were accessed by the participants and how often it was accessed by each participant, which was done to determine which information the participants considered when making their decisions. The results indicated that even when controlling for risk, Indigenous offenders were denied parole in higher proportions than any

other group except for male domestic violence offenders. Additionally, it was found that offender risk assessment information was not often considered by the participants, resulting in higher levels of granting parole for offenders that are historically considered low risk (e.g., female offenders), compared to the lower levels of granting parole for offenders that are historically considered high risk (e.g. Indigenous offenders). These results indicate that the participants may have relied on past anecdotal experience or stereotypes to inform their decisions, as opposed to factors specific to the offender they are assessing (Gobeil & Serin, 2009). Using stereotypes and mental shortcuts to make parole decisions increases the risk of bias and can contribute to inconsistencies across PBC members' parole decisions. To assure consistency and fairness in parole decision-making across offenders, PBC members need to be aware of potential biases they hold, or stereotypes they ascribe to.

One example of stereotyping during parole decision-making as identified by Silverstein (2005) includes parole board members prioritizing different factors for different racial groups when granting parole. Through the revision of parole hearings in British Columbia, Silverstein was able to identify themes important in granting parole that differed according to offender race. Silverstein (2005) found that for Indigenous offenders, community responsibility and engagement were one of the most important factors in granting parole, with offenders active in their Indigenous culture being granted release more often. Silverstein explained that parole members would explicitly ask the offender about their cultural learning and that he believed the members could have been considering the offender participating in their culture as managing a “troublesome population” (Silverstein, 2005). When considering the parole hearings for Hispanic and Asian offenders, Silverstein identified the themes of individual responsibility and shame that the PBC members believed were culturally relevant. Silverstein explained that Hispanic and

Asian offenders who expressed remorse for dishonouring their families and community were granted release more often than those who did not. The above examples indicate that there is the potential for racial and cultural biases when identifying factors relevant to parole decision-making.

Other potential factors. In addition to those explained above, some other factors have been identified as potentially significant for parole decision-making. These include offender education (Morgan & Smith, 2005a), security classification (Houser et al., 2019), family support and visitation while incarcerated (Mooney & Daffern, 2014; Vîlcică, 2015), quality of release plan (Bulgar, 2016; Mooney & Daffern, 2014; Tewksbury & Connor, 2012), and victim input (Caplan, 2005; Morgan & Smith, 2005b). A higher likelihood of being granted parole is associated with the offender having higher levels of education, lower security classification, strong family support, a good quality release plan, and the offender's victim having less input. A lower likelihood of being granted parole is associated with the offender having lower levels of education, higher security classification, poor family support, poor quality release plan, and more victim input.

Present Study

There is currently a disproportionate number of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system in Canada, highlighting the realities of systemic racism in the country. While the number of criminal offences and incarceration has been steadily decreasing for many years, the number of incarcerated Indigenous offenders continues to climb in male, female, and youth facilities, with Indigenous peoples accounting for over 30% of the federal offender population and only 5% of the Canadian population (PSC, 2020). This indicates that while the Canadian government and CSC have been taking steps to address this overrepresentation, there continue to be flaws in the

system. As previously mentioned, one contributor to the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in correctional institutions continues to be the more limited approval for conditional release compared to non-Indigenous offenders (Officer of the Correctional Investigator, 2020; Gobeil & Serin, 2009). For this reason, it is important to investigate any potential racial biases in the parole process.

The present study investigates the possible effects of offender race on parole decision-making using a community sample². Research of this nature will serve to identify potential conscious or unconscious biases of risk based on offender race, thereby highlighting race as a factor that PBC decision-makers should be aware of. Additionally, participants' political orientation and beliefs will be measured to investigate whether parole decisions may be tied to politics. The first hypothesis for this study is that Indigenous offenders will be less likely to be granted parole than White offenders even when other factors are held consistent, such as index offence, institutional behaviour, and criminal record. Furthermore, it is expected that Indigenous resentment will be a mediating variable and have a significant indirect effect on parole decision through Indigenous resentment. The second hypothesis for this study is that participants with more conservative political views will be less likely to grant parole compared to participants with less conservative political views. An exploratory analysis will also be conducted to investigate if there is an interaction between offender race and participant political views. If there is a

² Previous studies on the differences between mock parole board members and actual parole board members suggest that the two groups are not directly comparable. Though not completely comparable, mock parole board members are often used in research due to the limited experimental designs that can be applied to data collection on actual parole board members and their actual case records. One of the limitations to the present study will be that the participants and their data cannot necessarily be used to project assumptions on the personal biases of actual parole board members. A community sample is being used as a proxy as it is less resource intensive and more time efficient. This limitation will be discussed in more depth in the discussion (Lindsey & Miller, 2011).

relationship between offender race and political views, it is expected that conservative participants will be less likely to grant parole to the Indigenous offender compared to the White offender. This is theorized due to the history of conservative governments' support for penal measures that disproportionately negatively affect racial minorities (Bennett & Walker, 2018).

Method

Sample

A total of 639 anonymous participant responses were received and 235 responses were excluded due to suspected duplicate responses, rendering the total sample used in the dataset 394. Suspected duplicate responses were assessed by identifying repeated IP addresses, and repeated identical written-word answers. Repeat responses were only identified from participants recruited from the Reddit platform. Participants were recruited using different platforms including MTurk (35.03%, $N = 138$), SONA (33.76%, $N = 133$), and Reddit (31.22%, $N = 123$) (Table 1; Appendix B).

To be eligible for this study, the participants had to satisfy the same requirements as individuals applying to the PBC. The requirements were that the participant had to be either a Canadian citizen or a Permanent Resident of Canada, and had to be over the age of 18. To reach as many Canadians as possible, participants were recruited online using three platforms: SONA, MTurk, and Reddit. SONA is a platform used by universities where a researcher can post their study and students (predominantly psychology students) can participate in the posted studies for course bonus points. Participants recruited on this platform were majority white females in their early twenties (Table 1).

MTurk is a platform operated by Amazon where participants are considered employees of the platform and are presented with surveys they meet the eligibility criteria to complete for monetary compensation. MTurk participants must be over the age of 18 and must complete a demographic questionnaire to determine what surveys they qualify for. Additionally, participants receive MTurk scores according to the quality of their data, where participants with lower quality scores are more limited in what surveys they can complete. This provides an incentive for the participants to fully complete the surveys and produce quality data. This sample was skewed towards white and male participants in their mid-thirties (Table 1).

The third platform used was Reddit, an open social media site composed of smaller internet communities centred around a common theme. One such theme includes online survey research. This study was advertised and posted on two separate Reddit groups that focused on participating in online survey research. The Reddit communities are not able to filter participants for specific eligibility criteria, so it is more difficult to ensure that the survey is being completed by the population it is created to measure. The eligibility criteria were explicitly stated in the study description and informed consent form, however, there were no additional checks to verify the participants were truthful in their responses. Additionally, to make the study available a reusable link had to be provided, which was unable to prevent participants from creating repeated submissions. Approximately 77.5% ($N = 93$) of Reddit participants did not provide their demographic information, so the sample composition is unknown (Table 1).

Comparison of variance analyses were conducted comparing the three recruitment groups and found significant differences regarding gender, education, and age (Table 1). Despite the significant differences between groups, participants from all platforms were grouped together and included in the final analyses. This was done due to the limited number of participants and

the need to increase statistical power. If the groups had been kept separate, statistical power would have been further reduced and increasing the chances of missing an effect. The implication of merging participants across recruitment platforms is that there may be group differences that are not fully explored in the following analyses.

Compensation varied depending on the recruitment platform. Participants from MTurk received compensation of \$0.75 (USD) for participating in the study, with the potential to receive an additional \$0.50 for successfully completing the manipulation check and another \$0.50 for completing the survey, with the total potential compensation being \$1.75. Participants from SONA received 0.25 bonus points for eligible psychology courses, and participants from Reddit received a draw entry to win one of two \$50.00 Amazon Gift Cards.

Participant demographic information was collected; however, a significant portion of the sample did not provide any demographic information (29.3%, $N = 119$), possibly due to fatigue as the demographic questionnaire was at the end of the survey. Of the demographic data collected, ages ranged from 18 to 68 ($M = 30.0$, $SD = 11.0$), with 55.4% identifying as female ($N = 159$), 43.9% identifying as male ($N = 126$), and 0.7% identifying as Non-Binary/ Third Gender ($N = 2$). The majority of the sample reported their ethnicity as White (75.5%, $N = 215$), followed by Asian/ Asian Canadian (11.8%, $N = 34$), and Black/ Black-Canadian (4.2%, $N = 12$). For highest level of education completed, most participants reported completing some college or university degree (34.8%, $N = 100$), followed by undergraduate degree (24.4%, $N = 70$), and college or specialized diploma (16.4%, $N = 47$; Table 1).

Table 1*Participant Demographics*

	Reddit % (<i>n</i>)	SONA % (<i>n</i>)	MTurk % (<i>n</i>)	Total % (<i>n</i>)	χ^2	Cramer's V
Total sample proportion	30.8% (120)	31.8% (124)	37.4% (146)	100% (390)		
Gender					47.06***	.29***
Male	15.9% (20)	21.4% (27)	62.7% (79)	43.9% (126)		
Female	4.4% (7)	59.7% (95)	35.8% (57)	55.4% (159)		
Non-Binary/ Third Gender	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.7% (2)		
Ethnicity					26.59	.22
White	10.6% (23)	44.2% (96)	45.1% (98)	74.4% (217)		
Asian	2.9% (1)	20.6% (7)	76.5% (26)	11.8% (34)		
Black	8.3% (1)	58.3% (7)	33.3% (4)	4.2% (12)		
Hispanic/Latinx	0.0% (0)	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.3% (1)		
Arab	0.0% (0)	57.1% (4)	42.9% (3)	2.4% (7)		
Indigenous	25.0% (1)	75.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.4% (4)		
Mixed	0.0% (0)	75.0% (3)	25.0% (1)	1.4% (4)		

Other	16.7% (1)	50.0% (3)	33.3% (2)	2.1% (6)		
Prefer not to answer	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)	0.7% (2)		
Highest Education					150.15***	.51***
High school	0.0% (0)	81.6% (31)	18.4% (7)	13.2% (38)		
Some college or university	4.0% (4)	77.0% (77)	19.0% (19)	34.8% (100)		
Undergraduate degree	14.9% (10)	12.9% (9)	72.9% (51)	24.4% (70)		
College or specialized diploma	12.8% (6)	12.8% (6)	74.5% (35)	16.4% (47)		
Some post-baccalaureate	57.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (3)	2.4% (7)		
Graduate degree	12.0% (3)	4.0% (1)	84.0% (21)	8.7% (25)		
	Reddit <i>M (SD)</i>	SONA <i>M (SD)</i>	MTurk <i>M (SD)</i>	Total <i>M (SD)</i>		
Age	30.6 (7.4)	22.4 (5.4)	36.8 (10.9)	30.0 (11.0)		

Note. $N = 390$, with $N = 103$ missing. Percentages are reflective of the proportion reported, not the total sample.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Procedure and Measures

This study employed a between-groups design using the predictive factor of offender race (White, Indigenous) described in a vignette on the participants' parole decision. Participants read one of the two randomly assigned vignette conditions (Appendix C & Appendix D). Each vignette contained the same information regarding index offence, institutional behaviour, and offender rehabilitation, and differed only on offender race. Participants were asked whether they would choose to deny parole, grant parole with additional conditions (Appendix F), or grant parole with standard conditions (Appendix E). If participants chose to grant parole with additional conditions, they were asked to provide the reasoning behind why each additional condition was imposed. Additionally, participants were asked to indicate confidence in their decision.

Additional conditions. Participants that chose to grant parole with additional conditions were directed to a separate survey page that listed 27 additional conditions, and a 28th option to create an additional condition not on the provided list (Appendix F). The list of conditions was created by the author by reviewing conditions of community or conditional sentences (Government of Canada, 2018; Maxwell, 2017) in addition to creating purposefully relevant conditions (e.g., limited number of bank accounts) or irrelevant (e.g., mandatory supervised child visitation) to the index offence. A request for a list of parole conditions was sent to the PBC, however, a list was not provided. Participants were also asked to explain why they chose each additional condition.

Political orientation. Participant political orientation was measured with the 12-Item Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS; Everett, 2013) (Appendix G). The SECS (Everett, 2013) was developed through an exploratory study using an American sample that

asked participants to identify themes associated with conservative political values, and then identify which themes were most commonly identified. A 12-item scale was developed and administered to participants asking them to rate how positively or negatively they felt about each identified issue on a nominal scale of 0-100, increasing by 10s (10, 20, 30, etc.) with 0 representing a negative feeling and 100 representing a positive feeling. Each item was presented in an intentionally unspecific way, such as “Abortion.”, “Welfare benefits”, and “Limited government” (Everett, 2013). The SECS is composed of two subscales: the Social Conservatism Sub-Scale (SCSS) which measured attitudes toward social conservatism (e.g., traditional family), and the Economic Conservatism Sub-Scale (ECSS), which measured attitudes toward economic conservatism (e.g., reduced taxes). For both the full scale and the sub-scales, higher scores indicated more conservatism, whereas lower scores indicated less conservatism.

Reliability analyses reported in its introductory publication indicated internal consistency with a Cronbach’s alpha of .88 for the 12-item scale, an alpha of .70 for the subscale for economic conservatism, and an alpha of .87 for the subscale of social conservatism. The full 12-item scale will be used in the current study. A correlation analysis between the SECS and other constructs of social and economic conservatism demonstrated a high level of construct validity (Everett, 2013).

A Cronbach’s alpha analysis was conducted for this study to assess internal consistency. Moderate internal consistency was found for the full SECS ($\alpha = .78$) and the SCSS ($\alpha = .73$); however, low internal consistency was found for the ECSS ($\alpha = .57$). Despite the low internal consistency of the ECSS, it was still included due to the adequate consistency for the SECS, though the limitation should be acknowledged. Due to noted political differences between Canadian and American populations, it is important to indicate that the SECS is a tool created

using American data and has not been validated with a specific Canadian sample. The scale was used regardless of this limitation, however, due to the limited availability of multifaceted measures of political orientation validated with a Canadian sample.

Attitudes towards Indigenous peoples. To measure the presence of negative attitudes towards Indigenous peoples, the Indigenous Resentment Scale (IRS; Beauvais, 2021) (Appendix H) was used. The IRS was created to measure resentment attitudes towards Indigenous peoples in Canada by having participants indicate how they felt about a particular statement on a 5-point Likert-type ordinal scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree; Beauvais, 2021). A high scale score indicated high levels of Indigenous resentment. Some examples of the statements the participants were presented are “Aboriginals are getting too demanding in their push for land rights.”, “The government does not show enough respect towards Aboriginals.”, and “More must be done to protect Aboriginal languages.” (Beauvais, 2021).

Original reliability analyses indicated high internal consistency with a Cronbach’s alpha of .90 for the full scale. A correlation analysis was conducted between the IRS, and measures for a desire for social distance from Indigenous peoples and opposition to redistributive policies to help Indigenous peoples. The correlation analysis demonstrated a high level of construct validity (Beauvais, 2021). As this scale is new, there are currently no other published works assessing the tool’s validity. Reliability analyses for this study indicated high internal consistency ($\alpha = .85$).

Socially desirable responding. As this study looked at racial attitudes as a predictive factor of parole decision-making, a measure of participant desirable responding was beneficial to identify participants who respond based on societal expectations. Desirable responding was measured by the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Appendix I). This scale

measured impression management and self-deceptive enhancement using a 7-point nominal scale, rating participant agreement of a statement, with 1 being not true, 4 being somewhat true, and 7 being very true (Paulhus, 1988). The complete BIDR scale is composed of two subscales, one that measured self-deceptive enhancement (SDE) and another that measured impression management (IM). The items that are indicated as “6” or “7” received one point in either a positive or negative direction as indicated on the score sheet with a total possible score between 0 and 20. The items are totalled, with high scores indicating that a participant provided exaggeratedly desirable responses. Some statements include “My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right”, “I have not always been honest with myself”, and “I am fully in control of my own fate” (Paulhus, 1988).

Reliability analyses indicate acceptable internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s alpha of .83 for the complete 40-item scale, and alpha ranges from .68 to .80 for the self-deceptive enhancement and .75 to .86 for the impression management subscales. A correlational analysis to assess construct validity showed that all items in the self-deceptive enhancement subscale had a correlation of .71 and the impression management subscale correlated .80 with previously validated scales measuring the same attitudes (Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, Marlowe & Crowne, 1960; Jacobson-Kellog Self-Description Inventory, Jacobson et al., 1977). Reliability analyses for this study indicated acceptable internal consistency, with the full BIDR scale ($\alpha = .83$) and the IM subscale ($\alpha = .78$) having high internal consistency; however, the SDE subscale only had moderate internal consistency ($\alpha = .71$).

Analyses were conducted to identify outlier responses on the BIDR scale and participants associated with the outliers had their data excluded from the dataset ($N = 4$), rendering the total number of participants 390.

Demographics. Participant demographic information, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and the highest level of education was also collected (Appendix J). Additionally, attention and manipulation checks were included to ensure the participant had paid attention to the vignette and were properly reading and understanding the questions.

Data Analysis

To address the first hypothesis, an ordinal logistic regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between offender race and parole decision. Further binary logistic regressions were used to investigate the relationship between offender race and dichotomous parole decisions. A second analysis was then conducted using SPSS PROCESS (Hayes, 2022) where participant IRS scores were entered into the model as a mediating variable to evaluate if there was an indirect effect of Indigenous resentment on parole decision. This was done to help identify how much of the effect between offender race and parole decision can be accounted for by attitudes toward Indigenous peoples.

To address the second hypothesis, a binary logistic regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between political orientation and parole decisions. Further binary logistic regressions were conducted to analyze the relationship between participant conservatism and dichotomous parole decisions. An exploratory analysis was conducted, considering the effect of political orientation and offender race on parole decision. Using SPSS PROCESS (Hayes, 2022), a mediation analysis was conducted using participant SECS scores to evaluate whether there was an indirect effect of participant conservatism on their parole decision.

Using the Cohen power table, an a priori power analysis suggested a minimum sample size of 800 participants to achieve sufficient statistical power (.80) to detect a small effect size.

Despite that it was unlikely to recruit a sufficient number of participants, the proposed analyses did not change because the research questions were about the inclusion of a third variable through which the model could express itself, and thus, the most appropriate statistical analyses to test the questions was a mediation regression. As anticipated, the actual sample size was significantly less than the suggested for logistical regression and mediation analyses and achieved a power of approximately .50. Due to low statistical power, it is likely there are effects between or within measures not being captured and sufficiently analyzed, and thus, the results should be interpreted with caution.

Results

Parole Decision

Several analyses were conducted on parole outcome, including decision descriptives, correlations, and regression models. The majority of participants chose to grant the offender parole (74.9%, $N = 292$), with 169 choosing to grant parole with standard conditions (43.3%), 123 choosing to grant parole with additional conditions (31.5%), and 98 choosing to deny parole (25.1%).

Manipulation Checks

When reviewing the manipulation checks, it was found that approximately 43.6% ($N = 170$) of the total sample either got the ethnicity incorrect (17.7%, $N = 69$) or did not provide an answer (25.9%, $N = 101$). Analyses were conducted on the filtered sample of participants who successfully completed the manipulation check (Appendix K) to see whether the results would be significantly different from the total sample. Few differences were found between the filtered sample and the full sample. These differences will be highlighted at the end of each section. The

full sample was used for the main analyses because there would be too few participants to achieve adequate statistical power (power for filtered sample .30).

Hypothesis 1.1

An ordinal logistic regression was used to analyze the association between offender race and overall parole decision. The association was not statistically significant, $b = -.081$, 95% CI [-.450, .287], $p = .660$, indicating that the odds of granting parole did not differ significantly between offender race conditions ($R^2 = .000$, $p = .665$; Table 2). Binary logistic regression analyses were used to evaluate the association between offender race and the dichotomous decision to grant or deny parole, and to grant parole with standard conditions or with additional conditions. The association between race and the decision to grant or deny parole was not statistically significant, $b = -.013$, 95% CI [-.474, .437], $p = .950$ ($R^2 = .000$, $p = .955$; Table 3), as was the association between race and the decision to grant parole with standard or with additional conditions, $b = .191$, 95% CI [-.256, .626], $p = .446$ ($R^2 = .002$, $p = .421$; Table 3). These results indicate that the odds of choosing one parole option over the other did not differ significantly between offender race conditions.

Regarding the filtered sample, results were similar, with the association between offender race and parole decision failing to reach statistical significance for overall parole decision ($b = -.001$, 95% CI [-.470, .537], $p = .997$), the decision to grant or deny parole ($b = -.157$, 95% CI [-.900, .515], $p = .657$), and the decision to grant parole with standard or additional conditions ($b = .146$, 95% CI [-.447, .774], $p = .637$) (Appendix K).

Table 2*Offender Race and Parole Decision- Overall*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Condition					
Offender race	-.081 [-.427, .308]	.638	.92	1.333	.666

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $N = 390$.

$R^2 = .000$ (Cox-Snell), .001 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .19$, $p = .665$.

^aParameter is redundant

Table 3*Offender Race and Parole Decision- Dichotomous*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Grant vs. Deny ^a					
Offender Race	-.013 [-.474, .437]	.624	.99	1.560	.950
Grant with standard conditions vs. additional conditions ^b					
Offender Race	.191 [-.256, .626]	.760	1.21	1.929	.446

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a $R^2 = .000$ (Cox-Snell), .000 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .00$, $p = .955$. $N = 390$.

^bR² = .002 (Cox-Snell), .003 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .65, p = .421. N = 292.$

Hypothesis 1.2

To assess whether IRS score would have an indirect effect within the offender race–parole decision model, a mediation regression analysis was performed. The indirect effect of offender race on parole decision through IRS score was not statistically significant when assessing overall parole decision ($b = .000, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [-.008, .010]$), decision to grant or deny parole ($b = .007, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [-.074, .094]$), and decision to grant parole with standard or additional conditions ($b = -.007, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [-.122, .108]$).

Hypothesis 2.1

An ordinal regression analysis was used to measure the association between SECS score and overall parole decision. When looking at overall parole decision, the association was not statistically significant, $b = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.001, .001], p = .595$, indicating that overall parole decision was not significantly associated with SECS score ($R^2 = .001, p = .600$; Table 4).

A binary logistic regression was conducted to analyze whether there was an association between SECS score and the dichotomous parole decisions (grant versus deny parole; grant parole with standard conditions versus with additional conditions). The binary logistic regression found that there were significant associations between participant SECS score and parole decision. For the decision to grant or deny parole, SECS scores were a significant predictor, $b = -.001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.003, .000], p = .036$, and accounted for approximately 1.3% of model variance ($R^2 = .013, p = .026$). This result indicates that regardless of offender race, increased scores of conservatism were associated with denying parole rather than granting parole (Table 5). For the

decision to grant parole with either standard conditions or additional conditions, SECS scores were a significant predictor, $b = .001$, 95% CI [.000, .003], $p = .030$, and accounted for approximately 1.7% of model variance ($R^2 = .017$, $p = .022$). This result indicates that increased scores of conservatism were associated with granting parole with standard conditions rather than additional conditions, regardless of offender race (Table 5).

For the filtered sample, results differed and there were no statistically significant associations between SECS scores and overall parole decision ($b = .000$, 95% CI [-.002, .001], $p = .681$), the decision to grant or deny parole ($b = -.001$, 95% CI [-.004, .001], $p = .189$), and the decision to grant or deny parole with standard or additional conditions ($b = .001$, 95% CI [-.001, .003], $p = .384$; Appendix K).

Table 4

Social Economic Conservatism and Parole Decision- Overall

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Conservatism					
SECS score	.000 [-.001, .001]	.999	1.00	1.001	.595

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $N = 383$.

$R^2 = .001$ (Cox-Snell), .001 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .28$, $p = .600$.

^aParameter is redundant

Table 5*Social Economic Conservatism and Parole Decision- Dichotomous*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Grant vs. Deny ^a					
SECS score	-.001 [-.003, .000]	.997	1.00	1.000	.029*
Grant with standard conditions vs. additional conditions ^b					
SECS score	.001 [.000, .003]	1.000	1.00	1.003	.031*

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a $R^2 = .013$ (Cox-Snell), .019 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = 4.94$, $p = .026$. $N = 383$.

^b $R^2 = .017$ (Cox-Snell), .022 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = 4.76$, $p = .029$. $N = 286$.

Hypothesis 2.2

To assess whether SECS score would have an indirect effect on the offender race – parole decision model, a mediation regression analysis was performed. The indirect effect of offender race on parole decision through SECS score was not statistically significant when assessing overall parole decision ($b = -.001$, 95% BCa CI [-.009, .011]), decision to grant or deny parole ($b = -.006$, 95% BCa CI [-.074, .058]), and decision to grant parole with standard or additional conditions ($b = .001$, 95% BCa CI [-.061, .085]).

In addition to having set hypotheses, additional exploratory analyses were conducted to learn how SECS score interacted with other measures. A correlational analysis was conducted to discover any other significant associations between conservatism and parole decision. In addition

to significant findings for the SECS scale, there were also significant associations between parole decision and the Social Conservatism Sub-Scale (SCSS), and the Economic Conservatism Sub-Scale (ECSS).

Social Conservatism Subscale. SCSS scores were weakly and negatively associated with the decision to grant or deny parole ($r = -.11, p = .028$), indicating that increased conservatism scores were associated with denying parole. SCSS scores were also weakly and positively associated with the decision to grant parole with standard compared to additional conditions ($r = .13, p = .030$), indicating that increased social conservatism scores were associated with granting parole with standard conditions (Table 6).

Economic Conservatism Subscale. ECSS scores were weakly and negatively associated with the decision to grant or deny parole ($r = -.14, p = .007$), indicating that increased economic conservatism scores were associated with denying parole (Table 7).

Table 6

Social Conservatism Subscale and Parole Decision Correlations

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. SCSS	382	415.21	129.26	-
2. Parole decision- Overall	390	2.06 ^a	.75	-.03
3. Parole decision- Grant or Deny	390	1.75 ^b	.43	-.11*
4. Parole decision- Grant, with standard conditions or additional conditions	292	1.42 ^c	.50	.13*

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant, with additional conditions. 3 = Grant, with standard conditions.

$N = 383$.

^b Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant (with standard conditions and additional conditions). $N = 383$.

^c Where 1 = Grant, with additional conditions. 2 = Grant, with standard conditions. $N = 285$.

Table 7

Economic Conservatism Subscale and Parole Decision Correlations

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. ECSS	383	249.40	77.85	-
2. Parole decision- Overall	390	2.06 ^a	.75	-.06
3. Parole decision- Grant or Deny	390	1.75 ^b	.43	-.14**
4. Parole decision- Grant, with standard conditions or additional conditions	292	1.42 ^c	.50	.11

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant, with additional conditions. 3 = Grant, with standard conditions.

$N = 383$.

^b Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant (with standard conditions and additional conditions). $N = 383$.

^c Where 1 = Grant, with additional conditions. 2 = Grant, with standard conditions. $N = 286$.

Additional Conditions

If a participant chose to grant parole with additional conditions, a list of 27 conditions was provided with a 28th option for participants to add a condition not on the list, and they were asked to indicate which conditions they would impose. When looking at the individual additional

conditions, the prohibition of alcohol (70.7%, $N = 116$), no contact with co-accused (61.6%, $N = 101$), and the mandatory reporting of financial transactions upon request (61%, $N = 100$) were the most frequently selected additional conditions (Table 8).

A correlation was run between the total number of additional conditions selected and offender race, SECS, and IRS scores. The correlation between offender race and the number of additional conditions was not statistically significant, indicating that the number of additional conditions selected was not associated with offender race ($r = -.06$, $p = .264$; Table 9). There was a significant correlation between the number of additional conditions and ECSS scores, with a weak negative association indicating that participants with increased conservatism scores selected fewer additional conditions ($r = -.13$, $p = .009$; Table 9). There was also a significant correlation between the number of additional conditions and IRS score, with a weak negative association indicating that participants with increased IRS selected fewer additional conditions ($r = -.23$, $p < .001$; Table 9). Correlations between the total number of additional conditions and SCSS and SECS were not statistically significant.

Table 8

Additional Conditions Frequencies

Additional	Selected		Not Selected	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Parole Board approved housing	88	53.7	76	46.3

Cannot live in home community	20	12.2	144	87.8
Cannot use or possess alcohol	116	70.7	48	29.3
Cannot use or possess cannabis	80	48.8	84	51.2
Cannot use any illicit drug or prescription drugs	91	55.5	73	44.5
Must participate in a community substance use program	80	48.8	84	51.2
Must participate in psychological counselling	83	50.6	81	49.4
Must submit a random urinalysis test at least once a month	71	43.3	93	56.7
No driving	33	20.1	131	79.9
Must participate in parenting or healthy/respectful relationship class	25	15.2	139	84.8
Must participate in anger management class	23	14.0	141	86.0
Cannot have contact with the victim	96	58.5	68	41.5

Cannot have contact with the co-accused	101	61.6	63	38.4
Must report any changes in employment status	91	55.5	73	44.5
Must report any changes in their relationship status	39	23.8	125	76.2
Must report any changes in living situation	87	53.0	77	47.0
Cannot access a cell phone	20	12.2	144	87.8
Cannot access a computer	25	15.2	139	84.8
Cannot access internet	32	19.5	132	80.5
Cannot be within 100 meters of areas where children are present	18	11.0	146	89.0
Can only have supervised visitation with their children	10	6.1	154	93.9
Must complete grade 12 education	15	9.1	149	90.9
Cannot leave the country	76	46.3	88	53.7
Have a limited number of bank accounts	94	57.3	70	42.7

Must report all financial transactions	100	61.0	64	39.0
Must wear an electric monitoring device	37	22.6	127	77.4
Must abide by a curfew	52	31.7	112	68.3
Other	1	0.6	161	99.4

Note. $N = 123$ participants chose to grant parole with additional conditions.

Table 9

Additional Conditions Correlation

	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1.	Number of additional conditions	390	4.12 ^a	5.83	-
2.	Offender race	390	-	-	-.06
3.	SCSS	382	415.21	129.26	-.02
4.	ECSS	383	249.40	77.85	-.13**
5.	SECS	383	663.52	186.24	-.07
6.	IRS	384	23.39	5.84	-.23**

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $N = 123$.

^a Out of possible 28 additional conditions.

Indigenous Resentment

The IRS scale was originally selected to measure the potential association between Indigenous resentment, offender race, and parole decision. As previously stated, the association between IRS, offender race, and overall parole decision was not statistically significant (Table 2), however, IRS score was significantly correlated with the decision to grant or deny parole, granting parole with standard or additional conditions, and the number of additional conditions, in addition to SCSS, ECSS, and SECS scores.

All correlations between IRS scores and SCSS, ECSS, and SECS scores were significantly and positively correlated, indicating that increased Indigenous resentment attitudes were associated with increased measures of economic, social, and overall conservatism. The associations between IRS score and SCSS ($r = .31, p < .001$), ECSS ($r = .49, p < .001$), and SECS ($r = .42, p < .001$) scores were all weak-to-moderate positive correlations (Table 10).

Table 10

Indigenous Resentment, Parole Decisions, and Conservatism Correlations

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. IRS	384	23.39	5.84	-
2. Parole decision- Overall	384	-	-	-.025
3. Parole decision- Grant or Deny	384	-	-	-.158**
4. Parole decision- Grant, with standard or additional conditions	287	-	-	.214***
5. Number of additional conditions	384	4.12	5.83	-.225***
6. SCSS	382	415.21	129.26	.31***

7. ECSS	383	249.40	77.85	.49***
8. SECS	383	663.52	186.24	.42***

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

The objective of the current study was to explore whether there was an association between the race of an offender (White or Indigenous) applying for parole and the decision to grant or deny their request. This research relates to the study of institutional racism, and how government and social systems disproportionately negatively impact racialized groups (Henry, 2021; Huebner & Bynum, 2008), with particular concern for Canada and its colonial history with Indigenous peoples. Previous studies have shown that Indigenous offenders are less likely to be granted parole compared to offenders of other ethnicities (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2020; Welsh & Ogloff, 2000); thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate whether racial bias can explain some of the decision disparity.

Parole Decision

Offender Race

It was expected that offender race would be significantly associated with parole decision in that participants given the vignette depicting an Indigenous offender would be less likely to grant parole, or if they did grant parole be more likely to provide additional restrictions, compared to participants given the same vignette depicting a White offender. Results did not support the first hypothesis and no significant association was found between offender race and

parole decision for the overall decision, the dichotomous Yes/ No decision, or between Yes, with standard conditions/ Yes, with additional conditions.

One explanation for the lack of significant association is that the manipulation of race was not salient enough or was not internalized by the participants. One point to support this explanation was that a large portion of the sample did not successfully complete the manipulation check (43.6%, $N = 170$). The manipulation check was at the end of the survey with the demographic questionnaire, and all participants who did not answer the manipulation check also did not complete the demographic survey. It is suspected that the incomplete manipulation checks were not deliberate avoidance, but likely a result of the participant terminating the survey prematurely. The amount of incomplete data limits the ability to interpret the dataset fully, as it is possible that a significant proportion of the sample was not paying attention to offender race. If so, it cannot be known whether participants were not paying attention to race because they were not properly reading the vignette, or whether it was because they did not perceive the offender's race to be relevant information. An effort was made to make the Indigenous offender's race salient, such as explicitly stating they were Indigenous, they were from a First Nation reservation, they worked with Indigenous Elders, had participated in Indigenous-specific programming, and were applying for an Indigenous halfway house (Appendix C). A timer was also used to prevent participants from leaving the vignette story for approximately one minute, giving the participants time to read the vignette and not allowing them to skip it prematurely. Both of these inclusions mitigate the possibility of participants simply not paying attention or skipping the vignette.

The filtered results did differ from the full dataset; however, results should be interpreted with caution and more data should be collected to re-examine the results. Analyses only

including participants who successfully completed the manipulation check did not have sufficient power due to the small number of participants (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007), and thus the filtered results should also be interpreted with caution. It was because of the low sample power that the current analyses used all participant data.

An alternative and simpler explanation is that offender ethnicity was not a factor participants considered when making their parole decision. While this is contrary to the hypothesis, it could indicate that explicit racial bias does not play a significant role in the participants' parole decision. Similar to the results from Green et al. (2006), the current study did not find a direct effect of race in punitive attitudes, but rather an indirect effect of racism and race resentment through conservatism. The findings suggest that conservatives do not support punitive attitudes to target a racial group, rather that they support punitive attitudes despite disproportionate harm to racial groups. This interaction could be introducing racial bias through a less direct medium, in this case, political conservatism. The above reasoning could explain why significant associations were not found between offender race and parole decisions, but rather between conservatism and parole decisions.

The second part of the first hypothesis on offender race and parole decision was that participant IRS scores would be a mediating variable and have an indirect effect on offender race and parole decision. The second part of the first hypothesis could not be supported due to the lack of significant associations found between offender race, IRS scores, and parole decision.

Conservatism

The second hypothesis concerned participants' political orientation and whether it was associated with parole decision. To address the second hypothesis, the association between

conservatism and parole decision was examined. It was expected that participants with higher scores of conservatism would be less likely to grant parole. While there was no significant association between conservatism and overall parole decision, significant associations were found between dichotomous parole decisions and social, economic, and overall conservatism. It was found that when participant decisions were grouped dichotomously to either grant or deny parole, higher conservatism scores were associated with the more punitive decision, which was to deny parole. When the data was filtered to only analyze responses from participants who successfully completed the manipulation checks, results failed to identify significant associations between participant conservatism and parole decision. The different results suggest that more research is needed to better understand the association between conservatism and parole decision-making.

This result supports the second hypothesis that more conservative participants would be less likely to grant parole compared to less conservative participants. In other words, while the hypothesis of conservatism relating to overall parole decision is unsupported, it is partially supported by this finding. The significant association between conservatism and the decision to deny parole was not surprising, as it is supported by numerous studies on the relationship between conservatism and punitive attitudes. The consensus in this area of study is that individuals with more conservative views tend to support more punitive legislation and action within the justice and correctional systems, such as mandatory minimum sentencing, longer sentences, and the opposition to suspended sentences and conditional release (Aarten et al., 2015; Beauvais, & Stolle, 2022; Green et al., 2006; Harris et al., 2022; Reppucci et al., 2009). These findings have been replicated in numerous Western countries, including Canada, and have remained relatively consistent across time.

These results are pertinent to the understanding of potential bias within the justice and correctional systems, as they suggest that more conservative individuals may be less likely to grant conditional release compared with their less conservative counterparts. When left unaddressed, individual differences in political orientation may contribute to decision disparity where two comparable offenders receive different parole decisions based solely on who is evaluating them. This outcome would arguably violate the Correctional and Conditional Release Act (CCRA, 1992), which states offenders should be housed in the least restrictive way possible while controlling for risk. If two comparable offenders are considered for parole by two different decision makers and the outcomes significantly differ, there is a possibility that one of the decisions does not comply with the tenancy of least restriction, and an offender would be incarcerated in excess of their risk. Denying an offender parole undeservedly contributes to higher proportions of sentence served in an institution, and in the instance of criminalized minorities (e.g., Indigenous peoples) contribute to overincarceration (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2020)

The second part of the hypothesis was that conservatism would mediate the association between offender race and parole decision wherein conservatism would account for some of the variation. While the association between SECS scores and parole outcome were different between parole decisions, there was no direct association between offender race and SECS score. The lack of direct association made all mediation models not statistically significant, indicating that SECS score does not significantly affect the association between offender race and parole decision.

The second hypothesis also included an open-ended plan to explore any significant associations between conservatism and parole. Correlational analyses were run between SECS

scores, in addition to the SCSS and ECSS, and parole decisions. One of the benefits of the SECS is that it has these two subscales, which can help to provide a more robust understanding of which conservative attitudes hold significance in the participants' decision-making. It was particularly useful in the current study, as different measures of conservatism were found to have a different association with parole decisions. Both measures of social and economic conservatism were not statistically significant for overall parole decision but held some significance for the dichotomous decisions.

Grant or deny parole. For the option of either granting or denying parole, higher economic and social conservatism scores were associated with the more penalizing option of denying parole. While these findings are not surprising, given the total conservatism score also had a similar association, it is interesting that economic conservatism on its own is significant.

In previous literature, the punitive attitudes of conservatives have mostly been explained socially, wherein people who are more conservative view offenders as individuals who violate the rules of society and morality and victimize the community as a collective (Merton, 1934). Since the community is seen as the victim, the perceived harm is greater. The resulting reflex is then to impose more retributive consequences in retribution (Silver & Silver, 2017). This may have been a similar mentality to those held by the participants in this study.

When looking at face value, the association between increased economic conservatism and more punitive decisions may seem counterintuitive, since many economically conservative opinions are against government funding, some of which is allocated for the correctional and prison systems. With this logic, it would be expected that economic conservatives who oppose government spending would prefer to have a manageable offender released to save 'taxpayer money'. Results indicate that this is not the case.

A simple explanation for this finding can be that participants are not aware of the costs associated with incarceration compared to community supervision. Prior research on Canadians' understanding of the criminal justice system has found that the cost of supervision was significantly overestimated by the public while the cost of incarceration was significantly underestimated (Roberts & Stalans, 2000). If public opinion is that supervision is more expensive than incarceration, likely due to supervision staff, temporary housing etc., then the positive association between economic conservatism and denying parole can be explained as a cost-saving decision.

An alternative and more moralistic interpretation of the economic conservatism-denying parole relationship can be explained using economic individualism. While the current study does not directly measure economic individualism, its' similarities to economic conservatism, such as economic independence and limited government intervention, are salient enough that it can be used to help explain the findings of this study. As explored in the introduction, the framework of individualism as it pertains to crime endorses the belief that crime is a consequence of one's own moral deficiencies and that the only way to prevent crime is to enact harsh retribution to deter future offending (Kornhauser, 2015). Using this logic, conservative individuals who subscribe to this mentality would view incarceration as the best deterrent for future offending.

Grant parole with additional or standard conditions. When looking at the dichotomous decision to grant parole with standard conditions (the least punitive decision) and to grant parole with additional conditions (the most punitive decision), the association between economic conservatism was not statistically significant, however, there was a significant positive association with social conservatism. This finding indicates that individuals who reported more socially conservative views were associated with the least punitive decision (grant parole with

standard conditions) compared to those who reported fewer socially conservative views. This finding is surprising as it is the only outcome measure throughout the study where higher scores of conservatism were not associated with the most punitive parole option.

A possible explanation for the positive association between social conservatism and parole without additional conditions could be that conservatives more often perceive crime as an individual moral failing as opposed to a consequence of condition; meaning that those higher in conservatism believe that people only commit crime because there is something wrong with them individually (Silver & Silver, 2017; Unnever & Cullen, 2009). The individual moralistic framework of crime adopts the belief that the most effective deterrent for committing a future crime is harsh punishment as retribution for the original crime committed (Kornhauser, 2015; Silver & Silver, 2017). Individuals who subscribe to this framework often perceive any sentence other than incarceration as non-punitive and insufficient, and the restrictive and punitive aspects of conditional sentences/release are not well understood (Maxwell, 2017; Roberts & Stalans, 2000). The belief in punishment as the only appropriate consequence of crime and the inaccurate perception that community supervision is expensive (Roberts & Stalans, 2000), may be cumulative in understanding the reluctance of social conservatives to impose additional conditions. If an individual believed an aspect of additional conditions was to provide rehabilitative support but did not believe rehabilitation was the most efficient way to reduce reoffending, they may be less likely to endorse additional conditions.

When compounded, it makes sense that individuals who believe crime is a “state of mind” (Unnever & Cullen, 2009) and is not efficiently addressed through supervised rehabilitation (Maxwell, 2017) would not support imposing additional conditions that would require more resources for a perceived less effective outcome. The positive association between

conservatism and granting parole without additional conditions can be better explored in another study that reviews individual additional conditions and how they relate to conservatism. Doing so may provide further clarity on whether conservatives view additional conditions as rehabilitative or punitive by identifying which additional conditions are imposed most frequently by those with higher scores of conservatism.

Additional Conditions

If the participant decided to grant the offender parole with additional conditions, they were provided with a list of 27 potential conditions, in addition to a 28th option of creating their own. Participants were also asked to explain their decision, however that data was not analyzed as part of the current study. Of those potential 28 conditions, the most frequently imposed included the prohibition of alcohol, non-contact with the co-accused, and the mandatory reporting of all financial records upon request. Given the vignette was about a non-violent offender serving a sentence for fraud with a co-conspirator, the last two conditions make sense since they can be connected to the nature and characteristics of the offence. The prohibition of alcohol, however, is not as easily explained. Originally, this item was added to identify potential racial biases given the stereotype of Indigenous peoples being alcoholics (Haddock et al., 1994); however, the results showed that the additional condition of alcohol prohibition was not significantly associated with offender race or Indigenous resentment. This result indicates that participants given the Indigenous vignette or with higher scores of Indigenous resentment were no more likely to assign this condition than participants in the White offender condition or with lower scores of Indigenous resentment. Rather, most participants imposed this condition. The reason for the prevalence of this condition is unclear.

Speculation could be that public belief and understanding of parole is inaccurate and that this condition was imposed due to a public perception of it being a common condition. As was previously discussed, Canadians' general understanding of the correctional system and parole is often incorrect (Maxwell, 2017; Roberts & Stalans, 2000) and so they rely on their preconceived notions to make decisions and formulate opinions. No sources could be found to confirm that the prohibition of alcohol is a frequent condition, however multiple studies that have investigated the connection between alcohol and crime have found them to be related (Carpenter & Dobkin, 2011; Ternes & Johnson, 2011). Some proposed explanations for the positive association between alcohol and crime include alcohol's pharmacological effects reducing inhibition and foresight while increasing aggression, the "excuse motive" justification for antisocial behaviour, and the social nature of drinking alcohol encouraging interpersonal interactions (Carpenter & Dobkin, 2011). Laypeople may draw from their understanding of the link between alcohol and crime and believe that alcohol can increase an offender's chances of reoffending regardless of their criminal or substance use history. This reasoning provides a possible explanation for the frequency of prohibiting alcohol as an additional condition despite alcohol not being suggested or mentioned in the vignette as part of the offender's offence cycle. Despite this, caution should be exercised when speculating the reasons for selecting additional conditions since the participants did provide some reasoning, which was not analyzed in the current study.

Conservatism and Indigenous resentment. In addition to frequencies, correlational analyses were conducted to assess the association between conservatism and Indigenous resentment, and the total number of additional conditions imposed. Associations between the total number of additional conditions imposed and offender race, social conservatism, and

overall conservatism were not statistically significant, indicating they did not influence how many conditions the participant imposed.

Significant negative associations were found between the total number of additional conditions imposed, and both economic conservatism and Indigenous resentment. These results indicate that individuals with higher economic conservatism scores and higher Indigenous resentment scores were associated with imposing fewer additional conditions. The association between economic conservatism and additional conditions can be linked to the previously explored relationship between increased social conservatism and decreased punitive attitudes when the dichotomous decision was to grant parole with standard or additional conditions. This reasoning would include understanding offending as a personal, individual moral issue that can only be addressed by the offender. With this logic, it may not make sense to impose additional conditions if the individual does not believe they will address the moral deficiencies of the offender, while simultaneously costing the government in resources to provide the services and increased supervision (Kornhauser, 2015; Silver & Silver, 2017; Unnever & Cullen, 2009).

The explanation for the inverse association between Indigenous resentment and additional conditions is unclear, but one possibility is because Indigenous resentment and conservatism are related, the significant association between conservatism and additional conditions is reflected in Indigenous resentment scores. In other words, Indigenous resentment itself may not be related to additional conditions, but because individuals with high levels of conservatism also tend to have high levels of Indigenous resentment, the association between Indigenous resentment and additional conditions appears significant. More research is required on this association to better understand how Indigenous resentment related to parole conditions, which may provide some insight on parole decision disparity.

Indigenous Resentment

The associations between Indigenous resentment and conservatism were explored to better understand the results and how the two concepts were related. Indigenous resentment as it relates to parole decisions and additional conditions has already been discussed, so this section will explore how Indigenous resentment relates to conservatism.

The associations between Indigenous resentment and every score of conservatism (social, economic, and total) were significant and positive. These findings indicate that the higher the individual scored on any independent measure of conservatism, the higher they scored in Indigenous resentment. These findings are not necessarily surprising, given every measure with a significant association with Indigenous resentment thus far has also had a significant association with conservatism, and is always in the same direction. Due to the frequent and significant correlations between measures of conservatism and Indigenous resentment, a multicollinearity analysis was done to ensure the scales did not significantly overlap or shadow each other. Multicollinearity was not found, indicating that the correlation between the scales was not caused by overlapping items.

Several previous studies investigating politics and racial resentment have found similar relationships between political conservatism, race resentment, and punitive attitudes. One study conducted by Harris et al. (2022) found that political party affiliation was significantly related to both race resentment and punitive attitudes. Specifically, they found that participants who identified as Republican and participants who voted for President Donald Trump reported significantly higher rates of racial resentment and support for punitive attitudes (Harris et al., 2022). Similarly, in a recent Canadian study, Beauvais and Stolle (2022) found that Conservatives had higher levels of Indigenous resentment, compared to non-sovereignist left-

wing parties, which had the lowest levels of Indigenous resentment. Specifically, Indigenous resentment was tied to attitudes toward Canadian nationalism and the perceived need for the government to preserve ‘Canadian culture’ (Beauvais, & Stolle, 2022). Given the items related to patriotism on the SECS, if conservatives perceive Indigenous movements as a threat to Canadian culture, it could explain why high conservatism is associated with high Indigenous resentment. Additionally, support for government funding for the preservation and reconciliation of Indigenous practices is likely counterproductive to the economic conservatism mentality of limited government and government spending.

Implications

The results of this study indicate that there is some level of racial resentment associated with parole decisions even though the manipulation of offender race was not statistically significant. The proposed explanation for this is that racial bias is being introduced through political attitudes and biases, and it is these indirect expressions of racism that influence parole decisions. The results of this study can not only contribute to the literature on racial bias in the justice and correctional systems but can also provide insight into how racial bias can present itself and different approaches that can be taken to mitigate its’ influence. For instance, if decision-makers receive training for reducing racial bias, but this training focuses on instances of direct racism as opposed to indirect racism, or racism present through a different medium (e.g., political bias), it may not be as effective as intended. Understanding different ways racism can be introduced into decision-making will help in the development and implementation of more effective training for identifying and mitigating bias.

The results of this study also support the inclusion of extralegal information that contextualizes an individual’s life experiences when they have been affected by marginalization

and racism (e.g., Gladue Reports). The results of this study support and contribute to other bodies of literature explaining that indirect effects of racism can be expressed through other mediums, such as social hierarchy, religion, and policy (Beauvais & Stolle, 2022; Chin et al., 2021; Harris et al., 2022). Furthermore, this study suggests that while racism may not be explicit, the ignorance of disproportionate harm to marginalized communities is in itself damaging and contributing to institutional racism. Prior research has found that which factors decision-makers consider relevant to the decision can vary between members (Ruhland, 2020). By requiring decision-makers (i.e., PBC members) to consider particular extralegal factors and inform themselves of circumstances in which race can impact an individual's life experience, it encourages them to consider relevant extralegal factors when they otherwise would not. For instance, the creation of a Gladue report serves to provide decision-makers with information about the individual and how their life experiences have been influenced by colonial and racist policy and action. While this study did not examine the consideration of extralegal factors directly, the results do support research suggesting that those with more conservative attitudes are more likely to support criminal justice policies despite the disproportionate harm caused to marginalized communities due to extralegal factors such as poverty, which can be influenced by race. Requiring decision-makers to consider context as it related to marginalized people will limit their ability to ignore the potential harm caused by their decision.

Strengths

One of the greatest strengths of this study was that it had an experimental design that allowed for direct condition manipulation. Many studies in the area of racial bias in the justice and correctional systems use archival data from real defendants/offenders and try to match individual cases to reduce the influence of extraneous variables (Henry, 2021; Huebner &

Bynum, 2008; Welsh & Ogloff, 2000). While these studies have value in that they use real-world data, it is not possible to isolate the different factors that can influence the outcome (e.g., sentence length, parole approval, etc.). This becomes especially problematic when the defendant/offender's race is a significant predictor of the presence of other risk factors that contribute to decision-making. As discussed in the introduction, studies have found Indigenous peoples in Canada to be more likely to have more extensive criminal records, commit more severe offences, and receive longer sentences, which are all factors associated with parole decision-making (Welsh & Ogloff, 2000). The inability to isolate race from other factors can make it difficult to quantify its direct effect. Through its experimental design, the current study was able to keep all factors constant between vignettes and isolate race as the only differentiating variable, allowing race to be considered more independently.

A valuable component of the current study was the inclusion of a multi-dimensional measure of political orientation. The majority of previous literature on conservatism used more limited measures of political orientation, such as asking participants which political party they vote for, which may not be reflective of participants' attitudes about different issues (Roberts & Stalans, 2000). By using the SECS, this study was not only able to measure participant conservatism more thoroughly by using multiple items, but it was also able to break conservatism down into two frameworks: social and economic. In turn, this helped to better contextualize how conservatism was associated with punitive attitudes and Indigenous resentment.

The current study also addresses a gap in the literature on punitive attitudes, race resentment, and politics. A significant portion of research in this area is focused on sentencing and policy support, with few studies focused on conditional release and parole. This study

contributes to limited research on conditional release and public opinion, while also exploring factors of racial resentment and politics.

In addition to contributing to the area of correctional research as a whole, the current study contributes to the relatively small body of Canadian literature on political orientation, Indigenous resentment, and punitive attitudes. As was explained in the introduction, there remains an overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples at every level of Canadian corrections (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2020). These trends are occurring despite government attempts to reduce over-incarceration through diversion courts, Gladue reports, and culturally informed correctional programming (Appendix A). This study can help to provide some information on how Indigenous resentment reflects itself in political beliefs and can transfer into individual bias.

Limitations

While this study has merit and can contribute to the limited literature, there are several limitations. These include the method of data collection, result generalizability to the Canadian public, and the generalizability to members of the PBC.

Data Collection

As mentioned in the method sections, the scale used to measure participant political orientation was developed using an American sample, and thus may not be validated for Canadian use. Additionally, the measure of economic conservatism (ECSS) had a low internal consistency value, questioning whether the subscale measured economic conservatism as it was intended. Results on the SECS and its' subscales should be interpreted with caution and should this study be replicated, it is suggested that researchers either chose another multifaceted

measure of conservatism that has been validated with a Canadian sample or validate the SECS and subscales before data collection.

One avenue of data collection included posting the study on Reddit and inviting individuals to participate via an anonymous link. This link allowed repeated access and thus participants could not technologically be prevented from providing multiple submissions. Approximately two-thirds of the data from Reddit ($N = 161$) was removed due to suspected multiple submissions. This reduced the sample size and, while the data was cleaned as well as possible, there is the possibility of undetected repeated submissions which could violate the assumption of independence. Additionally, the majority of Reddit participants did not complete the participant demographics and condition manipulation check. Without the participant demographics, the generalizability of results is difficult to gauge, and true effects between demographics and measures cannot be analyzed. Without completing the manipulation check, it is difficult to understand whether participants internalized their manipulation condition and limits interpretation of associations with the dependent variable (offender race). Future research can mitigate this problem by including the manipulation check earlier, though consideration should be given to where it is placed to avoid indicating the importance of race to the participant.

Another limitation of the data was that the citizenship and age of participants could not be verified across recruitment platforms. The greatest confidence in accurate reporting was from the MTurk data since MTurk members had to be at least 18 years old to join the platform and a 'Canadian' filter was used to limit the study to members who previously reported their country of residence as Canada. There was also large confidence in participant data from SONA since the majority of university students are aged 18 years or older, though the study could not be limited to Canadians by the author and required participants to be honest about their citizenship.

Participant data from Reddit was the least reliable since there was no filter to ensure participants' age or citizenship and relied on the honesty of participants to read the study description, informed consent, and only participate if it applied to them.

The above limitations contribute to concerns of data integrity, wherein the overall quality of the sample data and thus the statistical effects found, limit the generalizability of the findings and pose questions about the significance of the results. Due to questions about sample differences across platforms and missing manipulation checks, in addition to having underpowered analyses, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution. It is recommended that readers use the results of this study to support the development of additional research, rather than to draw decisive conclusions about the measures and variables of interest.

Result Generalizability

Result generalizability is limited in two capacities: as it relates to Canadians overall and how it relates to PBC members specifically. Due to the small sample size and limited participant demographics provided, it cannot be determined how well the participant pool reflects Canada's population on factors of sex, ethnicity, age, or highest level of education.

Regarding the generalizability of the PBC, these results are limited because PBC members did not participate in the study. Previous studies on parole attitudes have used community samples due to the difficulty of recruiting PBC members, and theoretically, since any Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident can apply to be on the Parole Board, this study chose to use a community sample of Canadians as a proxy group (Lindsey & Miller, 2011; Roberts & Stalans, 2000). Despite the previous acceptance of using community samples, there are some significant differences between average Canadians and PBC members, most notably individual

experiences with the correctional and/or justice systems and internal training provided by the PBC (Government of Canada, 2018). Participants were not asked about prior experience with the correctional or justice systems, so their familiarity cannot be assessed. Given that prior experience with these systems is important to PBC recruitment and that most PBC members likely have prior experience, it is unlikely that participants would have comparative experience with PBC members. Regarding internal training, it is possible the provided training could aid PBC members in identifying their biases or provide them with information on conditional release that renders their understanding and approach to parole decision-making different than average Canadians. For instance, a letter from the PBC Chairperson Jennifer Oades states that PBC members receive training on cultural competency, including conscious, unconscious, and perceived bias (Government of Canada, 2021).

Due to the training and experience differences between PBC members and the participants, the attitudes and processes used by participants to make their parole decision are possibly different than those of PBC members, and extreme caution should be used when applying these results to the PBC. For more generalizable results, attempts should be made to recruit participants from the PBC. When this is not possible, targeting participants whose PBC applications may be more likely to be selected by the PBC, with relevant experience in the correctional/ justice systems, may create a more relevant proxy sample.

Future Research

The findings of this study highlight numerous areas of future research that span different disciplines. This study included a section on additional conditions the participant would impose upon the offender, as well as an open-ended question asking them to explain their reasoning. The purpose of this inclusion was two-fold: to see whether racial discrimination would present itself

through the disproportionate number of additional conditions or frequency of individual conditions for one offender over the other, and to gain better insight into what Canadians consider relevant and important for parole. These measures were superficially explored for any association with offender race, and while the association with offender race was not statistically significant, there were significant associations found with Indigenous resentment and social, economic, and total conservatism. One area of future research could be to explore associations between individual additional conditions and measures of Indigenous resentment and conservatism. Additionally, a qualitative analysis could be done to better understand the participants' justifications for parole decisions. Results could then be used to better understand how Canadians consider parole.

Another future study that could be done with the current data is the examination of conservatism as it related to parole decisions. While this is explored in the current study, it was not the variable of interest. Such a study could benefit from a measure of how well participants understand the correctional system and parole and a secondary measure of punitive attitudes. A more thorough study on conservatism as it relates to punitive attitudes and decision-making would add to the literature, and the inclusion of Indigenous resentment would not only be somewhat novel, but also aid in better understanding the dynamic between conservatism, Indigenous resentment, and punitive attitudes.

A replication of the current study with minor adjustments and a more targeted recruitment approach could help make the results more generalizable to the PBC and contribute more thoroughly to the literature on political-racial bias in Canadian policy. The replication could keep the same White and Indigenous offender vignettes but could include a vignette depicting a Black and/or Asian offender. Studies have shown that racial resentment varies

between provinces and racial groups, indicating that some regions of Canada hold more racial bias against particular groups compared to other groups and other regions (Beauvais & Stolle, 2022). In addition to adding these vignettes, the demographic survey would also include a question on participants' province/territory of residence, which would help examine regional differences across Canada. This replication could also adopt a more strategic method of participant recruitment where Canadians with experiences 'relevant' to the PBC would be targeted (e.g., public service, law, business, etc.). Future researchers could review the composition of the PBC and attempt to recruit participants with similar levels of education and experience as current PBC members. A review could be done by either reviewing published reviews of PBC composition, or by collecting PBC members' educational information on the internet through a platform like LinkedIn (a networking site to post education and employment history). From there, researchers can recruit participants through societies, groups, and networks associated with prevalent education experience. For instance, a large proportion of the PBC board is composed of lawyers, so recruiting participants from legal programs and societies can help to create a more representative comparative group for the PBC.

The methodology and results of the current study could also be used to design a similar study, but with a more salient race manipulation. The current study was careful to use vignettes that did not adhere to racial stereotypes because it did not want to prime participants to adopt a racially stereotypical framework outside of direct race manipulation. The next study could deliberately use a vignette that depicts a racial stereotype and explore whether participant responses differ due to participant-held racial stereotypes. This new manipulation may permit participants to demonstrate more clearly any racial biases they hold. For instance, perhaps participants in the current study did not directly consider race in the parole decision because the

offender was seen as an outlier in their racial schema, but if the new study featured a White and Indigenous offender with identical histories of impaired driving, the racial bias may be more direct because it plays directly into the racial stereotype of “drunk Indian” (Haddock et al., 1994). With a more stereotypical racial depiction, the study could help better explain how individuals perceive the danger of others and administer punishment using their mental schemas.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to explore the association between offender race and parole decision when all other factors are constant. This study also used measures of conservatism and Indigenous resentment to see whether either had an influence on the offender race – parole decision association or had significant interactions of their own. This was done to better understand racial and political bias, and how it can contribute to disparity in parole decision-making. While there was no effect of offender race on parole decisions, it was found that there may be an indirect effect of race through political bias. These findings can be used to better understand how Indigenous overrepresentation in Canada’s justice and correctional systems continue to increase, despite attempts by the government to address the issue. With a better understanding of how racism can present itself, there is more potential for racial bias to be identified, acknowledged, and mitigated.

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Appendix A

Government recognition of Indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system

The Canadian federal government has acknowledged the racism in the current justice system and has expressed their desire to address inequities and curb systemic racism. Several relatively recent legislation and Supreme Court cases have reflected the government's desire to address the unique relationship Indigenous peoples have with the criminal justice system. One of the first forms of legislation that outlined the specific needs of Indigenous offenders was the Statutes (1995). Section s. 718 of the Statutes (1995) explicitly states that a judge should consider the special circumstances of an Indigenous offender when determining their sentence (Statutes, 1995), such as the presence of intergenerational trauma, substance misuse, and history of abuse. The Statutes also states that any alternative to incarceration, such as probation, should be applied to an Indigenous offender, which aims to reduce the overincarceration of Indigenous offenders.

There have also been a number of Supreme Court cases where the ruling emphasized the need for judges to consider mitigating factors unique to Indigenous offenders, and to follow s. 718 of the Statutes (1995) in order to responsibly address problems of overincarceration of Indigenous offenders. One case that highlighted the necessity of s. 718 was the case of *R v. Gladue* (1999), which dealt with an appeal of the court of appeal for British Columbia on the basis that s. 718 of the Statutes (1995) was not given enough credence during the trial of an Indigenous woman convicted of manslaughter. The Supreme Court agreed that the first trial judge did not appear to consider the systemic factors which may have influenced the offender to engage in criminal activity (*R v. Gladue, 1999*). The ruling summarized that in order for a judge to properly apply s.718, they must gather any and all information relevant to a defendant's

environment, background, and experiences as an Indigenous person. These relevant factors have since adopted the title of “Gladue” factors, after the 1999 case. The trial also concluded with an emphasis on restorative justice whenever possible for Indigenous offenders, both to keep the sentence in line with traditional Indigenous practices and to decrease the number of Indigenous offenders in custody (*R v. Gladue, 1999*). Gladue factors can be applied outside of sentencing and can be considered in cases of not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder (*R v. Sim, 2005*), and parole hearings (*R v. Pelletier, 2004*).

Despite the establishment of Gladue factors, they are not always considered. Almond et al. (2020) looked at judicial decision-making regarding violence risk between Indigenous offenders and non-Indigenous offenders being evaluated as dangerous offenders. The analysis involved collecting the offender’s demographic information, and any comments made by the judge involving culture, which were then coded as superficial or meaningful. A comment was considered superficial if the Judge acknowledged that the offender was Indigenous but did not expand. A comment was considered meaningful if the Judge discussed the offender’s Indigenous history and elaborated on the Gladue report. Almond et al. (2020) found that Indigenous culture was not always considered regarding violence risk, and that culture was only meaningfully discussed in approximately 25% of cases, and only considered in approximately 64% of cases. Almond et al. (2020) continued to explain that their findings did not only go against Supreme Court rulings that cultural factors must be considered (Gladue), but that Indigenous offenders are significantly more likely to be assessed as higher risk by experts and that neglecting to account for mitigating factors only increases the racial differences in risk evaluation.

Another Supreme Court of Canada case focused on the rights of Indigenous offenders is that of *R v. Ewert* (2018). This case ruled that the application of non-validated risk assessments

to Indigenous offenders had the potential to negatively impact the offender, and that efforts should be made to validate risk assessments for Indigenous offenders before being applied. This case centered around s. 24(1) of the CCRA (1992), which states that CSC will take all steps necessary to ensure information about an offender is accurate. The Supreme Court found CSC in violation of this because they administered assessment tools (such as the PCL-R) for the purposes of assessing offender risk to an Indigenous offender even though they were aware that the assessment was not validated among Indigenous peoples. This meant that CSC was making decisions based on the results of a tool that was not validated to be used on Indigenous offenders. The courts stated that the risk assessment tools should be assessed in their validity when applied to Indigenous offenders, and that until they are validated, their results should be interpreted with caution.

One step the PBC has taken to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in custody has been to introduce Elder assisted hearings. As described by Turnbull (2014), the creation of these hearings in 1992 served two purposes: to address Indigenous overrepresentation and to introduce Indigenous practices and traditions into the rehabilitative processes. While discussing the creation of these hearings, Turnbull explains that these hearings can help to reduce risk by means of culturally appropriate decision-making and ensure a fairer and more effective parole system. Though there are identified benefits of Elder assisted hearings, there are some challenges as well, such as changing traditional Indigenous practices to be compatible with the methods of the PBC, using PBC appointed Elders, and selecting Elders who have the backgrounds and knowledges for Indigenous offenders with different cultures. While Turnbull explains that this hearing format may be well intended and may have some merits, it is important to examine other aspects of an offender's identity outside of their Indigenous heritage and that

the creation of Elder assisted hearings may confine Indigenous offenders into a type of “cultural straitjacket” (Turnball, 2014).

Appendix B

Participant Recruitment Across Platforms

Table 11

Manipulation Check by Participant Recruitment Platform

	MTurk		SONA		Reddit		χ^2	Cramer's V
	37.4 (N = 146)		31.8 (N = 124)		30.8 (N = 120)			
	Pass	Fail/ Absent	Pass	Fail/ Absent	Pass	Fail/ Absent		
Manipulation Check	72.6 (106)	27.4 (40)	81.5 (101)	18.5 (23)	10.0 (12)	90.0 (108)	152.1***	.62***

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 12*Participant Age by Participant Recruitment Platform*

		MTurk			SONA			Reddit			$F(2,375)$	η^2
		N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Demographics	Age	133	36.81	10.91	122	22.38	5.45	26	30.58	7.40	89.20***	.39

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 13*Participant Parole Decision by Recruitment Platform*

		MTurk			SONA			Reddit			$F(2,375)$	η^2
		N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Parole	Overall ^a Decision	142	1.99	0.73	124	2.18	0.64	117	2.03	0.88	2.22	.01
	Decision											
	Outcome											
	Total number of	138	4.44	5.66	124	6.06	6.63	116	2.00	4.44	15.56***	.08
	Additional											
	Conditions ^b											

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a 1 = Deny parole. 2 = Grant parole with additional conditions. 3 = Grant parole with standard conditions.

^b $n = 28$.

Figure 14

Chi-Square Test of Frequencies for Binary Outcomes by Participant Recruitment Platform

		MTurk		SONA		Reddit		χ^2	Cramer's V
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Parole	Grant vs.	108	38	108	16	76	44	18.41***	.22***
Decision	Deny								

		MTurk		SONA		Reddit		χ^2	Cramer's V
		Standard	Additional	Standard	Additional	Standard	Additional		
		Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions	Conditions		
Parole	Grant with	37	71	38	70	48	28	18.67***	.25***
Decision	standard								
	conditions vs.								
	Grant with								
	additional								
	conditions								

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 15*Participant Scale Scores by Recruitment Platform*

		MTurk			SONA			Reddit			$F(2,375)$	η^2
		N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Scale	SCSS	142	388.59	121.46	123	386.18	129.65	117	478.03	116.28	22.15***	.11
Scores												
	ECSS		250.63	83.78		210.58	64.20		289.57	61.50	36.74***	.16
	SECS		639.22	177.38		596.76	170.82		767.61	163.23	32.46***	.15
	IRS		23.76	6.22		19.77	5.03		26.84	3.46	57.64***	.23
	SDE	138	3.49	2.86	124	3.83	2.73	116	5.06	3.54	9.00***	.05
	IM		6.17	4.21		6.16	3.36		5.88	4.09	0.21	.00
	BIDR		9.66	6.14		9.99	4.73		10.94	7.14	1.48	.01

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Appendix C

Indigenous Non-Violent Offender (Modified; Gobeil, 2006)

Please read the following vignette below carefully. You will be unable to proceed from this page for 60 seconds. When the 60 seconds are up and you have finished reading the vignette, please proceed to the next page.

This is the case of a 36 year-old Indigenous man from Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve (Ontario, Canada) serving a 6 year sentence for fraud (x6), conspiracy, and breach (x3). Although alcohol abuse has been noted, and led to prior arrests for impaired driving, the principal incentive for these crimes appears to have been financial. Pre-sentence reports indicate that the offender was involved in a series of business ventures that were intended to defraud vulnerable people from their savings. The offender and two co-accuseds promised a variety of products to investors, none of which were provided. They moved across Canada with their scheme and used the internet, as well. Victim impact statements indicate many of the investors lost their life savings as a result of their trusting his claims. He has one assault when he was aged 19, for which he received a 30-day sentence. Otherwise, his prior crimes include fines and probation for impaired driving and fraud and one breach of recognizance. He is described on file as a charismatic and verbally convincing individual.

In his current sentence he has had a couple of minor incidents where he was caught providing three-way telephone services to offenders for a small fee. Once detected, he stopped. At admission he had been recommended for Pathways Moderate Programming for Indigenous offenders and substance abuse programming. After 36 months he has completed both programs without major problems. Reports on file are reasonably positive regarding his participation and

performance. Indigenous Elders feel he is certainly saying the right things but are hesitant given the nature of his criminal history. Reports on file indicate he is a moderate risk to re-offend. He has residency confirmed at a halfway house for Indigenous offenders. Overall, current programming reports are reasonably positive.

Appendix D**White Non-Violent Offender (Modified; Gobeil, 2006)**

Please read the following vignette below carefully. You will be unable to proceed from this page for 60 seconds. When the 60 seconds are up and you have finished reading the vignette, please proceed to the next page.

This is the case of a 36 year-old White man from Windsor (Ontario, Canada) serving a 6 year sentence for fraud (x6), conspiracy, and breach (x3). Although alcohol abuse has been noted, and led to prior arrests for impaired driving, the principal incentive for these crimes appears to have been financial. Pre-sentence reports indicate that the offender was involved in a series of business ventures that were intended to defraud vulnerable people from their savings. The offender and two co-accuseds promised a variety of products to investors, none of which were provided. They moved across Canada with their scheme and used the internet, as well. Victim impact statements indicate many of the investors lost their life savings as a result of their trusting his claims. He has one assault when he was aged 19, for which he received a 30-day sentence. Otherwise, his prior crimes include fines and probation for impaired driving and fraud and one breach of recognizance. He is described on file as a charismatic and verbally convincing individual.

In his current sentence he has had a couple of minor incidents where he was caught providing three-way telephone services to offenders for a small fee. Once detected, he stopped. At admission he had been recommended for Moderate Programming for offenders and substance abuse programming. After 36 months he has completed both programs without major problems. Reports on file are reasonably positive regarding his participation and performance. Staff feel he is certainly saying the right things but are hesitant given the nature of his criminal history.

Reports on file indicate he is a moderate risk to re-offend. He has residency confirmed at a halfway house. Overall, current programming reports are reasonably positive.

Appendix E

Vignette Questions

Parole is a form of supervised and conditional early release of an offender who is considered manageable in the community. While on parole, an offender must follow specific conditions and rules put in place by the Parole Board of Canada. If the offender breaks a condition, they are returned to a correctional institution to be reassessed. Some of the standard conditions of parole for all offenders include:

- Living in an approved community
- Report to their parole officer as instructed
- Follow the law and keep the peace
- Always carry their release documentation with them
- Do not own or possess any weapon
- Inform their parole officer of any change that may affect their ability to follow the conditions of their release

When considering parole, community protection is the most important consideration. The conditions imposed on an offender should be a balance between community safety and the least restrictive conditions reasonable for that particular offender.

Using the above information about parole and the vignette you read, please answer the following questions.

1. Would you grant this offender parole?

No, I would not grant this offender parole.

Yes, with standard conditions listed above.

Yes, with standard conditions listed above plus other conditions (choose below and select all that apply).

2. How confident are you in your decision?

Please rate your level of confidence in having made the most appropriate release decision.

<input type="checkbox"/>										
0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Appendix F**Additional Conditions List**

1. Can only live in Parole Board approved housing
2. Cannot live in home community
3. Cannot use or possess alcohol
4. Cannot use or possess cannabis
5. Cannot use any illicit drug or prescription drugs for which he does not have a prescription in his name
6. Must participate in a community substance use program (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous) by attending a meeting at least once a week
7. Must participate in psychological counselling at least once a week
8. Must have a random urinalysis test at least once a month, and must come up clean (no drugs in their system)
9. No driving
10. Must participate in parenting or healthy/ respectful relationships class
11. Must participate in anger management class
12. Cannot have contact with the victim
13. Cannot have contact with co-accused
14. Must report any changes in their relationship status (familial, friend, romantic) to parole officer
15. Must report any changes in employment status to parole officer
16. Must report any changes in living situation to parole officer
17. Cannot access a cell phone

- 18. Cannot access a computer
- 19. Cannot access internet
- 20. Cannot be within 100 meters of areas where children are present
- 21. Can only have supervised visitation with their children
- 22. Must complete grade 12 education
- 23. Cannot leave the country
- 24. Must have a limited number of bank accounts
- 25. Must report all financial transactions to parole officer upon request
- 26. Must wear an electric monitoring device at all times
- 27. Must abide by a curfew- must be present in approved housing from 11pm to 7am
- 28. Other (please specify)

- 1. Why would you make this parole decision? If you have chosen any extra conditions, please tell us why you think these conditions are important.
- 2. How confident are you in your decision?

Please rate your level of confidence in having made the most appropriate release decision.

<input type="checkbox"/>										
0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Appendix G**Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS; Everett, 2013).**

“How positive or negative do you feel about each issue on the scale of 0 to 100, where 0 represents very negative, and 100 represents very positive”.

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

1. Abortion.
2. Welfare benefits (reverse scored).
3. Limited government.
4. Military and national security.
5. Religion.
6. Gun ownership.
7. Traditional marriage.
8. Traditional values.
9. Fiscal responsibility.
10. Business.
11. The family unit.
12. Patriotism.

Appendix H**Indigenous Resentment Scale (IRS; Beauvais, 2021).**

Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement by selecting one of the following options.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

1. Aboriginals are getting too demanding in their push for land rights.
2. More must be done to protect Aboriginal languages (reverse scored).
3. Aboriginals get unfair tax breaks.
4. Irish, Jewish, Chinese, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Aboriginals should do the same without any special favours.
5. The government does not show enough respect toward Aboriginals (reverse scored).
6. Aboriginal activists are making reasonable demands (reverse scored).
7. Aboriginal get more favours from the education system than they should have.

Appendix I

Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR v. 6; Paulhus, 1988).

“Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not true			Somewhat true			Very True

1. My first impressions of people usually turn out to be right. (+)
2. It would be hard for me to break any of my bad habits. (-)
3. I don't care to know what other people really think of me. (+)
4. I have not always been honest with myself. (-)
5. I always know why I think things. (+)
6. When my emotions are aroused, it biases my thinking. (-)
7. Once I've made up my mind, other people can seldom change my opinion. (+)
8. I am not a safe driver when I exceed the speed limit. (-)
9. I am fully in control of my own fate. (+)
10. It's hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought. (-)
11. I never regret my decisions. (+)
12. I sometimes lose out on things because I can't make up my mind soon enough. (-)
13. The reason I vote is because my vote can make a difference. (+)

14. My parents were not always fair when they punished me. (-)
15. I am a completely rational person. (+)
16. I rarely appreciate criticism. (-)
17. I am very confident of my judgements. (+)
18. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover. (-)
19. It's all right with me if some people happen to dislike me. (+)
20. I don't always know the reasons why I do the things I do. (-)
21. I sometimes tell lies if I have to. (-)
22. I never cover up my mistakes. (+)
23. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone. (-)
24. I never swear. (+)
25. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. (-)
26. I always obey laws, even if I'm unlikely to get caught. (+)
27. I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back. (-)
28. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening. (+)
29. I have received too much change from a salesperson without telling him or her. (-)
30. I always declare everything at customs. (+)
31. When I was young I sometimes stole things. (-)

32. I have never dropped litter on the street. (+)

33. I sometimes drive faster than the speed limit. (-)

34. I never read sexy books or magazines. (+)

35. I have done things that I don't tell other people about. (-)

36. I never take things that don't belong to me. (+)

37. I have taken sick-leave from work or school even though I wasn't reporting it. (-)

38. I have never damaged a library book or store merchandise without reporting it. (+)

39. I have some pretty awful habits. (-)

40. I don't gossip about other people's business. (+)

Appendix J**Participant Demographics**

Attention check: What was the ethnicity of the offender whose parole you were considering?

- White
- Black
- Indigenous
- Other

1. What is your age?

2. What is your gender?

Male/ Female/ Non-Binary/ Prefer not to answer

3. How would you describe your ethnicity?

White/ Asian or Asian Canadian/ Black or Black Canadian/ Hispanic or Latinx/ Arab/

Indigenous/ Mixed/ Other/ Prefer not to answer

4. What is your highest level of education completed?

High school/ Some college or university/ Undergraduate degree/ College or specialized diploma/

Some post-baccalaureate/ Graduate degree (post-baccalaureate)

Appendix K

Parallel Data Analyses Filtered for Successful Manipulation Checks

Table 16

Offender Race and Parole Decision- Overall

Condition	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Offender race	.001 [-.470, .537]	.605	1.001	1.656	.997

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

$R^2 = .000$ (Cox-Snell), $.000$ (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .000$, $p = .997$.

^aParameter is redundant

Table 17*Offender Race and Parole Decision- Dichotomous*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Grant vs. Deny ^a					
Offender Race	-.157 [-.900, .515]	.428	.855	1.708	.657
Grant with standard conditions vs. additional conditions ^b					
Offender Race	.146 [-.447, .774]	.631	1.157	2.123	.637

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a $R^2 = .001$ (Cox-Snell), .001 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .198$, $p = .656$.

^b $R^2 = .001$ (Cox-Snell), .002 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .224$, $p = .636$.

Table 18*Social Economic Conservatism and Parole Decision- Overall*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Conservatism					
SECS score	.000 [-.002, .001]	.998	1.000	1.001	.681

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

$R^2 = .001$ (Cox-Snell), .001 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .162, p = .687$.

^aParameter is redundant

Table 19*Social Economic Conservatism and Parole Decision- Dichotomous*

	<i>b</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio			<i>p</i>
		<i>LL</i>	Odds Ratio	<i>UL</i>	
Grant vs. Deny ^a					
SECS score	-.001 [-.004, .001]	.997	.999	1.001	.189
Grant with standard conditions vs. additional conditions ^b					
SECS score	.001 [-.001, .003]	.999	1.001	1.002	.384

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a $R^2 = .008$ (Cox-Snell), .013 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = 1.762, p = .184$.

^b $R^2 = .004$ (Cox-Snell), .006 (Nagelkerke). Model $\chi^2(1) = .763, p = .382$.

Table 20*Social Conservatism Subscale and Parole Decision Correlations*

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. SCSS	217	392.35	126.65	-
2. Parole decision- Overall ^a	219	2.13	.69	-.014
3. Parole decision- Grant or Deny ^b	219	1.82	.39	-.062
4. Parole decision- Grant, with standard conditions or additional conditions ^c	179	1.38	.49	.061

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant, with additional conditions. 3 = Grant, with standard conditions.

^b Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant (with standard conditions and additional conditions).

^c Where 1 = Grant, with additional conditions. 2 = Grant, with standard conditions.

Table 21*Economic Conservatism Subscale and Parole Decision Correlations*

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. ECSS	218	232.75	79.91	-
2. Parole decision- Overall	219	2.13	.69	-.057
3. Parole decision- Grant or Deny	219	1.82	.39	-.097
4. Parole decision- Grant, with standard conditions or additional conditions	179	1.38	.49	.032

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant, with additional conditions. 3 = Grant, with standard conditions.

^b Where 1 = Deny. 2 = Grant (with standard conditions and additional conditions).

^c Where 1 = Grant, with additional conditions. 2 = Grant, with standard conditions.

Table 22*Additional Conditions Frequencies*

Additional	Selected		Not Selected	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Parole Board approve housing	55	49.5	56	50.5
Cannot live in home community	12	10.8	99	89.2
Cannot use or possess alcohol	82	73.9	29	26.1
Cannot use or possess cannabis	51	45.9	60	54.1
Cannot use any illicit drug or prescription drugs	68	61.3	43	38.7
Must participate in a community substance use program	62	55.9	49	44.1
Must participate in psychological counselling	58	52.3	53	47.7
Must submit a random urinalysis test at least once a month	48	43.2	63	56.8
No driving	22	19.8	89	80.2

Must participate in parenting or healthy/respectful relationship class	15	13.5	96	86.5
Must participate in anger management class	12	10.8	99	89.2
Cannot have contact with the victim	70	63.1	41	36.9
Cannot have contact with the co-accused	79	71.2	32	28.8
Must report any changes in employment status	67	60.4	44	39.6
Must report any changes in their relationship status	24	21.6	87	78.4
Must report any changes in living situation	66	59.5	45	40.5
Cannot access a cell phone	14	12.6	97	87.4
Cannot access a computer	18	16.2	93	83.8
Cannot access internet	26	23.4	85	76.6
Cannot be within 100 meters of areas where children are present	8	7.2	103	92.8

Can only have supervised visitation with their children	8	7.2	103	92.8
Must complete grade 12 education	9	8.1	102	91.9
Cannot leave the country	51	45.9	60	54.1
Have a limited number of bank accounts	68	61.3	43	38.7
Must report all financial transactions	78	70.3	33	29.7
Must wear an electric monitoring device	24	21.6	87	78.4
Must abide by a curfew	39	35.1	72	64.9
Other	1	0.9	108	99.1

Note. $N = 111$ participants chose to grant parole with additional conditions.

Table 23*Additional Conditions Correlation*

	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1.	Number of additional conditions	219	5.18	6.24	-
2.	Offender race	219	-	-	-.081
3.	SCSS	217	392.35	126.65	.051
4.	ECSS	218	232.75	79.91	-.048
5.	SECS	218	623.30	183.28	.015
6.	IRS	219	21.57	6.12	-.126

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

^a Out of possible 28 additional conditions.

Table 24*Indigenous Resentment, Parole Decisions, and Conservatism Correlations*

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1
1. IRS	219	21.57	6.12	
2. SCSS	217	392.35	126.65	.234***
3. ECSS	218	232.75	79.91	.446***
4. SECS	218	623.30	183.28	.353***

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Appendix L**Recruitment Blurb**

Hello! What do you think about parole decision-making? We invite you to complete this survey on the attitudes and opinions of Canadians on parole decision-making and let us know your opinion! This survey is open to Canadian citizen or Permanent Residents 18 years or over and is estimated to take approximately 20 minutes.

Appendix M

Online Recruitment Poster



Share your thoughts with us on Canadian Parole Decision-Making!

**Have you ever thought about parole in
Canada?**

**Have you ever wondered how you would
make the decision to grant or deny
parole?**

**Are you 18+ years old, and either a
Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident?**

**If so, join us in sharing your thoughts and
opinions by completing short survey (10 -
15 min), and be entered into a draw to
win one of two 50\$ Amazon gift cards!**

**Check it out! Scan this code or go
to this link:** [https://smuniversity.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/
SV_2crDycMX11r5cEu](https://smuniversity.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2crDycMX11r5cEu)

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REB File #22-020



Appendix N

Informed Consent Form (SONA)

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making
SMU REB File Number

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Introduction

Hello! I am a graduate student at Saint Mary's University (SMU), Halifax, Nova Scotia, and I am collecting data for my Master's Thesis under the supervision of Dr. Meg Ternes.

We invite you to take part in a study investigating the attitudes and opinions of Canadians on parole decision-making. We hope that the results from this study can indicate what Canadians find most important to consider when making parole decisions, and why.

Please note your involvement in this study is completely voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish and you can stop participating at any time should you decide this study is not for you.

Who is eligible to take part?

To participate, you must currently be either a Canadian Citizen, or a Permanent Resident of Canada, and must be 18 years or older. If you are not a Canadian Citizen/ Permanent Resident and 18 years or older, we appreciate your interest, but the question of this study likely does not apply to your current circumstances.

What does participating mean?

If you choose to participate, we will ask you to read a vignette (a short story), and then measure your attitudes towards the vignette on a number of ranked scales and open questions. The entire study will include four (4) measures and a short demographic questionnaire.

In its entirety, this study will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. This survey is done online through Qualtrics, and you will be able to be complete at a time and place that is convenient for you. Additionally, there is no time limit for completion allowing for breaks when needed. However, the survey must be completed in one sitting as once you close the online window, you cannot return to the study.

What are the potential benefits of this research?

As offender conditional release (e.g. parole) often involves the community, it is important to understand how the average Canadian feels about parole. By participating in this study, you can help in the study of how Canadians approach parole decision-making, and help to find common factors that Canadians deem important in parole decision-making. This research will contribute to

the overall good of Canada by learning more about attitudes and opinions on the conditional release of Federal offenders.

What are the potential risks for participants?

The study focuses on a fictional non-violent offender, thus there is a risk that the study may invoke some difficult emotions for someone with an unpleasant history with corrections or was a victim of fraud in the past. Should you wish to skip a question, you will have the ability to do so by selecting the “prefer not to answer” option on the question page. You also have the ability to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. Additionally, this survey will take approximately 20 minutes so there is a risk of fatigue. The responses are not timed so breaks are allowed while completing the survey.

What will be done with my information?

The study will be conducted via Qualtrics, a survey platform that has a server located in Canada. Qualtrics collects IP Addresses of participants which can be considered identifying information. However, IP Addresses will be removed from our dataset after initial accuracy checks are completed.

The data will be stored on a cloud-based password-protected server and/or on password protected computers. We plan on keeping the data for as long as we think we may need it, and at least five years after the results are published. Only members of the research team will have access to the data, but we may share the data with other scholars or journal editors.

Once all the data is collected and analyzed for this project, we plan on sharing this information with the research community through conferences, presentations, and academic papers. We expect to share our results by September 2022.

What type of compensation is available for participation?

This survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. To compensate for your time, you will receive .5 bonus course points via SONA for an eligible course.

Can I withdraw from this study?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty by closing your internet browser. However, the Qualtrics program saves partial or previously submitted data which may still be used by researchers. There is no penalty for withdrawing; if you choose to withdraw early, you will receive .5 course bonus points as compensation for your time.

How can I get more information?

You should feel free to ask any member of the research team if you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study. For any ethical questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of the SMU Research Ethics board (ethics@smu.ca).

Research participant rights and protection:

The Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board has reviewed this research with the guidance of the TCPS 2 based on three core principles: Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare and Justice. If you have any questions or concerns at any time about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact ethics@smu.ca or 902-420-5728.

- I understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits, and that by consenting I agree to take part in this research study and do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can end my participation at any time without penalty.
- I have had adequate time to think about the research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Please click “yes” to continue

Appendix O

Informed Consent Form (TurkPrime)

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making

SMU REB File Number

A. Bruce, & Dr. M. Ternes.

Psychology Department

Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Phone #: (902) 240-5853; Email address: meg.ternes@smu.ca or alice.bruce@smu.ca

Introduction

Hello! I am a graduate student at Saint Mary's University (SMU), Halifax, Nova Scotia, and I am collecting data for my Master's Thesis under the supervision of Dr. Meg Ternes.

We invite you to take part in a study investigating the attitudes and opinions of Canadians on parole decision-making. We hope that the results from this study can indicate what Canadians find most important to consider when making parole decisions, and why.

Please note your involvement in this study is completely voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish and you can stop participating at any time should you decide this study is not for you.

Who is eligible to take part?

To participate, you must currently be either a Canadian Citizen, or a Permanent Resident of Canada, and must be 18 years or older. If you are not a Canadian Citizen/ Permanent Resident, and 18 years or older, we appreciate your interest, but the question of this study likely does not apply to your current circumstances.

What does participating mean?

If you choose to participate, we will ask you to read a vignette (a short story), and then measure your attitudes towards the vignette on a number of ranked scales and open questions. The entire study will include four (4) measures and a short demographic questionnaire.

In its entirety, this study will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. This survey is done online through Qualtrics, and you will be able to be complete at a time and place that is convenient for you. Additionally, there is no time limit for completion allowing for breaks when needed. However, the survey must be completed in one sitting as once you close the online window, you cannot return to the study.

What are the potential benefits of this research?

As offender conditional release (e.g. parole) often involves the community, it is important to understand how the average Canadian feels about parole. By participating in this study, you can help in the study of how Canadians approach parole decision-making, and help to find common

factors that Canadians deem important in parole decision-making. This research will contribute to the overall good of Canada by learning more about attitudes and opinions on the conditional release of Federal offenders.

What are the potential risks for participants?

The study focuses on a fictional non-violent offender, thus there is a risk that the study may invoke some difficult emotions for someone with an unpleasant history with corrections or was a victim of fraud in the past. Should you wish to skip a question, you will have the ability to do so by selecting the “prefer not to answer” option on the question page. You also have the ability to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. Additionally, this survey will take approximately 20 minutes so there is a risk of fatigue. The responses are not timed so breaks are allowed while completing the survey.

What will be done with my information?

The study will be conducted via Qualtrics, a survey platform that has a server located in Canada. Qualtrics collects IP Addresses of participants which can be considered identifying information. However, IP Addresses will be removed from our dataset after initial accuracy checks are completed.

The data will be stored on a cloud-based password-protected server and/or on password protected computers. We plan on keeping the data for as long as we think we may need it. Only members of the research team will have access to the data, but we may share the data with other scholars or journal editors.

Once all the data is collected and analyzed for this project, we plan on sharing this information with the research community through conferences, presentation, and academic papers. We expect to share our results by September 2022.

What type of compensation is available for participation?

This survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. To compensate for your time, you will receive \$1.25 for completing the survey, plus a bonus of \$0.50 if you correctly respond to all of the attention checks, for a potential total of \$1.75.

Can I withdraw from this study?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty by closing your internet browser. However, the Qualtrics program saves partial or previously submitted data which may still be used by researchers. There is no penalty for withdrawing; if you choose to withdraw early, you will receive \$1.25 as compensation for your time, plus an extra \$0.50 if you’ve correctly responded to all of the attention checks.

How can I get more information?

You should feel free to ask any member of the research team if you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study. For any ethical questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of the SMU Research Ethics board (ethics@smu.ca).

Research participant rights and protection:

The Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board has reviewed this research with the guidance of the TCPS 2 based on three core principles: Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare and

Justice. If you have any questions or concerns at any time about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact ethics@smu.ca or 902-420-5728.

- I understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits, and that by consenting I agree to take part in this research study and do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can end my participation at any time without penalty.
- I have had adequate time to think about the research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Please click “yes” to continue

Appendix P

Informed Consent Form (Online Recruitment)

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making

SMU REB #22-020

A. Bruce, & Dr. M. Ternes.
Psychology Department
Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3
Phone #: (902) 240-5853; Email address: meg.ternes@smu.ca or alice.bruce@smu.ca

Introduction

Hello! I am a graduate student at Saint Mary's University (SMU), Halifax, Nova Scotia, and I am collecting data for my Master's Thesis under the supervision of Dr. Meg Ternes.

We invite you to take part in a study investigating the attitudes and opinions of Canadians on parole decision-making. We hope that the results from this study can indicate what Canadians find most important to consider when making parole decisions, and why.

Please note your involvement in this study is completely voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish and you can stop participating at any time should you decide this study is not for you.

Who is eligible to take part?

To participate, you must currently be either a Canadian Citizen, or a Permanent Resident of Canada, and must be 18 years or older. If you are not a Canadian Citizen/ Permanent Resident, and 18 years or older, we appreciate your interest, but the question of this study likely does not apply to your current circumstances.

What does participating mean?

If you choose to participate, we will ask you to read a vignette (a short story), and then measure your attitudes towards the vignette on a number of ranked scales and open questions. The entire study will include four (4) measures and a short demographic questionnaire.

In its entirety, this study will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. This survey is done online through Qualtrics, and you will be able to be complete at a time and place that is convenient for you. Additionally, there is no time limit for completion allowing for breaks when needed. However, the survey must be completed in one sitting as once you close the online window, you cannot return to the study.

What are the potential benefits of this research?

As offender conditional release (e.g. parole) often involves the community, it is important to understand how the average Canadian feels about parole. By participating in this study, you can help in the study of how Canadians approach parole decision-making, and help to find common

factors that Canadians deem important in parole decision-making. This research will contribute to the overall good of Canada by learning more about attitudes and opinions on the conditional release of Federal offenders.

What are the potential risks for participants?

The study focuses on a fictional non-violent offender, thus there is a risk that the study may invoke some difficult emotions for someone with an unpleasant history with corrections or was a victim of fraud in the past. Should you wish to skip a question, you will have the ability to do so by selecting the “prefer not to answer” option on the question page. You also have the ability to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. Additionally, this survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes so there is a risk of fatigue. The responses are not timed so breaks are allowed while completing the survey.

What will be done with my information?

The study will be conducted via Qualtrics, a survey platform that has a server located in Canada. Qualtrics collects IP Addresses of participants which can be considered identifying information. However, IP Addresses will be removed from our dataset after initial accuracy checks are completed.

The data will be stored on a cloud-based password-protected server and/or on password protected computers. We plan on keeping the data for as long as we think we may need it. The email list generated for the draws will be stored on secure servers and will be securely destroyed once the draws are complete. Only members of the research team will have access to the data, but we may share the data with other scholars or journal editors.

Once all the data is collected and analyzed for this project, we plan on sharing this information with the research community through conferences, presentation, and academic papers. We expect to share our results by September 2022.

What type of compensation is available for participation?

This survey takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. To compensate for your time, you will receive an entry in a draw to win one of two \$50.00 Amazon gift cards. Should you like to enter the draw, there will be a question at the end of the survey about what email to contact you with should you win the draw. This email will not be used or shared outside this purpose.

Can I withdraw from this study?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty by closing your internet browser. However, the Qualtrics program saves partial or previously submitted data which may still be used by researchers.

How can I get more information?

You should feel free to ask any member of the research team if you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study. For any ethical questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of the SMU Research Ethics board (ethics@smu.ca).

Research participant rights and protection:

The Saint Mary’s University Research Ethics Board has reviewed this research with the guidance of the TCPS 2 based on three core principles: Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare and

Justice. If you have any questions or concerns at any time about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact ethics@smu.ca or 902-420-5728.

- I understand what this study is about, appreciate the risks and benefits, and that by consenting I agree to take part in this research study and do not waive any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can end my participation at any time without penalty.
- I have had adequate time to think about the research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Please click “yes” to continue

Appendix Q

Feedback Letter (SONA)

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making
SMU REB File # 22-020
A. Bruce, & Dr. M. Ternes
Saint Mary's University
Department of Graduate Studies
Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3
Phone: (226) 377-6195; Email: alice.bruce@smu.ca
Phone: (902) 420-5853; Email: meg.ternes@smu.ca

Dear participant,

We would like to thank you for your participation in this study. As was stated in the consent form, we are interested in your opinions and attitudes on parole decision-making. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to measure the attitudes and opinions on parole decision-making of Canadians to get better insight into potential racial and political bias. The intention to measure racial and political bias was not stated in the consent form as it could have pressured participants to answer the survey questions in a way that they thought was expected of them, which would have made the data harder to use. The data collected in this survey will contribute to a better understanding of bias that can lead to decision disparity between offenders of different races.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant-such as computer IP addresses- will be kept confidential and will be removed entirely from our dataset after initial accuracy checks are complete. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, we plan on sharing our results with the research community through conferences, presentations, and academic journals. Only group data will be presented and no individual participants will be identified.

The project is expected to be completed in September 2022. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, you can also contact members of the research team at the email addresses listed at the bottom of the page.

Should you experience any negative outcomes as a result of this study, please reach out to Dr. Meg Ternes by phone (902-420-5853) or by email (meg.ternes@smu.ca) immediately. Further, if needed, please reach out to SMU's Counselling Services. They can be accessed by phone (902-420-5615), email (counselling@smu.ca), or by visiting their office located on 4th floor Student Centre.

As with all Saint Mary's University projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at 902-420- 5728 or ethics@smu.ca.

Thank you,

The Research Team

Alice Bruce, alice.bruce@smu.ca

Meg Ternes, meg.ternes@smu.ca

Appendix R

Feedback Letter (TurkPrime and Reddit)

Racial and Political Bias in Parole Decision-Making
SMU REB File # 22-020
A. Bruce, & Dr. M. Ternes
Saint Mary's University
Department of Graduate Studies
Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3
Phone: (226) 377-6195; Email: alice.bruce@smu.ca
Phone: (902) 420-5853; Email: meg.ternes@smu.ca

Dear participant,

We would like to thank you for your participation in this study. As was stated in the consent form, we are interested in your opinions and attitudes on parole decision-making. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to measure the attitudes and opinions on parole decision-making of Canadians to get better insight into potential racial and political bias. The intention to measure racial and political bias was not stated in the consent form as it could have pressured participants to answer the survey questions in a way that they thought was expected of them, which would have made the data harder to use. The data collected in this survey will contribute to a better understanding of bias that can lead to decision disparity between offenders of different races.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant-such as computer IP addresses- will be kept confidential and will be removed entirely from our dataset after initial accuracy checks are complete. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, we plan on sharing our results with the research community through conferences, presentations, and academic journals. Only group data will be presented and no individual participants will be identified.

The project is expected to be completed in September 2022. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding this study, or if you have any questions or concerns, you can also contact members of the research team at the email addresses listed at the bottom of the page.

Should you experience any negative outcomes as a result of this study, please reach out to Dr. Meg Ternes by phone (902-420-5853) or by email (meg.ternes@smu.ca) immediately. Further, if needed, please reach out to the appropriate telehealth number for your province/ territory as listed below.

As with all Saint Mary's University projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about ethical matters or would like to discuss your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at 902-420- 5728 or ethics@smu.ca.

Thank you,

The Research Team

Alice Bruce, alice.bruce@smu.ca

Meg Ternes, meg.ternes@smu.ca

Provincial Crisis Lines

BC: 310- 6789	ON: (866) 531- 2600	PEI: (800) 218- 2885	NU: (800) 265- 3333
AB: (877) 303-2642	QU: (866) 277- 3553	NF: (888) 737- 4668	
SA: 811	NB: (506) 450- 4357	YU: (867) 668-6429	CAN : (833) 456- 4566
MB: (877) 435- 7170	NS: (888) 429- 8167	NWT: (800) 661- 0844	