

Project Deliverable 0

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Deviance or Deservingness? Opioids, Morality, and Economic Precarity	
Contact	Heather Mooney hmooney@bu.edu
Organization	Boston University - Sociology Department
Organization Description	Sociology, broadly, looks at how macro-level systems, institutions, and ideologies shape life outcomes for individuals and groups. In this project, I explore how the ongoing opioid crisis, which has killed over 760,000 people since 1999, impacts support people and care workers.
Project Type	Data Science
Project Description	<p>For this portion of the research, I analyze crowdfunded campaigns hosted on GoFundMe posted from 2010-2020. Using a variety of keywords, I explore campaigns related to drug-use and overdose to explore how competing frames of drug use and addiction change over time. In addition to exploring how race and gender impact framing and campaign success, I also explore the different relational, moral, and affective appeals that are made to potential donors online.</p> <p>An estimated 10.3 million people aged 12 or older misused opioids in 2017. 9.9 million people misused prescription pain relievers and 808,000 people used heroin. I hope this will be available to them and their networks, amplifying the impact significantly.</p> <p>This project has both policy implications and theoretical promise. Given the long-reaching effects of COVID-19 and the ongoing opioid crisis (which has been overshadowed by and accelerating since COVID-19 began), it will be important to understand how death, loss, and need are constructed by supporting people in times of (layered) crisis. This research represents a case to explore how morality and deservingness change over time and across populations. More broadly, my dissertation explores the “intersections” of social control and “rehabilitative poverty governance.” This project provides concrete benefits by centralizing the experiences of care workers and support people--who are often on the “front lines” of service delivery--in order to further improve existing recommendations, policy, and programming.</p>
Data Sets	<p>N/A - I have been hand coding so I can share that, but not sure how useful it will be.</p> <p>GoFundMe data - campaign keyword search. Examples of keywords include:</p> <p>Opiate Opioid Addiction Addict Heroin</p>

	<p>Pain medication Pain medicine Pain killer(s) Drugs Overdose Dependency Demon Recovery Rehabilitation Rehab Fentanyl Unexpectedly Suddenly Epidemic Battle War</p> <p>*focusing on the words in bold first, to narrow our project scope</p>
Suggested Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scrape data from GoFundMe from 2010 - 2020 using a variety of keywords with a strategy to optimize the number of relevant campaigns we extract data for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There may be limitations to getting all data from 2010 to 2020, so a potential alternative we thought of is to break down the years into beginning (2010-2012) - middle (2015-17) - present (2019-2020) 2. Max 300 campaigns per year, all United States postings 3. Include photo data, campaign information, wall posting, and photo information 4. Include social media tagging and relevant pages 5. Clean data (filter out international & repeated campaign) 6. Devise a data visualization tactic to illustrate patterns & findings
Questions to be answered in Analysis	<p>I'm trying to understand how a contested social phenomenon - drug use - is framed as deviant (moral failing) or deserving (medical condition) to a wide audience, and how that stigma changes over time. Particularly, I am interested in how this paradoxical problem is framed in relation to need in times of economic precarity and minimal financial/institutional support.</p> <p>Is drug use a criminal act in need of control, or is it a medicalized condition in need of care? What is construed as deviancy versus deserving of support? How is financial need for stigmatized conditions (ranging from rehabilitation services to memorial/funeral costs) framed, and how does that vary across time and by population?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is success of a campaign determined by humanizing descriptions/components, race/status of the victim and who is writing the campaign, social media interaction, etc.? • What do we use to define a successful campaign and why?

Additional Information	<p>Tools and Methods</p> <p>For scraping - Scrapy and Selenium webdriver (for searching GoFundMe and finding relevant campaigns), and BeautifulSoup (for scraping actual campaign data).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential reference: https://github.com/Imeninato/GoFundMe <p>For cleaning and preprocessing use Pandas to organize the dataset into dataframes for faster computation.</p> <p>Data visualization libraries such as Matplotlib, Seaborn, and Bokeh (interactive web-integratable visualizations).</p>
Limitations / Potential Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting all components associated with a campaign (namely connected social media, applicable memorial pages & attached photos) may prove difficult • Since this a new project, we would have to scrape data ourselves before data analysis could be done which means that data analysis would have to take place later in the semester than expected • Because Selenium takes over the user's computer, it may require a lot of time to gather data which could prevent the owner of the computer from using their device for prolonged periods of time. In this case, we may need to look into using another device or remote access • GoFundMe does not appear to have a way of filtering results by year, so it may prove difficult to get data from GoFundMe campaigns that go all the way back to 2010
Questions for Client	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much data is sufficient to start (i.e., for each time period how much should we collect at first?) 2. Differences between content analysis & selective discourse analysis? 3. Since many of the GoFundMe campaigns are not explicit when it comes to disclosing opioid addiction, how would we know that campaigns being scraped are associated with opioid/drug addiction and are relevant to the study? 4. Is it possible to reach out to GoFundMe to inquire about gaining access to data related to our project?