

# Policing 'Vancouver's mental health crisis':

## A critical discourse analysis

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MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA, POLICING, DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE, VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

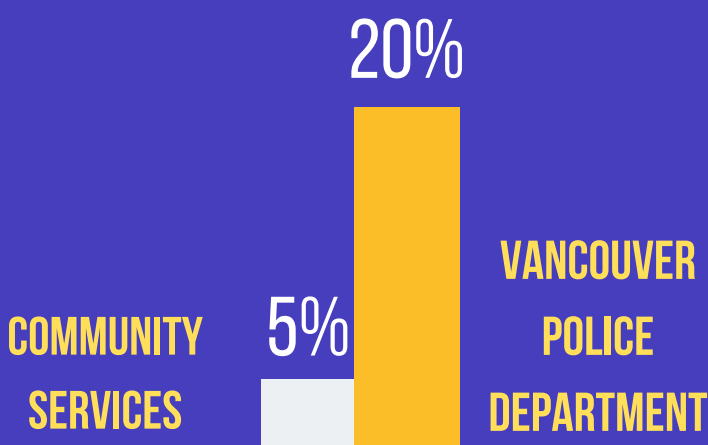


### Context

- The first article to critically examine the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) reports on mental health in Vancouver.
- Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) is home to a disproportionate number of people living in poverty and with mental illness.
- VPD plays an important role in framing "the mental health crisis" in the DTES, which has policy implications.
- Reports by the VPD may contribute to the DTES being stigmatized by the media and police.

**The VPD reports on the DTES perpetuate the idea of mental illness as dangerous, which furthers stigma.**

### 2014 VANCOUVER BUDGET



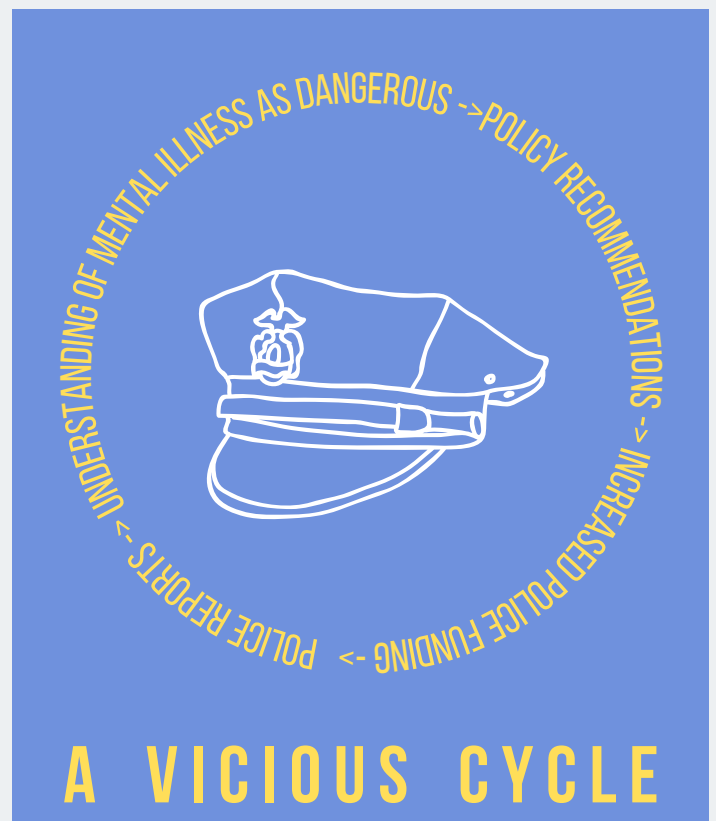
### CALLS RELATED TO MENTAL ILLNESS

#### ACCORDING TO POLICE



### Study's Findings

- The authors argue that the VPD are too often trusted as a reliable source of information and data by policy-makers, but this study calls their reliability into question.
- The VPD reports contain no input from DTES residents.
- Police reports contribute to calls for increased surveillance rather than bettering the lives of people living with mental illness.
- The authors argue that supporting community-based mental health services and affordable housing is more effective than increased policing.



Infographic by Kayla Lowe, Dana Puli, Carolyn Chow, Anya McKercher, and Mary Fowler

This undergraduate student work is a product of a collaboration between the Making Research Accessible initiative (MRAi), researchers, Dr. Kirby Manià and the students of ASTU 100 at UBC. This student work has been reviewed by the lead author of the original item. Revisions provided by the lead author have been incorporated into the student work with support from the UBC Learning Exchange and members of the MRAi. The reader should bear in mind that this is a student research project/report and is not an official document of UBC.

Summary by Ann George, Haley Albrecht, Wanjun Brown, Ananya Vishwanath, Élodie Tremblay, and Dylan MacDonald