# Leah A. Ouellet

Northwestern University | School of Education and Social Policy
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*Areas of expertise:* punishment, criminal justice policy, policy reform, criminal legal decision-making, adolescence & emerging adulthood, qualitative methods

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2026-Present **Assistant Professor (incoming)**
Rutgers University, Newark, NJ
School of Criminal Justice

## EDUCATION

2026 **Northwestern University,** Evanston, IL
School of Education and Social Policy
Human Development and Social Policy (HDSP), PhD (expected June 2026)

*Dissertation:* "Multilevel Analyses of Juvenile Life Without Parole and its Reform: Understanding the People, Places, And Politics that Shape Policy"

*Committee:* Simone Ispa-Landa (Chair, HDSP/Sociology)
Dan McAdams (HDSP/Psychology)
Quinn Mulroy (HDSP)
Christopher Seeds (Criminology, Law, & Society, UC Irvine)

2017 **Wayne State University,** Detroit, MI
Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology
Criminal Justice, MS

2013 **University of Michigan,** Ann Arbor, MI
Ford School of Public Policy
Public Policy, BA

## FELLOWSHIPS & FUNDING

2024-2026 **National Institute of Justice**
Graduate Research Fellowship ($166,500)

2024 **Community Foundation of Southeastern Michigan, Michigan Justice Fund**
Rapid Response Grant, "Just Poetry: A Community Conversation about Juvenile Life Without Parole in Michigan," ($7,000; role: event co-creator & organizer)

2022-2025 **Arnold Ventures Foundation**

"Second Chances: A National Outcomes Study of Safe and Equitable Decarceration Among People Serving Juvenile Life Without the Possibility of Parole," ($861,692; Title on grant application: Research Associate; Principal Investigator: Dr. Laura Abrams, UCLA)

2020-2023 **Institute for Education Sciences**
Graduate Training Fellowship ($144,000)

## REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

2025 **Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Abrams, L., Ward, J., Jackson, D., Turner, R., Bennet, J., Howard, R., & Xu, A. (forthcoming). "Understanding Variation in Juvenile Life Without Parole Legislation following *Miller*." *Criminology and Public Policy.* https://doi:10.1111/1745-9133.70011

2025 Nuamah, S., & **Ouellet, L.** Claiming Citizenship: The Political Labor of Black Women's Resistance. Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race, 1–21. https://doi:10.1017/S1742058X25100039

2024 Bennett, J., Brydon, D., Ward, J., Jackson, D., **Ouellet, L**., Turner, R., & Abrams, L. "In the Wake of *Miller* and *Montgomery*: A National View of People Sentenced to Juvenile Life Without Parole." *Journal of Criminal Justice, 93.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2024.102199

2024 Cowan, H., McAdams, D., **Ouellet, L.,** Jones, C., Mittal, V. "Self-concept and Narrative Identity in Individuals at Clinical High Risk for Psychosis." *Schizophrenia Bulletin, 50(4), 848-859*. https://doi.org/10.1093/schbul/sbad142

2023 Abrams, L., Canlione, K., **Ouellet, L.,** & Melillo, A. "Pathways to Freedom: The Evolution of the Parole Process for Youth Lifers in California." *The Journal of Qualitative Criminal Justice and Criminology, 13(1).* https://doi.org/10.21428/88de04a1.c6458869

2023 **Ouellet, L**. & Wareham, J. "Prosecutor Decision-Making Following Juvenile Life Without Parole Sentencing Reform." *Youth Violence & Juvenile Justice, 21(4).* https://doi.org/10.1177/15412040231173345

2019 Larson, M., Xu, Y., **Ouellet, L.,** & Klahm, C. "Exploring the Impact of 9,398 Demolitions on Neighborhood-Level Crime in Detroit, Michigan." *Journal of Criminal Justice, 60,* 57-63. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2018.11.002

## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Ture, S. Lam, P., **Ouellet, L.,** Simpson, A., Hassinen, K., McAdams, D.,

& Reischer, H. (R&R Submitted Nov. 2025) "Agency and Communion Across Nine Years of Middle Adulthood: Between- and Within-Person Associations with Psychological and Developmental Outcomes." *Journal of Adult Development*.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

2025 Mulvey, P., **Ouellet, L.,** McAdams, D. "Exploring the Foundations of Life Story and Narrative Research within Criminal Legal Lived Experience Scholarship." In *Division on Corrections and Sentencing Handbook: Lessons from Lived Experience (Vol. 10)*. Eds. Wright, K., Fader, J., LeBel, T., Dum, C.

2024 Jackson, D., Abrams, L., Brydon, D., Bennett, J. & Ward, J., **Ouellet, L.,** & Turner, R. "Examining the Health of People Serving Juvenile Life Without the Possibility of Parole: Setting a Research Agenda." In *Division on Corrections and Sentencing Handbook: Contemporary Issues in Health and Punishment (Vol. 9).* Eds Fahmy, C., Novisky, M., Link, N. Routledge.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

**Ouellet, L.** "The Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood for Youth Sentenced to Life Without Parole."

Ward, J., Jackson, D., Bennett, J.Z., **Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Turner, R., Abrams, L. "Examining Equitable Decarceration of Individuals Sentenced to JLWOP in the United States."

**Ouellet, L**., Brydon, D., Abrams, L., Turner, R., Ward, J., Bennet, J, & Jackson, D. "Codifying the Hallmark Features of Youth: Understanding How the *Miller* Factors Shape Sentencing Legislation."

## PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, & INVITED LECTURES

2025 **Ouellet, L**. "*Understanding How Courtroom Workgroups Across Counties Implement Juvenile Life-Without-Parole Reform."* Upcoming at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

**Ouellet, L.** "*The Rise of Juvenile Life Without Parole."* Invited Lecture, University of Michigan School of Social Work MSW Program.

Mulvey, P., **Ouellet, L.,** McAdams, D. *"Understanding Life Story and Narrative in Lived Experience Criminal Legal Scholarship."* Upcoming at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

**Ouellet, L.,** Ward, J., Brydon, D., Bennett, J.Z., Jackson, D., Turner, R., & Abrams, L. "*Understanding Resentencing and Release Outcomes Amongst Child-lifers Eligible for Sentence Review Following Miller*." Upcoming at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

Abrams, L., Brydon, D., **Ouellet, L.,** & Howard, R. "*Getting Past the Gate:*

*Navigating Administrative Hurdles to Conduct Research with Lifers*." Upcoming at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

Brydon, D., Bennett, J., Ward, J., Jackson, D., **Ouellet, L**., Turner, R., & Abrams, L. "*Adversity and Connectedness: Examining Social Support and Mental Health Among Incarcerated Lifers."* Upcoming at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC.

**Ouellet, L.** *"Juvenile Life Without Parole Reform and the Courtroom Workgroup: How the 'Hallmark Features of Youth' are Defined and Operationalized within Sentencing Courts' Decision-Making Processes."* Presented at the annual Law & Society Association meeting in Chicago, IL.

2024 **Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Turner, R., Abrams, L., Ward, J., Bennet, J, & Jackson, D. "*Mapping Juvenile Life without Parole Legislation throughout the United States*." Presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Public Policy Analysis & Management in National Harbor, MD.

**Ouellet, L.** "*The Rise of Juvenile Life Without Parole."* Invited Lecture, University of Michigan School of Social Work MSW Program.

Brydon, D., Bennett, J.Z., Abrams, L., **Ouellet, L.** "*Policy Impacts on Children Sentenced to Life Without Parole: A Three-State Case Study."* Presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Public Policy Analysis & Management in National Harbor, MD.

**Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Turner, R., Abrams, L., Ward, J., Bennet, J, & Jackson, D. "*Codifying the Hallmark Features of Youth: Understanding How the Miller Factors Shape Sentencing Legislation*." Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in San Francisco, CA.

Ward, J., Abrams, L., Jackson, D., Bennett, J.Z., **Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Turner, R. "*Examining Equitable Decarceration of Individuals Sentenced to JLWOP in the United States."* Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in San Francisco, CA.

**Ouellet, L**., Brydon, D., Turner, R., Abrams, L., Ward, J., Bennet, J, & Jackson, D. "*It's a State Thing: Mapping State-Level Policy Reform Across the United States Related to Juvenile Life Without Parole Sentencing*." Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Social Work Research in Washington, D.C.

2023 Bennett, J.Z., Brydon, D., Ward, J., Abrams, L., Jackson, D., **Ouellet, L.,** & Turner, R. "*Current Status of The Juvenile Lifer Population Post*-Miller *and* Montgomery*: Where Are They Now?*" Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Philadelphia, PA.

**Ouellet, L.,** Brydon, D., Turner, R., Abrams, L., Ward, J., Bennet, J, & Jackson, D. "*Mapping Juvenile Life without Parole Reform throughout the United States*." Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Philadelphia, PA.

2022 **Ouellet, L. "***Prosecutors and Sentencing Policy Reform: Understanding Prosecutor Decision-Making Following* Miller *and* Montgomery." Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Atlanta, GA.

2021 **Ouellet, L.** "*The Transition to Adulthood for Juvenile Lifers."* Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Chicago, IL.

2017 **Ouellet, L.** "*Resentencing Michigan's Juveniles Serving Life Without Parole: An Analysis of County Decisions."* Presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Philadelphia, PA.

Sutton, C., Herring, M., Lorentz, K., **Ouellet, L**., Saif, S., Hansen, D., Schyllander, A. "*Political Discourse Amongst Adolescents: Is it Still Gendered?"* Presented at the annual conference for the Michigan Political Science Association in Ypsilanti, MI.

**Ouellet, L**., Larson, M., Klahm, C. "*Razing Detroit: An Exploratory Analysis of the Impact of Concentrated Demolitions on Neighborhood-Level Crime And Disorder."* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences in Kansas City, MO.

2016 **Ouellet, L**., Smith, B., Klahm, C. "*Overstressing the Influence of Police Stress: A Review of the Evidence."* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology in New Orleans, LA.

## TEACHING

2024- 2025 Instructor of Record at Wayne State University
Undergraduate *Race, Crime, and Justice*

2022- 2023 Instructor of Record at Wayne State University
Undergraduate *Race, Crime, and Justice*

2021-2022 Teaching Assistant at Northwestern University
Undergraduate *Policymaking and Implementation*

Teaching Assistant at Northwestern University
Undergraduate *Field Methods*

2020- 2021 Teaching Assistant at Northwestern University
Undergraduate *Child and Adolescent Development*

2017- 2018 Instructor or Record at Wayne State University
Mixed undergraduate & graduate, *Special Topics in Criminal Justice: Art and Justice*

2016- 2017 Directed Study Supervisor at Wayne State University
Mixed undergraduate & graduate

Teaching Assistant at Wayne State University
Undergraduate *Introduction to Criminal Justice*

Teaching Assistant at Wayne State University
Undergraduate *Juvenile Delinquency*

**SERVICE & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

2017-2024 Co-Creator & Organizer of "Just Poetry: A Community-Based Event about Notions, Perceptions, and Experiences of Justice," annually held in Detroit, MI, to showcase different topics featuring criminal justice professionals and directly impacted poets

2021-2024 Brown Bag Committee at Northwestern University: Student representative coordinating departmental speaker series and professional development for peers

2020-2022 Graduate Student Advisory Council Member for the Northwestern Prison Education Program at Northwestern University

2015-2017 Learning Community Project Coordinator at Wayne State University:
Created and coordinated a day-long service project for undergraduates, involving over 100 students and eight different non-profit service locations in Detroit

**TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*"Publishing with Interview Data,"* Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis, Texas Tech University. Instructed by Heather Vough. June 2-June 5, 2025.

Research Practice Partnership with a regional school district. Report title: "*In-school Truancy at Franklin High,"* Principal Investigator: Simone Ispa-Landa., Spring 2023.

"*Grant Writing*" Multidisciplinary Program in Educational Sciences, Northwestern University. Instructed by Julie Cwikla. Nov. 4-5, 2021.

*"R: Regression Modeling"* Northwestern IT Research Computing Services, Northwestern University. August 9-13, 2021.

**AD HOC JOURNAL REVIEWER**

*American Journal of Criminal Justice*
*Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*
*Journal of Research on Crime and Delinquency*
*Journal of Adolescent Research*

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Society of Criminology
Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Law & Society Association