

# 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- **Assistant Professor (incoming)**  
Present 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.org/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.org/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*

## Ouellet CV

- 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