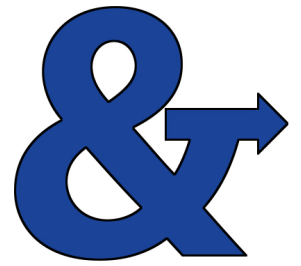


# DPOP NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024



ASC DIVISION OF

# Public Opinion & Policy

## Chair's Welcome

Hello everyone! I hope this Spring finds each of you doing well. DPOP continues to grow and evolve since our beginnings just a mere three years ago. This year DPOP held its first elections and welcomes three new executive board members, Alex Burton, Asminet Ling, and Jason Silver, and I am sure they will bring much innovation and excitement to DPOP. However, elections also mean people must step off the board. As such, I want to thank Frank Cullen, Justin Pickett, and Kevin Wozniak for their incredible service on the inaugural board. With their leadership, DPOP has continued to gain influence within ASC and grow to over 90 members.

This year we will continue to recognize and assist our members. As such, we will once again award our Young Scholar Award and Distinguished Scholar Award as well as select and fund the first Doctoral Student Survey winner. Look for calls for nominations this summer. Thank you all for the amazing work you do!

*Cheryl Lero Jonson*

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by Andrew Wheeler, PhD
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If you pull up a random data science job ad, you are likely to see a surfeit list of required technical skills and have no clue what they are: huggingface, pytorch, kubernetes, xgboost, EC2, streamlit – I could go on with weird tech software names and acronyms ad-nauseum. While this makes it seem like PhDs in the social science are not qualified for such positions, this is not true.

I currently work as a data scientist for a healthcare company; my day-to-day mostly involves writing python code to query databases and build predictive models related to processing healthcare claims. It also involves supervising junior data scientists and delivering presentations to business partners in the organization. It is really only a change in degree from the work I did as an academic, not in kind. For better or for worse, I do more PowerPoint© presentations as a data scientist than I did as an academic.

For individuals who focus on quantitative research, having a portfolio of your work (such as a GitHub repository showing your R code for your dissertation) makes you more qualified than the majority of data scientists whom I interview. There are certain skills that will make you a more attractive data science candidate on the margins, such as machine learning, but the basics of data analysis are the same for a research paper as they are for a private sector analyst job.

To be clear, I would not suggest a current PhD student intentionally alter their dissertation to staple in a machine learning project to make them more attractive for data science jobs. More the opposite perspective – predictive models are quite useful for many real-world situations, and you should consider that as a viable research area to study unto itself.

For those who do qualitative work (or those who do not want to pursue data-oriented jobs), there are additional career paths in the private sector. Being a project manager for a private sector company is no different than supervising students or managing a grant. And unlike being a professor, these positions at large companies have regular pay increases and multiple career progression paths.

To be successful in a dissertation requires immersion into your research field. Those skills you obtained while doing that dissertation though – being an independent researcher, data analysis, writing coherently, presenting your work – are all the same skills necessary to be successful in any technical job. If you can write a dissertation, trust me you can learn to write python code to download an NLP model from huggingface in short order.

For those interested in more resources and advice on private sector data science jobs, I suggest checking out my free to sign up and peruse Alt Academic newsletter, <https://crimede-coder.com/newsletter>. There I provide additional tips on learning more advanced skills, job searching advice, and have a running list of private and public sector jobs as exemplars of the types of opportunities that are available outside of traditional academic professor positions.

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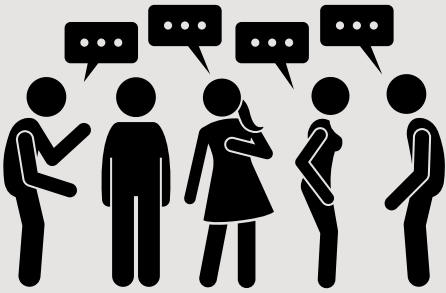
Dr. Wheeler received his doctoral degree in criminal justice from the University at Albany SUNY. His published work focuses on data applications in policing; predictive analytics, operation research, and policy analysis. He has collaborated with police departments across the United States, and currently runs a consulting firm, [CRIME De-Coder](#), in which he helps police departments with custom software and data analytics.

**Hey DPOP Member!**  
**Click [here](#) for Dr. Wheeler's Alt-Academic Job Listings!**

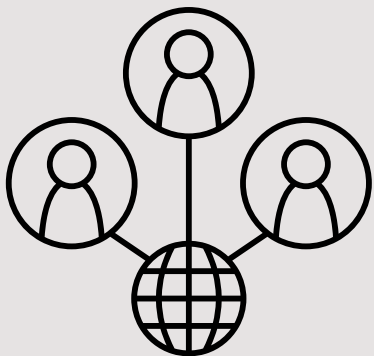
# Second Annual DPOP Social



WE HAD A MARVELOUS TIME AT  
STRANGELOVE'S



NETWORK  
CONNECT  
UNWIND



# Awards

2023 Young Scholar Awardee  
Colleen Berryessa

YOUNG  
SCHOLAR  
AWARD WINNER



COLLEEN BERRYESSA

*Congratulations*

DISTINGUISHED  
SCHOLAR  
AWARD WINNER



BRANDON APPLGATE

Inaugural Awardee for the 2023  
Distinguished Scholar Award  
Brandon Applegate

*Congratulations*

# Awards

**Congratulations, Rachel Silverthorn!**

Book Raffle Winner of  
Kevin Wozniak's  
*The Politics of Crime Prevention*



**Congratulations, Amanda Graham!**

Winner of the YouGov Survey  
Question Raffle



We sat down with lead author, **Dr. Alex Burton**, to discuss his research on prison officers' attitudinal schemas and academy training receptivity...

## What prompted your interest in this topic?

Several years ago, I learned that training in corrections is a significantly understudied area. By contrast, there are tens of studies that focus on police training. With this study, my interest was to see what impacts training efficacy at the individual level.

## Why is this issue important today?

Prisons are struggling to recruit and hire correctional officers. Some states have focused on "mission-based hiring," whereby individuals are targeted if their personal values align with those of the organizations. Our study finds preliminary evidence that officers' incoming attitudes, when they align with the rehabilitative goal of correctional organizations, seem to perform much better in training. These findings are important as they can further inform state corrections departments who might be ideal candidates to target in their recruitment.

### Read the full article for more!

Burton, A.L., Jonson, C.L., Miller, W.T., & Wang, J. (2024). Attitudinal schemas and academy training receptivity: A quasi-experimental study of prison officers. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. <https://doi-org/10.1007/s11292-023-09604-7>

## What are some of the highlights from the study?

There are no benefits of states hiring correctional officers with strong punitive attitudes insofar as correctional officer training is concerned. By contrast, there appears to be great benefit to hiring officers with strong rehabilitative attitudes. They fare much better in academy training.

## How do you think your study could inform public policy on prison officer training or hiring practices?

For decades, the public has espoused that rehabilitation should be a primary goal of incarceration. At the same time, many studies find that correctional officers support a rehabilitative orientation toward their work. Thus, the results of this study indicate that the officers whose values align with the public's seemed to be more receptive to training in the academy. I believe that if we continue to find that the public supports rehabilitation, and officers who support it have more favorable outcomes, there is an impetus to continue to reform prisons (both the staff and facilities) to foster a rehabilitative environment. For training this would look like revising curricula to focus on care and human service and for hiring more emphasis on targeting those with the right attitudes and values toward the job.

**Dr. Alexander L. Burton** is an Assistant Professor in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Program at The University of Texas at Dallas. He received his doctoral degree from the University of Cincinnati. His research agenda focuses on topics in corrections and public policy and his recent works can be found in *Criminology*, *Criminology & Public Policy*, and *Justice Quarterly*.



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For more information, contact Alexander L. Burton  
[alexander.burton@utdallas.edu](mailto:alexander.burton@utdallas.edu)



# News Around DPOP

## New Publications by DPOP Members

**Dr. Maria Tcherni-Buzzeo**, *University of New Haven* published the 8th ed. of: Tcherni-Buzzeo, M., & Pyrczak, F. (2024). *Evaluating research in academic journals: A practical guide to realistic evaluation*. Routledge. ISBN: 9781032424095  
[www.routledge.com/9781032424095](http://www.routledge.com/9781032424095)

All DPOP members are welcome to use a 25% discount code SS254

## DPOP Members in New Positions

**Dr. Amanda Graham** is beginning a new position at *Texas State University*. Newly minted **Dr. Kate Wilds** is beginning a new position at *The Einstein School*.

## New Funding Awarded to DPOP Members

**Dr. Shichun Ling**, *California State University, LA* was awarded a competitive seed grant to examine **perceptions of vulnerability and suspiciousness**. **Dr. Cassandra Atkin-Plunk's**, *Florida Atlantic University* mentee, **Shania Grant** was awarded a prestigious grant to conduct a national survey to examine **how racial attitudes impact the public's support for reentry initiatives**

## DPOP Members Around ASC

**Dr. Natasha Frost**, *Northeastern University* running for ASC President



Hello fellow DPOP members! I have been a DPOP member since the Division's inception & I am on this year's election slate for ASC President! If elected president, my goal is to modernize the ASC so that it better serves evolving interests of our diverse membership. Please consider voting for me in the upcoming ASC election... ballots open in May and close in June. Thanks so much for your consideration (and hopefully your vote!).

- Natasha Frost, *Northeastern University*

To have your news included in the  
**Fall 2024 Newsletter**,  
look for the *Call for News* email  
or go to: <https://ascdpop.org/contact-us-2/>

# Welcome to our 2024 Committee Members

## AWARDS

**Sean Roche, Chair**

**Angela Jones, *Texas State University***

**Justin Pickett, *SUNY Albany***

## COMMUNICATIONS

**Alexander Burton, Chair**

**Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, *Florida Atlantic University***

**Colleen Berryessa, *Rutgers University***

**Haley Puddy, *University of Texas at Dallas***

## CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

**Sean Roche, Chair**

**Riane Bolin, *Radford University***

**Justin Pickett, *SUNY Albany***

## NOMINATIONS

**Leah Butler, Chair**

**Laura Huey, *University of Western Ontario***

**Daniel Lytle, *University of Maryland Eastern Shore***

**John Navarro, *Sam Houston State University***

## PUBLICATIONS

**Shichun Ling, Chair**

**Kelly Socia, *University of Massachusetts Lowell***

**Lauren Van Blarcum, *University of Texas at Dallas***

**Kate Wilds, *The Einstein School***

## PROGRAM

**Jason Silver, Chair**

**Peter Hanink, *Cal Poly Pomona***

**Omeed Ilchi, *Purdue University Northwest***

**Robert Lytle, *University of Arkansas Little Rock***

ASC DIVISION OF

# Public Opinion & Policy

## DIVISION OF PUBLIC OPINION AND POLICY

DPOP PROVIDES A HOME FOR SCHOLARS  
INTERESTED IN THE NATURE OF PUBLIC OPINION &  
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CRIME AND JUSTICE POLICY

### MEMBERSHIP

ACTIVE/RETIRED MEMBERS: \$20

STUDENT MEMBERS: \$10

### WEBSITE

[WWW.ASCDPOP.ORG](http://WWW.ASCDPOP.ORG)

## EXECUTIVE BOARD



**CHERYL LERO JONSON**

CHAIR



**SEAN PATRICK ROCHE**

VICE CHAIR, CHAIR OF CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS  
COMMITTEE, & CHAIR OF AWARDS COMMITTEE



**ALEXANDER L. BURTON**

EXECUTIVE COUNSELOR, CHAIR OF  
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



**SHICHUN LING**

EXECUTIVE COUNSELOR, CHAIR  
OF PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE



**JASON R. SILVER**

EXECUTIVE COUNSELOR,  
CHAIR OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE

*Join  
today*