

BJS STUDENT RESEARCH EXPO
Program

October 29, 2024 | 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm



Bureau of Justice Statistics

Agenda

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has partnered with the American Society of Criminology to highlight student projects using BJS data collections and programs. Selected undergraduate and graduate students have been invited to present a poster or visual describing their research using data from one of BJS's many data collections at this special webinar event.

The opinions in these presentations are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position and policies of the Bureau of Justice Statistics or the U.S. Department of Justice.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Kevin M. Scott, Acting Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics

Natasha Frost, Northeastern University, Vice President, American Society of Criminology (ASC)

Student Presentations

Investigation of Forensic Crime Lab Characteristics and their Impact on Competency Testing Results

Calvin H. L. Cho
Duke University

Rape Myths in Numbers: The Relationship Between Stereotypical Case Characteristics and Arrest Outcomes

Gemini A. Creason-Parker, M.S., M.A.
Texas State University

Predictors of Prisoner Access to Healthcare

Sonya Eason
Duke University

Severity and Composition of Illicit Substance Use Among Juvenile Offenders

Annabel Fay
University of Colorado Boulder

The Role of Citizenship Status in Help-Seeking Behaviors and Reporting to Police Among Domestic Violence Survivors

Kristen M. Fite
George Mason University

Organized Crime and Challenges Faced by Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies

Salpi S. Kevorkian, M.S.
Florida International University

An Examination of Key Factors that Correlate with Human Trafficking in the U.S.

Samuel King
Boston College

Erin Yenawine
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Examination of Parent Incarceration in Vermont

Abigail Moody
The University of Vermont

Exploring the Associations Between School Resource Officer Presence and Student Bullying, Safety and Fear, Drug/Alcohol Access, and Perceptions of School Fairness

Lily Palmer
North Carolina State University

Gender Composition in Law Enforcement Agencies

Elizabeth Tranquil
North Carolina State University

Closing Remarks

Min Xie,
ASC Executive Counselor, University of Maryland, College Park

Investigation of Forensic Crime Lab Characteristics and their Impact on Competency Testing Results

This project uses the Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Laboratories to examine the relationship between a lab's characteristics and competency testing results. The project uses multiple linear regression analysis to explore factors associated with varying competency levels.

Rape Myths in Numbers: The Relationship Between Stereotypical Case Characteristics and Arrest Outcomes

Prior research has found that rape myth acceptance (RMA) is a contributing variable in how victims are treated within the system during their pursuit of justice; criminal justice actors, despite their unique position, are susceptible to these contributing variables. For police officers, specifically, RMA may influence case outcomes in a variety of ways, such as whether the perpetrator is arrested, tried, or convicted. This project focuses on reported rapes to explore how they are reflected in official statistics. Using 2020 National Incident-Based Reporting (NIBRS) data, this study employs a logistic regression model to determine if cases are more likely to end in arrest if they align with RMA stereotypes (e.g., victim-offender relationship, weapon use, victim physical injury, and offender impairment).

Predicting Provider Visits in Prisons

Using the Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016 dataset, this project examines the factors that are involved in prisoner access to healthcare providers. Two parsimonious models are built to predict whether U.S. prison inmates in 2016 received care for their health needs based on past medical history, current medical status, demographics. The primary goal is to do a pairwise comparison of models to determine whether a patient's provider status—that being whether they have seen a provider since admission to prison—is better predicted by more common medical diagnoses or less common medical diagnoses. This work can clarify the type of data that is important to collect to understand the prisoner patient population.

Severity and Composition of Illicit Substance Use Among Juvenile Offenders

Substance abuse is widely reported by justice-involved youth and is considered a key correlate for offending. This study uses self-report data collected as part of the National Survey of Youth in Custody, 2018 (NSYC-3) to provide a comprehensive overview of the drug use characteristics of adjudicated juveniles. The primary objectives are to (1) demonstrate the composition of illicit substance use and (2) examine how patterns in the types of drugs used by juvenile offenders differ within sex and across race and ethnicity.

The Impact of Immigration in Police Reporting and Help-Seeking Among Domestic Violence Survivors

Domestic violence (DV) is a significantly underreported crime, despite affecting millions of individuals across the U.S. Compared to natural born citizens, immigrants who experience DV face unique challenges in both formal police reporting and utilizing assistance from victim support agencies. This study examines both police reporting and victim service agency utilization of DV victims using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) between 2017 and 2022 through the lens of citizenship status.

Organized Crime and Challenges Faced by Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies

This project seeks to comprehensively examine the challenges faced by tribal law enforcement agencies in addressing organized crime using the most recent Census of Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies (CTLEA) administered by BJS. The project will use indicators related to tribal law enforcement challenges (e.g., funding, jurisdiction) and organized crime activity (e.g., arrests on tribal lands) to better understand the barriers and challenges faced by law enforcement in improving public safety in tribal communities.

An Examination of Key Factors that Correlate with Human Trafficking in the U.S.

This study uses the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data and other extant datasets to examine geospatial factors related to human trafficking. Casinos, highways, and high-traffic airports have been identified as key factors that may correlate with human trafficking in U.S. cities. This research seeks to examine the relationship between human trafficking and the presence of sexually oriented businesses, where both labor and sex crimes may occur, using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression.

Examination of Parent Incarceration in Vermont

Since 2020, the Vermont Prison Research and Innovation Network (PRIN) has conducted three rounds of surveys to question staff and incarcerated individuals at the Vermont Southern State Correctional Facility. This project compares Vermont's incarceration rates of parents with minor children with the national rate using the Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI).

Exploring the Associations Between School Resource Officer Presence and Student Bullying, Safety and Fear, Drug/Alcohol Access, and Perceptions of School Fairness

School resource officers (SRO) are increasingly prevalent in schools throughout the U.S. This study aims to investigate any link between SRO presence and bullying. It will also examine whether rates of bias-based bullying differ from general bullying based on the presence of SRO(s). The study further seeks to explore how SRO presence relates to feelings of fear and safety, drug and alcohol access, and perceptions of school fairness.

Gender Composition in Law Enforcement Agencies: An Analysis Using BJS LEMAS Data

Using BJS's Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics data, this project explores whether the gender makeup of a law enforcement agency correlates with other agency-level characteristics. The presented research uses model building and data splitting methods to examine the impact of female representation in policing.

Student Speakers



Calvin H. L. Cho is studying biology at Duke University and is passionate about policy issues in the life sciences/healthcare sector. He has previously worked at Regeneron Pharmaceuticals where he contributed to coagulation research. He has also worked at the Moore lab in the Department of Neurology at the Duke School of Medicine focusing on migraine pathophysiology. Currently, he serves as the Community-Facing Committee co-chair of the Duke Student Collaborative on Health Policy, where he partners with North Carolina initiatives and organizations to address healthcare coverage, community navigation, and universal meals in schools.



Gemini A. Creason-Parker is a multi-disciplinary scholar pursuing a doctorate degree in criminology at Texas State University who focuses on sexual assault, media, and crime. She received her M.S. and B.S. in criminal justice, M.A. in communication studies, and B.A. in Spanish and sociology from Northeastern State University. She placed first in the Midwest Sociological Society's 3MT in 2023, won the Top Doctoral Presentation and Compassionate Research awards from Texas State's Research Conference in 2022, and received the ACJS Minority Mentorship Grant in 2023. She has published multiple works, including her master's thesis on rape myths in Law & Order: SVU.



Sonya Eason is studying statistical science at Duke University, where she applies her passion for using statistics and data science for social justice. One of her research goals is to ensure vulnerable populations are studied in medical research. She is excited to finish her education at Duke and continue utilizing statistics in professional school and the workforce.



Annabel Fay is a third-year Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Colorado Boulder. She holds a B.A. and an M.A. in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley, and Columbia University. Her undergraduate research concentrated on private treatment programs in the United States, while her master's thesis examined the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDNA) and its influence on institutional change. Annabel's current research centers on substance use patterns among adjudicated offenders, with a focus on how drug use varies by race, ethnicity, and sex.



Kristen M. Fite is a second-year graduate student pursuing a master of arts in criminology, law & society at George Mason University. Her research interests primarily focus on victimization and violence against women, and she is passionate about using research to inform policy-making practices. Prior to studying at GMU, Kristen earned her B.A. in criminology and sociology at the University of Arkansas. She volunteers with local prison reentry programs in the D.C. metropolitan area and hopes to open her own women's reentry program one day.



Salpi S. Kevorkian is currently a doctoral student and Presidential Fellow in the International Crime and Justice program within the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs at Florida International University. Ms. Kevorkian is currently specializing in crime and violence prevention research.



Samuel King is a senior at Boston College, majoring in environmental studies and political science. His research focuses on carbon sequestration using large climate models to inform policy on public land management. He recently completed a data science research program at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, this summer.



Abigail Moody is a second-year master's student in statistics at the University of Vermont. Over the past year, they have focused on researching and analyzing survey data related to carceral climate and culture in Vermont State Prisons. With a strong interest in data equity, policymaking, and statistical education, Abigail's research approach emphasizes the humans behind the data. Upon graduation, they aim to further explore how statistical education and equitable data analysis can drive meaningful change and foster connection. In their free time, Abigail enjoys reading, coding, and spending time with friends' pets.



Lily Palmer is a senior majoring in psychology and criminology and minoring in statistics at North Carolina State University. At NC State, Lily works as a research assistant and the Lead Wellness Coach at Wellness & Recreation. She also volunteers as a mental health ambassador and crisis text line counselor. In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, traveling, and visiting friends and family. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a doctoral program in clinical psychology, focusing on outcomes of children impacted by parental substance-use and incarceration.



Elizabeth Tranquil is a master's student studying statistics at North Carolina State University. She is aiming for a public sector role that focuses on data science, statistical analysis, or programming. Her interests include machine learning and applying statistical techniques to solve complex, real-world problems across various fields.



Erin Yenawine is a junior at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, studying economics and political science. She has completed a data science research program on anti-human trafficking funded by the National Science Foundation at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, this summer. She is currently studying European policy in The Hague, Netherlands this fall. After graduation, Erin plans on pursuing a master's in public policy to combine her interests in economics and government. She plans to pursue a research-focused career developing policy in Washington, D.C.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Kevin M. Scott, PhD, is the acting director.



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