

Veronica Pletsch

Summary

I am a first generation high school and college graduate, I was raised in poverty by a single teenage mom in Chicago. These details matter, they've shaped who I am both personally and professionally. It was poverty that influenced me to think critically and analytically in order to overcome psychological, financial, and social barriers. It is from these experiences that I first became curious by the perplexing nature of human behavior, society, and social interactions. Ultimately, through my career as a social science researcher and data scientist, I strive to "discover the hidden logic of familiar things" to better understand our complex social world and to hopefully leave it better than I found it.

Education

- 2026 **University of Chicago**
Master of Arts (MAPSS) in Sociology / Computational Social Sciences
- 2022 **DePaul University**
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology
- 2019 **Harold Washington Community College, City Colleges of Chicago**

Experience

- 2026–Present **Front-end Developer**, STEALTH STARTUP, (Confidential).
 - Front-end architecture development lead for a SaaS platform utilizing Next.js, React, and TypeScript.
 - Designed and implemented the UI/UX components using Tailwind CSS and Framer Motion.
 - Maintained organization by creating a site architecture diagram and excel spreadsheets.
 - Established REST APIs, user signup/login pipeline, and cookie-based telemetry for engagement tracking.
 - Created one-of-a-kind static and animated pixel art for the startup's branding using Aseprite.
- 2022–2025 **Research Associate**, NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.
 - Co-authored grant proposals securing \$100,000+ in funding from CDC and NIH.
 - Screened, recruited, scheduled, and interviewed 100+ for VTTI Traffic Safety focus groups.
 - Co-designed survey for GWG study administered yearly to 2,750 youths.
 - Cleaned, recoded, and analyzed large-scale datasets in SPSS, NVivo, and MAXQDA.
 - Founder and leader of the GWG Youth Advisory Group.
 - Co-developed the CLAS Standards health care provider toolkit, authored the Mental Health, Rural, Long Term Care portions for CMS OMH.
- 2021–2022 **Undergraduate Researcher**, ICH UND DU LAB, DEPAUL UNIVERSITY, Chicago, IL.
 - Researched hierarchy formation and its correlation with socioeconomic status.
 - Assisted PhD candidates in the early development of an original study on the misattribution of arousal.
- 2021–2022 **Graduate Intern**, NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.
 - Interviewed 20 participants for the rehabilitation of previously incarcerated LGBTQ+IA individuals study.
 - Quantitative data analysis using STATA for the National Social Life, Health and Aging Project (NSHAP) and the High School and Beyond (HSB) Project, both focused on aging and geriatric populations.
- 2021 **Research Intern**, FONSELP, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 - Conducted partnership outreach, recruiting international nongovernmental organizations and corporations to invest in local Latin American communities.
- 2021 **Translation Intern**, JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 - Translated Spanish program material for financial partners and stakeholders.
- 2019-2020 **Policy Intern**, 12TH WARD ALDERMAN, Chicago, IL.
 - Researched affects of proposed ordinances and briefed the Alderman's director of policy and communications.
 - Organized community meetings, food drives, and holiday drives.
- 2017-2019 **English Tutor**, AQUINAS LITERACY CENTER, Chicago, IL.

Skills

Programming	R, Python, LaTeX, SQL, Git/GitHub, AI Prompt Engineering
Concepts	Machine Learning, Granger Causality, Geo-spatial Analysis, Data Wrangling, Econometric Modeling, Multivariate Analysis, A/B Testing, Component-Based Architecture
Statistics	Bayesian Inference, Non-parametric Statistical Tests, Regressions, Difference-in-Difference, Time-Series
Research	Mixed Methods (Qual/Quant), Ethnography, Focus Groups, Grants/Proposals, Interviewing, IRB, Study Design, Study Recruitment, Surveys, Web-scraping, 3P Data
Software	MAXQDA, NVivo, SPSS, STATA, Qualtrics, Microsoft 365, Google BigQuery, R Studio, Canva, React, Next.js, Tailwind CSS, Framer Motion, Clerk, Vercel
Visualization	Tableau, RShiny, Quarto, Overleaf, Frontend Web Development, UI/UX Design, Aseprite

Publications

- * Pletsch, V. (2026). Stereotyping Machines? A computational sentiment analysis of A.I. in U.S. news media (2000-2024) [Master Thesis]. The University of Chicago
- * MacLean, K., Watson, L., O'Leary, M., Cotter, M. M., Lancaster, C., Pletsch, V. M., Mumford, E. A. (2026). Trauma-informed approaches to campus sexual assault response: A mixed-methods study. Violence Against Women. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012261432608>
- * Sheridan-Johnson, J., Pletsch, V., Zasha, S., Liu, W., Taylor, B. (2024). The Impact of Agency Policies on Level of Force Used by Officers, Police Quarterly, (submitted for publication).
- * Golan, O., Pletsch, V., Park, D., Frank, M., Sheridan-Johnson, J., Liu, W., Nguyen, B.-T., Sawyer, H., Taylor, B. (2025). Data reporting for use of force and violence against officer incidents: Qualitative insights from law enforcement command staff and officers. The Police Journal, 99(2), 217–226. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032258X251352790>
- * Pletsch, V. (2022). The Public Narrative of Welfare and the Impoverished: Effects of Social Stereotypes on Low-Income Individuals. [Bachelor Thesis]. DePaul University.

Conference Presentations

- * Prevalence of Lifetime Indirect and Direct Firearm Violence Victimization and Perpetration: National Survey Results, Society for Prevention Research Conference, Washington, DC.
- * A Computational Analysis of Artificial Intelligence Within U.S. Media Discourse (2000-2024), MACS conference at the University of Chicago
- * The Social Perspective and Personal Experience of Individuals in Poverty in the United States, Sharing Social Knowledge Conference, Chicago, IL.

Awards

IPSOS Micro Grant Award Recipient
McNair Scholar
Healy Foundation Scholar
Dean's List Student

Volunteer and Other Experience

Personal Fitness Trainer at Equinox
Erie House
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Lower Nine Organization, New Orleans
Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council
Election Coordinator
Various Political Campaigns