

Dylan Pieper

Data Scientist and Social Psychologist

Profile

I develop data science solutions that build community, improve health and well-being, and support social change. Using R and Python, I build tools that translate data into insight—through descriptive analytics, statistical modeling, geospatial mapping, and web application and API development. I take a human-centered approach with cross-functional teams to balance impact with scalability. My curiosity inspires me to explore new technologies in machine learning and contribute to open-source communities.

Personal Information

He/Him
Madison, Wisconsin
dylanpieper@gmail.com
<https://dylanpieper.github.io/>

Professional Skills

Data Science Core

R, R Markdown, Quarto, Shiny

Database Architecture

MySQL, PostgreSQL, DuckDB

Data Engineering & DevOps

Git, GitHub, Docker, Azure,
Linux (RHEL)

Large Language Models

Claude, Claude Code, OpenAI,
Ollama, DeepSeek

Research & Evaluation Tools

Tableau, Qualtrics, REDCap

Front-End Development

React, Bootstrap, Observable,
SurveyJS

Transferable Skills

Statistics (Bayes and Frequentist),
Object-Oriented Programming,
Functional Programming,
Package Development

Experience

Data Scientist - Program Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU), University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Sep 2021 - Present

- Lead data science initiatives for substance use treatment, public health, and justice reform projects
- Direct data strategy with cross-functional teams including healthcare providers, implementation teams, researchers, and IT departments
- Support supervision of a team of 3–5 analytics staff, including recruitment, professional development, and technical mentorship
- Design and implement data pipelines integrating data from 250+ healthcare sites
- Architect and maintain SQL databases that integrate health records, multiple tracking systems, and rich geographic and operational data
- Develop ETL workflows using R and SQL to automate data processing and reduce manual errors
- Engineer automated reports, web applications, and dashboards for healthcare providers and researchers deployed on university servers
- Evaluate data collection instruments through psychometric methods and pilot studies
- Build advanced statistical models using mixed-effect regression and survival analysis methods
- Author peer-reviewed research manuscripts, technical documentation, data dictionaries, and data governance protocols (IRB and HIPPA compliance)

Experience

Field Interviewer - NORC at the University of Chicago, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Aug 2021 - Nov 2021

- Conducted in-person interviews with research participants, recording responses using standardized survey instruments and protocols
- Traveled to various locations within an assigned geographic area to complete interviews, managing my schedule while meeting individuals for data collection
- Maintained confidentiality of all participant information and adhered to strict research ethics and data security procedures

Research Specialist - Michele Gelfand's Culture Lab, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

Aug 2020 - Aug 2021

- Analyzed and published data on COVID-19 deaths across 57 countries and their relationship to social norms using multilevel statistical models
- Ran two experiments testing different nudges, or message framing effects, for wearing masks and forecasted the utility of these interventions
- Developed a natural language processing (NLP) Shiny app to detect threatening language and compare levels across texts (<https://www.michelegelfand.com/threat-dictionary>)

Writing Coach - University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA

Aug 2017 - May 2020

- Coached students in writing (CRLA certified) and statistics, providing personalized guidance to meet their needs and improve their academic performance
- Supported English Language Learners (ELLs) in improving their writing skills and language proficiency
- Coached students from diverse and non-traditional backgrounds, including students with learning disabilities
- Trained new tutors and designed comprehensive training materials to ensure effective tutoring practices
- Delivered lectures on academic integrity, plagiarism prevention, and essay writing
- Conducted outreach initiatives in classrooms and at student registration events to promote tutoring services and academic resources
- Used pedagogical approaches including Csikszentmihalyi's flow model and Bloom's taxonomy

Education

Master of Arts - Social Psychology - University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa

2018 - 2020

- Thesis: "Challenging Social Systems Under the Threat of Pollution" (<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/1028/>)
- Completed courses Statistical Computing I and II to learn base R
- Worked as a Research Assistant in the Psychoneuroendocrinology Lab
- Worked as a Teaching Assistant in undergraduate psychology courses (Introduction to Psychology, Biopsychology, and Psychology of Gender)
- Awarded research and travel funds from the university totaling \$1,800

Bachelor of Arts - Psychology - University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa

2014 - 2018

Publications

- **Pieper, D. J.**, McNeill, J. M., Chiridon, C. R., Moore, D. W., Wang, E.-H., Raby, S., & Cloutier, R. M. (Under Review). Racial disparities in Pennsylvania's criminal justice system: Analyzing prosecutorial and judicial decision-making.
- Gelfand, M. J., Jackson, J. C., Pan, X., Nau, D., **Pieper, D.**, Denison, E., Dagher, M., Van Lange, P. A. M., Chiu C., & Wang, M. (2021). The relationship between cultural tightness-looseness and COVID-19 cases and deaths: A global analysis. *The Lancet: Planetary Health*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(20\)30301-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30301-6)
- Gelfand, M. J., Li, R., Stamkou, E., Denison, E., Fernandez, J., Choi, V., Chatmen, J., Jackson, J. C., **Pieper, D.**, & Dimant, E. (2021). Persuading conservatives and liberals to comply with mask-wearing: An intervention tournament. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.jesp.2022.104299>
- Dimant, E., Clemente, E. G., **Pieper, D.**, & Azevedo, F. (2022). Politicizing mask-wearing: Predicting the success of behavioral interventions among Republicans and Democrats in the U.S. *Scientific Reports*, 12, 7575. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-10524-1>
- **Pieper, D.** (2020). Challenging social systems under the threat of pollution: Replication and extension of Eadeh and Chang (2019) (Publication No. 1028) [Master's Thesis, University of Northern Iowa]. *UNI ScholarWorks*. <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/1028>

Presentations

- **Pieper, D.** (2025, June). redquack: An R Package for Memory Efficient REDCap-to-DuckDB Workflows. *R/Medicine*. (Upcoming Remote Talk).
- **Pieper, D.** (2025, September). Taking the Helm: Build Better Tools Through Community and Iteration. *posit::conf*. (Upcoming Remote Talk).
- Katie, W. & **Pieper, D.** (2024, June). The Pennsylvania Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (PA MOUD) Technical Assistance and Quality Improvement Expansion Project. *Rural Health Information Hub*. (Online Resource). <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/1139>
- **Pieper, D.**, Gelfand, M. J., & Denison, E., (2021, February). COVID-19: Meta-Norms to Wear Masks and Social Distance in the U.S. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*. (Remote Poster Session). <https://osf.io/y8cug/>
- **Pieper, D.**, Hirano, H., & Harton, H. C. (2020, April). The Effect of Environmental Threats and Terrorism/Violent-Crime Threats on Political Orientation and Attitudes. *Midwestern Psychological Association Conference*. Chicago, Illinois. (Conference Canceled) ... Also (2020) at the *University of Northern Iowa's College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Conference*. Cedar Falls, Iowa. (Conference Canceled). <https://osf.io/3n7r8/>
- **Pieper, D.** (2020, February). Challenging the System Under the Threat of Pollution: Low System Justification Mediates a Liberal Political Shift. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*. New Orleans, LA. (Poster Session) ... Also (2020) at the *University of Northern Iowa's College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Conference*. Cedar Falls, Iowa. (Conference Canceled). <https://osf.io/v7nez/>
- **Pieper, D.** (2019, April). What's in a name? Measuring the Potential Influence of Medical Cannabis Labels on Attitudes Toward Its Use. *Iowa Psychological Association Conference, Des Moines, Iowa*. (Poster Session) ... Also (2019, April) at the *University of Northern Iowa's College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS) Conference*. Cedar Falls, Iowa. Awarded Best Oral Presentation (2nd Place, \$250). <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/agss/2019/all/18/>
- **Pieper, D.**, DeSoto, C., & Hitlan, R. (2018, April). The Relations Between Personality and Source of Dietary Protein. *Midwestern Psychological Association Conference*. Chicago, Illinois. (Poster Session) ... Also (2017, April) at the *University of Northern Iowa's College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Conference*. Cedar Falls, Iowa.

R Packages

- **redquack**: Transfer REDCap data to DuckDB with minimal memory overhead, designed for large datasets that exceed available RAM (<https://dylanpieper.github.io/redquack/>)
- **hellmer**: hellmer makes it easy to batch process large language model chats using ellmer sequentially or in parallel (<https://dylanpieper.github.io/hellmer/>)
- **samesies**: Compare lists of texts, factors, or numerical values to measure their similarity (<https://dylanpieper.github.io/samesies/>)
- **shinysurveyjs**: Integrate SurveyJS with Shiny to interface with a PostgreSQL database and create dynamic survey experiences (<https://dylanpieper.github.io/shinysurveyjs/>)