

Michael S. Topping

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Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
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Center for Demography and Ecology
Center for Demography of Health and Aging

EDUCATION

In Progress **Ph.D.**, Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Committee: Michal Engelman, Katherine Curtis, Eric Grodsky, and Stephanie Robert
Minor: Quantitative Analysis and Data Science
Preliminary Exams: Social Stratification; Demography & Ecology

2020 **M.A.**, Sociology, University of Memphis

2018 **B.S.**, Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, *magna cum laude*

2018 **B.A.**, Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, *magna cum laude*

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Demography
Social Stratification

Aging and the Life Course
Medical Sociology

Health Disparities
Quantitative Methodology

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

Fletcher, Jason, **Michael S. Topping**, and Won-tak Joo. 2025. "Trends in the Female Longevity Advantage of 19th Century Birth Cohorts: Exploring the Role of Place and Fertility." *Social Science History*.

Topping, Michael S., Jinho Kim and Jason Fletcher. 2024. "Variation in Adult Cognition Across Domains and Life Course Place Effects in the UK." *Journal of Aging and Health* 36(10):599-609.

Topping, Michael S. and Jason Fletcher. 2024. "Educational Attainment, Family Background, and the Emergence of Pain Gradients in Adulthood." *Social Science & Medicine* 346:116692.

Topping, Michael S., Jinho Kim, and Jason Fletcher. 2023. "Area-Level Infant Mortality Exposure in Early Life and Alzheimer's Disease Mortality: Examining Variation Based on Age, Sex, and Place of Birth." *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* 93(3):1007-1016.

James, Wesley, Claire Brindley, Christopher Purser, and **Michael S. Topping**. 2022. "Conceptualizing Rurality: The Impact of Definitions on the Rural Mortality Penalty." *Frontiers in Public Health* 10:1029196.

Topping, Michael S., Jinho Kim, and Jason Fletcher. 2021. "Association and Pathways of Birth in the Stroke Belt on Old Age Dementia and Stroke Mortality." *SSM-Population Health* 15:100841.

Xu, Wei, **Michael S. Topping**, and Jason Fletcher. 2021. "State of Birth and Cardiovascular Disease Mortality: Multilevel Analyses of the National Longitudinal Mortality Study." *SSM-Population Health* 15:100875.

Topping, Michael S., Jinho Kim, and Jason Fletcher. 2021. "Geographic Variation in Alzheimer's Disease Mortality." *PLoS ONE* 16(7):e0254174.

Fletcher, Jason, **Michael S. Topping**, Fengyi Zheng, and Qiongshi Lu. 2021. "The Effects of Education on Cognition in Older Age: Evidence from Genotyped Siblings." *Social Science & Medicine* 280:114044.

UNDER REVIEW

Topping, Michael S. and Jason Fletcher. "Area-Level Infant Mortality Exposure in Early-Life and Later Life Stroke: The Role of Modifiable Risk Factors and Place of Birth."

Topping, Michael S. "Pathways of Early Life Residence and their Association with Old Age Cognition."

Vachuska, Karl and **Michael S. Topping** "Socioeconomic Disadvantage Explains Neighborhood Racial Inequality in Opioid Mortality."

IN PROGRESS

[†] - denotes equal authorship.

Topping, Michael S. "Geographic Differences in Lifespan Inequality in the United States."

Topping, Michael S. "Periods, Pathways, and Prolonged Exposure: Socioeconomic Status Across the Life Course and Old Age Cognition."

Peters, Sara A.[†] and **Michael S. Topping**.[†] "Decomposing the Rural Mortality Penalty."

Topping, Michael S. "Place of Origin and Dementia Risk in Later Life: Evidence from the Stroke Belt."

Topping, Michael S. "Place of Birth and Cognitive Life Expectancies: The Role of Education."

Peters, Sara A., Katherine Curtis, Clayton Adamson, **Michael S. Topping**, and Anton Babkin. "Structural Determinants of Rising Premature Mortality: The Role of Region, Race, and Rurality."

Furuya, Shiro, Jia Wang, Wei Xu, and **Michael S. Topping**. "The Life Course Geographies of Loneliness."

Topping, Michael S. and Michal Engelman. "High School Background and Cognitive Trajectories in Later Life."

GRANTS

National Institute on Aging R36 Grant for Dissertation Research (1R36AG094877) “The Place-Based Origins of Cognitive Aging.” Overall Impact Score: 24*

*Mechanism rescinded due to change in administration priorities.

HONORS AND AWARDS

2025	American Sociological Association Student Forum Travel Award (\$250)
2025	Janet R. Hankin Medical Sociology Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison (\$1,000)
2024	Department of Sociology Scholarship Supplement, University of Wisconsin-Madison (\$4,172)
2024	Center for Demography of Health and Aging Early-Career Travel Award (\$2,000)
2024	Departmental Citation for Excellence as a Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2023	Southern Demographic Association PopLine Scholarship (\$525)
2023	American Sociological Association Student Forum Travel Award (\$250)
2023	American Association for Public Opinion Research Student Conference Award (\$800)
2022-2026	Graduate Research Fellow, Institute for Research on Poverty
2020	Morton Thesis Award, Graduate School, University of Memphis (\$500)
2018-2020	Department of Sociology Travel Grants, University of Memphis
2018	Albertson Medallion Award, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
2018	Chancellors Leadership Award, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
2017	Alpha Kappa Delta, National Sociology Honor Society
2017	Phi Alpha, National Social Work Honor Society

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**Indicates work presented by coauthor*

“Socioeconomic Status Across the Life Course and Old Age Cognition”

- Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, 2025
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Montréal, Quebec, 2024

“Place of Birth and Dementia Risk in Later Life: Evidence from the Stroke Belt”

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, 2025

“Structural Dimensions of Rising Premature Mortality in the US: An Examination of the Role of the Economy, Race, and Rurality”*

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, 2025
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 2025

“Place of Birth and Cognitive Life Expectancies: The Role of Education.”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 2025

“The Life Course Geographies of Loneliness”*

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 2025

“Decomposing The Rural Mortality Penalty”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 2025

“Impact of High School Background on Old Age Cognition: Evidence from a Wisconsin Cohort”

- Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington, 2024

“Pathways of Early Life Residence and their Association with Old Age Cognition”

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, Savannah, Georgia, 2024

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Columbus, Ohio, 2024

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2023

“The Role of Health in Racial Classification and Identification”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Columbus, Ohio, 2024

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, 2023

“Geographic Variation in Cognitive Domains: Evidence from the UK Biobank”

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, 2023

“Early, Intermediate, and Late Respondents: Associations with Survey Responses, Data Quality, and Sample Quality in a Campus Climate Web Survey”

- Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research, Chicago, Illinois, 2023

“Childhood Disadvantage and Later Life Disability: The Impact of Parental Death”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2023

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, 2022

“Trends in the Female Longevity Advantage of 19th Century Birth Cohorts: Exploring the Role of Place and Fertility”

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2022

“Area Level Infant Mortality Exposure in Early Life and Alzheimer’s Disease Mortality: Examining Variation Based on Age, Sex, and Place of Birth”

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2022

“Geographic Disparities in Lifespan Inequality in the United States: The Role of Cardiovascular Disease Mortality”

- Southern Demographic Association Annual Meeting, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2022

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, 2022

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, 2022

“The Effects of Education on Cognition in Older Age: Evidence from Genotyped Siblings”

- Integrating Genetics and Social Sciences Conference, Boulder, Colorado, 2021

“Rural-Urban Cancer Disparities: The Role of Physician Supply”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri, 2021 (Virtual)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024-Present NIA T32 Predoctoral Trainee, Center for Demography of Health and Aging, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2022-Present	Graduate Research Assistant, University of Wisconsin Survey Center, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Dykema, PhD
2020-2024	Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Demography of Health and Aging, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison Faculty Advisor: Jason Fletcher, PhD
2019-2020	Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis Faculty Advisor: Wesley James, PhD
2018-2020	Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis Faculty Advisor: Gretchen Peterson, PhD
2017-2018	Undergraduate Research Assistant, Department of Sociology and Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Faculty Advisor: Maggie Böhm-Jordan, PhD

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2023	Lecturer (Fall Semester), Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison Course: Population Problems (SOC 170 - 4.78/5.00 Course Evaluation)
2019-2020	Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis Advisor: Kendra Murphy, M.A. Courses: Introduction to Sociology; Racial/Ethnic Minorities; Methods of Social Research; Sociology of Religion; Rise of Sociological Theory; Sociology of Poverty
2018-2020	Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Bamford, PhD Courses: Introduction to Sociology; Racial/Ethnic Minorities; Methods of Social Research; Social Inequality; Sociology of Education
2018-2019	Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis Faculty Advisor: Jeni Loftus, PhD Course: Sociology of Gender

SERVICE

<i>Discipline</i>	
2025	Abstract Reviewer, Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts.
2024	Regular Session Organizer, "Population and Demography", American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Montréal, Quebec.
2023	Presider, Oral Session: "Population and Demography", Southern Demographic Association, San Antonio, Texas.

2023	Presider, Section on Sociology of Population Roundtable: "Education, Schooling, and Well-being", American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
2022-2024	Section on Aging and the Life Course Outstanding Mentor Award Committee, American Sociological Association.
2022-Present	Chair, Undergraduate Student Paper Award Committee, Southern Demographic Association, Knoxville, Tennessee.
2022	Presider, Oral Session: "The Social Determinants of Health", Southern Demographic Association, Knoxville, Tennessee.
2022	Presider, Open-Refereed Roundtable: "Inequality", American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, California.
2022	Panel, "Careers in Sociology." University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.
2020-2022	Academic Justice Committee Member, Sociologists for Women in Society
2019-2021	Elections Committee Member, North American Society for the Sociology of Sports
2019	Panel, "Grad Student Information Session: Grad Students Speak from Experience." Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Starkville, Mississippi.

Departmental/University

2024-Present	Coordinator, Health, Aging, and Life Course Student Working Group, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2024-2025	Student Mentor for Incoming Students, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2023	Instructor, Spatial Thinking Seminar, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2022-2024	Sociology Graduate Student Association Culture and Climate Committee (Assoc. Chair 2023; Chair 2023-2024), University of Wisconsin-Madison
2021, 2023	Peer Mentor for Incoming Graduate Students, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2020-2022	Sociology Graduate Student Association Mental Health and Wellness Committee, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2020-2025	Sociology Graduate Student Association, Cohort Representative, 2020 Cohort, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2019-2020	Representative of the College of Arts and Sciences, General Assembly of the Graduate Student Association, University of Memphis
2019-2020	Professional Development Committee Member, Graduate Student Association, University of Memphis
2017-2018	Student Ambassador, National Association of Social Workers, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

2017-2018	Treasurer of Alpha Kappa Delta, Sociology Honor Society, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
2017-2018	Treasurer of Phi Alpha, Social Work Honor Society, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point
2016-2018	Director of Public Relations, Sociology and Social Work Organization, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Professional

2017-2018	Intern, North Central Independent Living Program, Wood County Human Services
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PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Sociological Association

Sections: Aging and the Life Course, Medical Sociology, Mental Health, and Sociology of Population

Gerontological Society of America

Population Association of America

Southern Demographic Association

JOURNAL REFEREE

American Journal of Epidemiology, Innovation in Aging, International Journal of Epidemiology, Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, SSM-Population Health

SKILLS

Computing: ArcGIS Pro, SPSS, Stata, R, GeoDa, L^AT_EX, Microsoft Office, Qualtrics, MPlus, Tableau