

WESLEY L. JAMES

Department of Sociology
The University of Memphis
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EDUCATION

- 2009 Ph.D. in Sociology with an emphasis in Demography, Mississippi State University
Dissertation Title: “Has the Education and Health Relationship Changed Over Time?
A Panel Analysis of Age, Period, & Cohort Effects”
- 2004 M.S. in Sociology, Mississippi State University
Thesis Title: “Regional Variation in Income Inequality and Mortality: Does Health
Infrastructure Have a Mediating Effect?”
- 2001 B.A. in Sociology, University of Missouri-Columbia

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Demography	Rural Health	Quantitative Research Methods
Medical Sociology	Statistics	Program Evaluation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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| 2024-present | Chair. Department of Sociology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2024-present | Faculty Affiliate. ACRE. Department of Biology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2023-2024 | Interim Chair. Department of Anthropology. <i>The University of Memphis</i> |
| 2021-present | Professor. Department of Sociology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2020-present | Founding Executive Director, Center for Community Research and
Evaluation. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2016-present | External Program Evaluator, <i>Delta Health Alliance</i> |
| 2015-2021 | Associate Professor. Department of Sociology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2015-2020 | Graduate Coordinator, Department of Sociology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2014-present | Faculty Affiliate. School of Public Health, Division of Social and
Behavioral Sciences. <i>The University of Memphis</i> |
| 2008-present | Research Fellow. Social Science Research Center. <i>Mississippi State
University</i> |
| 2009-2015 | Assistant Professor. Department of Sociology. <i>University of Memphis</i> |
| 2010 (summer) | Visiting Research Fellow. Social Science Research Center
<i>Mississippi State University</i> |
| 2009 (summer) | Post-Doctoral Fellowship. Social Science Research Center.
<i>Mississippi State University</i> |

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Iratzoqui, Amaia., Mehdi Hajilou, **Wesley James**, *et al.* 2025. “The Role of Research Centers on University Campuses.” *Journal of Policy Practice & Research*, 6, 176–188.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s42972-025-00116-4>
- Bennett, Jonathan, Mehdi Hajilo, Anna Della Rosa, Rachel Arthur, **Wesley James**, & Karen Matthews. 2025. “Democratizing Quantitative Data Analysis and Evaluation in Community-Based Research Through a New Automated Tool.” *Social Sciences*, 14(6), 346. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14060346>
- Meador, John Elliot, **Wesley James**, Jonathan Bennett, Joseph Branson, and Karen Matthews. 2023. “COVID-19 Pandemic and the Social Determinants of Health.” *Frontiers in Epidemiology*, May(3): <https://doi.org/10.3389/fepid.2023.1139371>.
- James, Wesley**, Claire Brindley, Christopher Purser, and Michael Topping. 2022. “Conceptualizing rurality: The impact of definitions on the rural mortality penalty.” *Frontiers in Public Health*, Nov.(3): <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.1029196>.
- Terrell, Kimberly and **Wesley James**. 2022. “Racial Disparities in Air Pollution Burden and COVID-19 Deaths in Louisiana, USA, in the Context of Long-Term Changes in Fine Particulate Pollution.” *Environmental Pollution*: 15(5).
<http://doi.org/10.1089/env.2020.0021>.
- King, Chris, Rachel Arthur, Jonathan Bennett, **Wesley James**, and Karen Matthews. 2021. “Evaluation of a Peer-Led Comprehensive Sexual Health Program for College Teens.” *American Journal of Sexuality Education*: 16(4): 533-553.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2021.1959472>.
- Campbell, Mary, Emily Holmes, **Wesley James**, and Karen Matthews. 2021. “Sow, Grow, Know, and Show: The Impact of School Gardens on Student Self-Perception in the Mississippi Delta.” *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 60(2): 140-162.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03670244.2020.1807343>.
- Kedia, Satish, Patrick J. Dillon, Yu Jiang, **Wesley James**, Andy Collins, and Soumitra S. Bhuyan. 2021. “The Association Between Substance Use and Violence: Results from a Nationally Representative Sample of High School Students in the United States.” *Community Mental Health Journal*, 57: 294-306. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-020-00648-x>.
- Bennett, Jonathan, Christopher King, Chelsea Joyner, **Wesley James**, and Karen Matthews. 2020. “The Lasting Effects of Teen Pregnancy Programs: Evidence from a Regional Collaborative.” *Population and Public Policy*, Applied Demography Series 11, Springer Publishing Company: pp. 3-27: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57069-9_1.

- King, Christopher, Anna Church, **Wesley James**, Rhonda Okoth, and Karen Matthews. 2020. "Birth Weight Outcomes for Non-Hispanic Black Women in a Home Visiting Program in Rural Mississippi: Observations from the Field." *Population and Public Policy*, Applied Demography Series 11, Springer Publishing Company: pp. 81-92: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57069-9_5.
- James, Wesley**, Julia Wolf and Jeralynn Cossman. 2020. "Characteristics of Persistently Unhealthy Counties: A Comparison of White and Black Mortality Over Time." *The Social Science Journal*, 57(1): 115-119, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2019.01.005>.
- Taylor, Colby, Jonathan Bennett, Christopher King, **Wesley James**, and Karen Matthews. 2019. "Lasting promise: long-term effects of a transition-to-kindergarten program." *Perspectives on Early Childhood Psychology and Education*, 4(2), 117-146.
- Cosby, Arthur, Maya McDoom, **Wesley James**, Hasna Khandekar, Willie Brown, and Heather Hanna. 2019. "Growth and Persistence of Place-Based Mortality in the United States: The Rural Mortality Penalty." *American Journal of Public Health*, 109(1): 155-162, doi:10.2105/AJPH.2018.304787.
- James, Wesley**, Jeralynn Cossman and Julia Wolf. 2019. "The Ultimate Inequality: Vast Mortality Disparities across U.S. Regions." *N-IUSSP*, <http://www.niussp.org/>.
- James, Wesley**, Jeralynn Cossman and Julia Wolf. 2018. "Persistence of Death in the United States: The Remarkably Different Mortality Patterns between America's Heartland and Dixieland." *Demographic Research*, 39(33): 897-910, doi:10.4054/DemRes.2018.39.33.
- James, Wesley**, Karen Matthews, Peter Albrecht, and Anna Church. 2018. "Improving the Health of Rural America's Chronically Ill: A Case Study of a PCMH Clinic in Mississippi." *Population Health Management*, 21(1): 83, doi:1089/pop.2017.0054.
- Cossman, Jeralynn, **Wesley James**, and Julia Wolf. 2017. "The Differential Effects of Rural Health Care Access on Race-Specific Mortality." *Social Science and Medicine – Population Health*, 3: 618-623, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2017.07.013>.
- James, Wesley**, Karen Matthews, Peter Albrecht, Shelby Fox, and Anna Church. 2017. "Evidence of a Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Improving the Health of Chronically Ill Patients in the Mississippi Delta." *Journal of Preventative Medicine and Care*, 1(4), doi:10.14302/issn.2474-3585.jpmmc-17-1449.
- James, Wesley** and Jeralynn Cossman. 2017. "Long Term Trends in Black and White Mortality in the Rural United States: Evidence of a Race-Specific Rural Mortality Penalty." *The Journal of Rural Health*, 33: 21-31, doi:10.1111/jrh.12181.
- Mueller, Anna S., **Wesley James**, Seth Abrutyn, and Martin Levin. 2015. "Suicide Ideation and Bullying among U.S. Adolescents: Examining the Intersections of Sexual Orientation, Gender & Race/Ethnicity." *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(5): 980-985.

- James, Wesley.** 2014. "All Rural Places Are Not Created Equal: Revisiting the Rural Mortality Penalty in the United States." *American Journal of Public Health*, 104(11): 2122-2129.
- Jia, Chunrong, **Wesley James**, and Satish Kedia. 2014. "Relationship of Racial Composition and Cancer Risks from Air Toxics Exposure in Memphis, Tennessee, U.S.A." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, Special Issue: Eliminating Health Disparities to Achieve Health Equity*, 11(80): 7713-7724, doi:10.3390/ijerph110807713.
- James, Wesley.** 2014. "Teaching Introduction to Sociology to Pre-Medical Students." *American Sociological Association: TRAILS*.
- James, Wesley**, Ronald Cossman, and Neal Feierabend. 2014. "Integrating Spatial and Time Sensitive Data to Monitor Social Patterns: A Dynamic Methodology for Studying Social Issues." *Journal of Maps, Special Issue: Innovative Mapping in Spatial Demography*, 10(2): 308-312, <http://dx.doi.org/10/1080/17445647.2013.866910>.
- James, Wesley**, Chunrong Jia, and Satish Kedia. 2012. "Uneven Magnitude of Disparities in Cancer Risks from Air Toxics." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, Special Issue: Social and Economical Determinants of Health*, 9: 4365-4385, doi:10.3390/ijerph9124365.
- Cosby, Arthur, Kristen Aanstoos, Marissa Matta, Jeremy Porter, and **Wesley James**. 2012. "Public Support for Hispanic Deportation in the United States: The Effects of Ethnic Prejudice and Perceptions of Economic Competition in a Period of Economic Distress." *Journal of Population Research*, doi:10.1007/s12546-012-9102-9.
- James, Wesley** and Jeremy Porter. 2012. "Inequality, Health Infrastructure, and Spatial Context: Understanding Pathways to Variations in the Causal Determinants of Race-Specific Mortality Rates." *Sociological Spectrum*, 32(4): 322-345.
- James, Wesley** and Ronald Cossman. 2010. "Using Maps to Monitor At-Risk Geographic Areas of Heart Disease: Tracking Access to Prescription Medication and Mortality Rates." *Journal of Maps*, 2010: 478-487.
- Cossman, Ronald, Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Troy Blanchard, Richard Thomas, Louis Pol, and Arthur Cosby. 2010. "Correlating Pharmaceutical Data with a National Health Survey as a Proxy for Estimating Rural Population Health." *Population Health Metrics*, 8(25):1-17.
- Cossman, Jeralynn, **Wesley James**, Arthur Cosby, and Ronald Cossman. 2010. "Underlying Causes of the Emerging Nonmetropolitan Mortality Penalty." *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(8): 1417-1419, doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.174185.
- Porter, Jeremy, Ronald Cossman, and **Wesley James**. 2009. "Research Note: Imputing Large Group Averages for Missing Data, Using Rural-Urban Continuum Codes for Density Driven Industry Sectors." *Journal of Population Research*, 26(3): 273-278.

- Buchanan, Robert, Michael Kaufman, Li Zhu, and **Wesley James**. 2008. "Neurologist versus non-Neurologist Care of Multiple Sclerosis Patients." *International Journal of MS Care*, 10(4):106-112.
- Cosby, Arthur, Tonya Neaves, Ronald Cossman, Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Neal Feierabend, David Mirvis, Carol Jones, and Tracey Farrigan. 2008. "Preliminary Evidence for an Emerging Non-Metropolitan Mortality Penalty in the United States." *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(8): 1470-1472.
- Buchanan, Robert, Li Zhu, Randolph Schiffer, Dagmar Radin, and **Wesley James**. 2008. "Rural-Urban Analyses of Health-Related Quality of Life Among People with Multiple Sclerosis." *Journal of Rural Health*, 24(3): 244-252.
- Buchanan, Robert, Mike Kaufman, Li Zhu, and **Wesley James**. 2008. "Patient Perceptions of Multiple Sclerosis-Related Care: Comparisons by Practice Specialty of Principal Care Physician." *NeuroRehabilitation*, 23(3): 267-272.
- Cossman, Jeralynn, Ronald Cossman, **Wesley James**, Carol Campbell, Troy Blanchard, and Arthur Cosby. 2007. "Persistent Clusters of Mortality in the United States." *American Journal of Public Health*, 97(12): 2148-2150.
- Cossman, Ronald, Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Troy Blanchard, Richard Thomas, Louis Pol, Arthur Cosby, and David Mirvis. 2007. "Evaluating Heart Disease Prescriptions-Filled as a Proxy for Heart Disease Prevalence Rates." *Journal of Health & Human Services Administration*, 30(4): 503-528.
- Buchanan, Robert, Li Zhu, and **Wesley James**. 2007. "Urban/Rural Differences in Health Insurance Coverage Among People with Multiple Sclerosis." *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 29(24):1890-1898.
- James, Wesley** and Jeralynn Cossman. 2006. "Does Regional Variation Affect Ecological Mortality Research? An Examination of Mortality, Income Inequality and Health Infrastructure in the Mississippi Delta." *Population Research and Policy Review*, 25: 175-195.
- Buchanan, Robert, Randolph Schiffer, Suojin Wang, Alexa Stuijbergen, Bonnie Chakrovorty, Li Zhu, MyungSuk Kim, **Wesley James**. 2006. "Satisfaction with Mental Health Care Among People with Multiple Sclerosis in Urban and Rural Areas." *Psychiatric Services*, 57(8): 1206-1209.
- James, Wesley**, Ronald Cossman, Jeralynn Cossman, Carol Campbell, and Troy Blanchard. 2004. "A Brief Visual Primer for the Mapping of Mortality Trend Data." *International Journal of Health Geographics*, 3(7).

Cossman, Ronald, Jeralynn Cossman, Troy Blanchard, **Wesley James**, and Arthur Cosby. 2004. "Mortality Rates Across Time: Does Persistence Suggest 'Healthy and Unhealthy Places' in the United States?" *WorldMinds: Geographical Perspectives on 100 Problems*. Edited by Janelle, D.G., Warf, B., and Hansen, K. Amsterdam: Kluwer Press.

GRANTS & CONTRACTS

Total grant and contract dollars received: **\$29,035,682**

- Needs assessment of St. Louis County social and demographic conditions. Sub-award from Consilience Group, LLC, from STLC, MO Health and Human Services. \$12,500.
- *Evaluation of the Hooks Academic Achievement and Mentoring Initiative*, Principal Investigator. Benjamin Hooks Institute for Social Change, UofM. \$8,800.
- *Evaluation of Co-Curricular Community Based Professional Mentoring to Enhance Undergraduate Engineering Student Persistence and Career Readiness*. Sub-recipient from NSF. \$5000
- *Demographic Assessments of Five Delta Communities for DRIVE (Delta Revitalization through Innovation, Vision, and Equity)*. \$20,000
- *Growing Agricultural Diversity, Production and Prosperity in the Mid-South Mississippi Delta through Agri-STEM Career Development and Specialty Crop Production and Value-Added Processing*, sub-recipient. Delta Regional Authority. \$149,999.
- *Evaluating Effects of Non-Cognitive Competency Trajectories on Economic Mobility Using Data from Promise Neighborhoods*, Principal Investigator. Delta Health Alliance and Stanford University. \$70,288.
- *Upskill Mid-South*, Principal Investigator. Economic Development Administration. \$21.5M.
- *Evaluation of MPD Crisis Intervention Programs*, Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Memphis Police Department. \$225,000. February 2024.
- *The Partnership to Maximize Women's Equity in Reproductive Health (POWER)*, subcontractor, Wesley James. Funding originated by National Institutes of Health (NIH). \$159,877. September 2023-September 2024.
- *Evaluation of Memphis Blood Donor Growth Plan*. Vitalant Research Institute, San Francisco, CA. Revenue Agreement, \$10,000.
- *Survey of Community Partners*. Memphis Area Legal Services (MALS). Revenue Agreement, \$8,000.
- *Evaluation of the RESPECT program in West Memphis Schools*, Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by DeltaARTS, West Memphis, AR. \$5,000.
- *Evaluate Impact of Health and Education Programs in the Mississippi Delta*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$2,161,986. July 2023-June 2026.
- *TBLC Needs Assessment*. Subcontractor, Wesley James. Funded by Tennessee Business Leaders Council (TBLC). \$40,000. March 2023.
- *Digital Literacy Evaluation*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by the Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis, Memphis, TN. \$20,000. December 2022.
- *PH-IDEAS*, subcontractor, Wesley James. Funding originated from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, \$905,341. 2022-2026.

- *Domestic Violence Task Force*, subcontractor, Wesley James. Funded by University of Memphis, Public Safety Institute. \$19,301. October 2022-present.
- *School of Music Outreach Evaluation*. Subcontractor, Wesley James. Funded by University of Memphis CoRS grant. \$2,500. November 2021-April 2022.
- *Memphis Chamber Workforce Project*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by The Greater Memphis Chamber, Memphis, TN. \$30,000. May 2022-Nov. 2022.
- *GROWWTH Implementation Grant*, Subcontractor, Wesley James. Funded by TN Dept. of Human Services, Nashville, TN. Funding originated from US DHHS. \$395,157. November 2022-2024.
- *GROWWTH Planning Grant*, Subcontractor, Wesley James. Funded by TN Dept. of Human Services, Nashville, TN. Funding originated from US DHHS. \$75,000.
- *SWCCTN Evaluation*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Southwest TN Community College, Memphis, TN. \$4,367. October 2021.
- *Digital Literacy Evaluation*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by the Women’s Foundation of Greater Memphis, Memphis, TN. \$25,000. October 2021.
- *MS RIVER Collaborative*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Town of Inverness, MS. \$99,803. October 2021-present.
- *ASAF Evaluation*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by A Step Ahead Foundation, Memphis, TN. \$15,000. March 2021.
- *Evaluate Impact of Health and Education Programs in the Mississippi Delta*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$1,706,295. July 2020-June 2023.
- *Memphis Aquifer Water Survey Project Development and Analysis*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by CAESER, University of Memphis. \$50,000. April 2020-March 2021.
- *Evaluate Impact of Indianola and Deer Creek Promise Neighborhood Programs*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$370,676. July 2019-June 2020.
- *Evaluate Impact of Indianola and Deer Creek Promise Neighborhood Programs*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$379,613. July 2018-June 2019.
- *Evaluate Impact of Indianola Promise Neighborhood Program*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$299,760. June 2017-May 2018.
- *Evaluate Impact of Indianola Promise Neighborhood Program*. Principal Investigator, Wesley James. Funded by Delta Health Alliance, Stoneville, MS. \$261,419. June 2016-May 2017.

RESEARCH IN POPULAR MEDIA

- 2025 Stevenson, Ginger and Doris Burke (2025). Sick in a Hospital Town. ProPublica. December 7, 2025. <https://projects.propublica.org/albany-georgia-hospital/part-one/>
- 2020 Terrell and James (2022) manuscript in *Environmental Pollution* referenced in *NBC News*. “In ‘Cancer Alley’ A Renewed Focus on Systemic Racism is too Late”, by Luke

Denne, June 21, 2020. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/cancer-alley-renewed-focus-systemic-racism-too-late-n1231602>

- 2020 James and Cossman (2017) manuscript from *JRH* referenced in *The Atlantic*. “Rural Southerners Take on the Coronavirus: Many Black Belt communities lack hospitals, beds, ventilators, and tests”, by Adam Harris. May 7, 2020. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/05/coronavirus-rural-south/610963/>
- 2020 Cosby et al. (2019) manuscript from *AJPH* referenced in *Washington Post*. “The covid-19 crisis is going to get much worse when it hits rural areas”, by Michelle A. Williams, Bizu Gelaye, and Emily M. Broad Leib. April 6, 2020. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/06/covid-19-crisis-is-going-get-much-worse-when-it-hits-rural-areas/?fbclid=IwAR0LHqPkKwOhlD5p3hgzZz1DgxN6VIjQmzP3j27i9iRelBpZzVnqQmpWHTk>

APPLIED RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2006-2008 Consultant. McKibben Demographics, Rock Hill, SC
Responsible for supervising, scouting, and surveying residential and commercial developments to create school enrollment projection models: Lauderdale County, MS; Cobb County, GA, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA; Harrison County, MS.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS *(includes last ten years and notable presentations for brevity)

- 2025 “The Perfect Storm: Generational Shifts in the Impact of Childhood/Adolescent Bereavement on Relational Outcomes.” Southern Sociological Association. Charlotte, NC. Theresa Edwards-Capen, Christopher Purser, and Wesley James.
- 2024 “The Lasting Impact of Losing a Parent During Adolescence: A Longitudinal Analysis of Gender Differences in Relational and Deviant Outcomes in Adulthood.” Southern Sociological Society. New Orleans, LA. Christopher Purser, Wesley James, and Theresa Capen-Edwards.
- 2024 “Maternal Health in the Mississippi Delta: Care Experiences and Health Outcomes.” Southern Demographic Association. Savannah, GA. Claire Brindley, Wesley James, and Jonathan Bennett.
- 2022 “Harnessing Community Knowledge for Understanding Educational Needs.” Southern Demographic Association, Knoxville, TN. Claire Brindley, Chris King, Jonathan Bennett, Madeline Plaster, Joseph Branson, Wesley James, and Rachel Arthur.
- 2022 “Unintended Consequences of the SCOTUS Dobbs Decision in Mississippi.” Southern Demographic Association, Knoxville, TN. Wesley James, Claire Brindley, Elliot Meador, Chris King, Madeline Plaster, and Elizabeth Manoah.

- 2019 “Does the Definition of Rural Matter?” Southern Demographic Association, New Orleans, LA. **Wesley James**, Chris Purser, Anthony Stone, and Anna Church.
- 2019 “Social, Environmental, and Public Health Disparities among Rural Communities in Louisiana’s Industrial Corridor.” Rural Sociological Society, Richmond, VA. **Wesley James** and Kimberly Terrell.
- 2018 “Testing Place Effects for Spatial Mortality in the United States.” Population Association of America, Denver, CO. Julia Wolf, Jeralynn Cossman, Misty Harris, Hannah DePoy, and **Wesley James**.
- 2018 “Defining ‘Rural’ and its Implications on Health Disparities.” Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA. **Wesley James** and Chris Purser.
- 2017 “The Deviance-Generating Effects of Poor General Health: A Longitudinal Examination of General Strain Theory.” Southern Sociological Society, Greenville, SC. Chris Purser and **Wesley James**.
- 2017 “Political Cultures and Health Disparities: Regional Examination of Health Outcomes and Political Agendas.” Southern Demographic Association, Morgantown, WV. Dallas Breen, **Wesley James**.
- 2017 “Incidence of African-American Female Suicide Attempts in the Mississippi Delta.” Southern Demographic Association, Morgantown, WV. Chris King and **Wesley James**.
- 2016 “The Effects of a Home Visitation Program on Low Birth Weight Incidence in Leflore County, Mississippi.” Southern Demographic Association, Athens, GA. Chris King, **Wesley James**, Rhonda Okoth, and Karen Matthews.
- 2016 “The Influence of Public Health Infrastructure on Racial Mortality Disparities.” Southern Demographic Association, Athens, GA. **Wesley James**, Jeralynn Cossman, and Julia Wolf.
- 2016 “Race and Rural: An Investigation of the Rural Mortality Penalty and the Role of Public Health Infrastructure.” Population Association of America, Washington, D.C. Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, and Julia Wolf.
- 2015 “The Association Between Poor General Health, Negative Emotions, and Deviant Coping Strategies: An Extension of General Strain Theory.” Mid-South Sociological Society, Lafayette, LA. Chris Purser and **Wesley James**.
- 2015 “How Health Care Expenditures Effect Racial Disparities in County-Level Mortality.” Southern Demographic Association, San Antonio, TX. Jeralynn Cossman and **Wesley James**.

- 2015 “Race and Rural: An Investigation of the Rural Mortality Penalty.” Population Association of America, San Diego, CA. Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Tony Lemonis.
- 2014 Panel Discussion on Poverty and Health in the South. Southern Sociological Society. Charlotte, NC. **Wesley James**.
- 2006 “Mapping Chronic Disease Clusters Using Prescription Data as a Proxy.” Poster presentation, Population Association of America. Los Angeles, CA. Ronald Cossman, Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Troy Blanchard, Richard Thomas, Louis Pol, and Arthur Cosby. **Winner of the PAA Poster Excellence award.*
- 2005 “Conversation of Gestures or Significant Symbols? An Analysis of Boxing.” Mid-South Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta. GA. **Wesley James** and Chris Purser. **Winner of the Graduate Student Paper Award*
- 2004 “Migration, Population Mixing and Mortality: A Spatial Analysis.” Poster presentation, Population Association of America. Boston, MA. Ronald Cossman, **Wesley James**, Jeralynn Cossman, and Carol Campbell. **Winner of the PAA Poster Excellence award.*
- 2003 “How Standardization of Rates Affects the Spatial Patterns of Mortality in the U.S.” Poster presentation, Population Association of America. Minneapolis, MN. Ronald Cossman, Jeralynn Cossman, **Wesley James**, Troy Blanchard, and Carol Campbell. **Winner of the PAA Poster Excellence award.*

INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 Panelist at the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy Fall Research Forum. University of Memphis. “Unintended Consequences of the SCOTUS Decision on Dobbs in Mississippi.” December 1, 2023.
- 2023 Panelist at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Louisiana Public Health Institute, Gulf Research Program. “The Increasing Importance of Social Determinants of Health in the Rural South.” May 2023.
- 2022 Presidential Address at Southern Demographic Association in Knoxville, TN. “A Cautious Return to Normalcy: Moving Forward from the COVID-19 Pandemic.” October 2022.
- 2019 Invited Speaker at the Cancer Alley Community Empowerment Workshop, sponsored by the University Network for Human Rights & the Concerned Citizens of St. John the Baptist Parish, Reserve, LA. “Sociology and Environmental Justice in Louisiana.” September 2019.
- 2019 Invited Speaker at Auburn University Health and Social Equity Speaker Series,

- Sponsored by Center for Health Equity and Environmental Research, Auburn University. “Spatial Disparities in Mortality: The Importance of Place on the Ultimate Health Outcome.” April 2019.
- 2019 Invited Panelist at Strategic Session, *Reimagine Louisiana*, by Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy, Gulf Restoration Network, and No Waste Louisiana. New Orleans, LA. “Unequal Magnitude of Exposure to Environmental Toxins in Cancer Alley, LA.” February 2019.
- 2017 Invited Panelist at the National Cancer Institute, Gaithersburg, MD. “Understanding Definitions of Rural/Rurality: Implications for Rural Cancer Control.” October 2017.
- 2017 Invited Panelist at a Congressional Briefing on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., sponsored by Population Association of America. “Small Towns/Big Changes: The Shifting Demographics of Rural America: Health and Mortality.” April 2017.
- 2014 Invited Lecture at the Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University. “All Rural Places are not Created Equal: Revisiting the Rural Mortality Penalty in the U.S.” May 2014.
- 2014 Invited to speak to students from the Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory Charter School. May 2014.
- 2014 Invited Panel Discussant at Southern Sociological Society on Poverty and Health in the South. April 2014.
- 2013 Invited lecture for *Lessons in Honor of the Life and Work and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, St. George’s Independent School, Memphis, TN. “Environmental Racism in the United States.” January 2013.
- 2012 Invited lecture to Social Pupils, The University of Memphis undergraduate sociology club. “Social Conditions and the Spread of Disease in Industrial Revolution New York.” November 2012.
- 2012 Invited lecture to the Department of Sociology Brown Bag Series, The University of Memphis. “SES and Cancer Risks due to Inhalation of Air Toxics in Cancer Alley, Louisiana.” March 2012.
- 2011 Invited lecture to the Public Health Brown Bag Research Series, The University of Memphis School of Public Health. “The Role of Social and Economic Inequality in Predicting Race-Specific Mortality: Which Matters More?” May 2011.
- 2010 Invited lecture to the students at the Living and Learning Residence Complex, University of Memphis. “Portrayal of the Family in the Media.” November 2010.

- 2010 Lecture given as part of the Social Science Research Center 60th Anniversary Panel Series. “Using Prescription Drugs as a Proxy Measure for Chronic Illness.” October 2010.
- 2010 Lecture given to students from Technologico De Monterey, Monterey, Nuevo Leon (Mexico). “The Social Climate for Hispanic Immigration in the United States.” May 2010.
- 2009 Lecture given to Social Pupils: The University of Memphis undergraduate sociology club. “The Creative Side of Data Analysis.” University of Memphis. November 2009.
- 2009 Lecture given to sociology students from the University of Catania, Catania, Sicily (Italy). “Geographic Variation in United States Mortality.” Joint venture between University of Catania and Mississippi State University. October 2009.

TEACHING

Graduate Seminar in Medical Sociology	Social Statistics
Senior Thesis Seminar	DIS in Demographic Research Methods
Methods of Social Research	DIS in Sexual Abuse and Obesity
Marriage and Family	DIS in Statistical Application
Social Problems	Medical Sociology (Undergraduate)
Introduction to Sociology	Intro to Sociology for Pre-Meds
*Developed online Research Methods	*Developed online Marriage and Family
*Developed online Medical Sociology	Graduate Seminar in Research Methods

SERVICE TO THE DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

Thesis/Dissertation Committees **Winner of Morton Award as top Master’s Thesis at UofM*

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| ▪ <i>MD Sharif Hossain, 2024-present</i> | <i>Golam Suhel, 2023-2025 (Chair)</i> |
| ▪ <i>Fahima Sultana, 2024-present</i> | <i>Drew Schaeffer, 2024-2025</i> |
| ▪ <i>Nithila Ramesh, 2024-present (Chair)</i> | <i>Anna Della Rosa, 2024-2025</i> |
| ▪ <i>Samirah Rahman, 2022-2024</i> | <i>Janet Okine, 2025-present (Chair)</i> |
| ▪ <i>Rifat Jahan Loran, 2022-2024</i> | <i>Emmanuel Cullins, 2023-present</i> |
| ▪ <i>Jacob Richardson 2022-2023*</i> | <i>Kelsey Hill, 2022-2024</i> |
| ▪ <i>Lilith Green, 2020-2022</i> | <i>Israt Jahan, 2022-present</i> |
| ▪ <i>Clarion Harris, 2021-2022</i> | <i>Carl Wilkins, 2021-2022</i> |
| ▪ <i>Uyvonda Stewart, 2020-2021 (Chair)</i> | <i>Melissa Arismendy, 2021-2022 (Chair)</i> |
| ▪ <i>Ebenezer Kpuinen, 2020-2021 (Chair)*</i> | <i>Sarah Collins, 2019-2020</i> |
| ▪ <i>Michael Topping, 2018-2020 (Chair)*</i> | <i>Aisha Naantaanbuu, 2019-2020</i> |
| ▪ <i>Dontarious Cowans, 2017-19</i> | <i>Anna Church, 2017-19 (Chair)*</i> |
| ▪ <i>Kaniz Fatema, 2017-2019</i> | <i>Samia Tasmim, 2017-2019</i> |
| ▪ <i>Krista Wright Thayer, 2017-18*</i> | <i>Brandi Barnes, 2017-18</i> |
| ▪ <i>Caleb Cooley, 2017-18</i> | <i>Victoria Gaines, 2017-18</i> |
| ▪ <i>Melissa Garcia, 2016-2017</i> | <i>Daisy Angeles, 2016-2017</i> |
| ▪ <i>Anthony Stone, 2016-2017 (Chair)</i> | <i>Rekeycha Harris, 2015-2017</i> |

- *Degan Hubbard, 2015-2016*
- *Korrie Johnson, 2013-2014*
- *Myles Moody, 2014-2015*
- *Brittany Campagna, 2013-2015 (Chair)*
- *Zeinab Shuker, 2014-2015*
- *Armanthia Duncan, 2010-2011 (Chair)*
- *Rachel Kannady, 2009-2010*
- *Jonathan Murphy, 2010*
- *JoAnna Boudreaux, 2016-2017*
- *Darla Still, 2013-2014*
- *Darla Smith 2013-2014*
- *Dominique Watson, 2012-2013 (Chair)*
- *Stephanie Otte, 2012-2013 (Chair)*
- *Adriene Davis, 2012-2013*
- *Christy Lewis, 2011*
- *Tony Lemonis, 2014-15*

Department/College/University Committees

2024-present	Colloquium Committee
2019-present	Assessment Committee
2016-present	Co-Organizer of the Sociology Department Brown Bag Series
2015-present	Departmental Graduate Committee, Chair
2015-present	College of A&S Graduate Council Committee
2016-present	College of A&S Travel Enrichment Committee
2015-2017	College of A&S GAMTA and Morton Award Selection Committee
2015-2016	Department Chair Search Committee
2012-2015	Departmental Aide, Ecourseware Advisor
2012-2013	University of Memphis, Research Capacity Assessment Task Force
2012-2015	University of Memphis, Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee
2011-2012	College of A&S Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
2011-2012	Alpha Kappa Delta, Faculty Advisor
2011-2012	Departmental Search Committee (Instructor/Coordinator Position), Chair
2011-12, 2016-2021	Departmental Comprehensive Exam Committee, Chair (2011, 2018, 2019)
2010-2013	Social Pupils Undergraduate Sociology Club, Faculty Advisor
2010-15, 2018-present	Departmental Advisory Committee
2010-2013	Departmental Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
2009-2013	Departmental Undergraduate Committee
2009-2011	Departmental Search Committee
2009-2010	College of A&S McGaughran Scholarship Selection Committee

SERVICE TO THE DISCIPLINE

Advisory Council/Board Memberships

- *Public Safety Institute, University of Memphis, 2024-present*
- *Creative Literacy, LLC, 2025-present*

Positions Held

- *Partners for Rural Impact, Rural Leadership Cohort, 2025-present*
- *Committee on the Status of Students, Southern Sociological Society, 2021-2023*
- *Past-President: Southern Demographic Association, 2022-2023*
- *President: Southern Demographic Association, 2021-2022*
- *President Elect: Southern Demographic Association, 2019-2021*
- *Editorial Board Member, Population Research and Policy Review, 2018-present*

- *Newsletter Editor: Southern Demographic News, Southern Demographic Association, 2013-2020*
- *Editorial Board member, Journal of Maps-Social Science Edition, 2012-2014*
- *Board of Directors, Southern Demographic Association, 2011-2014*
- *Steering Committee, Mississippi State University Sociology 50th Anniversary, 2012-2013*
- *Local Arrangements, Southern Demographic Association, 2014 (Memphis, TN)*

Discussant

- *Southern Sociological Society, 2014*
- *Population Association of America, 2011*

Session Chair & Organizer

- *Southern Demographic Association, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2018, 2023, 2024*
- *Population Association of America, 2016*
- *Mid-South Sociological Association, 2010 (Chair and Organizer)*

Reviewer

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▪ <i>PLOS ONE</i> | <i>Jrnl of Rural Social Sciences</i> |
| ▪ <i>Jrnl of Rural Studies</i> | <i>Milbank Quarterly</i> |
| ▪ <i>Race and Social Problems</i> | <i>JAMA</i> |
| ▪ <i>Social Forces</i> | <i>Health Expectations</i> |
| ▪ <i>Journal of Maps</i> | <i>Sage Publishing Company</i> |
| ▪ <i>Population Research and Policy Review</i> | <i>Sociological Focus</i> |
| ▪ <i>Journal of Marriage and Family Review</i> | <i>South African Crime Quarterly</i> |
| ▪ <i>Rowman and Littlefield</i> | <i>Journal of Urban Management</i> |
| ▪ <i>Oxford University Press</i> | <i>UC Press</i> |
| ▪ <i>Taylor and Francis</i> | <i>Scientific Reports (Nature)</i> |
| ▪ <i>Journal of Adolescent Health</i> | <i>Demographic Research</i> |
| ▪ <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> | <i>Health Policy and Technology</i> |
| ▪ <i>Journal of Rural Studies</i> | <i>Journal of Rural Health</i> |
| ▪ <i>Jrnl of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved</i> | <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> |
| ▪ <i>Journal of Urban Management Review</i> | <i>Health Affairs</i> |
| ▪ <i>Jrnl of Health Disparities Research & Practice</i> | <i>Preventive Medicine</i> |
| ▪ <i>BMC Public Health</i> | |

PAST AND PRESENT PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Partners for Rural Impact (PRI)
- American Sociological Association (ASA)
- Southern Demographic Association (SDA)
- Southern Sociological Society (SSS)
- Population Association of America (PAA)
- Mid-South Sociological Association (MSSA)
- Rural Sociological Society (RSS)
- Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association (A-MSA)
- Alpha Kappa Delta, Alpha Chapter of Mississippi, Mississippi State University

HONORS & AWARDS

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 2023 | Distinguished Research Award in the Social Sciences, Business, and Law. University of Memphis Alumni Association. |
| 2022 | Distinguished Research Award in the Social Sciences. University of Memphis, College of Arts and Sciences. |
| 2021 | Pat Burlison Faculty Award. University of Memphis, College of Arts and Sciences. |
| 2020 | P.I. Millionaire Award. University of Memphis, Research and Innovation. |
| 2019 | Nominee for 2019 Paper of the Year, <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> .
“Growth and Persistence of Place-based Mortality in the United States: The Rural Mortality Penalty.” Co-authored with Dr. Arthur Cosby, Hasna Khandekar, Heather Hanna, Willie Brown, and Maya McDoom. |
| 2019 | Editor’s Choice Designation as one of Top Papers of 2018, <i>Demographic Research</i> . “Persistence of Death in the United States: The Remarkably Different Mortality Patterns Between America’s Heartland and Dixieland.” Co-authored with Dr. Jeralynn Cossman and Julia Wolf, West Virginia University. |
| 2013 | W. Russell Smith Award for Teaching Excellence. University of Memphis, College of Arts and Sciences |
| 2012 | University of Memphis Foundation, Private Donation Recipient (Awarded in the amount of \$2,000) |
| 2010 | College of Arts & Sciences Travel Enrichment Award, University of Memphis (Awarded in the amount of \$500.00) |
| 2009 | Sociology Doctoral Student of the Year, Mississippi State University |
| 2008 | SSRC Research Fellow Award. Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University |
| 2003, 04, 06 | PAA Poster of Excellence Award |
| 2005 | Graduate Student Paper of Distinction Award: “Conversation of Gestures of Significant Symbols? An Analysis of Boxing.” Mid-South Sociological Association. Atlanta, GA |
| 2005 | Centers and Institutes Graduate Student Research Award Recipient. Mississippi State University |
| 2004 | Sociology Masters Student of the Year, Mississippi State University |

REFERENCES

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