

# Michael E. Shepherd, Ph.D.

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## Academic Appointments

**University of Michigan, School of Public Health, Department of Health Management & Policy**

Assistant Professor, *Starting Fall 2024*

**University of Michigan, Department of Political Science**

Assistant Professor (by courtesy), *Starting Fall 2024*

**University of Texas at Austin, Department of Government**

Assistant Professor, 2022-2024

**University of Texas at Austin, Health & Society Program**

Affiliated Faculty, 2022-2024

**Vanderbilt University, Department of Medicine, Health, and Society**

Postdoctoral Fellow, 2021-2022

**Vanderbilt University, Data Science Institute**

Teaching Faculty, 2021

## Education

Ph.D. Political Science, Vanderbilt University, 2021

*Dissertation:* Unhealthy Democracy: How Partisan Politics is Killing Rural America

*Committee:* Larry M. Bartels (co-chair), Joshua D. Clinton (co-chair), Allison P. Anoll,  
and Katherine J. Cramer (University of Wisconsin)

M.A. Political Science, Vanderbilt University, 2019

M.A.P. Applied Politics, The University of Akron, 2015

B.S. Political Science, Murray State University, 2013

*Summa Cum Laude*

Commonwealth of Kentucky Secondary Education Teaching Credential

## Peer-Reviewed Articles

1. (Conditionally Accepted). "Access to Healthcare and Voting: The Case of Hospital Closures in Rural America" (with Derek Epp and Christian Cox). *American Political Science Review*.
2. (Conditionally Accepted). "Racializing COVID-19: Race-related and Racist Language on Facebook, Pandemic Othering, and Concern about COVID-19" (with Jonathan Metzler, Tara McKay, and Priya Bhatt\*). *Political Communication*.
3. 2022. "The Politics of Pain: Medicaid Expansion, the ACA, and the Opioid Epidemic." *Journal of Public Policy*. 42: 409-435.
4. 2021. "The Politics of Locating Polling Places: Race and Partisanship in North Carolina Election Administration, 2008-2016" (with Joshua D. Clinton, Nicholas Eubank, and Adriane Fresh). *Election Law Journal*. 20(2): 155-177.
5. 2021. "Polling Place Changes and Political Participation: The Effect of Election Administration in North Carolina Presidential Elections, 2008-2016" (with Joshua D. Clinton, Nick Eubank, and Adriane Fresh). *Political Science Research & Methods*. 9(4): 800-817.
6. 2020. "The Effects of Big-City News on Rural Residents' COVID-19 Responses" (with Eunji Kim and Joshua D. Clinton). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 117(36):22009-22014.
7. 2020. "Exit Strategy: Career Concerns and Revolving Doors in Congress" (with Hye Young You). *American Political Science Review*. 114(1): 270-284.

\*Undergraduate Student; ◇ Graduate/Professional Student

## Book Project

1. *Unhealthy Democracy: How Partisan Politics is Killing Rural America*.

My dissertation book project explores the political causes and consequences of rural health disparities and, in doing so, addresses two related and fundamental political science questions. First, to what extent does partisan control of government shape (health) policy and the health of Americans? And second, why do rural Americans, who tend to live shorter, less healthy lives and have more restricted access to health care, increasingly support a Republican Party that's policies are antithetical to the health needs of rural people and reject policies related these matters? On the former, I show that especially since the 1980s and 1990s, the Republican and Democratic parties have pursued radically different health and social welfare policies, with Republican policymaking leading to worsened rural health outcomes. However, I demonstrate that by appealing to the shared racial and rural identities of sicker and working-class rural whites, the Republican Party increasingly garners support from even the most struggling rural voters—despite the harmful effects of Republican rule.

Winner of the 2022 Best Dissertation Award, Class & Inequality Section, APSA.

## Book Reviews, Edited Volume Chapters, and Other Published Work

1. 2023. Book Review; *Ethically Challenged: Private Equity Storms US Health Care*; by Laura Katz Olson. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 2022. *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*. 52(4): 364-367.

2. 2020. Appendix Chapter. "The Public and the Electorate Before, During, and After the Civil Rights Movement." Appendix chapter in *His Truth is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope* by Jon Meacham. Random House: New York, 2020.
3. 2019. Opinion column. "Republicans face political risks on impeachment. But history shows not all is lost." (with Jon Meacham). *The Washington Post*. Dec. 18, 2019.  
*Media Coverage*: MSNBC.

## Work in Progress

1. (*Revised & Resubmitted*). "Physicians in Congress: Professional Backgrounds and Legislative Effectiveness" (with Daniel Skinner and Alexandra Fountaine). *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.
2. (*Revise & Resubmit*). "The Politics of America's Rural Hospital Crisis." *Political Behavior*.
3. (*Under review*). "A New Deal for Urban America: How 1930s Public Works Spending Has Shaped the Contemporary Urban-Rural Partisan Divide" (with Brian Hamel).
4. (*Under review*). "Measuring Disparities to Emergency Medical Services Using 200 Million Voter Records" (with Derek Epp and Christian Cox).
5. "Evidence from Absence: Exploring the Effects of Soft News through the Hollywood Writers Strike" (with John Gerring).
6. "The Right Against Life: State Party Control and Firearm Deaths."
7. "Identity Under Threat: How Potential Policy Change Mobilizes Gun Owners" (with Chris Cassella).
8. "Texas in the Rearview Mirror? How the Democratic Party Ignores Rural America and Underperforms in Elections" (with Clinton Willbanks).

## Teaching Experience

- Gun Politics Conference Course (G) - Spring 2024
- Mass Media & Democracy (G) - Spring 2024
- Health & Society Capstone (UG) - Fall 2022, 2023
- Rural Politics Conference Course (G) - Summer 2023
- Mass Media & Democracy (UG) - Spring 2023
- Current Approaches to Health & Society (UG) - Spring 2023, 2024
- Politics of Health in the US (UG) - Spring 2022
- Exploratory Data Analyses (G) - Fall 2022
- Math Camp (G) - August 2016

## Honors, Awards, and Fellowships

Best Dissertation Award, Class and Inequality Section, American Political Science Association Annual Conference, 2022.

Timothy E. Cook Best Graduate Student Paper Award, Political Communication Section, American Political Science Association Annual Conference, 2020.

Best Graduate Student Paper Award, Department of Political Science, Vanderbilt University, 2020.

## Conferences and Invited Talks

American Political Science Association: 2018, 2019, 2022, and 2023.

Midwest Political Science Association: 2017, 2018, 2024.

Southern Political Science Association: 2020.

Keeping the Republic Conference (Notre Dame), 2023.

Rethinking Rural Conference (Colby College), 2024.

Colleges and Universities: *Syracuse University; University of Akron; University of Michigan; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; University of Oklahoma; University of Texas, Austin; Vanderbilt University*

Groups and Organizations: *Rural Urban Bridge Initiative.*

## Profession, University, and Department Service

### Profession:

Panel Discussant &/or Chair: APSA, MPSA, SPSA.

APSA Class & Inequality Section Best Dissertation Award Committee (2023).

Discussant, Keeping the Republic Conference, Notre Dame University (2023).

Referee for the *American Journal of Political Science, American Journal of Preventative Medicine, American Politics Research, Comparative Political Studies, Emergency Medicine Australasia, Health Economics, Journal of Politics, Journalism, Public Opinion Quarterly, Political Research Quarterly, Quarterly Journal of Political Science.*

### University and Department:

UT Expert–Health Policy and Politics Expert Witness and Media Commenter, the University of Texas at Austin (2022-2024).

Archer Fellows Program, Faculty Selection Committee, University of Texas at Austin (2023-2024).

Faculty Connections Program, Faculty Mentor, University of Texas at Austin (2022-2024).

Policy Agendas Project, Faculty Affiliate, University of Texas at Austin (2022-2024).

Politics of Race and Ethnicity Lab, Faculty Affiliate, University of Texas at Austin (2022-2024).

## Research and Teaching Interests

Class and Inequality, Social and Political Determinants of Health, Rural Health Politics, Race and Racism, Public Policy, Campaigns and Elections, Political Communication, Public Opinion.

## Other Professional Experience

Founding Member, Rural-Urban Bridge Initiative, 2021-present.

Research Consultant, Jon Meacham, Nashville, TN, 2019-2021.

AP Visiting Fellow, AP Government Exam, Summer 2020.

Voter Protection Fellow, Tennessee Democratic Party, Nashville, TN, Fall 2018.

Campaign Researcher, Jim Cooper for Congress, Nashville, TN, Summer 2015.

Fundraising Executive, Kimberly Wood and Associates, Akron, OH, 2014-2015.

## References

Available upon request