

## Alec P. Rhodes

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Updated: Nov. 6, 2025

### EMPLOYMENT

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 2025-Present | Assistant Professor of Sociology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN                  |
| 2023-2025    | Postdoctoral Scholar, Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin–Madison |

### EDUCATION

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 2023 | Ph.D., Sociology, The Ohio State University  |
| 2020 | M.A., Sociology, The Ohio State University   |
| 2018 | B.A., Sociology, Hobart and William Smith Colleges<br>B.A., Economics, Hobart and William Smith Colleges<br>Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude, honors in sociology |

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Inequality, poverty, and mobility; economic sociology; credit, wealth, and debt; work and labor markets; social policy; rural and urban sociology; demography; life course; health and illness.

### PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

**Rhodes, Alec P.**, Davon Norris, Jason Houle, Rachel Dwyer, Sarah Bruch, and Lawrence Berger. Forthcoming. "Unsecured Credit and the Social Safety Net in U.S. States." *American Sociological Review*

**Rhodes, Alec P.** 2025. "The Wealth Returns to a Unionized Career." *Social Forces*, Advance Article, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soaf129>

**Rhodes, Alec P.** and Rachel E. Dwyer. 2024. "[Labor Unions, Debt, and Financial Advantage in Young Adulthood in the United States.](#)" *Work and Occupations* 52(3):447-488.

**Rhodes, Alec P.**, Rachel E. Dwyer, and Jason Houle. 2024. "[Debt Collection Pressure and Mental Health: Evidence from a Cohort of U.S. Young Adults.](#)" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 66(1):38-56.

- Featured in [Yahoo Finance](#)

Berger, Lawrence, Meta Brown, J. Michael Collins, Rachel E. Dwyer, Jason Houle, Stephanie Moulton, Davon Norris, and **Alec P. Rhodes**. 2024. "[State Unemployment Generosity and High-Cost Borrowing during the COVID Pandemic.](#)" *Nature Human Behaviour* 8:1676-1688.

- Featured in [Ohio State News](#), [AAAS EurekAlert!](#), [Science Magazine](#)

Phillips, Lora and **Alec P. Rhodes**. 2024. "[Racial-Ethnic Poverty Gaps in Later Life: A Role for Late Career Employment Quality?](#)" *Social Problems*, Online First.

**Rhodes, Alec P.**, Stephanie Moulton, Căzilia Loibl, Donald Haurin, and Joshua Joseph. 2024. "[Housing Wealth, Mortgage Borrowing, and Health Outcomes in Older Age: Evidence from Biomarker Data.](#)" *The Journals of Gerontology Series B* 79(7).

- Editor's Choice, The Journals of Gerontology Series B
- Academic Research Best Paper Award, Certified Financial Planner Board
- Featured in [Squared Away Blog](#)

**Rhodes, Alec P.** 2024. "[Labor Market Inequality, Debt, and the Consequences of Sub-Baccalaureate Credentials.](#)" *The Sociological Quarterly* 65(1):11-37.

Moulton, Stephanie, **Alec P. Rhodes**, Donald Haurin, and Căzilia Loibl. 2022. "[Managing the Onset of a New Disease in Older Age: Housing Wealth, Mortgage Borrowing, and Medication Adherence.](#)" *Social Science & Medicine* 314: 115437.

- Financial Planning Paper Award, American Council on Consumer Interests
- Featured in [Squared Away Blog](#)

Loibl, Căzilia, **Alec P. Rhodes**, Stephanie Moulton, Donald Haurin, and Chrisse Edmunds. 2022. "[Food Insecurity among Older Adults in the U.S.: The Role of Mortgage Borrowing.](#)" *Applied Economic Perspectives & Policy* 44(2):549-574.

**Rhodes, Alec P.** 2022. "[Student Debt and Geographic Disadvantage: Disparities by Urban, Suburban, and Rural Background.](#)" *Rural Sociology* 87(1):231-263.

- Olaf Larson Graduate Student Paper Award, Rural Sociological Society
- Featured in [The Rural Review](#), [The Daily Yonder](#), Consortium for Policy Research in Education's *Research Minutes* podcast

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

"Right to Work Laws and Economic Dynamism in U.S. Counties, 1946-2019" w/ Tom VanHeuvelen

"For What Benefit? State Right to Work Laws and Employer-Provided Benefit Coverage"

“Child Tax Credit Expansions, Credit Use, and Debt among Low-Income Mothers” w/ Lawrence Berger, Trisha Chanda, Rachel E. Dwyer, and Jason Houle.

“Debt Trajectories of Divorcing Mothers and Fathers: Divorce as a Dynamic Uncoupling” w/ Trisha Chanda, Lawrence Berger, Rachel E. Dwyer, and Jason Houle.

- Family Demography Poster Award, Population Association of America

“Payday Lending Supply, Demand, and Regulation: Insights from a New Dataset” w/ Megan Doherty Bea, Victoria Coan, and Rachel E. Dwyer.

“The Peculiar Inequality of Credit Scores and a New Take on the Democracy of Credit” w/ Davon Norris and Rachel E. Dwyer.

“Cash Transfers and Credit: Evidence from the Alaska Permanent Fund” w/ Lawrence Berger, Rachel E. Dwyer, and Jason Houle.

“Can’t Afford to Retire? Parental Student Loan Borrowing and Delayed Retirement”

## PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP AND REPORTS

2025                      **Rhodes, Alec P.** (January 12). [“How Unions are Helping Younger Workers Gain a Financial Advantage.”](#) Power at Work.

2022                      Loibl, Căzilia, Donald Haurin, Stephanie Moulton, **Alec P. Rhodes**, and Chrisse Edmunds. [“Food Insecurity among Older Adults in the US: The Role of Mortgage Borrowing.”](#) *University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research Discussion Paper Series*, DP2022-01.

2021                      **Rhodes, Alec P.** (September 9). [“Geographic Disparities in Student Debt by Rural, Suburban, and Urban Background.”](#) Work in Progress: Sociology on the Economy, Work and Inequality.

## GRANT FUNDING

2024                      Social Security Administration and Retirement and Disability Research Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, JSIT Research Award.  
Role: Principal Investigator.  
Project Title: “Wealth, Parental Student Loans, and Retirement Behaviors of Parents of College-Aged Children.”

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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| 2025      | Family Demography Poster Award, Population Association of America   |
| 2024      | Editor's Choice, The Journals of Gerontology Series B.  |
| 2023      | Aage B. Sørensen Travel Award, RC28 Social Stratification and Mobility, International Sociological Association                                  |
| 2022      | Academic Research Best Paper Award, Certified Financial Planner Board<br>Financial Planning Paper Award, American Council on Consumer Interests |
| 2021      | Olaf Larson Graduate Student Paper Award, Rural Sociological Society  |
| 2020      | Graduate Research Fellowship (Honorable Mention), National Science Foundation   |
| 2018-2019 | University Fellowship, The Ohio State University  |
| 2018      | Blair C. Currie Prize in Economics, Hobart and William Smith Colleges   |

## INVITED TALKS

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| 2024 | "State Unemployment Insurance Generosity and High-Cost Borrowing." Social Policy Seminar, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Delaware.<br><br>"The Wealth Returns to a Unionized Career." Household Finance Seminar, University of Wisconsin–Madison. |
| 2023 | "Debt Collection Pressure and Mental Health: Evidence from a Cohort of U.S. Young Adults." Sociology Colloquium Series, University at Buffalo.  |

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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| 2025 | Berger, Lawrence, Trisha Chanda, Rachel E. Dwyer, Jason Houle, and <b>Alec P. Rhodes</b> . "Child Tax Credit Expansions, Credit Use, and Debt among Low-Income Mothers." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington, D.C., Apr. 10-13.<br><br>Chanda, Trisha., <b>Alec P. Rhodes</b> , Lawrence Berger, Jason Houle, and Rachel E. Dwyer. "Divorce and Debt Holding: Heterogeneity by Parent Gender and Children's Physical Custody Arrangements." RC28 Spring Meeting, Milan, Italy, Mar. 25-27. |
| 2024 | Bea, Megan Doherty, Victoria Coan, Rachel E. Dwyer, and <b>Alec P. Rhodes</b> . "Payday Lending Supply, Demand, and Regulation: Insights from a New Dataset." Fall Research Conference, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, National Harbor, MD, Nov. 21-23.  |

**Rhodes, Alec P.** and Tom VanHeuvelen. "Do Right-to-Work Laws Lead to Economic Dynamism? Evidence from U.S. Counties, 1946-2019." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal, Aug. 9-13.

Berger, Lawrence M., Sarah Bruch, Rachel E. Dwyer, Jason Houle, Davon Norris, and **Alec P. Rhodes**. "Does State Safety Net Support Influence Unsecured Consumer Credit? Evidence from National Credit Report Data." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Columbus, OH, April 17-20.

**Rhodes, Alec P.**, Rachel E. Dwyer, and Jason Houle. "Debt Collection Pressure and Mental Health: Evidence from a Cohort of U.S. Young Adults." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Columbus, OH, April 17-20.

2023

**Rhodes, Alec P.** "Right to Work Laws, Marketplace Power, and Worker Compensation in the U.S." Fall Research Conference, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Atlanta, Nov. 9-11.

Berger, Lawrence M., Sarah Bruch, J. Michael Collins, Rachel E. Dwyer, Jason Houle, Stephanie Moulton, and **Alec P. Rhodes**. "Do State Social Welfare Policies Influence Consumer Debt Holdings? Evidence from National Credit Report Data." Fall Research Conference, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Atlanta, Nov. 9-11.

Norris, Davon and **Alec P. Rhodes**, and Rachel E. Dwyer. "Of Distribution and Translation: Credit Scores and Economic Mobility in the U.S." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, Aug. 17-21.

Berger, Lawrence M., Meta Brown, J. Michael Collins, Rachel E. Dwyer, Jason Houle, Stephanie Moulton, Davon Norris, and **Alec P. Rhodes**. "Inequality in High-Cost Borrowing and Unemployment Generosity in U.S. States during the COVID-19 Pandemic." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, Aug. 17-21.

**Rhodes, Alec P.** "Labor Unions and Wealth Inequality in the United States, 1985-2016." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, New Orleans, Apr. 12-15.

2022

**Rhodes, Alec P.** and Rachel E. Dwyer. "Labor Unions, Debt, and Financial Inclusion in Young Adulthood." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, LA, Aug. 5-9.

**Rhodes, Alec P.** and Simon Kolbeck. "Who Suffers Most from Prison? Heterogeneous Effects of Incarceration on Wage Inequality." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, LA, Aug. 5-9.

Phillips, Lora A. and **Alec P. Rhodes**. "Late Career Precarious Work and Racial-Ethnic Poverty Gaps in Later Life." Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Atlanta, Apr. 9-6.

2021 Phillips, Lora A. and **Alec P. Rhodes**. "Precarious Employment and Late Life Poverty among Older Workers." Virtual Engagement Event of the American Sociological Association, Aug. 6-10.

Loibl, Căzilia, **Alec P. Rhodes**, Stephanie Moulton, Donald Haurin, and Chrisse Edmunds. Food insecurity among older adults in the U.S.: The role of mortgage borrowing. 2021 IAREP-SABE Virtual Conference, Jun. 11, <https://sabeconomics.org/iarep-sabe-2021/>

**Rhodes, Alec P.** "Sub-Baccalaureate Credentials and Economic Inequality in Young Adulthood." Virtual Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, May 5-8.

2020 **Rhodes, Alec P.** "Student Debt and the Reproduction of Geographic Disadvantage: Disparities by Rural, Suburban, and Urban Background." Virtual Engagement Event of the American Sociological Association, Aug. 8-11.

2019 **Rhodes, Alec P.** "Exploring Urban-Suburban-Rural Disparities in Student Debt." Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Richmond, VA, Aug. 9.

2018 **Rhodes, Alec P.** and Ervin Kosta. "Local Identity, Global Context: Symbolic Ethnicity and Barriers to Collective Refugee Action." Annual Meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Baltimore, MD, Feb. 23.

2017 **Rhodes, Alec P.** "Bolstering Women's Employment and Increasing Men's Care through Parental Leave Policy Reform." Annual Meeting of the New York State Sociological Association, Rochester, NY, Oct. 20.

## RESEARCH AND TRAINEE EXPERIENCE

2024 *Retirement and Disability Research Consortium, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Junior Scholar Intensive Training*  
Role: Scholar and Trainee.

2023 *Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University*  
Role: Graduate Research Associate  
Team: Rachel Dwyer and Jason Houle

“Debt and Insecurity among Vulnerable Communities during the COVID-19 Crisis.” Funding agency: National Science Foundation.

- 2021-2022      *Department of Sociology and John Glenn College of Public Affairs, The Ohio State University*  
 Role: Graduate Research Associate  
 Team: Lawrence Berger, Meta Brown, J. Michael Collins, Rachel Dwyer, Jason Houle, and Stephanie Moulton  
 “Inequalities in Financial Coping During the COVID-19 Crisis: New Insights from Linked Credit Report, Alternative Financial Service, and State Administrative Data.” Funding agency: Russell Sage Foundation.
- 2020-2021      *John Glenn College of Public Affairs, The Ohio State University*  
 Role: Graduate Research Associate  
 Team: Stephanie Moulton, Donald Haurin, Căzilia Loibl, and Joshua Joseph  
 “Economic Security in Retirement: Does Borrowing from Home Equity Moderate the Impact of a Health Shock on Health Outcomes?” Funding agency: Social Security Administration Retirement and Disability Consortium, Center for Financial Security, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2020              *Ohio Department of Aging and Ohio Association of Gerontology and Education, Ohio Scholars in Aging Program*  
 Role: Fellow and Trainee
- 2019-2020      *College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University*  
 Role: Graduate Research Associate  
 Team: Căzilia Loibl, Donald Haurin, and Stephanie Moulton  
 “Food Insecurity among Older Adults in the U.S.: The Role of Mortgage Borrowing” Funding agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, Univ. of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research

## TEACHING AND MENTORING

- 2025              Instructor, “Economic Sociology of Modern Capitalism”, Cornerstone for Business Program (SCLA 10200), Purdue University
- 2022-2025      Mentor to junior scholars (graduate and undergraduate), Debt Lab, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University
- 2020              Teaching Training (Course Design, Learning Assessment, Inclusive Teaching), Drake Institute, The Ohio State University

## DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

- 2021-2022 President, Sociology Graduate Student Association, The Ohio State University
- 2019-2020 Cohort Representative, Sociology Graduate Student Association, The Ohio State University

## DISCIPLINARY SERVICE

- 2025 Organizer, Challenging Inequality through Federal, State, and Local Policy Partnerships, Paper Session, Fall Research Conference, Assoc. for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Seattle, WA, Nov. 14.
- 2024 Reception Committee, Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility Section, American Sociological Association.
- Organizer, Federal and State Policies and Economic Inequality in the United States, Paper Session, Fall Research Conference, Assoc. for Public Policy Analysis and Administration, National Harbor, MD, Nov. 22.
- Presider of Segregation in the Labor Market, Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Columbus, OH, April 17-20.
- 2022 Organizer, Mentoring Committee, Organizations, Occupations, and Work Section, American Sociological Association.
- 2021 Presider of Markets, Policy, and Economics Roundtable, BGSU-OSU Graduate Student Conference, Columbus, OH, October 29.

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Sociological Association; Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Population Association of America; RC28 Social Stratification and Mobility

## OCCASIONAL REVIEWER

*Journal of Consumer Affairs, Journal of Economic Psychology, Educational Researcher, Human Geography, Policy Studies Journal, Qualitative Sociology, Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, Social Currents, Sociological Forum, Social Science Research*