

## Yini Zhang

Assistant Professor  
University at Buffalo, State University of New York  
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**EDUCATION** **School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
Ph.D. in Communication (2016-2020)  
Minor: Educational Psychology (quantitative methods)  
*Dissertation: A network approach to understanding public attention, public opinion and communication flows in the digital media system (Thomas E. Patterson Best Dissertation Award)*  
Chairs: Dhavan Shah & Chris Wells  
Committee members: Lewis Friedland, Karl Rohe & Zhongdang Pan

**School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
M.A. in Mass Communication (2013-2016)

**School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China**  
M.A. in Journalism (2012-2014)

**School of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Beijing Normal University**  
B.A. in English Language and Literature (2007-2011) Highest Honors

**PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS** **Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, University at Buffalo**  
2020-present

**Honorary Fellow, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
2021-present

**Lecturer, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
2020

**Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Statistics, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
2018-2019

**Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin–Madison**  
2013-2018

**Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China**  
2013

**Program Assistant, Office of China Affairs, University of Maryland, College Park**  
2011-2012

**JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS** *+indicates a graduate/undergraduate student author at the time of manuscript preparation*  
26. **Zhang, Y.** & Lian, R<sup>+</sup> (in press). How right-wing media, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube circulated antipathy and threat cues about immigrants: A cross-media and

- cross-platform approach. *Mass Communication & Society*. [Impact Factor (2023): 2.7]
25. Wang, R.<sup>+</sup> & **Zhang, Y.** (in press). Partisan Response to Trump's Media Bashing on Twitter: From Synergistic Amplification to Strategic Avoidance, Countering, and Retooling. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*. [Impact Factor (2023): 2.6]
  24. **Zhang, Y.**,\* Suk, J.,\* Yang, D.<sup>+</sup>, Yue, Z.<sup>+</sup>, Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, Dong, X.<sup>+</sup>, An, Z.<sup>+</sup>, & Joseph, K. (2025). [Center-Left and Right-Wing News, YouTube, and Twitter as Key Connectors in the Social Media System: A Cross-Media and Cross-Platform Analysis of Hyperlinks](#). *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*. doi:10.51685/jqd.2025.007. [\*co-first authors] [Impact Factor not yet available]
  23. Suk, J.,\* **Zhang, Y.**,\* Liu, J. & Yang, Y.<sup>+</sup>. (2025). [Communicative AI in the Scientific Public Sphere: An Analysis of Twitter Discourse on Generative AI Tools](#). *Telematics and Informatics*. doi:10.1016/j.tele.2025.102261 [\*co-first authors] [Impact Factor (2023): 7.6]
  22. Li, M.<sup>+</sup>, Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Pevehouse, J., Sun, Y.<sup>+</sup>, Kwon, H.<sup>+</sup>, Lian, R.<sup>+</sup>, Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, Dong, X.<sup>+</sup>, & Shah, D. (2024). [Platform Affordances, Discursive Opportunities, and Social Media Activism: A Cross-Platform Analysis of #MeToo on Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit, 2017-2020](#). *New Media & Society*. doi: 10.1177/14614448241285562. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.5]
  21. Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, **Zhang, Y.**, Suk, J., & Levin, S.H.<sup>+</sup> (2024). [Empowered or Constrained in Platform Governance? An Analysis of Twitter Users' Responses to Elon Musk's Takeover](#). *Social Media + Society*. doi: 10.1177/20563051241277606. [Impact Factor (2023): 5.5]
  20. Kim, J.<sup>+</sup>, **Zhang, Y.**, & Borah, P. (2024). [Second-level agenda-setting effects of news media and public policy on social media discourse across platforms: Immigration during the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S.](#) *Information, Communication & Society*. doi: 10.1080/1369118X.2024.2380759. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.2]
  19. **Zhang, Y.**, Wong, J. C. S.<sup>+</sup>, An, Z.<sup>+</sup>, Brimmer, M.J.<sup>+</sup>, Joseph, K., & Yang, J. Z. (2024). [Partisanship and Risk Talk on Twitter: A Multipronged Analysis of the Prominence, Targets, and Drivers of COVID-19 Risk-Related Expression by Democrats versus Republicans](#). *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*. doi: 10.51685/jqd.2024.009. [Impact Factor not yet available]
  18. **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., Suk, J., & McGrady, R. (2024). [Trump, Twitter, and Truth Social: how Trump used both mainstream and alt-tech social media to drive news media attention](#). *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*. doi: 10.1080/19331681.2024.2328156. [Impact Factor (2023): 2.6]
  17. Dahlke, R.<sup>+</sup> & **Zhang, Y.** (2024). [Surviving or thriving political defeat on social media: A temporal analysis of how electoral loss exacerbates the gender gap in political expression](#). *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. doi: 10.1093/jcmc/zmad051. [Impact Factor (2023): 5.4]
  16. **Zhang, Y.**, Chen, F., Suk, J., & Yue. Z.<sup>+</sup> (2023). [WordPPR: A Researcher-Driven Computational Keyword Selection Method for Text Data Retrieval from Digital Media](#). *Communication Methods and Measures*. doi: 10.1080/19312458.2023.2278177. [Impact Factor (2023): 6.3]
  15. Jiang, X.<sup>+</sup>, **Zhang, Y.**\*, Kim, J.<sup>+</sup>, Pevehouse, J., & Shah, D. (2023). [Talking Past Each Other on Twitter: Thematic, Event, and Temporal Divergences in Polarized Partisan](#)

- Expression on Immigration. *Political Communication*. doi: 10.1080/10584609.2023.2263400. [\*corresponding author] [Impact Factor (2023): 4.6]
14. Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yue, Z.<sup>+</sup>, Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, Dong, X.<sup>+</sup>, Yang, D.<sup>+</sup>, & Lian, R.<sup>+</sup> (2023). [When the Personal Becomes Political: Unpacking the Dynamics of Sexual Violence and Gender Justice Discourses across Four Social Media Platforms.](#) *Communication Research*. doi: 10.1177/0093650223115414. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.9]
  13. **Zhang, Y.**, Yue, Z.<sup>+</sup>, Yang, X.<sup>+</sup>, Chen, F., & Kwak, N. (2022). [How a Peripheral Ideology Becomes Mainstream: Strategic Performance, Audience Reaction, and News Media Amplification in the Case of QAnon Twitter Accounts.](#) *New Media & Society*. doi: 10.1177/14614448221137324. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.5]
  12. **Zhang, Y.**, Chen, F., & Lukito, J. (2022). [Network Amplification of Politicized Information and Misinformation about COVID-19 by Conservative Media and Partisan Influencers on Twitter.](#) *Political Communication*. doi: 10.1080/10584609.2022.2113844. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.6]
  11. **Zhang, Y.\***, Chen, F.\*, & Rohe, K. (2022). [Social Media Public Opinion as Flocks in a Murmuration: Conceptualizing and Measuring Opinion Expression on Social Media.](#) *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. doi:10.1093/jcmc/zmab021. [\*co-first authors] [Impact Factor (2023): 5.4]
  10. **Zhang, Y.**, Shah, D., Valenzuela, S., & Pevehouse, J. (2022). [Reactive and Asymmetric Communication Flows: Social Media Discourse and Partisan News Framing in the Wake of Mass Shootings.](#) *The International Journal of Press/Politics*. doi: 10.1177/19401612211072793. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.1]
  9. **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito J., Su, M.H., Suk, J., Xia, Y., Kim, S.J., Doroshenko, L., & Wells, C. (2021). [Assembling the Networks and Audiences of Disinformation: How Successful Russian IRA Twitter Accounts Built Their Followings, 2015–2017.](#) *Journal of Communication*, 71(2), 305-331. doi: 10.1093/joc/jqaa042. [Impact Factor (2023): 6.1]
  8. Pelled, A., Lukito, J., Foley, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Sun, Z., Pevehouse, J., & Shah, D. (2021). [Death across the news spectrum: A time series analysis of partisan coverage following mass shootings in the U.S.](#) *The International Journal of Communication*, 15, 20. [Impact Factor (2023): 1.9]
  7. Wells, C., **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., & Pevehouse, J. (2020). [Modeling the formation of attentive publics in social media: The case of Donald Trump.](#) *Mass Communication and Society*, 23(2), 181-205. doi:10.1080/15205436.2019.1690664. [Impact Factor (2023): 2.7]
  6. Chen, F., **Zhang, Y.**, & Rohe, K. (2020). [Targeted sampling from massive block model graphs with personalized PageRank.](#) *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series B (Statistical Methodology)*, 82(1), 99-126. [Impact Factor (2023): 3.1]
  5. Lukito J., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Doroshenko, L., Kim, S. J., Su, M-H., Xia, Y., Freelon, D., & Wells C. (2020). [The Wolves in Sheep's Clothing: How Russia's Internet Research Agency Tweets Appeared in US News as Vox Populi.](#) *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 25(2), 196-216. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.1]
  4. **Zhang, Y.**, Shah, D., Foley, J., Abhishek, A., Lukito, J., Suk, J., Kim, S.J., Sun, Z., Pevehouse, J., & Garlough, C. (2019). [Whose Lives Matter? Mass Shootings and](#)

Social Media Discourses of Sympathy and Policy, 2012-2014. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 24(4), 182-202. doi:10.1093/jcmc/zmz009. [Impact Factor (2023): 5.4]

3. Suk, J., Abhishek, A., **Zhang, Y.**, Ahn, S.Y., Correa, T., Garlough, C., & Shah, D. (2019). #MeToo, Networked Acknowledgement, and Connective Action: How “Empowerment Through Empathy” Launched a Social Movement. *Social Science Computer Review*, 39(2), 276-294. doi:10.1177/0894439319864882. [Impact Factor (2023): 3.0]
2. Xia, Y., Lukito, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Wells, C., Kim, S., & Tong, C. (2019). Disinformation, performed: Self-presentation of a Russian IRA account on Twitter. *Information, Communication & Society*, 22(11), 1646-1664. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2019.1621921. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.2]
1. **Zhang, Y.**, Wells, C., Wang, S., & Rohe, K. (2018). Attention and amplification in the hybrid media system: The composition and activity of Donald Trump’s Twitter following during the 2016 presidential election. *New Media & Society*, 20(9), 3161-3182. doi:10.1177/1461444817744390. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.5]

#### MANUSCRIPTS UNDER R&R

4. Levin, S.H.<sup>+</sup>, Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, Seo, J.<sup>+</sup>, Leong, Y.Y.<sup>+</sup>, Bennett, E.<sup>+</sup>, Yang, D.<sup>+</sup>, Yang, Z.<sup>+</sup>, Chen, M.<sup>+</sup>, **Zhang, Y.**, & Suk, J. (R&R). From #StayWoke to “Culture Wars”: How Social Justice Discourse Is Separately and Synergistically Politicized on Twitter and YouTube. *Political Communication*. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.6]
3. Suk, J., Zhong, W., **Zhang, Y.**, Pruden, M., Yang, Y., Chen, C. & DiFranzo, D. (R&R). Unveiling Engagement and Platform Algorithmic Biases in Social Media Data Collection and Analysis: An Experimental Study. *Communication Methods and Measures*. [Impact Factor (2023): 6.3]
2. **Zhang, Y.** & Cho, H. (R&R). Agenda Building with Social Media: Conceptualizing and Analyzing Processes among Real-World Events, Social Media Publics, and News Media in #StopAsianHate. *Communication Research*. [Impact Factor (2023): 4.9]
1. Suk, J.,\* **Zhang, Y.**,\* Wang, R.<sup>+</sup>, Yang, D.<sup>+</sup>, Levin, S.H.<sup>+</sup>, Seo, J.<sup>+</sup> & Dong, X.<sup>+</sup> (R&R). Politicization as a Temporal Phenomenon: Longitudinal Evolution of Social Media Activism #MeToo in a Polarized Era. *Information, Communication & Society*. [\*co-first authors] [Impact Factor (2023): 4.2]

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

6. **Zhang, Y.** (forthcoming). Message Amplification. In Nai, A., Grömping, M., & Wirz, D. (Eds). *Elgar Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
5. Shugars, S., **Zhang, Y.**, & Jones, J. (2024). Editors’ Introduction to Special Issue of JQD:DM in Collaboration with ICWSM. *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*.
4. Lukito, J., Brown, M.A., Dahlke, R., Suk, J., Yang, Y., **Zhang, Y.**, Chen, B., Kim, S.J., & Soorholtz, K. (2023). *The State of Digital Data Research, 2023*. [White paper].
3. Shah, D., **Zhang, Y.**, Pevehouse, J., & Valenzuela, S. (2021). Counter a Reactive Media System. In Hart, D. (Eds.), *Fixing American Politics: Solutions for the Media Age*. Routledge.

2. Lukito, J., Wells, C., **Zhang, Y.**, Doroshenko, L., Kim, S.J., S, M.H., Suk, J., Xia, Y., & Freelon, D. (2018). [The Twitter Exploit: How Russian Propaganda Infiltrated U.S. News](#). [White paper].
1. **Zhang, Y.**, Wang, Y., Foley, J., Suk, J., & Conathan, D. (2017, July). [Tweeting Mass Shootings: The Dynamics of Issue Attention on Social Media](#). In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Social Media & Society* (p. 59). ACM.

**FUNDED  
GRANTS**

**Collaborative Research: SAI-R: Integrative Cyberinfrastructure for Enhancing and Accelerating Online Abuse Research (2228617) (2022)**  
National Science Foundation  
Co-PI UB Total: \$375,000

**SICSS Project: Examining multi-platform communication flows (2018)**  
Northwestern University  
Team Lead \$2,000

**UNFUNDED  
GRANT  
PROPOSALS**

**Proposal: Collaborative Research: SaTC: CORE: Small: Moderating Multimodal Online Hate in the Era of Generative AI (2024)**  
National Science Foundation  
Co-PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Maladaptive Coping Behaviors in the Wake of Mass Shootings: Media Tracking, Testing, and Targeting (2024)**  
National Institute of Justice  
PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Exploring the Development and Effects of Parasocial Relationships with “Benign” and Explicit Social Media Influencers for Right-Wing Extremist Orgs (2024)**  
Minerva Research Initiative - Department of Defense  
Co-PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Assessing the prevalence and manifestation of social identity threat in human vs. AI-generated hate and their differential impacts (2023)**  
Russell Sage Foundation  
PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Education DCL: EAGER: SecGAI: Learning Platform and Curriculum Development for Socially Secure Generative AI (2023)**  
National Science Foundation  
Co-PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Collaborative Research: Elements: Integrative Cyberinfrastructure for Enhancing and Accelerating Online Abuse Research (2021)**  
National Science Foundation  
Co-PI (not funded)

**Proposal: Countering New Waves of Online Hate in a Divisive and Rapidly**

**Transitioning World (2021)**  
**National Science Foundation**  
PI (not funded)

**Proposal: (PIER) Hub for Reducing Drownings in the Great Lakes Region (2020)**  
**National Science Foundation**  
Co-PI (not funded)

#### AWARDS

**Thomas E. Patterson Best Dissertation Award.** American Political Science Association. (2021)

**Louise Elizabeth George Scholarship.** University of Wisconsin–Madison. (2019 - 2019)

**Top paper in Political Communication Interest Group paper competition.** The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. (2018)

**Third place in the inaugural AEJMC Research Prize for Professional Relevance competition.** The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. (2018)

**Excellence in Teaching Award.** University of Wisconsin–Madison. (2017)

**Top Research Paper at Communication Crossroads.** University of Wisconsin–Madison. (2016)

#### INVITED TALKS

**The Mutual Shaping Between Communication Technologies and Users: A Computational Approach.** Department of Communication and Journalism at Texas A&M University. January 29, 2024.

**Users, Spaces, Platforms, and Systems: A Multi-Level Framework for Social Media Research.** Speaker for Brown Bag Series. Department of Communication at the University at Buffalo. December 8, 2023.

**Hyperlinks and content: Two computational approaches to tracing information flows in the hybrid-media cross-platform information ecology.** Speaker for Summer Institute in Computational Social Science-North Dakota State University (SICSS-NDSU). June 22, 2023.

**Misinformation and extremism.** Panelist at the Center for Information Integrity Conference, University at Buffalo. April 21, 2023.

**Social media and mass shootings.** Panelist at Buffalo Rising: Remembering the Past to Build a Stronger Community. Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, NYS Unified Court System. October 22, 2022.

**New and emerging data tools.** Panelist at the 2022 Digital Data Conference (D2C). University of Texas-Austin & The Social Science Research Council. April 14, 2022.

**Rooted in community and toward a personalized SJMC experience.** Keynote speaker at the 2021 Communication Crossroads Conference. University of Wisconsin–Madison. March 12, 2021.

**A network approach to mapping out communication actors and tracing communication flows and influence.** Speaker for Cutting-edge Communication Research at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research. University of Amsterdam. January 28, 2021.

**Whose lives matter? Mass shootings and social media discourses of sympathy and policy, 2012-2014.** Presented to School of Journalism and Mass Communication Board of Visitors. University of Wisconsin–Madison. April 12, 2019.

**CONFERENCE PAPERS**

55. Lukito, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Pruden, M., Prochaska, S., Chen, B., Zhong, W., Brown, M., Dahlke, R., Suk, J., Greenfield, J., & Borah, P. (2025). Cross-Platformization of Conservative Media: How U.S. Right-Leaning Outlets Curate Their Posts on Twitter and Truth Social. Paper accepted for presentation at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2025, Denver, CO.
54. Lu, L., **Zhang, Y.**, Kwon, H., Borah, P., Buttrick, N., Pevehouse, J., & Shah, D. (2025). Framing Mass Violence on the Left and Right: A Multimodal Analysis of Textual and Visual Content in Partisan Media. Paper accepted for presentation at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2025, Denver, CO.
53. Wang, R., Seo, J., Yim, C., Levin, S.H., Romann, L., Suk, J., & **Zhang, Y.** (2025). [Work In Progress] A cycle of contention: the politicized turn of discourse of AI on social media after ChatGPT. Paper accepted for presentation at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2025, Denver, CO.
52. Suk, J., Wei, Z., **Zhang, Y.**, Pruden, M., Yang, Y., Mao, C., & DiFranzo, D. (2025). Unveiling Engagement and Platform Algorithmic Biases in Social Media Data Collection and Analysis: An Experimental Study. Paper accepted for presentation at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2025, Denver, CO.
51. Shugars, S., Lukito, J., Pruden, M., Dahlke, R., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yang, Y., Zhong, W., Chen, B., & Brown, M. (2025). An Ecosystem Divided?: Cross-Platform Election Information Flows in Alt-Tech and Mainstream Social Media Platforms. Paper accepted for presentation at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2025, Denver, CO.
50. Kim, J., Kwon, H., **Zhang, Y.** & Shah, D.(2025). How Partisan Users Engage and Disengage with Each Other over Immigration: Fine-Tuning BERT to Explore Twitter Discourse between 2014–2017. Paper presented at 82nd Annual MPSA Conference, Chicago, IL.
49. Wang, R. & **Zhang, Y.** (2024). How Political Influencers Responded to Trump’s Media Bashing on Twitter? From Synergistic Amplification to Strategic Avoidance, Countering, and Retooling. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.
48. Wang, R., **Zhang, Y.**, Suk, J., & Levin, S.H.(2024). Empowered or Constrained in Platform Governance? An Analysis of Twitter Users’ Responses to Elon Musk’s Takeover. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.
47. Kim, T., **Zhang, Y.**, Yang, Y., & Lukito, J.(2024). After the Ban: Tracking the Migration from Twitter to Parler. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.

46. Suh, Y.J., Suk, J., Kwon, H., & **Zhang, Y.** (2024). From Hashtag to Networked Hate: Analyzing cross-platform hate in the #MeToo movement in South Korea. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.
45. Shugars, S., Lukito, J., Pruden, M., Dahlke, D., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yang, Y., Zhong, W., Chen, B., & Brown, M. (2024). An Ecosystem Divided?: Cross-Platform Election Information Flows across Alt-Tech and Mainstream Social Media Platforms. Paper presented at the International Conference on Computational Social Science 2024 (IC2S2) Conference 2024, Pennsylvania, PA.
44. Shugars, S., Lukito, J., Pruden, M., Dahlke, D., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yang, Y., Zhong, W., Chen, B., & Brown, M. (2024). An Ecosystem Divided?: Cross-Platform Election Information Flows in Alt-Tech and Mainstream Social Media Platforms. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.
43. Wang, R., Levin, S.H., Seo, J, Leong, Y.Y., Bennett, E., Yang, D., Yang, Z., Chen, M., **Zhang, Y.**, & Suk, J. (2024). From #StayWoke to “Culture Wars”: How Social Justice Discourse Is Separately and Synergistically Politicized on Twitter and YouTube. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2024, Philadelphia, PA.
42. **Zhang, Y.**, & Choi, H. (2024). Agenda building with social media in contemporary media ecology: Exogenous events and interpublic and intermedia processes surrounding #StopAsianHate. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2024, Gold Coast, Australia.
41. **Zhang, Y.**, Suk, J., & Lukito, J. (2024). A Multi-Level Framework for Social Media Research. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2024, Gold Coast, Australia.
40. Suh, Y.J., Suk, J., Kwon, H. & **Zhang, Y.** (2024). From Hashtag to Backlash: Unpacking Morality Across Platforms During the #MeToo Movement in South Korea. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2024, Gold Coast, Australia.
39. **Zhang, Y.**, Suk, J., Levin, S.H., & Wang, R. (2023). Elon Musk, Platform Ownership, User Participation, and the Governance of Twitter. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2023, Los Angeles, CA.
38. Wang, R. & **Zhang, Y.** (2023). How News Media and Partisan Influencers Responded to Trump’s Media Bashing. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2023, Los Angeles, CA.
37. Yang, Y., **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., Kim, S.j., Foley, J. & Suk, J. (2023). A Cross-Platform Analysis of Survivors of De-platforming after January 6. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2023, Los Angeles, CA.
36. Kim, J., **Zhang, Y.**, & Borah P. (2023). Immigration during the COVID-19 pandemic: How news media and public policy influenced public agenda on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2023, Washington DC.
35. **Zhang, Y.** & Jiang, X. (2023). Cueing “Bad Hombres”: How Right-wing News Media, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube Circulated Antipathy and Threat Cues About

Immigrants. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada.

34. **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., Suk, J., & McGrady, R. (2023). Too Big to Deplatform? Exploring Truth Social as Trump's New Twitter for Hacking Media Attention. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada.
33. Suk, J.,\* **Zhang, Y.**,\* Wang, R., Yang, D., Levin, S.H., Dong, X., & Seo, J. (2023). Fleeting Public Attention and Stubborn Partisan Passion: Politicization of #MeToo on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada. [\*co-first authors]
32. Jiang, X.,\* **Zhang, Y.**\*, Lian, X., Zhang, Z., Wang, Y., Dounane, D., Hando, L., & Shah, D. (2023). Right-wing Drivers of Antipathy toward and Threats from Immigrants on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada. [\*co-first authors]
31. Dahlke, R. & **Zhang, Y.** (2023). Surviving or Thriving the Moment of Defeat: Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders, and the Political Resilience of Populist Actors on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada.
30. Li, M., Suk, J., Sun, Y., Lian, R., **Zhang, Y.**, Kwon, H., Wang, R., Dong, X., Pevehouse, J., & Shah, D. (2023). A Cross-platform Analysis of 2017-2020 #MeToo on Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada.
29. Yang, T., Mukerjee, S., Lukito, J., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yphtach, L., & Majo-Vazquez, S. (2023). Modeling Time: Computational Approaches for the Analysis of Longitudinal, Temporal, and Time-Dynamic Data. Research Panel Session presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada.
28. **Zhang, Y.**, Suk, J., Yue, Z., An, Z., Yang, D., Wang, R., Dong, X. & Joseph, K. (2022). Mapping out Information Flow in the Social Media Ecosystem by Tracing Hyperlinks. Paper presented at the National Communication Association (NCA) Convention 2022, New Orleans, LA.
27. **Zhang, Y.**, Chen, F., Suk, J. & Yue, Z. (2022). WordPPR: A New Keyword Selection Method for Social Media Data Retrieval. Paper presented at the fifth annual Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS), Boston, MA.
26. Yang, Y., **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., Kim, S.j., Foley, J. & Suk, J. (2022). The Chilling Effect of DePlatforming? Evidence from Trump Supporters Who Survived Twitter's Deplatforming post Jan. 6. Paper presented at the 2022 Annual Conference of AEJMC, Detroit, MI.
25. **Zhang, Y.** (2022). Signaling Power: Attention Patterns of Heterogenous Networks in the #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter, and #StopAsianHate Movements on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
24. **Zhang, Y.**, Yue, Z., Yang, X., Chen, F. & Kwak, N. (2022). Strategic Performance, Audience Feedback, and Media Amplification: An Analysis of the Behaviors and Influence of QAnon Twitter Accounts. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.

23. **Zhang, Y.**, Wong, J. C. S., An, Z., Brimmer, M.J., Joseph, K. & Yang, J. Z. (2022). Conservatives Talked about Risks in the COVID-19 Pandemic More Than Liberals Did: How Partisan Identities Shaped Risk Expression on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
22. Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Yue, Z., Wang, R., Dong, X., Yang, D., Lian, R. & Kwak, N. (2022). “The personal is political”: A cross-platform approach to how networked acknowledgment before and after #MeToo transforms into politicization. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
21. Kim, J. & **Zhang, Y.** (2022). Rhetoric of Polarization: Partisan Language in the Immigration Discourse on Twitter, 2014-2017. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
20. Gupta, S. & **Zhang, Y.** (2022). Brand Polarization on Social Media: A Cross-Cultural Study Using Computational Approaches. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
19. Jiang, X., **Zhang, Y.**, Lian, X., Dounane, A., Hando, L, Wang, Y. & Shah, D. (2022). Real or symbolic threat: How real-world indicators and symbolic discourses shape negative expression about immigration on social media. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2022, Hybrid.
18. **Zhang, Y.** (2021). Signaling Power: Attention Patterns of Heterogeneous Networks in the #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter, and #StopAsianHate Movements on Twitter. Paper presented at the fourth annual Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS) conference, Virtual.
17. Fan, Y, **Zhang, Y.** & Zhang, S.F. (2021) Who am I Connected with? Community Detection and Effects in an Online Peer-to-Peer Support Forum. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference 2021, Virtual.
16. Lukito, J., Wagner, M., **Zhang, Y.** & McGregor, S. (2021) Mixed Methods Public Scholarship in Political Communication. Research Panel Session at Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference, Virtual.
15. **Zhang, Y.**, Chen, F., Lukito, J., & Rohe, K. (2021) Networked amplification: The role of networked elites in information diffusion surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2021, Virtual.
14. Jiang, X., **Zhang, Y.**, Kim, J. & Shah, D. (2021) Talking Past Each Other: Expression Polarization in Immigration Discourses on Twitter. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2021, Virtual.
13. **Zhang, Y.** (2021) An actor-centered network approach to tracing communication flows in the hybrid and hyperpartisan media system. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Winter Conference 2021, Virtual.
12. **Zhang, Y.**, Shah, D., Valenzuela, S. & Pevehouse, J. (2020) A Reactive Media System: Mass Shootings in a Polarized Communication Ecology. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2019, Virtual.
11. Suk, J., Abhishek, A., **Zhang, Y.** & Ahn, S.Y.. (2019). A Temporal Analysis of the #MeToo Movement Discourses. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2019, Washington D.C, USA.

10. Lukito J., Suk, J., **Zhang, Y.**, Doroshenko, L., Kim, S. J., Su, M-H., Xia, Y. & Wells C. (2018). *ero Day Twitter: How Russian Propaganda Infiltrated the U.S. Hybrid Media System*. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) 2018. Washington, DC.  
**\*Top paper in Political Communication Interest Group paper competition and third place in the inaugural AEJMC Research Prize for Professional Relevance competition.**
9. **Zhang, Y.**, Shah, D., Foley, J., Abhishek, A., Pevehouse, J., Lukito, J., Kim, S., Suk, J., Yang, F. & Garlough C. (2018). *The Features of Tragedy, Expressions of Sympathy, and Debates over Policy: A Time Series Analysis of Mass Shootings and Social Media Discourses*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2018, Prague, Czech.
8. Wells, C., **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J. & Pevehouse, J. (2018). *The formation of attentive publics in the hybrid media system: How Donald Trump assembled his amplification machine*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2018, Prague, Czech.
7. Suk, J, **Zhang, Y.**, Lukito, J., Su, M. & Foley, J. (2018). *Tracing Twitter Buzz: Clustering Hashtags and Handles About Mass Shootings and Gun Control*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2018, Prague, Czech.
6. Graves, L., Gunther, A., Pelled, A., Su, M., Wang, Y., & **Zhang, Y.** (2018). *Effects of Fact Checks on Partisan Beliefs and Perceptions of Bias*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2018, Prague, Czech.
5. Gunther, A., Graves, L., **Zhang, Y.**, Pelled, A., & Wang, Y. (2017). *Effects of Fact Checks on Partisan Beliefs and Perceptions of Bias*. Paper presented at the Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research Conference 2017, Chicago, IL.
4. Yang, J., Sangari, A., Duncan, M., **Zhang, Y.**, ... & Wu, Y. (2017). *Obamacare and political polarization on Twitter: An application of machine learning and social network analysis*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference 2017, San Diego, CA.
3. **Zhang, Y.**, Wang, Y., Foley, J., Suk, J., & Conathan, D. (2017). *Tweeting Mass Shootings —The Dynamics of Issue Attention on Social Media*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Social Media and Society 2017, Toronto, Canada.
2. **Zhang, Y.** & Wang, Y. (2016). *When Others ‘like’ it: Hostile Media Effect in the Era of Social Media*. Paper presented at the Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research Conference 2016, Chicago, IL.
1. **Zhang, Y.** (2016). *The power of commenting? Analyzing modes of Weibo users’ news comments in China*. Paper presented at the Big Ten Mini-Conference 2016, Iowa City, IA.

## TEACHING

### COURSES TAUGHT:

COM205 Research Methods. (F23, S23, F22, S22, Summer21) University at Buffalo.

COM240 Introduction to Mass Communication. (Summer22) University at Buffalo.

COM337 Communication Theory. (S23, S22, S21, F20) University at Buffalo.

COM466 Social Media & Society. (S25, F21) University at Buffalo.

COM504 Research Methods. (F23, F22) University at Buffalo.

COM686 Social Media & Society. (S25, F21, S21) University at Buffalo.

J566 Communication & Public Opinion (S20). University of Wisconsin–Madison.

J561 Mass Communication & Society (S18 as TA). University of Wisconsin–Madison.

J614 Communication & Public Opinion (F17, S17, & S16 as TA). University of Wisconsin–Madison.

J201 Introduction to Mass Communication (F16 & F13-F15, as (lead) TA). University of Wisconsin–Madison.

#### STUDENT ADVISING:

Doctoral Dissertation Committee (2021 to present):

- Department of Communication: Anita Kuei-Chun Liu (assistant professor at National Taiwan University), Sneha Gupta (industry research position), Rui Wang (incoming assistant professor at Loyola University Maryland), Yi Yin Leong;
- Department of Computer Science and Engineering: Zijian An (Meta)

Undergraduate advising (participation in lab research): Adam Duane, Mohammad Ilyas Omar, Emma Bennett

**SERVICE TO UB** Member of the Graduate Admissions Committee (2021 & 2022)

Participant in the Undergraduate Curriculum Summit (2025-present)

Co-Organizer of Brownbag Talk Series (2025-present)

**SERVICE TO THE FIELD** Editorial Board of [The International Journal of Public Opinion Research](#) (2023-present)

Member of [Media and Democracy Data Cooperative](#) (2021-present)

Program Committee Member of the 17th International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (ASONAM 2025)

Top Student Paper Committee of the Computational Methods Division (ICA, 2024)

Secretary/Treasurer, [Political Communication Section](#) (APSA, 2022-2024)

Guest editor for Special Section of [JQD:DM](#) in Collaboration with [ICWSM](#) (2023)

Thomas E. Patterson Best Dissertation Award Committee (APSA, 2022)

#### JOURNAL REVIEWS

PNAS Nexus

Journal of Communication  
Communication Research  
Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication  
New Media & Society  
Political Communication  
International Journal of Press/Politics  
Human Communication Research  
Public Opinion Quarterly  
Mass Communication & Society  
Social Media + Society  
International Journal of Communication  
International Journal of Public Opinion Research  
Policy & Internet  
Journalism Studies  
Social Science Computer Review  
Computational Communication Research  
Science Communication  
Environmental Communication  
Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology  
Atlantic Journal of Communication  
Annals of the International Communication Association  
Routledge book proposal review

**CONFERENCE  
REVIEWS**

International Communication Association (ICA)  
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)  
International Conference for Computational Social Science (IC2S2)

**MEDIA  
INTERVIEWS**

[Study shows tale of two social media platforms for Donald Trump](#) (May 6, 2024). *UBNow*.

[Dark Brandon popping off: is Joe Biden's 'cringe' TikTok helping or hurting him?](#) (May 3, 2024). *The Guardian (UK)*.

[The Media Show: Building Trump's social media app](#) (April 11, 2024). *BBC*.

[Donald Trump's use of Truth Social is harming his ability to reach voters, research shows](#) (March 26, 2024). *Fast Company*.

[Big questions, big data: A conversation with Yini Zhang, Ph.D.](#) (October 09, 2023). *Conversations about Communication: a podcast hosted by the Department of Communication at the University at Buffalo*.

[Misinformation Defense Worked in 2020, Up to a Point, Study Finds](#) (April 13, 2023). *New York Times*.

[Study examines how QAnon went from fringe to mainstream on Twitter](#) (April 10, 2023). *UBNow*.

[The White House is turning to TikTok stars to take its message to a younger audience](#) (October 9, 2022). *NPR*.

['Bite-sized' TikTok draws a Gen Z tired of Google. But misinformation remains rife.](#) (September 18, 2022). *USA TODAY*.

[Instagram post falsely promises leaked call between Biden, FBI](#) (August 17, 2022). *Agence France-Presse*.

[What's the prevailing opinion on social media? Look at the flocks, UB researcher says](#) (March 21, 2022). *UBNow*.

[Rumble Mixes Cat Videos With Covid Misinformation — and the Right Is Loving It](#) (January 4, 2022). *RollingStone*.

[ALUM YINI ZHANG \(PHD'20\) WINS THOMAS E. PATTERSON BEST DISSERTATION AWARD](#) (October 8, 2021). *UW-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication*.

[On the internet, nobody knows you're a dog – or a fake Russian Twitter account](#) (July 16, 2021). *UBNow*.

[Chinese-made vaccines are being subject to misleading narratives](#) (May 11, 2021). *First Draft*.

[Post-Shooting Sentiments 'As Intense As They Are Fleeting'](#) (August 9, 2019). *PBS HERE AND NOW*.

[Most major outlets have used Russian tweets as sources for partisan opinion: study](#) (March 8, 2018). *Columbia Journalism Review*.

[Why social media appeals after mass shootings have done little to change gun laws](#) (February 20, 2018). *Washington Post*.

## SKILLS

network analysis, natural language processing, data visualization, survey design, experiment design, multilevel analysis, time series modeling, structural equation modeling.

## PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE & SOFTWARE

**R** (advanced), **Hadoop** (intermediate), **Java** (intermediate), **Python** (beginner), **SPSS** (intermediate), **Microsoft Excel** (advanced).

(LAST UPDATED IN MAY 2025)