

Qiusi (Lyra) Sun

Curriculum Vitae
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EDUCATION

University of California, Davis, CA

Dec. 2022

Ph.D. in Communication

With Designated Emphasis in Computational Social Science

Thesis: Online deviant behavior on Social Media: The Macro, Miso, and Micro perspectives

Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH

Dec. 2015

M.S. in Applied Statistics and Operation Research

With a Certificate in Social & Interactive Communication

Nanjing University, Nanjing, China

Jul. 2013

B.S. in Statistics

Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA

Dec. 2012

Sociology (No-degree seeking)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Officer, the London School of Economics and Political Science

2025 - Present

Department of Methodology; Data Science Institute

Supervisor: Milena Tsvetkova, Ph.D.

ERC HUMANET: Human behaviour, social networks, and AI-mediated collective dynamics.

Postdoctoral Researcher, Syracuse University

2022-2025

School of Information Studies

Supervisor: Joshua Introne, Ph.D.

NSF CHS: Online Dynamics of Misinformation: Experimental research on narrative diffusion, causal representations, and information transmission in online social systems.

Data Scientist Intern, University of California, Davis

Summer 2020

Data Lab

Supervisor: Carl Sthmer, Ph.D.

UC Davis STEM Strategies: Data-driven analysis of STEM communication, information access, and educational resources.

FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Sep. 2025 - Present

ERC-funded HUMANET

Principal Investigators: Milena Tsvetkova, Ph.D.

London School of Economics and Political Science

ERC: €1,999,974.00

Apr. 2022 - Apr. 2025

NSF CHS: Small: Online Dynamics of Misinformation (Award number: 1908407)

Principal Investigators: Joshua Introne, Ph.D.

Syracuse University

NSF: \$495,478.00

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Sun, Q.**, & Hilbert, M. (2025). Will You Become the Next Troll? A Computational Mechanics Approach to the Contagion of Trolling Behavior. *Entropy*, 27(5), 542.
- Liu, M., **Sun, Q.**, & Williams, D. (2024). With great power comes great accountability: Network positions, victimization, perpetration, and victim-perpetrator overlap in an online multiplayer game. *New Media & Society*, 14614448241268995.
- Nguyen, H. S., **Sun, Q.**, & Williams, D. (2022). How Do We Make the Virtual World a Better Place? Social Discrimination in Online Gaming, Sense of Community, and Well-being. *Telematics and Informatics*, 101747.
- Sun, Q.**, Wojcieszak, M., & Davidson, S. (2021). Over-Time Trends in Incivility on Social Media: Evidence From Political, Non-Political, and Mixed Sub-Reddits Over Eleven Years. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 130.
- Sun, Q.**, & Shen, C. (2021). Who would respond to A troll? A social network analysis of reactions to trolls in online communities. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 121, 106786.
- Davidson, S., **Sun, Q.**, & Wojcieszak, M. (2020, November). Developing a New Classifier for Automated Identification of Incivility in Social Media. In *Proceedings of the Fourth Workshop on Online Abuse and Harms* (pp. 95-101).
- Shen, C., **Sun, Q.**, Kim, T., Wolff, G., Ratan, R., & Williams, D. (2020). Viral Vitriol: Predictors and Contagion of Online Toxicity in World of Tanks. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 106343.
- Zhang, J., & **Sun, Q.** (2020, May). Classifying and Understanding Flu Vaccine Misinformation on Twitter. In *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* (Vol. 54, pp. S61-S61).
- Featherstone, J. D., Zhang, J., & **Sun, Q.** (2019, November). Classifying Vaccine Misinformation on Twitter and Understanding Semantic Structures of Tweets Using Machine Learning Method. In *APHA's 2019 Annual Meeting and Expo* (Nov. 2-Nov. 6). APHA.
- Wang, B., Taylor, L., & **Sun, Q.** (2018). Families that play together stay together: Investigating family bonding through video games. *New Media & Society*, 1461444818767667.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW & PREPRINTS

- Sun, Q.**, Gaskin, T., Blagojevic, B., & Tsvetkova, M. (2026) *Mapping the Reddit Bot Ecosystem: Taxonomy and Evolution*, Preprint: arXiv:2607.23941
- Sun, Q.**, Hoover, S., Ewesuedo, C., & Introne, J. E. (Under Review). *Narrative Causal Structure, Large Language Models, and Human-AI Annotation News Media*.
- Introne, J. E., & **Sun, Q.** (Under Review). *Structural Contagion: How Narrative Causal Structure Shapes Information Diffusion in Social Networks*
- Sun, Q.**, Shen, C., & Williams, D. (Under Review). *Why Do You Stop Playing? Examining the Effects of Toxicity on Player Participation, Financial Investment, and Well-being in Team-based Online Games*.
- Sun, Q.**, & Featherstone, J.D. (Under Review). *Mapping Vaccine Misinformation Networks: A Comparative Network Analysis of Anti-Vaxxer and General Online Communities*.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER PREPARATION

- Sun, Q.**, Gaskin, T., & Tsvetkova, M. Human-Bot Interaction on Reddit
- Gaskin, T.**, Sun, Q., & Tsvetkova, M. Defection and Cooperation in Human-AI Games

Sun, Q., & Introne J. E. The Impact of Cultural Stereotypes, Narrative Structure, and Background Beliefs on the Recall of Narrative Information.

Sun, Q., Xue, H., & Shen, C. Lost in diffusion: How (mis)information is distorted in online networks.

Sun, Q. & Zhong, Q. Polarization and Consensus by Incivility, Opposing News Sources, and Social Networks.

Sun, Q. Bots Change the Trajectory of Incivility on Social Media: Volume, Targets, and Topics

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Sun, Q., Gaskin, T., Blagojevic, B., & Tsvetkova, M. (2026, September) Mapping the Reddit Bot Ecosystem: Taxonomy and Evolution. Abstract presented at *CS2Nordics*. Copenhagen, Denmark.

Sun, Q., Gaskin, T., & Tsvetkova, M. (2026, September) Deception and Distrust: Human–Machine Interaction in a Multiplayer Bluffing Game. Abstract presented at *CS2Nordics*. Copenhagen, Denmark.

Sun, Q., Gaskin, T., Blagojevic, B., & Tsvetkova, M. (2026, July) Mapping the Reddit Bot Ecosystem: Taxonomy and Evolution. Abstract presented at *the 12th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Burlington, USA.

Sun, Q., Hoover, S., Ewesuedo, C., & Introne, J. E. (2026, July). Narrative Causal Structure Large Language Models Human-AI Annotation News Media. Abstract presented at *the 12th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Burlington, USA.

Introne, J. E., & **Sun, Q.** (In Review). Structural Contagion: How Narrative Causal Structure Shapes Information Diffusion in Social Networks. Abstract presented at *the 12th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Burlington, USA.

Sun, Q., Joh, U., & Introne, J. E. (2024, July) Empirical Validation of a Model of Narrative Diffusion. Extended Abstract presented at *the 10th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Philadelphia, USA.

Sun, Q., Joh, U., & Introne, J. E. (2024, June) Modeling the Diffusion of Real Narratives. Extended Abstract presented at ACM's 2024 Collective Intelligence Conference. Boston, USA.

Sun, Q., Xue, H., & Shen, C. (2024, June) Lost in diffusion: How (mis)information is distorted in online networks. Extended Abstract presented at the *74th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Methods Division. Gold Coast, Australia.

Sun, Q. (2024, June) Bots Change the Trajectory of Incivility on Social Media: Volume, Targets, and Topics. Extended Abstract presented at the *74th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Methods Division. Gold Coast, Australia

Sun, Q., Xue, H., & Shen, C. (2023, July) Lost in diffusion: How (mis)information is distorted in online networks. Poster presented at the *9th International Conference on Computational Social Science*. Copenhagen, Denmark.

Sun, Q. & Zhong, Q. (2023, May) Polarization and Consensus by Incivility, Opposing News Sources, and Social Networks. Extended Abstract presented at the *73rd Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Methods Division. Toronto, Canada.

Sun, Q. & Introne, J. (2023, May) The Impact of Narrative Structure and Background Beliefs on the Recall of Narrative Information. Extended Abstract presented at the *73rd Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Information System Division. Toronto, Canada.

Sun, Q. (2022, July) Polarization and Consensus by Incivility, Opposing News Sources, and Social Networks. Extended Abstract presented at *8th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Chicago, USA

- Davidson, S., **Sun, Q.**, & Wojcieszak, M. (2021, May) Developing a New Classifier for Automated Identification of Incivility in Social Media. Paper presented at the *71st Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Methods Division. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Liu, M., **Sun, Q.**, & Williams, D. (2021, May) An Eye for an Eye, Among Teammates: Perpetrators and Victims of Online Incivility. Paper presented at the *71st Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Communication Technology Division. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Nguyen, H., **Sun, Q.**, & Williams, D. (2021, May) How Do We Make the Virtual World a Better Place? Social Discrimination in Online Gaming, Sense of Community, and Well-Being. Paper presented at the *71st Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Communication Technology Division. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Sun, Q.**, Shen, C., Ratan, R., & Williams, D. (2020, May) Why do You Stop Playing? Effects of Toxicity in MMOs. Extended Abstract presented at the *70th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Game Study Group. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Sun, Q.** & Wojcieszak, M. (2020, May) Overtime Trends in Incivility on Social Media: A systematic study of Reddit comments over thirteen years. Extended Abstract presented at, the *70th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Method Group. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Featherstone, J. D., **Sun, Q.**, Zhang, J., & Chapman, J. (2020 May) Classifying and Understanding the Semantic Structures of Vaccine Misinformation on Twitter. Extended Abstract presented at the *70th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Computational Method Group. Virtual Conference due to COVID-19.
- Sun, Q.**, Hilbert, M. (2019, Jul). A Computational Mechanics Approach to Trolling and its Contagion. Extended Abstract presented at the *5th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- Featherstone, J. D., **Sun, Q.**, & Zhang, J. (2019, Jul) *Are you connected to misinformation?* Extended Abstract presented at the *5th International Conference of Computational Social Science*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- Featherstone, J. D., **Sun, Q.**, & Zhang, J. (2019, Jun) Classifying and Understanding the Semantic Structures of Vaccine Misinformation on Twitter. Extended Abstract presented at *Sunbelt Social Networks Conference of the International Network for Social Network Analysis (INSNA)*. Montreal, Canada.
- Sun, Q.**, & Hilbert, M. (2019, May). If it Behaves Like a Troll, it is a Troll! A Computational Mechanics Approach to Trolling and its Contagion. Extended Abstract presented at the *69th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*. Computational Method Group. Washington, DC., USA
- Shen, C., **Sun, Q.**, Wolff, G., & Kim, T., Ratan, R., Williams, D. (2019, May). Viral Vitriol: Predictors and Contagion of Toxicity in World of Tanks. Paper presented at the *69th Annual Convention of International Communication Association*, Communication and Technology Division. Washington, DC. Top Paper Award.
- Sun, Q.**, & Shen, C. (2018, August). Who Will Reply to A Troll? A Network Approach to Understanding Trolls in Online Communities. Paper Presented at the *101st Annual Convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*. Washington D.C., USA
- Sun, Q.**, & Zhang, J. (2018, May) What Do People Talk about When They Tweet about HPV? Semantic and Sentiment Analyses of HPV and Cervical Cancer Related Tweets. Paper presented at the *68th Annual Convention of the International Communication Association*. Health Communication Division. Prague, Czech.

TEACHING AND MENTORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

Communication Theories

University of California, Davis | Undergraduate | Summer 2020

Interpersonal Communication Competence

University of California, Davis | Undergraduate | Summer 2017

Teaching Assistant

Social Media	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 3 offerings, 2016-2022
Digital Technology & Social Change	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 3 offerings, 2016-2022
Research Methods	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 2 offerings, 2016-2022
Introduction to Mass Communication	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 2 offerings, 2016-2022
Interpersonal Communication Competence	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 2 offerings, 2016-2022
Computational Social Science	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 2 offerings, 2016-2022
Nonverbal Communication	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 1 offerings, 2016-2022
Communication Theories	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 1 offerings, 2016-2022
Organizational Communication	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 1 offerings, 2016-2022
News Making & Communication Campaigns	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 1 offerings, 2016-2022
Public Speaking	University of California, Davis Undergraduate 1 offerings, 2016-2022
Regression	Bowling Green State University Undergraduate 4 offerings, 2013-2015

Guest Lecturer

Research Methods in Information Science	Syracuse University Graduate Spring 2024
Communication and Technologies	University of California, Davis Undergraduate Fall 2020

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Computational Methods	Statistical Modeling; Social Network Analysis; Natural Language Processing; Machine Learning; Large Language Models; Agent-Based Modeling; Human–AI Experimentation
Research Computing	Python; R; SQL; Gephi Reproducible computational workflows; LLM-assisted software development

Academic Service

Ad-Hoc Reviewer	2018- Present
Journals:	New Media & Society; Communication Research; Annals of the International Communication Association; POLS One; Computers in Human Behaviors; Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication; Communication Monographs; Human Communication Research;
Conferences:	International Communication Association; Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication; National Communication Association; International Conference of Computational Social Science; CHI PLAY

Conference Service

Session chair
104th Annual Convention of the National Communication Association, 2018

Department Service

Graduate Student Representative
Department Graduate Student Committee (CMNGO), University of California, Davis, 2017–2018

Awards and Grants

Oct 2019	Department Dissertation Award (\$1000), Department of Communication, University of California, Davis
May 2019	Conference Travel Grant (\$800), Department of Communication, University of California, Davis
May 2019	Top Paper Award. <i>69th Annual Convention of International Communication Association</i> , Communication and Technology Division.
May 2018	Conference Travel Grant (\$800), Department of Communication, University of California, Davis