

WENWEN CAO

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EDUCATION

University of Minnesota

Minneapolis, MN

Ph.D. in Mass Communication, Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication Sep 2024 - Present

- Advisor: Dr. Jisu Huh
- Lab Affiliate:
 - Minnesota Computational Advertising Lab (MCAL) Jul 2023-Present
 - Research in Strategic Communication Lab (RiSC) Sep 2024-Present

University of Melbourne

Melbourne, Australia

Master of Marketing Communications Jul 2021 - Dec 2023

- Thesis: Exploring Chinese Young Consumers' Emotional Response to Femvertising
- Advisor: Dr. Wonsun Shin

Southwest University

Chongqing, China

B.Eng. in Software Engineering Sep 2017 - Jun 2021

- Thesis: Weibo Text Sentiment Analysis based on Deep Learning

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Computational advertising, Influencer marketing, Consumer behavior, Emotion, Social media, Gender

PUBLICATIONS & CONFERENCES

[1] **Cao, W.** (2025). *Emotion in Motion: How Discrete Emotions and Their Intensity Drive the Diffusion of Gendered Controversial Advertising on Social Media*. Accepted by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference, Advertising Division, San Francisco, California.

[2] Shin, W., Huh, J., Chen, B., **Cao, W.** (2025). *Empowering or Hindering? How Today's Digital Media Consumers Really Feel About Data Privacy Issues and Privacy Protection Regulations*. Accepted by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference, Mass Communication and Society Division, San Francisco, California.

[3] Shin, W., Huh, J., Chen, B., **Cao, W.** (2025). *Behind the click: Unveiling consumer perceptions about data privacy and data-driven advertising personalization*. Accepted by the 23rd International Conference on Research in Advertising (ICORIA), Rotterdam, Netherlands.

[4] **Cao, W.** (2025). *Does Body Positivity Sell? Understanding Consumer Reactions Toward Body Positivity Campaigns on Social Media*. Accepted by International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) Conference, Singapore.

[5] **Cao, W.**, Shin, W. (2025). *Empowering Ads, Empowered Responses: Unveiling the Emotional and Behavioral Impact of Femvertising in China*. Paper presented by American Academy of Advertising (AAA) Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

[6] **Cao, W.**, Kang, Z. (2024). *"Equally objectifying all genders": Gender and self-presentation differences among 'edge-touching' influencers on Douyin*. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference, International Communication Division, Philadelphia, PA.

[7] **Cao, W.** (2024). *Empowering ads, empowered responses: Unveiling the emotional and behavioral impact of femvertising in China on social media*. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference, Advertising Division, Philadelphia, PA.

[8] Wang, H., Wang, D., & **Cao, W.** (2024). *Can disconnection make us discuss politics freely? A moderated-mediation model of cross-cutting exposure on social media political expression via politically motivated unfriending and blocking contingent upon fear of social isolation*. Paper presented at the 2024 International Communication Association (ICA) Preconference Digital Asia, Gold Coast, Australia.

[9] **Cao, W.** (2020). *A Louvre emergency escape model based on ant colony algorithm*. Paper presented at the 2020 International Conference on Data Processing Techniques and Applications for Cyber-Physical Systems.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, University of Minnesota, Hubbard

Fall 2024 -Present

Supervisor: Jisu Huh

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, University of Minnesota, Hubbard

JOUR 1501, Digital Games and Society (24 Fall)

JOUR 4251, Psychology of Advertising (25 Spring)

Guest Lecturer, University of Minnesota, Hubbard

JOUR 4251, Psychology of Advertising (25 Spring), Week 9: Behavior

AWARDS & HONORS

Third Place Top Student Paper, AEJMC Advertising Division

Aug 2024

Outstanding Undergraduate Thesis (5%), Southwest University, China

Jun 2021

Outstanding Graduates (10%), Southwest University, China

Jun 2021

Honorable Mention of MCM, Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications, USA

Apr 2019

First Class Scholarship (3%) Southwest University, China

Dec 2019

First Prize of Province Level, China Undergraduate Mathematical Contest in Modeling

Dec 2019

Advanced Student in Culture & Arts Activities of SWU (1.5%), Southwest University, China

Dec 2019

SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

2025 AEJMC Diversity and Inclusion Career Development/MCSD Fellowship (\$1200)

May 2025

Shea Fellowship (\$2400)

Apr 2025

AEJMC Advertising Division Travel Grant (\$220), AEJMC

Aug 2024

AEJMC Top Student Paper Awards Funds & Complimentary conference registration (\$250)

Aug 2024

College of Liberal Arts Fellowship, University of Minnesota

Aug 2024

REVIEW

Conference Reviewer

International Communication Association Conference (ICA) 2024

2023

Mass Communication Division *2, Computational methods division *2

AEJMC 2024: Advertising Division *1

2024

SERVICE

Social Media Manager, Journal of Advertising

Mar 2025 - Present

Graduate Student Interest Committee, American Academy of Advertising (AAA)

Mar 2025 - Present

Graduate Student Representative, AEJMC Advertising Division

Aug 2024 - Present

Student Member in Arts student Forum, University of Melbourne

2022

Orientation Welcome Centers Volunteer, University of Melbourne

2022

MEMBERSHIP

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)

American Academy of Advertising (AAA)

SKILLS

Qualitative skills: Proficient in conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups.

NLP skills: Proficient in text clustering, topic modelling, sentiment analysis and web crawling.

Programming: Experienced in Python for data extraction and analysis; familiar with C/C++, Java, and Linux.

Data analysis and visualization: R, MATLAB, SQL, SPSS.

Software Proficiency: Microsoft Suite, Visio, Project, NVivo

Language: Mandarin (native), English (Fluent)

INTERNSHIPS

Product Operation Intern

Nov 2021 - Jan 2022

Meituan (Global Fortune 500 Company)

Beijing, China

- Led data analysis on search errors and invalid cases, providing actionable insights and delivering regular analytical reports to optimize operations.
- Oversaw and coordinated over 100 projects, skillfully managing timelines, budgets, and logistics to enhance operational efficiency and address financial aspects.

Digital Marketing Intern

Aug 2021 - Sep 2021

Zhumengshi

China

- Created engaging content for RED, analyzing audience reactions to fine-tune strategies and maximize resonance and engagement with the target audience.
- Instrumental in managing influencer-follower relationships, leading to a notable increase in brand interaction and a debut post achieving over 1000 likes.

VOLUNTEER AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student Member | Arts Student Forum

Oct 2022 - Nov 2022

University of Melbourne

Australia

- Engaged actively in the Arts Student Forum, advocating for peers on six academic topics, bringing student perspectives to the forefront of academic discussions.
- Collaborated with diverse participants in the forum to brainstorm and develop resolutions for various student challenges, enhancing the student experience.

Consultant | Business Innovation Lab

Sep 2022

- Innovatively brainstormed strategies to attract high-caliber employees while respecting and integrating Aboriginal culture, addressing a key challenge in business diversity.
- Developed and presented solutions, receiving positive feedback from clients for practical and culturally sensitive approaches.

LANGUAGE

Mandarin (Native), English (Fluent)