

Amy Xian Zhang

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social computing, human-computer interaction, computational social science

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA Jan 2014 – Present

Ph.D. Computer Science

Computer Science Artificial Intelligence Lab: Haystack Group and UID Group

Advisor: Prof. David Karger

University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Oct 2011 – June 2012

M.Phil. Advanced Computer Science

Graduated with Distinction

Networks and Operating Systems Group

Advisor: Prof. Cecilia Mascolo

Thesis: Defining and Characterizing Urban Neighborhoods using Location-based Social Media

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Sept 2007 – May 2011

B.S. Computer Science, Minor: Mathematics, Economics

Summa Cum Laude

Social Media Information Lab

Advisor: Prof. Mor Naaman

Thesis: Time Series Analysis of Twitter with Hadoop

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

NSF Graduate Research Fellowship 2014-17

Gates Cambridge Scholar 2011-12

Novelli Award (awarded to top senior in CS by Rutgers CS Faculty) 2010-11

Madgison Award (awarded to top junior in CS by Rutgers CS Faculty) 2009-10

Rutgers University Presidential Scholarship (full academic scholarship) 2007-11

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Conference Papers

- [c.7] **Amy X. Zhang**, Scott Counts. Modeling Ideology and Predicting Policy Change with Social Media: Case of Same-Sex Marriage. *In Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (CHI 2015). Seoul, Korea. April 2015. Acceptance rate: 23%. **Best of CHI Honorable Mention.**
- [c.6] **Amy X. Zhang**, Mark S. Ackerman, David R. Karger. Mailing Lists: Why Are They Still Here, What's Wrong With Them, and How Can We Fix Them? *In Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (CHI 2015). Seoul, Korea. April 2015. Acceptance rate: 23%.

- [c.5] Edward Benson, **Amy X. Zhang**, David R. Karger. Spreadsheet Driven Web Applications. *In Proceedings of the ACM User Interface Software and Technology Symposium (UIST 2014)*. Honolulu, Hawaii. Oct 2014. Acceptance rate: 22%
- [c.4] Juho Kim, **Amy X. Zhang**, Jihee Kim, Robert Miller, Krzysztof Gajos. Content-Aware Kinetic Scrolling for Supporting Web Page Navigation. *In Proceedings of the ACM User Interface Software and Technology Symposium (UIST 2014)*. Honolulu, Hawaii. Oct 2014. Acceptance rate: 22%.
- [c.3] Nick Diakopoulos, **Amy X. Zhang**, Dag Elgesem, Andrew Salway. Identifying and Analyzing Moral Evaluation Frames in Climate Change Blog Discourse. *In Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM '14)*. Ann Arbor, MI. June 2014. Acceptance rate: 41%.
- [c.2] **Amy X. Zhang**, Anastasios Noulas, Salvatore Scellato, Cecilia Mascolo. Hoodsquare: Modeling and Recommending Neighborhoods in Location-based Social Networks. *In Proceedings of the International ASE/IEEE Conference on Social Computing (SocialCom '13)*. Washington, D.C. June 2013. Acceptance rate: 9.9%.
- [c.1] Mor Naaman, **Amy X. Zhang**, Sam Brody, Gilad Lotan. On the Study of Diurnal Urban Routines on Twitter. *In Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM '12)*. Dublin, Ireland. June 2012. Acceptance rate: 20%.

Refereed Journal Articles

- [j.1] **Amy X. Zhang**, Anastasios Noulas, Salvatore Scellato, Cecilia Mascolo. Hoodsquare: Modeling and Recommending Neighborhoods in Location-based Social Networks. *ASE Human Journal*. 2.01 (2013): pp 40-54. Acceptance rate: 3.8%. **Invited Publication.**

Refereed Abstracts and Workshop Papers

- [w.3] Nick Diakopoulos, Dag Elgesem, Andrew Salway, **Amy X. Zhang**, Knuf Hofland. Compare Clouds: Visualizing Text Corpora to Compare Media Frames. *In Proceedings of ACM Intelligent User Interfaces Workshop on Visual Text Analytics (TextVis @ IUI '15)*. Atlanta, Georgia. March 2015.
- [w.2] Yelena Mejova, **Amy X. Zhang**, Nicholas Diakopoulos, Carlos Castillo. Controversy and Sentiment in Online News. *In Proceedings of the 3rd Computation + Journalism Symposium (C+J '14)*. New York, NY. October 2014.
- [w.1] Nick Diakopoulos, **Amy X. Zhang**, Andrew Salway. Visual Analytics of Media Frames in Online News and Blogs. *In Proceedings of the IEEE InfoVis Workshop on Interactive Visual Text Analytics (TextVis @ InfoVis '13)*. Atlanta, Georgia. October 2013.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student, MIT CSAIL, Cambridge, MA

Jan 2014 – Present

Researching the way we conduct discourse and share information on the Internet, and creating interfaces and systems to facilitate new or better ways of interaction.

Projects include Eyebrowse: sharing of browser visits, and Murmur: a modern mailing list system [c.6]

Advisor: Prof. David Karger

Research Intern, Knowledge Group, Google, Mountain View, CA May 2015 – Aug 2015
Will be building and researching conversation recommendation algorithms and designs for social applications within Google.
Advisor: Dr. Jilin Chen, Dr. Ed Chi

Research Intern, neXus Group, Microsoft Research, Redmond, WA June 2014 – Sept 2014
Identifying population-level ideological shifts and predicting policy change at the state level from expressions made on Twitter by constituents, focusing on a case study of gay marriage. [c.7]
Advisor: Dr. Scott Counts

Researcher, NewsCred, New York, NY Sept 2012 – Jan 2014
Project LingoScope: visualization tool comparing framing differences between news sources.
Organized and aggregated dataset of over 1.5 million articles from 14 news sources and built API.
Aggregated additional 1.4 million blog posts related to climate change. [c.3][w.1][w.3]

Thesis, Cambridge Computer Laboratory, Cambridge, UK Nov 2011 – Sept 2012
Defining geographic neighborhoods in urban cities using density-based spatial clustering, based on different characteristics of Foursquare data, including place categories, local/tourist, and temporal traffic. Conducted user studies, built web visualization, and built neighborhood recommendation system given a user's Twitter profile information. [c.2][j.1]
Advisor: Prof. Cecilia Mascolo

Research Assistant, Yahoo! Research Labs, New York, NY May 2011 – Sept 2011
Using Twitter Firehose data, built largest known dataset of tweets geo-tagged for 58 cities.
Analyzed the aggregate temporal patterns of top 10,000 terms in each city and developed statistical measures to determine keywords that demonstrate robust diurnal patterns. [c.1]
Advisor: Prof. Mor Naaman, Dr. Jake Hofman

Thesis, Rutgers Social Media and Information Lab, New Brunswick, NJ Sept 2010 – May 2011
Built a Hadoop framework to quickly query large quantities of Twitter data for temporal patterns
Advisor: Prof. Mor Naaman

Research Assistant, Rutgers Computer Vision Lab, New Brunswick, NJ Sept 2009 – May 2010
Worked in team to detect and track faces in video and then identify faces from a database of people.
Worked on constructing a high-resolution face from low-resolution faces taken from video stills.
Advisor: Prof. Vladimir Pavlovic

WORK EXPERIENCE

Software Engineer, NewsCred, New York, NY Sept 2012 – Jan 2014
Backend engineer overseeing production API receiving 15 million+ hits/day delivering relevant news content and search indexes and databases storing over 150 million artifacts
Owner of image system and real-time analytics system serving 10 million+ images/day
Lead backend developer on migration of acquired startup Daylife – built new API serving 25 million requests/day.

Technology Summer Analyst, Barclays Capital, New York, NY June 2010 – Aug 2010
Conducted internal support for trade applications in Fixed Income products, assisting clients and employees, and monitoring servers and processes in Emerging Markets.

TEACHING

Instructor, “Exploring Computer Science Seminar,” Rutgers University Sept 2009 – Dec 2009
Instructed class of 18 freshmen on introductory computer science topics for university credit.
Individually designed syllabus and lesson plans, distributed grades, and arranged for trip to Google NYC.

TALKS AND POSTERS

Oral Presentation, MSR neXus Group, Redmond, WA Sept 2014
Modeling Ideology and Predicting Policy Change with Social Media: Case of Same-Sex Marriage

Poster Presentation, ICWSM Conference, Ann Arbor, MI June 2014
Identifying and Analyzing Moral Evaluation Frames in Climate Change Blog Discourse

Poster Presentation, Google Social Interactions Workshop, Lake Tahoe, CA Jan 2014
Eyebrowse: Serendipitous Interactions, Murmur: Reimagining the Mailing List

Oral Presentation, ASE/IEEE SocialCom Conference, Washington, D.C. Sept 2013
Hoodsquare: Modeling and Recommending Neighborhoods in Location-based Social Networks

Oral Presentation, Masters Thesis Presentation, Cambridge, UK May 2012
Hoodsquare: Modeling and Recommending Neighborhoods in Location-based Social Networks

Lightening Talk and Poster Presentation, ICWSM Conference, Dublin, Ireland June 2012
On the Study of Diurnal Urban Routines on Twitter

OTHER AWARDS AND HONORS

Best of CHI 2015 Honorable Mention Award
Microsoft Research Travel Grant to CHI 2015
ICWSM 2014 Student Grant Award

SERVICE

Program Committees
ICWSM 2014

Reviewer
CHI WIP 2015, CSCW 2015, UbiComp 2014, ICWSM 2014

Student Member
ACM, ACM SIGCHI, ASE, IEEE, AAAI

Mentoring
Research Mentor to MIT undergraduates Sept 2014 – Present
- Spring 2015 – Joy Yu, UROP, Murmur Project
- Fall 2014 – Bradley Eckert, UAP, Eyebrowse Project
Resident Tutor, Cabot House, Harvard University Aug 2013 – Present
- Perform residential duties at undergrad house of 200+ students, including study breaks, on-call help
- 4 hours weekly of general career advising and computer science tutoring
- Individual mentorship paired with ~7 incoming sophomores each year
Peer Mentor, C.S. Tutor, School of Arts and Sciences Honors Program, Rutgers Jan 2008 – May 2011

Leadership

Volunteer Assistant Coach, MIT Varsity Women's Tennis Team	Sept 2014 – Present
1 st Team, Cambridge Varsity Tennis Women's Blues Squad	Oct 2011 – July 2012
- 4 practices/week, weekly competitions in the UK and Portugal, defeated Oxford at Varsity Match	
President, Women in Computer Science at Rutgers	Sept 2007 – May 2011
- Organized career, social, and tutoring events and fundraising for Nigerian nonprofit W.TEC	
Captain, 1 st position, Rutgers Division I Varsity Women's Tennis Team	Sept 2007 – May 2011
- Led team of 8 student-athletes through 3 hours/day practice, weekly competitions and travel	
Executive Board, Rutgers Student-Athlete Advisory Committee	Jan 2009 – May 2011
- Organized volunteer and social events for student-athletes: soup kitchen, toy drive, and fundraising	

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages:	Experienced: Python, Java, C Familiar: R, Pig, x86 Assembly, Prolog, Scheme, C++, C#, Matlab
Front-end:	HTML, CSS, Javascript, jQuery, Backbone.js, PHP, JSP
Applications:	Django, RabbitMQ, Celery, Apache Solr, Apache Hadoop, ElasticSearch, OpenStack Amazon Cloud Services, browser extensions, Android apps, Puppet, Bootstrap
Databases:	MySQL, MongoDB, PostgreSQL, IndexedDB, Amazon DynamoDB, Redis, Cassandra, CouchBase
OS:	Windows, Linux (Ubuntu), Mac OSX

ATHLETIC AND SPORTSMANSHIP/LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Awarded a Full Blue for defeating Oxford at Annual Oxbridge Varsity Match 2012
National ITA/Arthur Ashe Jr. Sportsmanship and Leadership Award 2011
Academic National All-American 3rd Team 2011
Big East Postgraduate Leadership Award 2011 - \$7,500
Big East Scholar Athlete of the Year 2011 - \$7,000
Rutgers Athletic Dept. Headley-Singer Award, Sonny Werblin Award, and Leadership Award 2011
Voted Captain of the Tennis Team 2010-11, Most Valuable Player 2009-10
Ranked nationally in doubles, regionally in the Northeast US in singles
NJIAAW – Rutgers Woman of the Year 2010
Big East Sport Excellence Award 2009-10
ITA Scholar-Athlete 2007-10
All-Big East Team Selection 2009, 2010
Rutgers Representative at NCAA National Student-Athlete Development Conference, May 2009
NJ Division I, II Female Athlete of the Year 2009
Rutgers Freshman Athlete of the Year 2007-08
Awarded Full Athletic Scholarship to Rutgers 2007-11