BHAVANA BHEEM *Ph.D. Candidate*

bbheem2@illinois.edu

https://bbheem2.github.io/

Algorithmic justice, AI governance, and Policy-Oriented Audits of Sociotechnical Systems

EDUCATION

PH.D IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

University of Illinois Urbana Champaign | 2023 - 2029
Advised by Karrie Karahalios

B.S. IN COMPUTER SCIENCE-MATHEMATICS &
B.A. IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Harvey Mudd College | 2017-2021
Graduate with Distinction

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Bridging legal and policy frameworks with sociotechnical system design, prioritizing community-centered approaches
- Algorithmic auditing of AI systems using legal frameworks to assess transparency, accuracy, and civil liberties
- Empowering communities to audit, govern, and shape AI design and deployment
- Qualitative and comparative analysis of AI governance frameworks and regulations

ACADEMIC PAPERS

1. Banafsheh Behzad, **Bhavana Bheem**, Daniela Elizondo & Susan Martonosi (2023). *Prevalence and Propagation of Fake News*, Statistics and Public Policy, 10:1. DOI: 10.1080/2330443X.2023.2190368

2. (In Review) **Bhavana Bheem**, Sophia Yonus, Vinay Koshy, Motahhare Eslami, Kristen Vaccaro, Karrie Karahalios, Silas Hsu, Christian Sandvig. *Are News Feeds like Traffic Lights? Surveying Folk Theories of Algorithmic Technologies Beyond Social Media.*

POSTERS

1. **Bhavana Bheem**, Karrie Karahalios, Wendy Tam (March 2025). Reevaluating the Platform Neutrality Assumption of Section 230: An Agent-Based Model Approach, Poster presented at ACM Symposium on Computer Science and Law.

2. Wendy K. Tam, **Bhavana Bheem**, Karrie Karahalios (September 2024). Technology as Both a Threat and a Promise for Platform Regulation: Time, Place, and Manner Restrictions for Online Speech on Social Media Platforms, Poster presented at Navigating the New Frontier: The Political and Economic Implications of AI.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

1. **Bhavana Bheem**, Tom Bowman (August 2025). New Orleans' Dragnet Facial Recognition Program Threatens Innocent People, [Blog post](#), Center for Democracy & Technology.

2. **Bhavana Bheem** (July 2025). Echoes of Authoritarianism: A Comparative Study of U.S. Social Media Monitoring for Immigration with Global Parallels, [Blog post](#), Center for Democracy & Technology.

WORK EXPERIENCE

POLICY INTERN - SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE PROJECT

Center for Democracy and Technology   Jun 2025 - Aug 2025

- Co-authored a public blog post on civil liberties and accuracy concerns of real-time, untargeted facial recognition
- Published a comparative study on U.S. social media monitoring for immigration enforcement

SOFTWARE ENGINEER - AZURE NETWORKING

Microsoft   Aug 2021 - Aug 2023

- Developed and deployed new features for the Azure Software Load Balancer in C#, collaborating across teams to meet customer needs
- Built solutions to improve backend data consistency and reliability

TEACHING ASSISTANCE

CS 498 LAW AND POLICY ISSUES IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Fall 2025, Spring 2026

CS 565 SOCIAL SPACES

Fall 2024

CERTIFICATES

VISTA INSTITUTE FOR AI POLICY

AI Agents and the Law   Jun 2025 - Jul 2025

AWARDS & HONORS

ACM CS & Law Conference Travel Scholarship   Mar 2025

ACM Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency Conference Scholarship   Jun 2024

Richard T. Cheng Endowed Fellowship   Aug 2023

The William and Margaret Radley Prize in Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts   May 2021

Henry A. Krieger Prize in Decision Sciences   Sep 2019