

# Yixin Zou

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## Education

- 2017 – Present     **University of Michigan** | Ann Arbor, MI  
Ph.D. in Information  
Thesis committee: Florian Schaub (chair), Alessandro Acquisti, Denise Anthony, Tawanna Dillahun
- 2015 – 2017     **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign** | Champaign, IL  
B.S. in Advertising, minor in Communication  
Graduated with the Highest Honor (top 5% in College of Media)

## Employment

- 2017 – Present     **Graduate Student Research Assistant**  
*University of Michigan | Ann Arbor, MI*
  - Consumer reactions to data breaches and effective notification mechanisms.
  - Privacy expectation-risk misalignments in vulnerable populations (DARPA).
  - Usable privacy policy project (NSF SaTC Frontier, [usableprivacy.org](https://usableprivacy.org)).
  - Privacy in smart homes: a multi-stakeholder perspective.
  - Privacy attitudes and behaviors of software developers.
  - Phishing warnings for online email clients.
- 2020     **User Experience Research Intern**  
*Facebook, Privacy & Data Use Team | Remote*
  - 1:1 interviews with Facebook users to understand their expectations of the company's data practices.
  - Collaborated and communicated insights with product teams and data scientists.
- 2019     **Research Intern**  
*Norton Labs (previously Symantec Research Labs) | Culver City, CA*
  - Users' adoption and abandonment of security, privacy and identity theft protection practices (published at CHI 2020).
  - Computer security customer support for survivors of intimate partner violence (published at USENIX Security 2021).

- 2019     **User Experience Research Intern**  
Mozilla, Firefox Monitor Team | Remote
- Usability testings on wireframe prototypes to inform product design (see [this blog post](#) for more details).
  - Online experiments on content and format variations of breach notifications.

## Honors & Awards

- 2021     **Finalist, Facebook Fellowship**  
Facebook  
Among the top 3.5% of about 2,100 applicants worldwide.
- 2021     **Privacy Papers for Policymakers – Student Paper Honorable Mention**  
Future of Privacy Forum  
For “*It’s a scavenger hunt*”: *Usability of Websites’ Opt-Out and Data Deletion Choices*.
- 2020     **CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention**  
ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
For *Examining the Adoption and Abandonment of Security, Privacy, and Identity Theft Protection Practices*.
- 2020     **Finalist, Facebook Fellowship**  
Facebook  
Among the top 4% of about 1,800 applicants worldwide.
- 2019     **UMSI Field Prelim Milestone Distinction**  
University of Michigan School of Information  
For *Human Perception and Behavior In the Face of Privacy Risks*. The award is given to top 10% of students in this endeavor.
- 2019     **NortonLifeLock Fellowship**  
NortonLifeLock Research Group  
Awarded \$20,000 USD. One of the three recipients selected worldwide.
- 2019     **CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention**  
ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems  
For *Putting Your Warning Where Your Link Is: Improving and Evaluating Email Phishing Warnings*.
- 2018     **SOUPS Distinguished Paper Award**  
SOUPS 2018: Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security  
For “*I’ve Got Nothing to Lose*”: *Consumers’ Risk Perceptions and Protective Actions after the Equifax Data Breach*.

- 2019 **UMSI Pre-Candidacy Milestone Distinction**  
University of Michigan School of Information  
For “I’ve Got Nothing to Lose”: Consumers’ Risk Perceptions and Protective Actions after the Equifax Data Breach. The award is given to top 10% of students in this endeavor.

## Publications

*\* indicates equal contributions to the paper.*

### Journal & Magazine Articles (2)

- 2020 **Listen Only When Spoken To: Interpersonal Communication Cues as Smart Speaker Privacy Controls**

Abraham H. Mhaidli, Manikandan K. Venkatesh, Yixin Zou, Florian Schaub.  
*PoPETS: Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies*, 2020(2), 251-270. Sciendo.  
(26.8% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.2478/popets-2020-0026>  
*Also presented at PETS 2020.*

- 2019 **Beyond Mandatory: Making Data Breach Notifications Useful for Consumers**

Yixin Zou & Florian Schaub.  
*IEEE Security & Privacy*, 17(2), 67-72. IEEE. (Invited paper)  
<https://doi.org/10.1109/MSEC.2019.2897834>  
*Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2019.*

### Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings (11)

- 2021 **The Role of Computer Security Customer Support in Helping Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence**

Yixin Zou, Allison McDonald, Julia Narakornpichit, Nicola Dell, Thomas Ristenpart, Kevin Roundy, Florian Schaub, Acar Tamersoy  
*USENIX Security Symposium*. USENIX Association. (Acceptance rate TBD)

- 2021 **“Now I’m a bit angry:” Individuals’ Awareness, Perception, and Responses to Data Breaches that Affected Them**

Peter Mayer\*, Yixin Zou\*, Florian Schaub, Adam J. Aviv  
*USENIX Security Symposium*. USENIX Association. (Acceptance rate TBD)  
<https://www.usenix.org/conference/usenixsecurity21/presentation/mayer>  
*Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2021.*

- 2021 **Toggles, Dollar Signs, And Triangles: How to (In)Effectively Convey Privacy Choices with Icons and Link Texts**  
 Hana Habib\*, Yixin Zou\*, Yaxing Yao, Alessandro Acquisti, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Joel Reidenberg, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM. (26.3% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3411764.3445387>  
*Icon recommendation adopted by the CCPA amendments.*
- 2020 **Examining the Adoption and Abandonment of Security, Privacy, and Identity Theft Protection Practices**  
Yixin Zou, Kevin Roundy, Acar Tamersoy, Saurabh Shintre, Johann Roturier, Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM. (24.3% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.3376570>  
*CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention Award. Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2020.*
- 2020 **“It’s a scavenger hunt”: Usability of Websites’ Opt-Out and Data Deletion Choices**  
 Hana Habib, Sarah Pearman, Jiamin Wang, Yixin Zou, Alessandro Acquisti, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM. (24.3% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.3376511>  
*FPF 2020 Privacy Papers for Policy Makers Student Honorable Mention. Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2020.*
- 2019 **“We Can’t Live Without Them!” App Developers’ Adoption of Ad Networks and Their Considerations of Consumer Risks**  
 Abraham H. Mhaidli, Yixin Zou, Florian Schaub  
*Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security*. USENIX Association. (22.9% acceptance rate)  
<https://www.usenix.org/conference/soups2019/presentation/mhaidli>
- 2019 **An Empirical Analysis of Data Deletion and Opt-Out Choices on 150 Websites**  
 Hana Habib, Yixin Zou, Aditi Jannu, Neha Sridhar, Chelse Swoopes, Alessandro Acquisti, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
*Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security*. USENIX Association. (22.9% acceptance rate)  
<https://www.usenix.org/conference/soups2019/presentation/habib>  
*Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2020.*

- 2019 **You ‘Might’ Be Affected: An Empirical Analysis of Usability Issues in Data Breach Notifications**  
Yixin Zou, Shawn Danino, Kaiwen Sun, Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM. (23.8% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300424>  
*Also presented at FTC PrivacyCon 2020.*
- 2019 **Put Your Warning Where Your Link Is: Improving and Evaluating Email Phishing Warnings**  
 Justin Petelka, Yixin Zou, Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM. (23.8% acceptance rate)  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300748>  
*CHI Best Paper Honorable Mention Award.*
- 2018 **“I’ve Got Nothing to Lose”: Consumers’ Risk Perceptions and Protective Actions after the Equifax Data Breach**  
Yixin Zou, Abraham H. Mhaidli, Austin McCall, Florian Schaub  
*Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security*. USENIX Association. (22.8% acceptance rate)  
<https://www.usenix.org/conference/soups2018/presentation/zou>  
*SOUPS Distinguished Paper Award.*
- 2017 **Users’ Attitudes towards the “Going Dark” Debate**  
 Aseel Addawood, Yixin Zou, Masooda Bashir  
*International Conference on Applied Human Factors and Ergonomics*. Springer.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60585-2\\_28](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60585-2_28)  
 Workshop Proceedings and Posters (6)
- 2018 **An Empirical Analysis of Online Consent and Opt-Out Experience**  
 Hana Habib, Yixin Zou, Chelse Swoopes, Aditi Jannu, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Florian Schaub  
*Privacy Law Scholars Conference*. Washington D.C., USA. May 2018.
- 2018 **An Empirical Analysis of Website Data Deletion and Opt-Out Choices**  
 Hana Habib, Yixin Zou, Aditi Jannu, Chelse Swoopes, Alessandro Acquisti, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
*CHI ’18 Workshop on General Data Protection Regulation: An Opportunity for the HCI Community?* Montreal, Canada. Apr 2018.

- 2018 **Concern But No Action: Consumers' Reactions to the Equifax Data Breach**  
Yixin Zou & Florian Schaub  
*Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems: Late Breaking Work*. Montreal, Canada. Apr 2018.
- 2018 **Concern But No Action: Consumers' Reactions to the Equifax Data Breach**  
Yixin Zou & Florian Schaub  
*Midwest Security Workshop*. Champaign, IL, USA. Mar 2018.
- 2017 **Really Being There?: Telepresence in Virtual Reality Branded Content.**  
 Jie Shen, M. Stenger, J. Lechowicz, Chen Chen, Rachel Yang, Aparna Sivasankaran, Yanyun Wang, Ji Zhang, Yixin Zou, H. Katz, Michelle R. Nelson  
*Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*. Chicago, USA. Aug 2017.
- 2017 **The Impacts of Privacy Hypocrisy, Victim Characterization, Gender, and Context on Bystanders' Guilt Attribution in a Cyberbullying Suicide**  
 Mike Zhengyu Yao, Yixin Zou, Daniel Linz, P. Jaoude  
*Annual Conference of International Communication Association*. San Diego, USA. May 2017.
- Technical Reports (3)
- 2020 **CCPA Opt-Out Icon Testing – Phase 2**  
 Lorrie Faith Cranor, Hana Habib, Yaxing Yao, Yixin Zou, Alessandro Acquisti, Joel R. Reidenberg, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
 Report submitted to the Office of the California Attorney General.  
<https://www.oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/privacy/dns-icon-study-report-052822020.pdf>
- 2020 **User Testing of the Proposed CCPA Do-Not-Sell Icon**  
 Lorrie Faith Cranor, Hana Habib, Yixin Zou, Alessandro Acquisti, Joel R. Reidenberg, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
 Report submitted to the Office of the California Attorney General.  
<http://cups.cs.cmu.edu/pubs/CCPA2020Feb24.pdf>
- 2020 **Design and Evaluation of a Usable Icon and Tagline to Signal an Opt-Out of the Sale of Personal Information as Required by CCPA**  
 Lorrie Faith Cranor, Hana Habib, Yixin Zou, Alessandro Acquisti, Joel R. Reidenberg, Norman Sadeh, Florian Schaub  
 Report submitted to the Office of the California Attorney General.  
<https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/privacy/ccpa-cranor.pdf>

## Invited Talks

- 2021 **“Now I’m a bit angry:” Individuals’ Awareness, Perception, and Responses to Data Breaches that Affected Them**  
*SECUSO Research Group, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.* Online. May 2021.
- 2021 **Toggles, Dollar Signs, and Triangles: How to (In)Effectively Convey Privacy Choices with Icons and Link Texts**  
*CHI ’21: Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.* Online. May 2021.
- 2021 **“Now I’m a bit angry:” Individuals’ Awareness, Perception, and Responses to Data Breaches that Affected Them**  
*The George Washington University Usable Security and Privacy Lab.* Online. Apr 2021.
- 2021 **Spyware and Digital Intimate Partner Abuse**  
*Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center, University of Michigan.* Online. Mar 2021.
- 2020 **Examining the Adoption and Abandonment of Security, Privacy, and Identity Theft Protection Practices**  
*PrivacyCon, Federal Trade Commission.* Online. Jul 2020.
- 2019 **An Empirical Analysis of Data Deletion and Opt-Out Choices on 150 Websites**  
*SOUPS ’19: Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security.* Santa Clara, USA. Aug 2019.
- 2019 **Lengthy, Vague, and Inactionable: Issues with Data Breach Notifications and Implications for Public Policy**  
*PrivacyCon, Federal Trade Commission.* Washington D.C., USA. Jun 2019.
- 2019 **An Empirical Analysis of Readability and Usability Issues in Data Breach Notifications**  
*CHI ’19: Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.* Glasgow, UK. May 2019.
- 2018 **Designing Effective and Actionable Data Breach Notices: Implications for Firefox Monitor**  
*Firefox Monitor Team, Mozilla.* Online. Nov 2018.
- 2018 **“I’ve Got Nothing to Lose”: Consumers’ Risk Perceptions and Protective Actions after the Equifax Data Breach**  
*SOUPS ’19: Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security.* Baltimore, USA. Aug 2018.

## Teaching Experience

Graduate Student Instructor

- Fall 2019 **SI 501: Contextual Inquiry (University of Michigan)**  
Led two weekly discussion sections, held office hours, and graded assignments. Over-saw ten consulting projects with local clients led by master students.  
*4.8 (of 5.0) median rating (37 of 48 students).*

Fall 2018 **SI 110: Introduction to Information (University of Michigan)**  
 Led two weekly discussion sections, held office hours, and graded assignments. Also gave a guest lecture on net neutrality and privacy.  
*4.4 (of 5.0) median rating (20 of 48 students).*

#### Mentoring of Undergraduate & Master Students

**Khue Shay Le.** Undergraduate in CSE, University of Michigan. Since 2021.

**Michael Ni.** Undergraduate in CSE, University of Michigan. 2019-2021.

**Jamie Lai.** Undergraduate in Information, University of Michigan. 2019-2020.

**Kaiwen Sun.** Master in Information, University of Michigan. 2018.

**Shawn Danino.** Master in Information, University of Michigan. 2018.

**Austin McCall.** Undergraduate in Information, University of Michigan. 2018.

### External Service

#### Program Committee Member

- 2021 ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW), Posters.
- 2020, 2021 ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), Late Breaking Work.
- 2020 IEEE PerCom Workshop on Context Systems Design, Evaluation and Optimization.

#### Conference Organization

- 2021 Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security: Poster Junior Co-Chair.

#### External Reviewer

- 2020, 2021 CHI: ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.
- 2020, 2021 CSCW: Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW).
- 2020, 2021 DIS: ACM Conference on Designing Interactive Systems
- 2020, 2021 PoPETs: Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies.
- 2020 IJHCI: International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction.
- 2020 JAIST: Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology.

### University Service



University of Michigan

- 2020 **Privacy@Michigan Privacy Day Symposium**  
Contributed to organizing the Privacy@Michigan symposium in celebration of International Data Privacy Day. Organized “privacy clinics” to raise awareness of privacy issues among symposium attendees.
- 2019-2020 **Mentor, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program**  
Mentored undergraduate students on research projects. Help students build research skills and identify academic & career interests through close collaborations.

U-M School of Information

- 2021 **Student coordinator, Michigan Interactive and Social Computing (MISC)**  
Organized speaker series at the confluence of human-computer interaction, social computing, and computer-supported cooperative work from researchers at the University of Michigan and beyond.
- 2021 **Invited panelist, info sessions for PhD students**  
Shared advice and experience on topics such as finding summer internships, completing milestones, and navigating advisor-advisee relationships.

## Media Coverage

- 2021 **California Attorney General adopts Privacy Options icon into CCPA**  
The Privacy Options icon we designed in a CHI 2021 paper has been adopted into the official CCPA regulations through [an amendment](#). Reported on by [IAPP](#) and [JD Supra](#). Mar 2021.
- 2020 **Article on data breach notification research**  
Chicago Policy Review reported on our research in “[Data Breach Notifications Are Too Complex](#).” Sep 2020.
- 2020 **Quoted by CIO Dive**  
Quoted on potential changes of online safety practices during the COVID-19 pandemic in CIO Dive article “[The Remote Playbook](#).” Apr 2020.
- 2018 **The Equifax data breach study and implications for credit freezes**  
[New York Times](#) and [Detroit Free Press](#) quoted our SOUPS 2018 paper in discussing the importance of credit freezes. The Detroit Free Press article was picked up by the Associated Press and subsequently appeared in over 80 regional and local media outlets. Sep 2018.

## Op-Eds

2021    **An open letter to the U-M community**

Co-wrote an op-ed on [Michigan Daily](#) (w/ Heeryung Choi, Jane Im, and Cindy Lin) on anti-Asian racism in the United States and in academia. Apr 2021.