Zhuofan Li
/Jwo-fahn/

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Employment

2024-   Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech

Education

2018-2024   Ph.D. in Sociology, University of Arizona

with Graduate Certificate in Computational Social Science
Committee: Ronald Breiger (Chair), Corey Abramson, Joseph Galaskiewicz, Erin Leahey
Dissertation: *Corporate Open Science and Relational Infrastructure in Artificial Intelligence Research*

2014-2018   B.A. in Sociology, *magna cum laude*, Franklin & Marshall College

Research Interests

Digital Sociology; Economic Sociology; Organizations and Work; Science and Technology; Social Networks; Computational Social Science

Publications

Journal Articles

2024   Abramson, Corey, Zhuofan Li, Tara Prendergast, and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski. "Inequality in the Origins and Experiences of Pain: What 'Big (Qualitative) Data' Reveal about Social Suffering in the U.S." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 10(5): 34-65.

2024   Li, Zhuofan. "When Being a Data Annotator Was Not Yet a Job: The Laboratory Origins of Dispersible Labor in Computer Vision Research." *Socius* 10 (Special Issue: Sociology of Artificial Intelligence): 10.1177/23780231241259617.

2021   Li, Zhuofan, Daniel Dohan, and Corey Abramson. "Qualitative Coding in the Computational Era: A Hybrid Approach to Improve Reliability and Reduce Effort for Coding Ethnographic Interviews." *Socius* 7: 10.1177/23780231211062345.

Book Chapters

2025   Li, Zhuofan and Corey Abramson. "Ethnography and Machine Learning: Synergies and New Directions." Pp.245-272 in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Machine Learning*, edited by Juan Pablo Pardo-Guerra and Christian Borch. Oxford University Press.

Working Papers

Li, Zhuofan. "Selling Big Data Surveillance: The Embeddedness of Legitimacy in A Moralized Market of Facial Recognition Technology."

Li, Zhuofan, Daniel Dohan, and Corey Abramson. "Temporal Misalignment and Unequal Agency: What Terminal Cancer Patients Teach Us about Time and Inequality."

Some Work in Progress

Li, Zhuofan. "The Rise of Open Science and the New Infrastructure of Corporate Power."

Li, Zhuofan. "Hyperbrokerage."

Fu, Zheng, Jeffrey Shen, and Zhuofan Li. "Stop Citing Granovetter!"

Li, Zhuofan. "AI-Generated Content, Categorical Resistance, and Creative Reskilling: The Case of Digital Fan Artists."

Presentations

Conference Papers

2025   Galaskiewicz, Joseph, Eunsung Yoon, Zhuofan Li, Zheng Fu, Caleb Moore, Thelma Ebisan Reis, Kristen Pogreba-Brown, Leila Barraza, and Wanjun Chen. "Did Mistrust of the Medical Establishment Lead Residents to Ignore Public Health Guidance During the Pandemic?" Regular Session on Social Dimensions of Infectious Disease at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2025), Chicago, IL.

Lin, Shih-Hao and Zhuofan Li. "Gender, Aging, and the Wage Gap: Industry Variations and Social Exclusion Among Female Board Members." Economic Sociology Section Roundtable at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2025), Chicago, IL.

2024   Abramson, Corey, Zhuofan Li, and Tara Prendergast. "Qualitative Sociology in the Computational Era: Classic Issues, Emerging Trends, New Possibilities." Methodology and Mathematical Sociology Section Joint Session "Computational and Mathematical Approaches to Qualitative and Quantitative Data" at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2024), Montréal, Canada.

Galaskiewicz, Joseph, Eunsung Yoon, Kate Freeman-Anderson, Kristen Pogreba-Brown, Zhuofan Li, Zheng Fu, Wanjun Chen, and Caleb Moore. "Public Health Guidance, Neighborhood Effects, and SARS-CoV-2." Regular Session on Health Policy at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2024), Montréal, Canada.

Li, Zhuofan. "The Embeddedness of Legitimacy in A Moral Economy of Big Data Surveillance Technology." Technology and Innovation Management (TIM) Division at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management (AOM 2024), Chicago, IL.

Li, Zhuofan. "The Rise of Corporate Open Science: Boundaries, Brokerage, and Power in Artificial Intelligence Research." International Network for Social Network Analysis Sunbelt Conference (Sunbelt 2024), Online.

2023   Li, Zhuofan. "A Moral Economy of Big Data: Moral Attachment and Disembedding in the Facial Recognition Technology Market." Regular Session on Economic Sociology at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2023), Philadelphia, PA.

Li, Zhuofan. "Corporate Participation in Open Science: From Spillover to Brokerage." Poster Session at the International Conference on Science of Science and Innovation (ICSSI 2023). Evanston, IL.

Abramson, Corey, Tara Prendergast, Zhuofan Li, Martín Sánchez-Jankowski."Inequality in the Origins and Experiences of Pain." International Sociological Association Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification and Mobility. Melbourne, Australia.

2022   Abramson, Corey, Tara Prendergast, Zhuofan Li, Martín Sánchez-Jankowski."How Americans Make Sense of Chronic Pain." Russell Sage Foundation Conference: Building an Open Source Qualitative Social Science. New York, NY.

Li, Zhuofan, Corey Abramson, and Daniel Dohan. "The Temporal Structure of Capitals: Lessons from the End of Life." Sociology of Culture Section Session "Action in Unsettled Times" at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2022), Los Angeles, CA.

2021   Li, Zhuofan. "Lexicons into Categories: A Semantic Network Approach to Category-Spanning Identities." Organization, Occupation, and Work Section Roundtable at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA 2021), Online.

Li, Zhuofan. "A Semantic Network Approach to Category-Spanning Identities." Networks 2021: A joint Sunbelt and NetSci Conference, hosted by Indiana University Network Science Institute, Online.

Workshops

2024   Robey, Derek J., Sebastian Karcher, Sondra Stegenga, Corey Abramson, Max Besbris, Sadie Dempsey, Sarah Hart, Tiffany Huang, Zhuofan Li, Tara Prendergast, Breda O'Keeffe, and Reuel Rogers. "Verification in Qualitative Social Sciences." Center for Qualitative and Multi-Method Inquiry, Syracuse University, New York, NY.

2022   Abramson, Corey, Zhuofan Li, Daniel Dohan. "Introduction to Machine Learning for Qualitative Research." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (ASA 2022), Los Angeles, CA.

Grants & Fellowships

External

2023-2024   National Science Foundation/American Sociological Association Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (ASA DDRIG).

Virginia Tech

2025   New Faculty Mentoring Grant.

University of Arizona

2023-2024   Social and Behavioral Sciences Graduate Fellowship

2023   Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) Travel Grant

2022   Social and Behavioral Sciences Summer Dissertation Fellowship

2019-2020   Federick & Margaret S. Conrad Graduate Scholarship

2018-2019   Social and Behavioral Sciences Graduate Fellowship

Franklin & Marshall College

2017-2018   Nissley Grant

2017   Hackman Summer Research Scholarship

Honors & Awards

2024   Sánchez-Jankowski Graduate Paper Award, University of Arizona

2024   Raymond V. Bowers Graduate Paper Award, University of Arizona

2021   Honors Pass, Comprehensive Exam in Social Networks, University of Arizona

2020   Honors Pass, Comprehensive Exam in Organizations and Work, University of Arizona

2018   William M. Kephart Prize in Sociology, Franklin & Marshall College

2018   Tourish Prize in Criminology, Franklin & Marshall College

2018   Phi Beta Kappa

Other Research Affiliations

2024-   Affiliate, Department of Science, Technology, and Society, Virginia Tech

2022-   Affiliated Researcher, Center for Ethnographic Research, Institute of the Study of Societal Issues, University of California, Berkeley

Teaching

Graduate

Digital Sociology (S25)

Undergraduate

Digital Sociology (F24)

Introductory Sociology (F21, S22, S25, F25)

Service

To the Profession

Ad hoc Reviewer for: Academy of Management, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, National Science Foundation, *Sociological Currents*, *Sociological Methodology*, *Socius*

2023   Panelist, American Sociological Association Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (ASA DDRIG) Proposal Preparation Workshop, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia

2023   Volunteer, American Sociological Association Economic Sociology Section Awards Showcase Panel

Virginia Tech

2024-2025   Undergraduate Program and Curriculum Committee, Department of Sociology

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2023	Graduate Student Representative, Graduate Studies Committee
2021-2023	Co-organizer, Social Organization Seminar
2021-2022	Graduate Student Representative, Faculty Recruitment Committee
2020-2021	Conception & Survey Design, Graduate Student Climate Survey

Last updated: July 2025