

# MATT DEBUTTS

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## Education

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### Stanford University

Ph.D. in Communication; Advisor: Jennifer Pan  
Ph.D. minor in Political Science  
M.A. in Communication; Knight-Hennessy Scholar

Stanford, CA

2021-present

2019-2021

### Peking University

M.A. in China Studies; Yenching Academy

Beijing, China

2016-2018

### Amherst College

B.A. in Law, Jurisprudence and Social Thought  
*Distinctions:* Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude

Amherst, MA

2010-2014

## Publications

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### PEER-REVIEWED

- [1] **Matt DeButts\***, Jennifer Pan\*. Reporting After Removal: The Effects of Journalist Expulsion on Foreign News Coverage (2024). *Journal of Communication*. [\*co-first author]
- [2] Alexander Spangher, James Youn, **Matt DeButts**, Nanyun Peng, Emilio Ferrara, Jonathan May. Explaining Mixtures of Sources in News Articles (2024). *EMNLP Proceedings*.
- [3] **Matt DeButts\***, Jennifer Pan\*. China's Internet Controls: What if Citizens Disengage? (2024). *Communication and the Public*.
- [4] Kate Starbird, Renee DiResta, **Matt DeButts**. Influence and Improvisation: Participatory Disinformation during the 2020 U.S. Election (2023). *Social Media+ Society*.

### BOOK CHAPTER

- [1] Lu, Y. & **DeButts, M.** (In press). How to use computational methods and online experiments to study Chinese digital media. In Xu J., Guo S., and Zhang W. (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook on Chinese Digital Media and Communication*.

### SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS

- [1] **Matt DeButts\***, Tongtong Zhang\*. Is Rights Consciousness Rising in China? Evidence from Thirteen Years of Citizen Complaints. (R&R at *China Quarterly*)
- [2] **Matt DeButts\***, Jennifer Pan\*. Chinese Government Influence on Diasporic Chinese-Language News Outlets. (*Accepted at APSA 2025*)
- [3] **Matt DeButts\***, Yingdan Lu\*. 'Intimate' Propaganda: How authoritarian regimes adapt propaganda to video-sharing platforms. (*Accepted to ICA 2025*)

### POLICY

- [1] Renee DiResta, **Matt DeButts**. "Newsworthiness,' Trump, and the Facebook Oversight Board." (April 2021) *Columbia Journalism Review*. ([https://www.cjr.org/the\\_new\\_gatekeepers/facebook-oversight-board-2.php](https://www.cjr.org/the_new_gatekeepers/facebook-oversight-board-2.php))
- [2] **Matt DeButts**. "The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Twitter Data Set." (April 2021). *U.S. China Perception Monitor*, Carter Center. (<https://uscnpm.org/2021/04/14/the-chinese-mfa-data-set-insights/>)
- [3] Jack Cable, **Matt DeButts**, Renee DiResta, Riana Pfefferkorn, Alex Stamos, David Thiel. "Clubhouse in China: Is the data safe?" (February 2021).

- [4] **Matt DeButts**, Maya Guzdar, Vanessa Molter. “Chinese Expat News Site Resists CCP Influence.” (September 2020).
- [5] Center for an Informed Public, Digital Forensic Research Lab, Graphika, & Stanford Internet Observatory (March 2021). The Long Fuse: Misinformation and the 2020 Election. Stanford Digital Repository: Election Integrity Partnership.

## JOURNALISM

- [1] **Matt DeButts**, [The Hotel at the Epicenter of China’s Online Film Industry](#), *Los Angeles Times*. 2017
- [2] **Matt DeButts**, [Chinese Turn to Sex Education to Prevent Abuse](#), *Los Angeles Times*. 2017
- [3] **Matt DeButts**, [Ask the Chinese: Public Opinion and Trump](#), *Los Angeles Times*. 2017
- [4] **Matt DeButts**, [UCLA Basketball Players are “Doing Fine” in Hotel Detention](#), *Los Angeles Times*. 2017
- [5] **Matt DeButts**, [When China Reporters Can’t Report From China](#), *ChinaFile*. 2020
- [6] **Matt DeButts**, [The Other Hospital Workers on the Pandemic’s Front Lines](#), *Vox*. 2020
- [7] **Matt DeButts**, [Urgency for Pro-Democracy Hong Kong Expatriates in the Bay Area](#), *SFGate*. 2019.
- [8] **Matt DeButts**, [How a Popular Chinese App is Turning Clicks into Connections](#), *Sixth Tone*. 2019.
- [9] **Matt DeButts**, [How the ‘Home of Overseas Chinese’ is Memorializing Migrants](#), *Sixth Tone*. 2017
- [10] **Matt DeButts**, [China’s Students Are Sharing Their Secrets...In English](#), *Foreign Policy*. 2016.

## CHINESE LANGUAGE

- [1] 硅谷多媒体: [为什么拜登的副总统人选一波三折而又如此重要](#): “Biden’s Choice of VP”
- [2] 2020 — 硅谷多媒体 《[硅谷三人行 1](#)》 — “Silicon Valley Chats” (video)
- [3] 2020 — 硅谷多媒体 《[硅谷三人行 2](#)》
- [4] 2019 — IUP 中文中心: 《[失忆的王国](#)》 — “The Kingdom of Forgotten Things.”

## Conferences

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- American Political Science Association (APSA) -- <i>upcoming</i>	Sep 2025
- International Communication Association (ICA) -- <i>upcoming</i>	Jun 2025
- American Political Science Association (APSA)	Aug 2024
- International Communication Association (ICA pre-conference)	Jun 2024
- International Journal of Press/Politics (IJPP)	Oct 2023
- American Political Science Association (APSA)	Sep 2023
- Midwestern Political Science Association (MPSA)	Apr 2023

Conducted reviews for: The Communication Review (2023), Harvard Misinformation Review (2024), Humanities & Social Sciences Communications (2024), Information, Communication and Society (2024)  
 Invited talks: “Agenda-setting” for Stanford COMM 108/208: Media Processes and Effects (2024)

## Teaching

### Teaching Assistant

Comm 106/206: Communication Research Methods

Comm 158/258: Censorship and Propaganda

Instructor: Jennifer Pan

- Designed lessons in R and Tidyverse to 50+ students
- Managed online quizzes, exams, and grading on Canvas
- Organized and led 20-person discussion as sole instructor

## Experience

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Stanford Internet Observatory.....	Graduate Research Assistant.....	2020-2023
Economist Intelligence Unit.....	Contributing Editor.....	2017-2019
Los Angeles Times.....	Special Correspondent.....	2017
C4ADS.....	Summer Analyst (OSINT).....	2019

Trivium/China.....	Politics Researcher.....	2018
L&T Newsroom.....	Freelance Copywriter.....	2015
Princeton-in-Asia .....	Teaching Fellow, China Foreign Affairs University.....	2014-2015

### **Fellowships, Grants & Awards**

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2025	Milton Wolf Seminar on Media and Diplomacy Emerging Scholar
2024	Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences Grant (IRiSS) (\$1500) Human-Center Artificial Intelligence (HAI) Google Cloud Grant (\$4600)
2023	Stanford Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI) Graduate Fellow (\$3000) Stanford Center on China's Economy & Institutions (SCCEI) Research Grant (\$9500)
2022	Stanford PACS Small grant (\$1500) Human-Center Artificial Intelligence (HAI) Google Cloud Grant (\$2200)
2019	Knight-Hennessy Scholarship (3-year funded graduate fellowship at Stanford University)
2019	Overseas Press Club Fellow (\$4000 for overseas reporting)
2018	Blakemore-Freeman Graduate Fellowship (\$50000 for language study)
2014	Fulbright ETA to Taiwan (declined)

### **Skills and Languages**

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Programming: Python, R (Tidyverse)  
 Languages: Mandarin (fluent), Spanish (proficient)