Rahaf Alharbi

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OVERVIEW

I investigate the accessibility benets, failures, and harms of emerging technologies in various contexts around live streaming, hybrid meetings, and articial intelligence (AI). Across these realms, I draw from critical disability studies to complicate understandings of access in sociotechnical systems, revealing power negotiations and added labor for people with disabilities. My work contributes to the fields of accessibility and human-computer interaction (HCI), appearing in several top-tier HCI venues such as ACM CHI and CSCW. I am committed to building and designing responsible technologies for and with disabled people toward an accessible and equitable future.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA　　　　　　　　　　　Aug. 2020 - May 2025 (expected)
Ph.D. in Information, specialized in Accessibility and Human-Computer Interaction
Affiliated with Accessibility, HCI, Aging (AHA!) and Center for Ethics, Society, and Computing (ESC)
Advisors: Dr. Robin Brewer and Dr. Sarita Schoenebeck

University of California, San Diego, CA, USA　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Sep. 2015 - Mar. 2020
B.S. in Mechanical Engineering (minor in Ethnic Studies), GPA: 3.67/4.00
Fully-funded by the KAUST Gifted Students Scholarship

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Aug. 2020 - Present
Graduate Research Assistant
• Led, designed and conducted qualitative studies with over 35 people with disabilities to understand accessibility barriers, benefits and trade-offs in various contexts such as AI assistance technologies and live streaming
• Collaborated with over 10 researchers across various institutions and departments (e.g., computer science and communication)
• Resulted in first author CSCW 2022 paper, and co-authored papers in CSCW 2022, First Monday, and CHI 2023, along with various workshop papers

Meta, Menlo Park, CA, USA　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　May 2023 - Aug. 2023
UX Research Intern (Responsible AI Team)
Manager: Dr. Amy Piedalue, collaborators: Dr. Jessica Heal, Dr. Ella Gamze Strack, and Dr. Chloé Bakalar
• Collaborated with UX team members and Chief Ethicist to design and conduct a foundational research study
• Performed an extensive literature review on internal and external research articles
• Collected and analyzed in-depth qualitative data
• Delivered unique implications to various teams at Meta
• Published two internal research papers

Microsoft Research, Redmond, WA, USA　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　May 2022 - Aug. 2022
Research Intern (Ability Team)
Mentored by Dr. John Tang (at Microsoft Research) and Karl Henderson (at Experiences & Devices)
• Designed and conducted qualitative interviews with 21 professionals with disabilities to understand their experiences in hybrid meetings
• Uncovered the unique accessibility benefits, drawbacks, and conflicts of hybrid meetings
• Generated design implications to improve the accessibility of hybrid meeting technologies and videoconferencing systems
• Resulted in a first authored CHI 2023 paper

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
Teaching Assistant for Introduction to Accessibility (Graduate Level)　　　　　　　　　　　Fall 2021

PUBLICATIONS

- **Peer-Reviewed Journals and Conference Publications***

[P5] Accessibility Barriers, Conicts, and Repairs: Understanding the Experience of Professionals with Disabilities in Hybrid Meetings
Rahaf Alharbi, John Tang, Karl Henderson
Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2023
Acceptance Rate: 28.4%

[P4] Hacking, Switching, Combining: Understanding and Supporting DIY Assistive Technology Design by Blind People
Jaylin Herskovitz, Andi Xu, Rahaf Alharbi, Anhong Guo
Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2023
Acceptance Rate: 28.4%

[P3] Denition drives design: Disability models and mechanisms of bias in AI technologies
Denis Newman-Griffis, Jessica Sage Rauchberg, Rahaf Alharbi, Louise Hickman, Harry Hochheiser
First Monday, 2023

[P2] Understanding Emerging Obfuscation Technologies in Visual Description Services for Blind and Low Vision People
Rahaf Alharbi, Robin N. Brewer, Sarita Schoenebeck
Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW), 2023

[P1] Beyond Borders: Womens Perspectives on Harm and Justice after Online Harassment
Jane Im, Sarita Schoenebeck, Marilyn Iriarte, Gabriel Grill, Daricia Wilkinson, Amna Batool, Rahaf Alharbi, Audrey N. Funwie, Tergel Gankhuu, Eric Gilbert, Mustafa Naseem
Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW), 2022

- **Peer-Reviewed Workshop Papers and Extended Abstracts**

[W7] **Bridging the Gap: Towards Advancing Privacy and Accessibility**
Rahaf Alharbi, Robin Brewer, Gesu India, Lotus Zhang, Leah Findlater, Yixin Zou, and Abigale Stangl
ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS 23)
Workshop Co-Organizer

[W6] **Speculating Perfect Algorithmic Reparations for Disability**
Robin Brewer, Rahaf Alharbi, Sarita Schoenebeck
Algorithmic Reparation Workshop, University of Michigan, 2022

[W5] Dreaming Disability Justice in HCI
Cella Sum, Rahaf Alharbi, Cynthia Bennett, Rua Williams, Katta Spiel, Christina Harrington
ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Extended Abstract (EA CHI'22)
Workshop Co-Organizer

[W4] **Care, Disability, & Live Streaming**
Rahaf Alharbi, Audrey Labrie
Presented in The Future of Care Work: Towards a Radical Politics of Care in CSCW Research and Practice. CSCW 2021 Workshop

[W3] **On Obfuscation, Privacy & Visual Description: Rethinking Access Technology as Contested**
Rahaf Alharbi, Jasmine Duong, Robin Brewer, Sarita Schoenebeck.
Presented in Articially Intelligent Technology for the Margins: A Multidisciplinary Design Agenda CHI 2021 Workshop

[W2] **Repairing Online Harms: Assessing Punitive and Reparative Justice Approaches**
Sarita Schoenebeck, Jane Im, Amna Batool, Daricia Wilkinson, Audrey Funwie, Rahaf Alharbi, Marilyn Iriarte, Gabriel Grill, Eric Gilbert, Mustafa Naseem
First Annual Conference of The Platform Governance Research Network. March 2021

[W1] I Am Not an Engineer: Understanding How Clinicians Design & Alter Assistive Technology
Rahaf Alharbi, Ada Ng, Rawan Alharbi, Josiah Hester
ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Extended Abstract (EA CHI'20)

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*In the field of human-computer interaction, conference papers are rigorously peer-reviewed, archived, and considered to be prestigious.

Talks and Presentations

[T4] **Accessibility Barriers, Conicts, and Repairs: Understanding the Experience of Professionals with Disabilities in Hybrid Meetings**
- Presented research and product-oriented talks to various groups at Microsoft
- Presented at CHI 2023

[T3] **Understanding Emerging Obfuscation Technologies in Visual Description Services for Blind and Low Vision People**
- Presented at a Ph.D. level course on Algorithms and Society at the University of Michigan, 2022
- Presented at the Michigan Interactive and Social Computing (MISC) research group, 2022
- Presented at a Master's level course in the University of Michigan, 2021
- Presented at CSCW 2022

[T2] **Understanding the Motivations and Practices of Disabled Live Streamers**
- Co-presented at UMSI Lighting Talks at the Intersections of Information, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2021

[T1] **I Am Not an Engineer: Understanding How Clinicians Design & Alter Assistive Technology**
- Presented at the ACM Special Interest Group on Accessible Computing (SIGACCESS), Riyadh, 2020

Service and Leadership

- **Organizing**

ASSETS Workshop on Privacy and Accessibility   2023
Co-organized with Robin Brewer, Gesu India, Lotus Zhang, Leah Findlater, Yixin Zhou, and Abigale Stangl

Neubacher Award Committee Member   2023
Reviewed nominees and selected winners for the James T. Neubacher Award which is presented to University of Michigan faculty, students, and staff who empower people with disabilities, advocate for disability rights, and increase accessibility in the university

ACM Designing Interactive Systems (DIS)   2022 - 2023
Assisted Accessibility Chairs (Robin Brewer and Cynthia Bennett) with numerous tasks such as co-authoring a guide for creating accessible figures and tables, selecting accessibility services, and evaluating the in-person venue for access

Accessibility, HCI, Aging (AHA) Research Group at the University of Michigan   2022 - 2023
Co-moderator of biweekly group meetings with faculty and students across the School of Information and the Computer Science & Engineering department

CHI Workshop on Dreaming Disability Justice in HCI   2022
Co-organized with Cella Sum, Franchesca Spektor, Cynthia Bennett, Christina Harrington, and Katta Speil. Our workshop aimed to introduce the CHI community to disability justice, and work towards creating an accountable and responsible research agenda

ACM Conference On Computer-Supported Cooperative Work And Social Computing (CSCW)   2021
Student Volunteer (Day Lead): assigned tasks to various student volunteers and created a document for writing alternative texts on images shared on CSCW Twitter

Personal Care Assistant Graduate Student Scholarship at the University of Michigan   2021
Committee Member

Disability Studies & HCI Reading Group at the University of Michigan   2020 - 2021
Organizer

Services for Students with Disability Ofce at the University of Michigan   2020 - 2021
Advisory Board

- **Reviewing**

ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)   2020 - Present
2-3 reviews per year
Special Recognition for Outstanding Reviews in CHI 2022

ACM Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS)   2020 - Present
1-2 reviews per year

Awards and Achievements

UMSI Travel Grant	2023
Rackham Graduate School Travel Grant	2023
DEI Travel Grant from ACM SIGACCESS	2022
CHI Special Recognition for Outstanding Reviews	2022
Mini Grant from UM Initiative on Disability Studies (UMInDS)	2021
DEI Travel Grant from ACM SIGACCESS	2020
KAUST Gifted Student Scholarship (KGSP)	2015

Skills

Methods: Qualitative Analysis, Interviewing, Focus Groups, Co-design Workshops, Usability Testing, Quantitative Analysis, Survey
Programming: Python, MATLAB
Languages: English (fluent), Arabic (native)