SARA M. B. SIMON (she/her)

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Research interests

My core research explores the history of automation in U.S. public health data production. I am especially interested in themes of hidden infrastructure, using theoretical lenses from science and technology studies, critical data studies, and labor history.

Education

Expected 2024	Illinois Institute of Technology M.S., Technology and Humanities
2015	Turing School of Software and Design Certificate in full-stack software development
2013	Wellesley College B.A., English with honors

Teaching experience

At Illinois Tech

Winter 2023	Teaching assistant: HIST 352: "History of Chicago"
Fall 2023	Teaching assistant: HUM 200: "Decoding and Designing Texts with Data"

Other experience

At Illinois Tech

2022 – 2023	Research assistant for Dr. Mar Hicks
Spring 2022	Research assistant for Dr. Carly Kocurek

Prior to graduate school

2020 – 2021	The COVID Tracking Project at The Atlantic Data quality team member
2019 – 2020	Spotlight PA at The Philadelphia Inquirer Investigative data reporter
2017 – 2019	The New York Times Associate software engineer, interactive news technologies
2015 – 2017	Vermont Public Radio Web developer

Conference presentations

Single-author presentations (academic)

Simon, Sara. "Operation Voder: The Women Behind the Machine." Paper presented at the Special Interest Group for Computing, Information, and Society (SIGCIS) conference, part of the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT), Online, September 21, 2023.

Simon, Sara. "A Labor History of Health Records: On Medical Scribes and the Ethics of Automation." Paper presented at the International Conference on Computer Ethics: Philosophical Enquiry, Chicago, Illinois, May 18, 2023.

Invited talks, panels, and workshops (academic & industry)

Data & Disease in Historical Perspective workshop invited participant. The Epidemy Lab, University of Edinburgh, December 14-15, 2023.

Griest Schwartzman, Eiryn, Kris Jayme Matas, Abigail Thomas, M. Hughes, **Sara Simon** and Claire Wang. "From Institutional to Individual Responsibility: An Analysis of How Top US Public Health Schools Abandoned COVID-19 Mitigation Policies." Recorded poster presented at the American Public Health Association conference, Online, November 12-15, 2023.

Simon, Sara. "Medical Scribes, Electronic Health Records, and the Ethics of Automation." Presentation at the Leibniz Trustworthy AI Lab weekly seminar, Online, October 26, 2023.

Simon, Sara. "Data and Power." Presentation at a University of Virginia data science graduate seminar, Online, September 13, 2023.

Aschwanden, Christie, Duncan Geere, Betsy Ladyzhets, Jessica Malaty Rivera and **Sara Simon**. "Diving into the Data: How Data Reporting Can Shape Science Stories." Panel at the ScienceWriters2020 conference, Online, October 19-23, 2020.

Astudillo, Carla, Ella Koeze, Allison McCartney and **Sara Simon**. "Beyond the Horserace of Election Results Graphics." Panel at the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 5-8, 2020.

Simon, Sara. "From an English Major to a Software Engineer." Presentation at Denison University, sponsored by the math, computer science, and data analytics departments; the narrative journalism program; and the Ronneberg Lecture Series, Granville, Ohio, April 18, 2019.

Hinton, Erik, Caitlyn Ralph and **Sara Simon**. "Panel Discussion on Data Visualization." Panel at Drew University, sponsored by the Mellon Grant for the Digital Humanities, Madison, New Jersey, March 20, 2019.

Linnell, Gabrielle and **Sara Simon**. "Track Changes: Succeeding in Digital Careers Because of the Humanities." Panel at Wellesley College sponsored by the English department, Wellesley, Massachusetts, October 4, 2017.

PRX & Radio Public hackathon invited participant. Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 12-13, 2017.

Knight-Mozilla OpenNews Code Convening invited participant. Austin, Texas, April 18-19, 2016.

Single-author presentations (industry)

Simon, Sara. "The Algorithm: A Narrative." FITC Technology & Creativity, Toronto, April 9, 2018.

Simon, Sara. "Sometimes Your Ideas Are Bad." UX Burlington, Burlington, Vermont, June 9, 2017.

Simon, Sara. "Learning Fluency." RubyConf, Cincinnati, Ohio, November 10-12, 2016.

Simon, Sara. "The Function of Bias." Brighton Ruby, Brighton, UK, July 8, 2016.

Publications

Academic publications

> **Simon, Sara**. "Review of *Immeasurable Weather: Meteorological Data and Settler Colonialism from 1820 to Hurricane Sandy* by Sara J. Grossman. *Technology and Culture.* (Accepted and forthcoming.)

> **Simon, Sara**, Carly A. Kocurek and Leilasadat Mirghaderi. "Building Digital Dream Houses: An Interview with Jesyca Durchin." *ROMchip* 4, no. 2 (December 20, 2022). https://romchip.org/index.php/romchip-journal/article/view/159.

> **Simon, Sara**. "COVID-19 Data in Historical Perspective: Lessons from Chicago's 1995 Heat Wave." *Socially Responsible Modeling, Computation, and Design* 2, no. 1 (2022): 1-10. doi.org/10.18409/soremojournal.v2i1.212.

Select public writing, journalism, and narrative data analysis

> Schechtman, Kara W. and **Sara Simon**. "America's Entire Understanding of the Pandemic Was Shaped by Messy Data." *The Atlantic*, May 25, 2021.

> **Simon, Sara**. "Inconsistent Reporting Practices Hampered Our Ability to Analyze COVID-19 Data. Here Are Three Common Problems We Identified." *The COVID Tracking Project*, April 8, 2021.

> Schechtman, Kara W. and **Sara Simon**. "Silent Data Mismatches are Compromising Key COVID-19 Indicators." *The COVID Tracking Project,* February 9, 2021.

> **Simon, Sara**, Ryan Briggs and Nina Feldman. "Pa.'s Failure to Mandate Quicker Death Reporting Before the Coronavirus Fueled Wild Data Fluctuations, Mistrust." *Spotlight PA and WHYY News*, September 24, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "UPMC's Claim of 'Less Severe' Coronavirus Strain in Pa. is Not Supported By Science." *Spotlight PA*, July 14, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "Health Officials Failed to Safeguard Trust in Pa.'s Coronavirus Data, Sowing Confusion." *Spotlight PA*, June 17, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "Pa.'s Death Toll for Philadelphia Lags Behind City's Count, Part of State's Ongoing Struggle to Compile Timely Data." *Spotlight PA*, May 2, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "Pa. Coroners, Health Department at Odds Over How to Handle Suspected Coronavirus Cases, Potentially Affecting Death Count." *Spotlight PA*, April 23, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "Protections for Vulnerable Pa. Seniors Lag, Reforms to Guardianship System 'Stuck.'" *Spotlight PA*, March 12, 2020.

> **Simon, Sara**. "How a Times Software Engineer Ended Up Covering Miss America." *New York Times,* September 12, 2018.

> Bennett, Jessica and **Sara Simon**. "Here's What You Didn't See On Miss America." *New York Times,* September 10, 2018.

> Carlsen, Audrey, Ash Ngu and **Sara Simon**. "What it Takes to Get an Abortion in the Most Restrictive U.S. State." *New York Times*, July 20, 2018.

Goldensohn, Rosa. [**Sara Simon** and Susan C. Beachy contributed research.] "They Shared Drugs. Someone Died. Does That Make Them Killers?" *New York Times*, May 25, 2018.

Chira, Susan and Catrin Einhorn. [Reporting was contributed by Alain Delaquérière, Agustin Armendariz and **Sara Simon** from New York; Bill Vlasic from Detroit; and Kitty Bennett from Washington.] "How Tough Is It to Change a Culture of Harassment? Ask Women at Ford." *New York Times.* December 19, 2017.

Vermont Public Radio staff. [Data analysis by Taylor Dobbs and **Sara Simon**.] "Gunshots: Gun Deaths in Vermont, 2011-2016." *Vermont Public Radio*, August 7, 2017.

Awards

2023   Full scholarship
Oral History Workshop, Center for Oral History at the Science History Institute, Summer 2023

2023   First place in graduate research
Illinois Tech, Lewis College of Science and Letters, Student Research Day, Spring 2023

2021   Fellow
Illinois Tech's Socially Responsible Modeling, Computation & Design initiative, Fall 2021

Skills & languages

CITI Program certificates

Social and Behavioral Research Investigators (2022)
Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research (2022)

Technical skills

Tools and applications: Git, GitHub, Google Suite, Slack, Airtable
Programming languages and data analysis frameworks: Python, Excel, Flask, Django, Ruby, Rails

Languages

Mandarin Chinese: Lapsed advanced proficiency
Spanish: Elementary proficiency