

STERLING WILLIAMS-CECI

(3-31-2023)

BASIC INFORMATION

Email: scw222@cornell.edu

Google Scholar: [click here](#)

Personal Website: <https://sterlcwc.github.io/>

EDUCATION

PhD Student, Department of Information Science, Cornell University (Fall 2021 – present)

Co-Advisors: Professor Michael Macy and Professor Mor Naaman

B.A. Robert S. Harrison College Scholar, *Summa Cum Laude* & B.A. Psychology, Cornell University (2021)

Minors: Information Science (Concentration: Ethics, Law, and Policy) & Communication

ACADEMIC RESEARCH POSITIONS

PhD Student in Social Technologies Lab, August 2021 – present: Cornell Tech, New York, NY

Mentor: Professor Mor Naaman, Associate Dean and Director, Social Technologies Lab (<https://s.tech.cornell.edu/>)

Description: As a PhD student in Information Science at Cornell University, I am working in Professor Naaman's Social Technologies Lab to study how current technologies affect attitudes and behaviors with importance for psychological well being, such as trust.

PhD Student in Social Dynamics Lab, August 2021 – present: Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Mentor: Professor Michael Macy, Goldwin Smith Professor of Arts and Sciences in Sociology and Director, Social Dynamics Lab (<http://sdl.soc.cornell.edu/>).

Research Assistant, September 2017 – present: Department of Information Science, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Mentor: Professor Michael Macy, Goldwin Smith Professor of Arts and Sciences in Sociology and Director, Social Dynamics Lab (<http://sdl.soc.cornell.edu/>)

Student Researcher, January 2020 – September 2020, Department of Science & Technology Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Mentor & Supervisor: Malte Ziewitz, Assistant Professor of Science & Technology Studies and Director, Digital Due Process Clinic (<https://dueprocess.sts.cornell.edu/about/>)

Research Assistant, Spring 2016, Department of Human Development, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

HONORS AND AWARDS

Graduate Student Committee Member, Weiss Nominating Committee, Spring 2022 - present

Nominated to be a representative for my college and accepted as a member of the University committee for reviewing and granting Weiss Presidential Fellowship Awards and Provost Awards for Teaching Excellence to nominated faculty. Appointed for a 3-year term starting in Spring 2022 by Dean of Faculty, Professor Eve De Rosa.

Nominated: Outstanding TA Award, INFO 4100: Learning Analytics, Spring 2022.

Nominated by Professor Rene Kizilcec as an outstanding graduate TA for INFO 4100.

Merrill Presidential Scholar, Cornell University, May 2021

Selected as one of the top 37 graduating seniors in recognition of “outstanding scholastic achievement, strong leadership ability, and demonstrated potential for contributing to society.”

Strategic Poster Designation for Interdisciplinary Research, SRCD Biennial Meeting, April 2021

My first-authored behavioral intervention experiment on Sharenting (see **Publications**) was designated as one of the top 50 studies out of a few thousand exemplifying interdisciplinary research in child development. Awarded by the Society for Research in Child Development, a leading international organization devoted to developmental psychology research.

Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Cornell Chapter, April 2021

Selected Spring 2021 for having a GPA in the top 7% for the senior class. Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, America's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society.

Selected for Golden Key Honor Society, Cornell University, May 2021

Robert S. Harrison College Scholar, Cornell University, December 2018 – May 2021

National Scholastic Writing Awards (Northeast Region-at-Large; 346,000 works submitted annually):

Gold Key Award for Creative Writing & National Finalist, 2016

Silver Key Award for Creative Writing, February 2017

New York State Academic Excellence Award, New York State Board of Education, May 2017:
Recognizing high Regents Exam scores with \$2000 scholarship.

LEADERSHIP & MENTORSHIP

Science Research Mentor for Ossining Science Research Program, Spring 2023 – present

Peer Mentor for Cornell Information Science PhD Program, Fall 2022 – present

Lab manager, Social Dynamics Laboratory, Spring 2022 – Spring 2023

Coordinated the presentation schedule, managed the member listserv, and led the lab meetings for Professor Macy's Social Dynamics Lab.

Student leader, Social Dynamics Laboratory, Fall 2017 – Fall 2018

Led other students working on Letters of Recommendation project with Professor Macy and coauthors. Assigned tasks to students, held meetings, taught students individually, did majority of coding, and presented on project to entire lab.

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH AND DATA SKILLS

Experimental design and execution: Qualtrics with Javascript Integration, Amazon Mechanical Turk & Cloud Research, Prolific

Programming: R (Proficient in scripting, R Markdown, data science, interactive data visualization, basic machine learning, and multiple packages including tidyverse)

Python (Trained in elementary scripting, data tidying, & basic data science)

CSS & HTML (elementary design and layout skills)

Javascript (elementary proficiency in randomization and selection algorithms)

GRANTS

The Contribution Project

Awarded \$400 to study how selective roommate requests posted on Facebook can impact people's attitudes toward students and their potential job-search outcomes. Study also assessed levels of public awareness of Facebook-post retrievability by prospective employers during online background checks. Funds supported creation of website to disseminate study's findings.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

I am interested in two parallel and complementary tracks of research. The first is unveiling factors that influence people's judgments and decisions in online contexts, particularly those of psychological importance (such as trust). For instance, how do we decide whom or what information we trust in Google search or social media, when we lack access to face-to-face social cues, and how do these decisions affect our behaviors? Secondly, I am also passionate about testing behavioral and attitudinal interventions to promote positive change in humans' trust and other judgments online. These interests have led me to study many diverse questions relating to online behavior, for example: how to change parents' attitudes toward "sharenting" (see **Publications**), how trust in Google search results changes as a function of the addition of misinformation, how managers form opinions of college students' employability based on their social media photos and posts.

PUBLICATIONS

Williams-Ceci, S., Naaman, M., & Macy, M. W. (2022). The Impact of Rank, Misinformation, and Warning Banners on Trust in Search Results: A Covid-19 Case Study. Paper in progress.

Bernstein, R.H., Macy, M.W., Williams, W.M., Cameron, C.J., Williams-Ceci, S.C., & Ceci, S.J. (2022). Assessing gender bias in particle physics and social science recommendations for academic jobs. *Social Sciences*, 11(2), 74. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11020074>

Williams-Ceci, S., Grose, G.E., Pinch, A.C., Kizilcec, R.F., & Lewis, N.A., Jr. (2021). Combating Sharenting: Interventions to Alter Parents' Attitudes Toward Posting About Their Children Online. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106939>

Singh, R., Hesselbein, C., Yang, S., Chan, N. K., Chasalow, K., Eng, A., Gonzales, D., Lee, C., Li, E., McGovern, C., Pinch, A., Williams-Ceci, S.C., Wisniewski, K., & Ziewitz, M. (working paper). Documenting the lived experiences of data subjects. [Link here](#).

Ceci, S.J., Williams-Ceci, S., & Williams, W.M. (2016). How to actualize potential: A bio-ecological approach to talent development. *Annals of the New York Academy of Science*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.13057>

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation at Google Office (New York): “The Impact of Rank, Misinformation, and Warning Banners on Trust in Search Results: A Covid-19 Case Study.”

Guest Lecture, INFO 4450: Computer-Mediated Communication. “Computer-Mediated Communication in Families.”

Invited by Professor Susan R. Fussell to give a guest lecture in her undergraduate and graduate course. I discussed implications of theories in CMC for parents posting about their children on social media, and presented my own first-authored intervention experiment on Sharenting (see **Publications**).

Guest Lecture, INFO 4800: Behavioral Science Interventions. “Translating Ideas Into Experiments.”

Invited by Professor Rene Kizilcec to give a guest lecture in his undergraduate course. I discussed goals of intervention experiments and presented my own first-authored intervention experiment on Sharenting (see **Publications**).

College Scholar Honors Thesis Presentation to the Public, 8 May 2021

Presented the methods and findings of 2 randomized controlled experiments I conducted on impression formation toward young adults based on their online behavioral data. Communicated complex methods and results to an audience of about 100 people from multiple fields and without backgrounds in social science.

Williams-Ceci, S.C., Grose, G.E., Pinch, A., Kizilcec, R.F. & Lewis, Jr., N.A. (2021). Combating Sharenting: Interventions to alter parents' attitudes toward posting about their children online. Poster presented at *Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, 2021*.

****Awarded as Strategic Poster for exemplifying Interdisciplinary Research in Child Development****

Cornell Human Development Youth Engagement Program, 26 June 2019

Spoke to approximately 100 low income and underserved high school youth as part of New York State's 4-H program. Discussed how I became interested in my research questions and how I found a career path that would allow me to explore them.

College Scholar Research Presentations, 10 May 2019

Presented to a group of 30 Cornell University students, faculty, and staff about my research project for the program. Discussed how I planned to study various impacts of the Big Data Age on young adults; gave examples of experimental studies I planned to conduct. My presentation was covered by the Cornell Arts and Sciences Communications website (<https://tinyurl.com/y4ag7aqf>) and the Cornell Chronicle (<https://tinyurl.com/y5ry2pcg>).