

Michael P. Sugarman
430 Morris Avenue #2, Providence, RI 02906
(732) 742-0059 | m@sugarman.zone

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
M.S. in Comparative Media Studies, June 2021
Thesis: “Playing It By Ear: Improvised Music Livestreaming During COVID-19.”
Advisor: Professor T.L. Taylor

Columbia College of Columbia University in the City of New York, New York, NY
B.A. in Film Studies, May 2012
Departmental Honors

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure, UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA *July 2021 — Present*
Director of Media and Research Fellow

- Conduct historical and ethnographic research of small online communities to understand alternatives to large, commercial social media.
- Team lead and design researcher conducting interviews and observing communities as basis for development of open-source social media software for music discovery called DISCO.
- Produce podcast and video content to translate our lab’s research to general audience nearing 2000 unique listeners through organic reach.
- Edit and write articles for iDPI blog that summarize our research for peers and public.
- Maintain newsletter and the lab’s social media presence.

People’s Collaborative Governance Network, Boston, MA *September 2020 — May 2021*
Graduate Research Assistant

- Led a full co-design process from initial research through final design implementation and launch.
- Collaborated with The Boston Project Ministries mutual aid group and the office of Boston City Councilmember Andrea Campbell to develop instructional material and educational programs teaching older adults how to use Zoom and Cisco Webex during COVID-19 social distancing.
- Managed a team of seven community stakeholders and graduate and undergraduate students.

Engagement Lab, MIT and Emerson College, Cambridge, MA *September 2020 — December 2020*
Graduate Research Assistant

- Prepared a white paper using ethnographic methods assessing Zoom workshops centered around New Yorker-style cartoons organized by the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre for diverse groups of academics, artists, and NGO workers across the Americas, Europe, and East and Southeast Asia.

NetGain Partnership, Cambridge, MA *June 2020 — February 2021*
Research Assistant

- Conducted a survey of computational social science field to produce the white paper “New Approaches to Platform Data Research,” examining academic researchers’ access to data from major

social media corporations.

- Helped identify policy solutions and funding opportunities for NetGain Partners, including the MacArthur and Knight Foundations.

Center for Civic Media, MIT, Cambridge, MA

August 2019 — May 2020

Graduate Research Assistant

- Built a data science pipeline for Natural Language Processing research tool Media Cloud.
- Analyzed journalistic quotes that use dehumanizing language about migrants from major United States news sources. Furthered research initially completed with Define American project.
- Published live reporting on relevant talks on lab website.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Comparative Media Studies Graduate Thesis Day

April 2021

“Playing It By Ear: Improvised Music Livestreaming During COVID-19.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsP2einhYQI>

Containment and Intimacy Interdisciplinary Symposium, McGill University

April 2020

“The History of the (Fossil) Record Industry.” *Interrupted by COVID-19*

FELLOWSHIPS

MISTI India

June 2020 – August 2020

- Fellowship sponsoring travel and residence in Mumbai for research and professional development.
- Awarded to MIT graduate students in affiliation with a sponsor organization in India

ACADEMIC MEDIA PRODUCTION

Viral Networks by MEAG (Podcast)

February 2021 — June 2022

Producer, Editor, Sound Designer

- Produced, co-wrote, and edited six-episode podcast series targeted at informed lay listenership presenting cutting-edge research on health and political mis- and dis-information via interviews with prominent sociologists, scholars of journalism, and public health academics. Hosted by researchers from the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society and Northeastern University, and presented by the Gates Foundation.
- Composed theme and background music, and implemented with sound design.
- Managed four-person creative by setting a production schedule, overseeing a feedback process, and developing a promotion plan for the series.
- Distributed series on major podcast providers including Apple Podcasts and Spotify, and syndicated the show to public radio stations in Palmer, AK and Dearborn, MI.

Reimagining the Internet (Podcast)

October 2020 — Present

Producer, Editor

- Producing and editing over two-dozen episodes to date for the Initiative for Digital Public

- Infrastructure at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, interviewing academics, activists, and entrepreneurs about how the Internet is broken and how we might fix it.
- Producing five-episode miniseries about trust online, with interview segments organized around one specific topic for each episode, such as law, cryptocurrency, cooperation, community, and safety.
- Composed theme music.
- Planning long-term programming that furthers iDPI’s research goals.
- Scheduling guests and working remotely with them to engineer high-quality audio recordings.

Civic Studios, Mumbai, India

June 2020 — August 2020

Producer, Editor, Web Developer

- Wrote and edited short video advocating for gender equality and social justice intended for viral distribution on WhatsApp, based on research into media tropes and consumption habits of Indian social media users.
- Built a dashboard for tracking metrics of such videos across Civic Studios’ social media presence.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

“Discovery Logic,” chapter in *Illustrated Field Guide to Social Media*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2023. [Forthcoming]

“New Approaches to Platform Data Research.” *NetGain Partnership*, February 2021. White paper co-authored with Ethan Zuckerman and Elizabeth Hansen-Shapiro.

SELECT WRITING, DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

“Keyword: Decentralization.” *Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure*, December 2022. *Forthcoming*.

“Keyword: Interoperability.” *Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure*, September 2022.

“Discovery Logic: Making friends while finding gems.” *Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University*, July 2022.

“We Love Music, So Why Is Joe Rogan Getting Rich?” *Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure*, March 2022.

“Groove Café Handbook v1: Safe Parties and Scenes.” *Groove Café*, March 2020

“How to Deal with Police at Your Show.” *Groove Café*, January 2020.

“Thanks for An Amazing Year, Suckers: Suggestions for a Cooperative Music Industry.” *Groove Café*, January 2019.

“Aftermaths: Chicago Stands with Puerto Rico.” *Groove Cafe*, August 2018.

“Dreaming of Music After the End of Facebook.” *Groove Cafe*, March 2018.

“Treating PTSD (On an Artist’s Budget).” *Groove Cafe*, January 2018.

“Basic Resources for Running a Safe Party Space,” *Groove Cafe*, December 2017.

“The Ultimate Guide to Artificial Body Parts,” *Hopes and Fears*, January 2016.

“The Private Sales of Guns Online is Virtually Lawless,” *Hopes and Fears*, October 2015.

“Erotica for a Better Tomorrow Wants to Bring Misogyny To Its Knees,” *Hopes and Fears*, May 2015.

“Mr. Let's Paint Is the Most Inspirational Outsider Maniac You've Never Heard Of,” *VICE Magazine*, April 2015.

“The World of Psychedelic Mushrooms Online,” *Hopes and Fears*, March 2015.

“America Eats Its Cassette Culture: The Marriage of Neoliberalism and the American Underground,” *AdHoc*, February 2014.

“Dear Arca,” *AdHoc*, November 2014.

“The True Cost of YouTube's Library of Everything,” *Motherboard*, October 2014.

“Matthew Regula's Homemade Synthesizers Prove that DIY Is Still Alive,” *The Creators Project*, January 2014.

“Sewage and High Society: Our Night With Matmos,” *The Creators Project*, November 2013.

“Consensus: Anxiety,” *AdHoc*, March 2013.

PODCAST EPISODES, PRODUCED AND EDITED

Viral Networks, Media Ecosystems Analysis Group

- “Solving the Internet’s misinformation problem.” June 2022.
- “Platform forensics: how misinformation content goes viral.” June 2022.
- “How to detect a disinformation campaign.” June 2022.
- “Welcome to the disinfo industry.” May 2022.
- “How disease conspiracy theories are born.” May 2022.
- “What are mis- and disinformation?” May 2022.

Reimagining the Internet, Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure at UMass Amherst

- “This One Weird Trick for Changing Society with Gal Beckerman.” November 2022.
- “Forgetful Advertising with Chand Rajendra-Nicolucci.” November 2022.
- “See Through AI Hype with Arvind Narayanan.” October 2022.
- “Librarian Jessamyn West on the Classroom Where We Learn to be Human.” September 2022.
- “Why Does a Librarian Own a Social Media Site That’s Been Around for Longer Than Facebook?” September 2022
- “Googling Like an Evangelical with Francesca Tripodi.” August 2022.

- “Ben Tarnoff Wants an Internet for the People.” July 2022.
- “Will Google and Meta Control Africa’s Broadband? With Andrew Blum and Carey Baraka.” July 2022.
- “The Attention Economy with Vincent F. Hendricks and Camilla Mehlsen.” June 2022.
- “Brandy Zadrozny, NBC’s Conspiracy Theory Sleuth.” June 2022.
- “Internet of Goldfish with Bruno Patino.” May 2022.
- “How Do We Reimagine Twitter?” April 2022.
- “Brandon Silverman, Ex-Crowdtangle/Facebook: ‘Legislation is Coming.’” April 2022.
- “Cory Doctorow Wants to Set Your Facebook Data Free.” March 2022.
- “It’s About Safety in Gaming with T.L. Taylor.” March 2022.
- “Molly White Thinks Web3 is Going Just Great.” March 2022.
- “Jonathan Corpus Ong on Digital Labor in the Philippines.” February 2022.
- “Olivia Junnell and Alex Inglizian, Experimental Sound Studio.” February 2022.
- “The Lost French Web with Kevin Driscoll.” February 2022.
- “Fighting Casteism in Tech with Thenmozhi Soundararajan.” January 2022.
- “Nathan Schneider Pt. 2: Blockchain Governance.” January 2022.
- “Nathan Schneider Pt. 1: Platform Coops.” January 2022.
- “A Reimagining Carol.” December 2021.
- “Wikipedia, The Last Bastion of Truth Online with Heather Ford.” December 2021.
- “The Real Silicon Valley with Fred Turner.” December 2021.
- “Tracy Chou Wants to Help You Avoid Trolls.” November 2021.
- “The Spotify Problem, with Damon Krukowski.” November 2021.
- “Maciej Ceglowski Wants a Smaller Internet for a Better World.” November 2021.
- “Are.na’s Visual Utopia with Charles Broskoski and Daniel Pianetti.” October 2021.
- “Social Media for Activism with Deen Freelon.” October 2021.
- “Fixing Failed Moderation with Sarita Schoenenbeck.” October 2021.
- “Caroline Sindere Wants to Design Online Spaces for Safety.” October 2021.
- “Bonus: Omar Wasow part 2.” October 2021.
- “Jillian C. Yorke Thinks Fighting Censorship Needs Platform Accountability.” September 2021.
- “The AOL-era Black Internet with Omar Wasow.” September 2021.
- “The Sex Worker Web with Lola Hunt and Eliza Sorensen.” April 2021.
- “The Prehistory of Black Twitter with Charlton McIlwain.” March 2021.
- “GJ Bogaerts is Building Dutch Public Social Media.” March 2021.
- “Davi Ottenheimer, Inrupt.” March 2021.
- “Platform Oversight Needs Accessible Data with Elizabeth Hansen-Shapiro.” March 2021.
- “Julia Angwin on The Markup’s Groundbreaking Data Journalism.” February 2021.
- “A Non-Toxic Nextdoor with Front Porch Forum’s Michael Wood-Lewis.” February 2021.
- “Jimmy Wales Tells Us the Story of Wikipedia.” February 2021.
- “Wendy Liu, Abolish Silicon Valley.” January 2021.
- “The Web without Venture Capital: Trebor School on Platform Cooperativism.” January 2021.
- “Amy Zhang is Building Open Source Tools for Healthy Online Communities.” January 2021.
- “Holiday Special with Chand Rajendra-Nicolucci and Mike Sugarman.” December 2020.
- “Reimagining Digital Music with Liz Pelly.” December 2020.
- “Tim Hwang, Subprime Attention Crisis.” December 2020.
- “Kate Crawford, Atlas of AI.” November 2020.
- “Kevin Roose, The New York Times.” November 2020.
- “Safiya Noble, UCLA Center for Critical Internet Inquiry.” November 2020.
- “Evan Henshaw-Plath, Planetary.Social.” November 2020.
- “Talia Stroud, Civic Signals.” October 2020.

EDITING EXPERIENCE

Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure blog, Amherst, MA

September 2020 – Present

Editor

- Work with lab members to present their computer science, social science, and policy research into easy-to-understand short articles intended to be shared widely online.
- Edit and format according to conventions of the conversational blog post format.

Groove Café, Chicago, IL

October 2017 — May 2021

Founding Editor

- Create flexible platform for advocacy for underground musicians and music community.
- Format includes a publication, a record label, and social media-based resources.

Reverb, Chicago, IL

January 2017 — July 2017

Editor

- Coached experts in musical instruments and audio production to write conversational, informative articles for web publication.

AdHoc.fm, Brooklyn, NY

November 2012 — September 2015

Senior Editor

- Established and maintained editorial vision for music criticism site.
- Oversaw international roster of writers.
- Coordinated daily web publication and monthly periodical.

COMMUNITY AND ACTIVISM EXPERIENCE

Groove Café Livestreams

March 2020 — October 2020

- Organized and hosted livestreamed concerts on Twitch to raise money for musicians who lost out on gigs at start of COVID-19 and mutual aid and, later, community organizations working towards racial and social justice.

Groove Café Fundraiser, Chicago, IL

July 2019

- Brought together DJs, comedy, rock band, and experimental music ensembles for day-time show in Little Village neighborhood to raise funds for Groove Café project. Produced free Know Your Rights workshop with help of National Lawyers' Guild's Chicago chapter.

Aftermaths 2: Noise for Palu (Groove Café), Chicago, IL and Indonesia

February 2019

- Compiled recordings of contemporary Indonesian music by noise artists and gamelan ensembles to raise money for disaster relief in Palu following the September 2018 tsunami and earthquake.

Goodiepal & Pals album (Groove Café), Chicago, IL and Denmark

January 2019

- Released album by Danish anarchist tekno rock band Goodiepal & Pals to raise money for their efforts working with refugees seeking asylum in EU, primarily in Serbia, Turkey, and Hungary.

Aftermaths: Chicago Stands with Puerto Rico (Groove Cafe), Chicago, IL

August 2018

- Organize compilation of 40 Chicago artists across genre and identity and raise money about \$1000 for continuing relief efforts in Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria.

- Chicago Show Calendar**, Chicago, IL *March 2018*
 – Built and facilitated calendar of Chicago underground music events as alternative to Facebook events with the help of diverse representatives of the local music scene.
- Hurricane Maria Relief Benefit Concert**, Chicago, IL *October 2017*
 – Organized and raised over \$2,000 at fundraiser for Hurricane Maria Community Relief and Recovery fund at Elastic Arts, hosting house music, Puerto Rican, and experimental music communities.
- Independent Music Promoter**, New York, NY and Chicago, IL *November 2012 — July 2019*
 – Booked, promoted, and produced concerts and benefit shows in non-profit and DIY spaces that give a stage to musicians across genres and identities, and audience from all backgrounds.

SELECTED MUSIC COMPOSITION

- “Cyclic Churn,”** Stanford University Press *September 2020*
 – Contributed original composition to *Feral Atlas*, edited by Dr. Anna Tsing.
- Music for Cycling Waste***, Dreamtone *September 2019*
 – Composed and recorded album exploring unseen global supply chains.
- Flayaway***, Adult Swim *December 2018*
 – Composed noise music and free jazz for television special broadcast on Adult Swim.
- Easy***, Netflix *September 2018*
 – Composed and performed avant-garde electronic music for the Netflix series *Easy*.

WEBSITES DESIGNED AND DEVELOPED

- Beyond/Below Music Series** *Forthcoming*
- Getting Connected** *May 2021*
<https://collabgov.mit.edu/getting-connected>
- Initiative for Digital Public Infrastructure** *October 2020*
<https://publicinfrastructure.org>
- Groove Café** *May 2020*
<https://groove.cafe>

COMPUTER AND SCRIPTING LANGUAGES

Proficiency with computer programming languages Python, JavaScript, React, Svelte, Gatsby, Processing, p5.js, SuperCollider (based on C), and Max/MSP.