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866 Yingkou Road
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EDUCATION

Stanford University, Stanford, CA

September 2022 – Present

- Degree pursued: Doctor of Philosophy (Master of Arts Awarded in May 2024)
- Major: Sociology
- Research interests: sociology of knowledge, sociology of education, sociology of science and technology, social theories, social science research methods, prediction
- Adviser: Prof. Jeremy Freese
- Ongoing research:
 - “The Unexpectedness Gap: Socioeconomic Inequality in the Quality of Employment Self-predictions,” advised by Prof. Jeremy Freese and Sarah Brayne
 - Politics and Social Change Lab
 - “Breaking the Iron Cage: Mainstream Organizational Convergence as a Contributor to Anti-establishment Sentiments,” advised by Prof. Robb Willer and Jeremy Freese
 - Exploring the ability of large language models to conduct semistructured interviews
 - “Optimal Response Ordering: Survey Experimental Evidence Across Identity Items,” collaborating as first author with Prof. Aliya Saperstein
 - Collaborations with researchers at Princeton and elsewhere
 - “Measuring the Predictability of Life Trajectories: A Large-Scale Computational Exploration,” collaborating as third author with Emily M. Cantrell, Pranay Anchuri, and Prof. Matthew J. Salganik
 - “You Have More Data Than You Think: Optimizing Machine Learning in Tabular Social Science Datasets through Augmentation and Linkage,” collaborating as first author with Emily M. Cantrell (equal contribution)
 - “More Data, Modest Gains: Assessing Limits of Prediction in Multidomain Population-Scale Social Data” collaborating as second author with Emily M. Cantrell (equal contribution), Sayash Kapoor, Mark D. Verhagen, Prof. Arvind Narayanan, and Matthew J. Salganik
 - “Births Are Difficult to Predict Even with Full-population Register Data,” collaborating with Elizaveta Sivak, Gert Stulp, and colleagues
- Selected coursework: Sociology of Science; Theories of Culture, Media, and Institutions; Social Stratification; Seminar on Organizational Theory; Rediscovering Social Science with Multiagent Simulations; Identity Politics; Natural Language Processing in the Social Sciences; Network Methods; Economic Sociology; Nations and Nationalism
- GPA: 4.051
- Teaching assistant: Sports, Competition, and Society; Self and Society: Introduction to Social Psychology; Introduction to Data Analysis; Junior Seminar: Preparation for Research
- Association of Sociology Graduate Students: I organize weekly writing hours for PhD students in the department

Summer Institute in Computational Social Science, Philadelphia, PA

July 2024

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

September 2018 – May 2022

- Degree: Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*
- Concentration: Sociology
- Certificates: French Language and Culture, Statistics and Machine Learning
- GPA: 3.897
- Junior independent work: “Private Tutoring, High School Enrollment, and the Rural-Urban Education Gap,” advised by Prof. Brandon Stewart
- Senior thesis: *Race, Ethnicity, and the Receipt of Charitable Aid*, advised by Prof. Matthew Salganik

- Selected coursework: Sociology of the Internet; Critical Approaches to Human-computer Interaction; Media and Public Policy; Law, Institutions and Public Policy; Urban Studies Research Seminar; Machine Learning with Social Data: Opportunities and Challenges; Sociological Theory; Machine Learning for Predictive Data Analytics; Probability and Stochastic Systems; Language, Power, and Identity (taught in French); Readings in Classic Chinese Short Stories (taught in Chinese); Ecology: Species Interactions, Biodiversity, and Society

Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford, CT

September 2014 – May 2018

The Second Middle School Affiliated to Fudan University, Shanghai, China

September 2010 – June 2014

Dayi Foreign Language School, Shanghai, China

September 2005 – June 2010

PUBLICATIONS

- Ren, Hanzhang. 2022. “Universities, Communities, and Creative Cities.” Pp. 90–99 in *Better Megacity Governance in the Global South*, edited by Y. Ren. Shanghai, China: Fudan-Latin America University Consortium.

AWARDS

- Ren, Hanzhang, and David S. Broska. 2025. Most Accurate Prediction Aggregation, Politics Data. Wisdom of the Crowd: Crowd Analysis Project.
- Cantrell, Emily M., and Hanzhang Ren (equal contribution). 2024. Most Accurate Predictive Model, Survey Data. Predicting Fertility in the Netherlands Data Challenge.
- Cantrell, Emily M., and Hanzhang Ren (equal contribution). 2024. Most Accurate Predictive Model, Registry Data. Predicting Fertility in the Netherlands Data Challenge.
- Cantrell, Emily M., Flavio Hafner, Sayash Kapoor, Malte Lüken, Tiffany Liu, Lydia T. Liu, Arvind Narayanan, Juan C. Perdomo, Hanzhang Ren, Matthew J. Salganik, Varun Satish, Benedict Ströbel, Keyon Vafa, Mark D. Verhagen. 2024. Most Innovative Approach. Predicting Fertility in the Netherlands Data Challenge.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (Presenting Author)

- Oral sessions:
 - Cantrell, Emily M., Hanzhang Ren, Pranay Anchuri, Sayash Kapoor, Mark D. Verhagen, Arvind Narayanan, and Matthew J. Salganik. 2025. “Replacing Researchers with Machine Learning Pipelines? High-throughput Computing as a Follow-up to Common Task Prediction Challenges?” Presented at the 2025 Big Team Science Conference, October 8, virtual.
 - Cantrell, Emily M., Pranay Anchuri, Hanzhang Ren, and Matthew J. Salganik. 2025. “How Accurately Can Machine Learning Algorithms Predict a Person’s Future?” Presented at the 120th American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, August 10, Chicago, IL.
 - Cantrell, Emily M., Hanzhang Ren (equal contribution). 2024. “How to Expect When They’re Expecting: Strategies for Improving Fertility Predictions in Survey and Register Data.” Presented at the ODISSEI Conference for Social Science in the Netherlands, December 10, Utrecht, Netherlands.
 - Ren, Hanzhang. 2023. “Race, Ethnicity, and the Receipt of Charitable Aid.” Presented at the SIPP Virtual Conference, February 9, Virtual.
- Poster sessions:
 - Cantrell, Emily M., Hanzhang Ren (equal contribution), Sayash Kapoor, Mark D. Verhagen, Arvind Narayanan, and Matthew J. Salganik. 2025. “Impacts of Data Matrix Size on the Performance of Models Predicting Life Outcomes.” Presented at the Population Association of America 2025 Annual Meeting, April 13, Washington, DC.

SKILLS

Fluent in Languages

- Chinese, English, and French

Quantitative Methods

- R, SQL, STATA, Python, Java, and Geographical Information System
- Survey experiment

Qualitative Methods

- Interview and participant observation

WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Center for Information Technology Policy, Princeton University *June 2021 – August 2021*

- Participated in a study named “Measuring the Predictability of Life Trajectories: A Large-scale Computational Exploration,” collaborating with Emily Cantrell, Pranay Anchuri, and Prof. Matthew Salganik
- Worked on data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Studies to make the data more machine-readable for the purpose of predicting outcomes at age 15 using data collected between age 0 and 9
 - Identified ambiguities in how the data guides define scales that measure various sociological concepts
 - Consolidated 2,196 variables into 441 variables by calculating the scales after ambiguities are resolved

Volunteer Analyst & Coordinator, SoGive

June 2020 – August 2023

- SoGive (sogive.org) is a British NGO that evaluates charities for their cost-effectiveness.
- Volunteered as an analyst
 - Conducted brief analyses of about 50 charities, matching expenditures to the number of beneficiaries whenever possible and attempting to the cost per beneficiary to predetermined benchmarks
 - Conducted deeper analysis on certain cause areas, such as education
- Volunteered as a coordinator
 - Guided other volunteers in their analyses of charities
 - Developed an interview process that recruits new analysts

Mentorship, Humanities Council, Princeton University

September 2019 – January 2020

- Selected as a volunteer peer mentors for the Princeton course East Asian Humanities I: Classical Traditions
- Hosted biweekly mentoring sessions to help students through group projects, essay assignments, film screenings, and exam preparation

Tour Guide, Princeton University Art Museum

April 2019 – March 2020

- Selected and trained as a volunteer tour guide for the Princeton University Art Museum
- Gave highlight tours on artworks from Britain, China, France, Mexico, Nigeria, and the United States

Writer, *Shanghai Daily*

June 2017 - July 2017

- Travelled around Shanghai interviewing people from all walks of life, writing and publishing nine articles on Metro news and art
- Wrote four column articles on food safety

Translation

June 2014 – December 2014

- Collaborated with two translators, Li Jianxia and Chen Yuanyuan, to translate British writer Henry Blackburn’s *Randolph Caldecott: A Personal Memoir of His Early Art Career* from English into Chinese
 - Helped design the cover picture of the Chinese version of the book, published by the Yeeyan Gutenberg Project in 2014 and available for sale on <https://read.douban.com/ebook/9195643/>

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Stanford Effective Altruism

September 2022 – Present

- Examining rigorous academic research, this student organization brings together undergraduate and

graduate students to explore how people can spend their time and money to do the greatest amount of good in the world

- Promoted to the organization's executive board in 2022
- Facilitated an introductory fellowship program
- Participated in group discussions on AI governance

Princeton Effective Altruism

September 2018 – May 2022

- Examining rigorous academic research, this student organization brings together undergraduate and graduate students to explore how people can spend their time and money to do the greatest amount of good in the world
- Promoted to the organization's executive board in 2019 and became president of the organization in 2020
- Helped organize speaker events and weekly discussion groups
- Helped organize a fellowship program that recruits a cohort of students every semester and meets 10 times during the semester to discuss issues like global public health interventions, nuclear safety, and animal rights

Princeton University Art Collective

September 2018 – May 2022

- Hosting weekly artmaking sessions, the organization aims to bring visual art to all Princeton students.
- Selected as president in September 2018.
- I have practiced visual art since 2008 and am familiar with pencil, charcoal, pen, watercolor, and oil paint.

William Trego Singers

September 2018 – March 2020

- Performing four times every year, this student choir has performed a diverse repertoire in English, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, Latin, and Hebrew.

Volunteering

July 2013 – January 2020

- Participated in "There is a Crowd around You," a Shanghai-based volunteer group organized online
- Whenever I was in China, I went to Guangqi Home for the Old every Saturday to provide emotional and material support for residents.
 - Wrote a brief introduction to Christianity to help fellow volunteers better understand the Christian elderlies in this institution.