

# KELLEY COTTER

CURRICULUM VITAE

2026

Website: <http://www.kelleycotter.com/>  
Bluesky: kelleyhas2es.bsky.social

College of Information Sciences &  
Technology  
The Pennsylvania State University  
E397G Westgate Building  
University Park, PA 16802

## EDUCATION

---

- 2020                    **Ph.D., Information & Media**  
Michigan State University  
Dissertation title: "Critical Algorithmic Literacy: Power,  
Epistemology, and Platforms"  
Dissertation Chair: Kjerstin Thorson, Ph.D.
- 2011                    **M.L.I.S., Library & Information Science**  
Drexel University  
Concentration in Academic Libraries
- 2008                    **B.A., English**  
Temple University  
Concentration in Creative Writing  
*Summa Cum Laude*
- 2008                    **B.A., Spanish**  
Temple University  
*Summa Cum Laude*

## POSITIONS HELD

---

- 2021-Present        **Assistant Professor**  
College of Information Sciences & Technology  
The Pennsylvania State University
- 2020-2021           **Postdoctoral Scholar**  
School of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Arizona State University

## RESEARCH & TEACHING AREAS

---

Critical algorithm studies; infrastructure and platform studies; feminist epistemology;  
science and technologies studies; data ethics and policy; human-centered computing;

digital literacy; digital divides and inequalities; mixed methods; political communication; digital culture

## BOOKS

---

**Cotter, K.** (Under contract). *Critical algorithmic literacy: From everyday knowledge to bottom-up governance*. Oxford University Press.

## PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

---

De, A., **Cotter, K.** (2026). The discursive flexibility of changecraft: Platform change discourse in Meta, TikTok, YouTube, and X. *Platforms & Society*, 3, 1-15.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/29768624251408212>

**Cotter, K.**, Jonas, R., De, A. (2025). “Why can’t I just be fat and exist on the internet?”: The embeddedness of anti-fatness on TikTok. *Platforms & Society*, 2, 1-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/29768624251377163>

Proferes, N., **Cotter, K.**, Thorson, K., Chang, C.F., De, A., Battocchio, A.F. (2025). Local platformized utopias? corporate discourse, community groups, and volunteer moderation on Facebook, Reddit, and NextDoor. *Platforms & Society*, 2.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/29768624251356761>

Tran, S., Lin, C., Dosono, B., **Cotter, K.** (2025). TikTok as a tool for identity work among the Hoa ethnic community. *Social Media + Society*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051251363215>

Hampton, K. **Cotter, K.** (2025). Disrupting Echo Chambers? How social media is related to social tolerance through network diversity: A study of linked lives over a major life course event. *Information, Communication & Society*, 28(1), 150–168.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2025.2460556>.

**Cotter, K.**, Kumar, P., Tan, R., De, A. (2024). Technology is a wish your heart makes: How Disney harnesses practical magic discourse to legitimize MyMagic+. *New Media & Society*, 27(7), 3829-3847. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448241230923>

Kumar, P., **Cotter, K.**, Cabrera, L. (2024). Taking responsibility for meaning and mattering: An agential realist approach to generative AI and literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 59(4), 570-578. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.570>

**Cotter, K.**, Ritchart, A., De, A., Foyle, K., Kanthawala, S., McAtee, H., Watson, T.X. (2024). If you’re reading this, it’s meant for you: The reflexive ambivalence of algorithmic conspirituality. *Convergence*, 30(6), 1893-1918.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/13548565241258949>

Kanthawala, S., **Cotter, K.**, Ritchart, A., De, A., McAtee, H., Yun, C., DeCook, J. (2023). Algorithmic conspirituality: Explicating its emergence, dimensions, and

persuasibility. *New Media & Society*, 27(5), 2885-2910.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448231217425>

Battocchio, A. F., Thorson, K., Hiaeshutter-Rice, D., Smith, M., Chen, Y., Edgerly, S., **Cotter, K.**, Choung, H., Dong, C., Moldagaliyeva, M., and Etheridge, C. (2023). Who will tell the stories of public health inequities? Platform challenges (and opportunities) in local civic information infrastructure. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 707(1), 144-171.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00027162231214398>

**Cotter, K.**, DeCook, J., Kanthawala, S., Foyle, K. (2022). In FYP we trust: The divine force of Algorithmic conspiratorality. *International Journal of Communication*, 16, 24.  
<https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/19289>

**Cotter, K.** (2022). Practical knowledge of algorithms: The case of BreadTube. *New Media & Society*, 26(4), 2131-2150. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221081802>

DeCook, J., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S., Foyle, K. (2022). Safe from “harm”: The governance of violence by platforms. *Policy & Internet*, 14(1), 63-78.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/poi3.290>

**Cotter, K.**, DeCook, J.R., Kanthawala, S. (2022). Fact-Checking the crisis: COVID-19, infodemics, and the platformization of truth. *Social Media + Society*, 8(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211069048>

**Cotter, K.**, Thorson, K. (2022). Judging value in a time of information cacophony: Young adults, social media, and the messiness of do-it-yourself expertise. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 27(3), 629-647.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/19401612221082074>

Pak, C, **Cotter, K.**, Thorson, K. (2022). Correcting Sample Selection Bias of Historical Digital Trace Data: Inverse Probability Weighting (IPW) and Type II Tobit Model. *Communication Methods and Measures*, 16(2), 134–155.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19312458.2022.2037537>

**Cotter, K.** (2021). “Shadowbanning is not a thing”: Black box gaslighting and the power to independently know and credibly critique algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, 26(6), 1226-1243.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2021.1994624>

**Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Pak, C., Thorson, K. (2021). “Reach the right people”: The politics of “interests” in Facebook’s classification system for ad targeting. *Big Data & Society*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951721996046>

Thorson, K., **Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Pak, C. (2021). Algorithmic inference, political interest, and exposure to news and politics on Facebook. *Information, Communication & Society*, 24(2), 183-200.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2019.1642934>

- Thorson, K., Medeiros, M., **Cotter, K.**, Chen, Y., Rodgers, K., Bae, A., Baykaldi, S. (2020). Platform civics: Facebook in the local information infrastructure. *Digital Journalism*, 8(10), 1231-1257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2020.1842776>
- Cotter, K.**, Reisdorf, B. (2020) Algorithmic knowledge gaps: A new dimension of (digital) inequality. *International Journal of Communication*, 20, 745–765. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/12450>
- Pak, C., **Cotter, K.**, DeCook, J. (2020). Inter-media reliance and sustainability of emergent media: A large scale analysis of American news outlets' external linking behaviors. *International Journal of Communication*, 20, 3546–3568.
- Cotter, K.** (2019). Playing the visibility game: How digital influencers and algorithms negotiate influence on Instagram. *New Media & Society*, 21(4), 895–913. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818815684>
- Cotter, K.**, & Sasso, M.D. (2016). Libraries protecting privacy on social media: Sharing without “oversharing.” *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice*, 4(2), 73–89. <http://doi.org/10.5195/PALRAP.2016.130>

## PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

---

- Cotter, K.**, De, A., Proferes, N., Davis, B., Antolini, M., Battocchio, A.F., Thorson, K. (2026). Volunteer moderation as situated civic labor in local information infrastructures. In the *2026 ACM CHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*. ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3772318.3790469>
- De, A., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S., Ritchart, A., McAtee, H. (2025). 'Whoever needs to see it, will see it': Motivations and labor of creating algorithmic conspiratorial content on TikTok. In the *28th ACM SIGCHI Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*. ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3757447>
- De, A., **Cotter, K.** (2025). What does it mean to be a good digital activist? Impact of constant platform changes on digital activism. In the *Proceedings of the 2025 ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing (CSCW)*. ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3757440>
- Jonas, R., De, A., **Cotter, K.**, (2024). "We happen to be different and different is not bad": Designing for intersectional fat-positive information-seeking. In the *Proceedings of the 2024 ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*. ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642599>
- Lyu, Y., Cai, J., **Cotter, K.**, Carroll, J. (2024). "I got flagged for supposed bullying, even though it was in response to someone harassing me about my disability.": A study of blind TikTokers' content moderation experiences. In the *Proceedings of the*

2024 ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI). ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642148>

**Cotter, K.** (2022). Selling political data: How political ad tech firms' discourses legitimate microtargeting. In: Smits, M. (eds) *Information for a Better World: Shaping the Global Future. iConference 2022. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 13192. Springer Nature. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-96957-8\\_18](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-96957-8_18)

Kanthawala, S., **Cotter, K.**, Foyle, K., DeCook, J.R. (2022). It's the methodology for me: A systematic review of early approaches to studying TikTok. *The Proceedings of the 54<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-54)*. <http://doi.org/10.24251/HICSS.2022.382>

Rader, E., **Cotter, K.**, Cho, J. (2018). Explanations as mechanisms for supporting algorithmic transparency. In the *Proceedings of the 2018 ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM Digital Library. <http://doi.org/10.1145/3173574.3173677>

**Cotter, K.**, Cho, J., and Rader, E. (2017). Explaining the news feed algorithm: An analysis of the "News Feed FYI" blog. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. ACM Digital Library. <http://doi.org/10.1145/3027063.3053114>

## CHAPTERS

---

**Cotter, K.**, Baron, S. (2018). Actively engaging with patrons on social media. In R. L. Sittler & T. J. Rogerson (Eds.), *The Library Outreach Casebook* (pp. 59-68). Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries

## PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

---

**Cotter, K.** (2025) TikTok sale put app's algorithm in the spotlight—a social media expert explains how the For You Page algorithm works and what changes are in store. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/tiktok-sale-puts-apps-algorithm-in-the-spotlight-a-social-media-expert-explains-how-the-for-you-page-works-and-what-changes-are-in-store-265658>

## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

---

Davis, B., **Cotter, K.**, De, A., & Kanthawala, S. (2026). Chatting for meaning: Fluidities in developer framings of religious and spiritual AI chatbots. *Big Data & Society*.

**Cotter, K.**, Hong, X., Jonas, R., Davis, B. (Under review). Algorithmic knowledge gaps and digital retraining decision-making in rural central Appalachia. In E. Hargittai (Ed.), *Handbook of Digital Inequality*.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

---

Tran, S., **Cotter, K.** (In Preparation). Identity and belonging: Exploring social media use among mono- and intra-ethnic Vietnamese Americans in the US. *DIS*.

Proferes, N., **Cotter, K.**, De, A., Battocchio, A.F., Davis, B. (In Preparation). Facebook, Value, and Volunteer Moderators in Local Community Groups. In M.R. Sauter, M.C. Forelle, C. Jack (Eds.), *Tech/Money*.

Jonas, R., Hong, X., **Cotter, K.** Davis, B. (In Preparation). Intra-rural divides in central rural Appalachia. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Innovation in Rural Regions (ICIRR)*.

Albargi, F., Dong, H., Mukherjee, S., **Cotter, K.**, Cabrera, L., Kumar, P. (Under review). Understanding Students' Perspectives of Instructors' Classroom Policies on Generative AI. *iConference*.

Taylor, S., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S., Davis, B., Yu, K. (In preparation). My FYP or our FYP? The interpersonal experience of algorithmic curation.

Kanthawala, S., Ritchart, A., McAtee, H., De, A., Davis, B., **Cotter, K.** (In preparation). My FYP, my identity: The role of algorithmic conspirluarity in identity shaping. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*.

## AWARDS & HONORS

---

2025	<b>Professor Tom O'Regan Fellowship</b> The University of Queensland
2023	<b>Best Paper Award</b> International Communication Association Annual Conference, Communication and Technology Division
2019	<b>Outstanding Ph.D. Service Award</b> Department of Media & Information, Michigan State University
2019	<b>Chuck Kaplan Fellowship</b> Department of Media & Information, Michigan State University
2019	<b>Travel Grant Award</b> International Communication Association
2019	<b>Travel Grant Award</b>

	International Communication Association, Communication and Technology Division
2018	<b>Robert W. Schlater Graduate Scholarship</b> Department of Media & Information, Michigan State University
2017	<b>Top Student Paper, Second Place</b> Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, Electronic News Division
2017	<b>Thomas F. Baldwin Endowed Fellowship</b> Department of Media & Information, Michigan State University
2016	<b>Rasmussen Scholarship</b> Department of Media & Information, Michigan State University
2011	<b>Beta Phi Mu Society</b> Drexel University
2009	<b>Dean's Fellowship</b> Drexel University

## GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

---

<b>The Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence, Pennsylvania State University, Seed Funding</b>	2026-2027	\$25,050
Principal Investigator with Andrea Miller, Sara Liao, Hil Malatino, and Salah Seoudi		
“Ambiguities and Tensions in Trans Crowdfunding: Viral Visibility Under Surveillance”		
<b>National Endowment for the Humanities</b>	Not awarded*	\$150,000
Principal Investigator with Shaheen Kanthawala (Co-PI)		
“Godbots and the Modelling of Faith: Understanding Spiritual Authority in the Age of AI”		
<b>The Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS)</b>	2025; DECLINED	€3,150

---

\* Due to changes in NEH's grantmaking priorities, only 1 of the 179 proposals was funded during this award cycle, and the program was discontinued.ns

Visiting Fellow

Principal Investigator

“Who is Considered an “Expert” in Citizen Consultation Initiatives for Platform Algorithm Governance?”

**College of Information Sciences and Technology, Pennsylvania State University**  
Seed Funding

2025

\$30,854

Principal Investigator with Shaheen Kanthawala (Co-PI)

“Godbots and the Modelling of Faith: Understanding Spiritual Authority in the Age of AI”

**The Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence, Pennsylvania State University**, Seed Funding

2024-2025

\$25,860

Co-Principal Investigator with Priya Kumar (PI) and Laura Cabrera

“Student Perspectives on the Ethics of Generative AI”

**National Science Foundation**

2022-2025

\$187,289

Co-Principal Investigator with Kjerstin Thorson and Nicholas Proferes

“The new gatekeepers: Content moderation and information threats in local communities”

**The Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence, Pennsylvania State University**, Seed Funding

2022-2023

\$7,250

Principal Investigator with Priya Kumar (Co-PI)

“The most magical AI on earth? How magical discourses normalize and legitimate AI systems”

**The New College, Arizona State University**, Scholarship, Research And Creative Activities (SRCA) Seed Grant (DECLINED)

2021-2022

\$4,931

Principal Investigator

“Platform microtargeting and inequality in political advocacy”

<b>National Science Foundation</b> , Dissertation Improvement Grant (SES-1946678)	2020-2021	\$15,567
---	-----------	----------

Co-Principal Investigator with Kjerstin Thorson

“Critical algorithmic literacy: World building around and with algorithms”

<b>The Graduate School and the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, Michigan State University</b> , Dissertation Completion Fellowship	2019-2020	\$2,734
---	-----------	---------

Principal Investigator

“Critical algorithmic literacy: World building around and with algorithms”

<b>Information and Media Program, Michigan State University</b> , Summer Research Fellowship	2018	\$2,300
--	------	---------

Principal Investigator

“Playing the visibility game: How digital influencers and algorithms co-construct influence on Instagram”

<b>Information and Media Program Summer Research Fellowship, Michigan State University</b>	2017	\$2,000
--	------	---------

Principal Investigator

“Overrun by emotion: How emotional reactions predict news sharing to social media”

## **CONFERENCE ACTIVITY & PARTICIPATION**

---

Davis, B., **Cotter, K.**, De, A., & Kanthawala, S. (2026). Fluidities in developer framings of religious and spiritual AI chatbots. The 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, June 4, Cape Town, South Africa.

De, A., **Cotter, K.** (2025). A taxonomy for rapidly changing social media platforms. The Association of Internet Researchers, October 15-18, Niterói, Brazil.

Davis, B., **Cotter, K.** (2025). The infrastructure of transphobic feminism: A digital ethnography of an anti-trans forum. The Association of Internet Researchers, October 15-18, Niterói, Brazil.

**Cotter, K.** (2025). Bottom-up governance of algorithms: Rehabilitating the epistemic power of everyday knowers. Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), September 3-6, Seattle, WA.

Davis, B., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S., Liu, Y., Ritchart, A., De, A., McAtee, H. (2025) Modelling of faith: Imaginaries of godbots. Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), September 3-6, Seattle, WA.

Proferes, N., **Cotter, K.**, Chang, C.F., De, A., Battocchio, A.F., Davis, B., Antolini, M., Thorson, K. (2025). Facebook, Value, and Volunteer Moderators in Local Community Groups. Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), September 3-6, Seattle, WA.

Proferes, N., **Cotter, K.**, Thorson, K., Chang, C.F., De, A., Battocchio, A.F. (2024). Imagining community utopia: The discursive construction of volunteer moderation in local communities on social media platforms. The Association of Internet Researchers, October 30 - November 22024, Sheffield, UK.

**Cotter, K.** (2024). Epistemic-democratic tension in the bottom-up governance of algorithms. The Association of Internet Researchers, October 30 - November 22024, Sheffield, UK.

Kanthawala, S., Ritchart, A., De, A. McAtee, H, **Cotter, K.** (2024). My FYP, my identity: The role of algorithmic conspirituality in identity shaping. The Association of Internet Researchers, October 30 - November 22024, Sheffield, UK.

De, A., **Cotter, K.** (2024). Digital activism amidst platform changes: The struggle to adapt to evolving imperatives. Reimagining Digital Activism: Navigating Complexities and Forging New Perspectives Preconference. International Communication Association Annual Conference, June 20-24, Gold Coast, Australia.

De, A., **Cotter, K.** (2024). Digital activism amidst platform changes: The struggle to adapt to evolving imperatives. International Communication Association Annual Conference, June 20-24, Gold Coast, Australia.

De, A., Chang, C.F., Battocchio, A.F., **Cotter, K.**, Proferes, N., Thorson, K. (2024). The New Gatekeepers: Volunteer Moderation in Local Communities on Social Media Platforms. Social Media Moderation Summit, May 25, Newark, NJ.

Cai, J., **Cotter, K.**, Jhaver, S. (2024). Enthusiasts to Protectors: Insights into Volunteer Content Moderation Panel for the Social Media Moderation Summit, May 25, Newark, NJ.

Kanthawala, S., **Cotter, K.**, Ritchart, A., De, A., McAtee, H., Yun, C., DeCook, J., (2023). Algorithmic conspirituality: Explicating its emergence, dimensions, and persuasibility. International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 25-29, Toronto. (**Best Paper Award, Communication and Technology Division**)

Hampton, K., **Cotter, K.**, Slaker, J. (2023). Shared social media use and the spread of network diversity and social tolerance amongst first generation rural university students and their parents. International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 25-29, Toronto.

**Cotter, K.** (2022). Navigating algorithmically mediated hyper(in)visibility in the body positivity movement. Platforms and the Precarity of Creator (In)Visibility Panel for the Association of Internet Researchers, November 2-5, Dublin, UK.<sup>†</sup>

**Cotter, K.** (2022). For the people or “progress”? Interrogating interest in algorithmic literacy. Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), December 7-10, Cholula, Mexico.

**Cotter, K.**, DeCook, J., Kanthawala, S. (2022). In FYP we trust: Algorithmic conspirituality. International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 26-30, Paris.

Chen, Y., Dong, C., Rodgers, K., Thorson, K., **Cotter, K.**, Baykaldi, S. (2022). “Civic information beyond local news: Identifying local civic information on Facebook.” International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 26-30, Paris.

**Cotter, K.** (2021). Technically wrong, practically right: Ways of knowing platform algorithms. Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), October 6-9, Toronto.

DeCook, J., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S. (2021). Safe from “harm”: The governance of violence by platforms. Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), October 13-16, Virtual.

**Cotter, K.** (2021). “Shadowbanning is not a thing”: Black box gaslighting and the power to independently know and credibly critique algorithms. International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 27-31, Virtual.

DeCook, J., **Cotter, K.**, Kanthawala, S. (2021). Safe from “harm”: The governance of violence by platforms. Platform Governance Research Network, March 25, Virtual.

---

<sup>†</sup> Cancelled due to COVID-19

- Battocchio, A.F., Etheridge, C., Thorson, K., Moldagaliyeva, M., Hiaeshutter-Rice, D., Dong, C., **Cotter, K.**, Chen, Y., Edgerly, S. (2021). A systematic method of cataloging civic information infrastructure. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, August 4-7, Virtual.
- Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Pak, C., Thorson, K. (2020). The politics of distortion: A case study of Facebook's classification system for (political) ad targeting. International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 21-25, Gold Coast, Australia.
- Poell, T., Nieborg, D., Duffy, B., Bishop, S., Prey, R., **Cotter, K.**, Carlson, M. (2020). "Visibility game." The Algorithmic Game Panel for the Media Industries 2020: Global Currents and Contradictions, April 16-18, London, UK.‡
- Chen, Y., Rodgers, K., Thorson, K., **Cotter, K.**, Baykaldi, S. (2019). "Local civic information beyond the news: Computational identification of civic content on social media." Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, August 7-10, Toronto, Canada.
- Hampton, K., **Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Slaker, J. (2019). "Social tolerance in rural America as afforded by persistent and pervasive networks." XXXIX Sunbelt Social Networks Conference of the International Network for Social Network Analysis, June 18-23, Montreal, Canada.
- Hampton, K., Medeiros, M., **Cotter, K.**, Slaker, J. (2019). "Modified multiple generator approach to enumerate personal support networks: a restricted five generator design." XXXIX Sunbelt Social Networks Conference of the International Network for Social Network Analysis, June 18-23, Montreal, Canada.
- Cotter, K.**, Reisdorf, B. (2019). "Algorithmic knowledge gaps: Education and experience as co-determinants." International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 24-28, Washington, D.C.
- Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Pak, C., Thorson, K. (2019). "Building algorithmic knowledge: Customization as experiential learning." International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 24-28, Washington, D.C.
- Thorson, K., Chen, Y., **Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Rodgers, K., Bae, A., Baykaldi, S. (2019). "When the news shrinks: Social media, community information needs, and the evaporation of politics." International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 24-28, Washington, D.C.
- Thorson, K., Medeiros, M., **Cotter, K.**, & Pak, C. (2018). "Advertising categories as clues about political content exposure on Facebook." *American Political Science*

---

‡ Cancelled due to COVID-19

Association, August 30-September 2, Boston, MA.

**Cotter, K.**, (2018). "Playing the visibility game: How digital influencers and algorithms negotiate influence on Instagram." Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, August 6-9, Washington, D.C.

Thorson, K., **Cotter, K.**, Medeiros, M., Pak, C. (2018). "Digital traces of political interest and exposure to political content on Facebook." International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 24-28, Prague, Czech Republic.

Pak, C., **Cotter, K.**, DeCook, J. (2018). "An evolved media landscape: A network exploration of the incorporation of partisan news organizations into the larger media ecosystem." International Communication Association Annual Conference, May 24-28, Prague, Czech Republic.

**Cotter, K.**, Fennell, C., Peng, Z. (2017). "Overrun by emotion: How emotional reactions predict news sharing to social media." Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, August 9-12, Chicago, IL.

**Cotter, K.** (2014). "Social media synergy: A method to the madness." Internet Librarian International, October 21-22, London, United Kingdom.

**Cotter, K.** (2014, October). "#InfoEthics for libraries in the age of social media marketing." Library Communications Conference, October 6-7, Mount Laurel, NJ.

**Cotter, K.** (2014). "Leading the followers on Twitter: A case study in information literacy instruction." Technology, Knowledge & Society Conference, February 6-7, Madrid, Spain.

**Cotter, K.** (2013). "Social media and information literacy: Educational imperatives." Social Media Conference, November 8, Fort Worth, TX.

**Cotter, K.** (2012). "Leveraging social media in education." e-Learning Conference, March 29, Philadelphia, PA.

## **WORKSHOPS, SYMPOSIA, & SUMMER SCHOOLS**

---

2025      *News Futures*. The ACM CHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. Yokohama, Japan. April 26, 2025.

2022      *Early Career Scholars Workshop*. International Conference on Social Media and Society, Virtual. July 20, 2022. (Co-organizer)

2022      *The Social Life of Algorithmic Harms Academic Workshop*. Data & Society, Virtual. March 10-11, 2022.

- 2021 *Narratives of COVID-19 in China and the World: Technology, Society, and Nations*. Center on Digital Culture and Society, University of Pennsylvania, Virtual. March 19-20.
- 2020 *Youth, News, and Democratic Engagement*. The International Journal of Press/Politics, University of Southern Denmark, Virtual. November 19-20.
- 2020 *iConference Doctoral Colloquium*. Virtual. March 24.
- 2019 *Oxford Internet Institute Summer Doctoral Program*. Oxford Internet Institute, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. July 1-12.
- 2019 *The Consortium for the Science of Sociotechnical Systems Summer Research Institute*. Rutgers University Inn and Conference Center, New Brunswick, NJ. June 18-21.
- 2018 *The Association of Internet Researchers Doctoral Colloquium*. Le Centre Sheraton Montréal Hotel, Montreal, Canada. October 10.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

---

**Cotter, K.** (2025). Platform epistemology: Shaping algorithmic knowledge in the visibility game. Darkness to Hyper-visibility Symposium, University of Queensland, November 13.

## EXTERNAL INVITED TALKS

---

**Cotter, K.** (2025). "Does the Algorithm Know Me Better Than I Know Myself?" Integrating Algorithmic Feeds into Research. Centre for Digital Cultures and Societies, University of Queensland, November 12.

**Cotter, K.** (2025). "Does the Algorithm Know Me Better Than I Know Myself?" Integrating Algorithmic Feeds into Research. ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society, RMIT University, November 10.

**Cotter, K.** (2025). Platform epistemology: Shaping algorithmic knowledge in the visibility game. Centre for Culture and Technology, Curtin University, November 7.

**Cotter, K.** (2022). The Politics and Legitimation of Political Microtargeting. Center for Communication & Public Policy (CCPP), Northwestern University, May 19, Virtual.

**Cotter, K.** (2022). "Shadowbanning is not a thing": Black box gaslighting and the power to independently know and credibly critique algorithms. Center for Democracy and Technology Shadowbanning Working Group, April 18, Virtual.

**Cotter, K.** (2015). Finding the threshold. Panel discussion at the Indiana University Pennsylvania's Reflective Practice Workshop: New Information Literacy Framework and Threshold Concepts: Tripping Point or Tipping Point for Great Teaching?, October 17, Indiana, PA.

**Cotter, K.** (2013). Social media as an information resource. Presented at the State System of Higher Education Libraries Council Annual Meeting, March 28, Harrisburg, PA.

## **ON CAMPUS & DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS**

---

**Cotter, K.** (2023). This talk is meant for you: The reflexive ambivalence of algorithmic spirituality. Invited speaker, Bellisario College Brownbag Speaker Series, November 14. University Park, PA.

**Cotter, K.** (2023). Manifesting AI: Mystical mentalities in human-machine interactions. Invited speaker, College of Information Sciences & Technology Research Talks, November 16. University Park, PA.

**Cotter, K.** (2021). Excavating the "unintended consequences" of algorithms: The case of Facebook's "interest" classification system for ad targeting. Invited speaker, Arizona State University Machine Learning Day 2021, April 9. Virtual.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

Spring 2026      **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**  
IST 489H: Research Methods for Information Sciences & Technology

Fall 2025        **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**  
IST 530: Foundations of Social Informatics

Spring 2025     **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**  
IST 489H: Research Methods for Information Sciences & Technology

Fall 2024        **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**  
IST 530: Foundations of Social Informatics

Spring 2024     **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**  
IST/COMM 234N: Digital Culture

Spring 2024     **Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University**

	IST 489H: Research Methods for Information Sciences & Technology
Fall 2023	<b>Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University</b> IST 530: Foundations of Social Informatics
Fall 2022	<b>Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University</b> IST 530: Foundations of Social Informatics
Spring 2022	<b>Instructor of record, The Pennsylvania State University</b> IST 489H: Research Methods for Information Sciences & Technology
Fall 2021	<b>Guest lecturer, The Pennsylvania State University</b> IST 590: Colloquium Researching Algorithmic Literacy
Fall 2021	<b>Guest lecturer, The Pennsylvania State University</b> IST 402: AI, Algorithms, and Life Playing the Visibility Game
Spring 2021	<b>Guest lecturer, University of Alabama</b> JCM 372: Media Effects Algorithms and Media Effects
Fall 2020	<b>Guest lecturer, Arizona State University</b> SOC 334: Technology and Society "Instagram + Algorithms + the Visibility Game"
Summer 2020	<b>Course developer and co-instructor of record, Michigan State University</b> MI 401: The Social Life of Digital Technology
Spring 2020	<b>Graduate Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University</b> MI 361: IT Network Management and Security
Fall 2019	<b>Graduate Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University</b> MI 302: Networks, Markets, and Society
Summer 2019	<b>Course developer and co-instructor of record, Michigan State University</b> MI 401: The Social Life of Digital Technology
Spring 2019	<b>Co-instructor of record, Michigan State University</b> MI 401: Digital Communication and Society

Spring 2019	<b>Graduate Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University</b> ADV 442: Digital Analytics
Fall 2015	<b>Instructor of record, Duquesne University</b> UCOR 030: Research & Information Skills
Fall 2019	<b>Guest lecturer, Michigan State University</b> MI 302: Networks, Markets, and Society “The Governing Logics of Algorithms”
Fall 2019	<b>Guest lecturer, Michigan State University</b> MI 302: Networks, Markets, and Society “The Intersection of Governance, Algorithms, and Social Networks”
Spring 2019	<b>Guest lecturer, Michigan State University</b> MI 862: Managing Digital Enterprises “Researching algorithms and digital influencers”
Fall 2018	<b>Guest lecturer, Michigan State University</b> JRN 922: Media Theory “Digital traces of political interest and exposure to political content on Facebook”
Fall 2015 & Fall 2014	<b>Guest lecturer, Duquesne University</b> UPNS 112: Information Technology and Nursing “Social Media & Professional Image in Nursing”
Fall 2013 & Spring 2012	<b>Guest lecturer, Indiana University of Pennsylvania</b> ENGL 202: Composition II “Using Social Media for Research”

## RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

---

2017-2018	<b>Project Manager</b> , Studies in Radicalism Online Michigan State University Libraries, East Lansing, MI
2014 –2016	<b>Marketing &amp; Electronic Communications Librarian</b> Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA
2012 –2014	<b>Social Media &amp; Reference Librarian</b> Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA

## SERVICE TO PROFESSION

---

**Reviewer (Journals)**

2021-2026	<i>International Journal of Communication</i>
2024	<i>Convergence</i>
2022-2024	<i>Social Media + Society</i>
2018-2024	<i>New Media &amp; Society</i>
2024	<i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i>
2024	<i>Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review</i>
2020-2023	<i>Big Data &amp; Society</i>
2023	<i>Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society</i>
2023	<i>Communication Theory</i>
2023	<i>Communication, Culture and Critique</i>
2023	<i>Digital Culture and Education</i>
2023	<i>Journal of Information Policy</i>
2023	<i>Social Sciences</i>
2022	<i>Journal of Communication</i>
2022	<i>Journalism Studies</i>
2021	<i>The Information Society</i>
2021	<i>Technology, Mind, and Behavior</i>
2021	<i>Journal of Marketing Management</i>
2021	<i>Social Science Information</i>
2019-2020	<i>Information, Communication &amp; Society</i>
2019	<i>Social Inclusion</i>

**Reviewer (Associate Chair)**

2024-2025	<i>ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)</i>
-----------	--

**Reviewer (Conferences)**

2021-2025	<i>ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)</i>
2021-2025	Association of Internet Research (AoIR) Annual Conference
2023-2025	<i>ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)</i>
2017-2023	International Communication Association Annual Conference
2022	<i>Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)</i>

**Invited Panelist (Grant Proposals)**

2025	National Science Foundation (NSF), CNS Division
2023	Dutch Research Council (NWO) Talent Programme - Social Sciences and Humanities
2021-2023	Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence Seed Funding, Pennsylvania State University
2023	Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence BIG (Big Ideas Grant) Seed Funding
2022	National Science Foundation's (NSF) Science of Science: Discovery, Communication, and Impact (SoS:DCI) program

2022	National Science Foundation's (NSF) Law and Science Dissertation Grant (LSDG) program
2021	Time-Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences

## **SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY**

---

2023-present	<b>Graduate Council</b> Pennsylvania State University Council Member
--------------	--

## **SERVICE TO DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE**

---

2022-2025	<b>Faculty Council</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Council Member
2024-2025	<b>IST Tenured Faculty Search</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member
2022-2024	<b>Informatics PhD Qualifying Exams Committee</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member
2021-present	<b>Undergraduate Course Committee – IST 489H</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member
2021-present	<b>Undergraduate Course Committee – IST 431</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member
2022-2024	<b>Graduate Recruiting Committee</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member

2021-2022	<b>New IST Degree Taskforce</b> College of Information Sciences & Technology Pennsylvania State University Committee Member
2019-2020	<b>Sustained Dialogue Program</b> College of Communication Arts & Sciences Michigan State University Participant
2019-2020	<b>Peer Mentoring Program</b> Information & Media Ph.D. Program Michigan State University Peer Mentor
2018-2019	<b>Information &amp; Media Ph.D. Program Executive Committee</b> Information & Media Ph.D. Program Michigan State University Ph.D. Student Representative
2018-2019	<b>Graduate Studies Committee</b> Department of Media & Information Michigan State University Graduate Student Representative
2018–2019	<b>Incoming Student Orientation</b> Information & Media Ph.D. Program Michigan State University Planner, Representative/Guide

## MEDIA COVERAGE

---

Featured work: Meta: Guilty of designing and selling addiction. *TyN Magazine*, April 4, 2026. <https://tynmagazine.com/meta-guilty-of-designing-and-selling-addiction/> (Author: Gabriel E. Levy B.)

Expert: There's a New American TikTok. What Does That Mean for You? *The New York Times*, January 23, 2026. <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/22/business/media/tiktok-sold-app-content-algorithm.html> (Author: Emmett Lindner)

Featured work: The Democratic Perils of Hidden Moderation. *The Blog of the American Philosophical Association (APA)*, August 26, 2025.

<https://blog.apaonline.org/2025/08/26/the-democratic-perils-of-hidden-moderation>  
(Author: Étienne Brown)

Featured work: Bye, Bye, Appleby? Google v. Russia as First Cracks in the Forum Doctrine. *Strasbourg Observers*, August 6, 2025.  
<https://strasbourgobservers.com/2025/08/06/bye-bye-appleby-google-v-russia-as-first-cracks-in-the-forum-doctrine/> (Author: Babette De Naeyer)

Featured work: Are you shadowbanned? The FTC wants to hear from you. *Mashable*, February 24, 2025. <https://mashable.com/article/ftc-request-for-comment-shadowban-tech-censorship> (Author: Anna Iovine)

Expert: How organizations and campaigns are trying to break through on TikTok to reach young voters. *CNN*, October 22, 2024.  
<https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/22/politics/tik-tok-young-voters/index.html> (Author: Shania Shelton)

Expert: Media Literacy. *Conversations Live at WPSU*, March 21, 2024.  
<https://video.wpsu.org/video/media-literacy-ih9ixz>

Featured work: Pro-Abortion, anti-abortion activists have one thing in common: Suspicion of tech platforms. *Tech Policy Press*, January 11, 2024.  
<https://www.techpolicy.press/proabortion-antiabortion-activists-have-one-thing-in-common-suspicion-of-tech-platforms/>

Featured work: Taylor Swift and the end of the Hollywood writers strike – a tale of two media narratives. *The Conversation*, September 28, 2023.  
<https://theconversation.com/taylor-swift-and-the-end-of-the-hollywood-writers-strike-a-tale-of-two-media-narratives-214441> (Author: Aarushi Bhandari)

Expert: Getting to know AI: Are we asking the wrong questions? *HumIn Focus at Penn State*, June 24, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwJZcv92ANY>

Expert: World Wide Web went wild after public release 30 years ago. *The Daily Item*, April 29, 2023. <https://www.dailyitem.com/news/world-wide-web-went-wild-after-public-release-30-years-ago> (Author: Anna Wiest)

Featured Work: Understanding Social Media Recommendation Algorithms. *Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University Blog*. March 9, 2023.  
<https://knightcolumbia.org/content/understanding-social-media-recommendation-algorithms> (Author: Arvind Narayanan)

Featured work: TikTok's secret sauce: TikTok's algorithm is ordinary. Its real innovation is something else. *Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University Blog*, December 15, 2022. <https://knightcolumbia.org/blog/tiktoks-secret-sauce> (Author: Arvind Narayanan)

Featured work: I've spent more than 10 years studying social media. Here's who is really going to get screwed over by the shakeup in Big Tech. *Business Insider*, December 8, 2022. <https://www.businessinsider.com/big-tech-shakeup-layoffs-leaving-social-media-creators-scrambling-2022-12> (Author: Brooke Duffy)

Featured work: What is shadowbanning? How do I know if it has happened to me, and what can I do about it? *The Conversation*, November 3, 2022. <https://theconversation.com/what-is-shadowbanning-how-do-i-know-if-it-has-happened-to-me-and-what-can-i-do-about-it-192735> (Authors: Marten Risius and Kevin Marc Blasiak)

Featured work: 'Influencer' is now a popular career choice for young people – here's what you should know about the creator economy's dark side. *The Conversation*, June 28, 2022. <https://theconversation.com/influencer-is-now-a-popular-career-choice-for-young-people-heres-what-you-should-know-about-the-creator-economys-dark-side-185806> (Author: Nina Willment)

Expert: Inside the good, bad, and very ugly of social media algorithms. *Fast Company*, June 24, 2022. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90761087/inside-the-good-bad-and-very-ugly-of-social-media-algorithms> (Author: KC Ifeanyi)

Featured work: Can you #GameTheGram? Kendrick Martinez of hier marketing shares his thoughts on the current state of social media algorithms. *Forbes*, April 22, 2021. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/anniebrown/2021/04/22/can-you-gamethegram-kendrick-martinez-of-hier-marketing-shares-his-thoughts-on-the-current-state-of-social-media-algorithms/?sh=3ebd739a3c19> (Author: Annie Brown)

Expert: Facebook is defending its algorithms. Critics aren't buying it. *Recode*, March 31, 2021. <https://www.vox.com/recode/22360498/facebook-news-feed-algorithms-nick-clegg-mark-zuckerberg> (Author: Rebecca Heilweil)

Featured work: Our old models of journalistic impact need to change. *RQ1*, January 6, 2021. <https://rq1.substack.com/p/our-old-models-of-journalistic-impact>

Expert: Artists struggle to promote their work on Instagram amid algorithm changes, censorship and blocked hashtags. *Medium*, December 24, 2020. <https://medium.com/8-million-stories/artists-struggle-to-promote-their-work-on-instagram-amid-algorithm-changes-censorship-and-hashtag-cd83112e3258> (Author: Isabelle Bousquette)

Expert: Why it matters that TikTok wants to reveal its algorithms. *Recode*, July 29, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/7/29/21346758/tiktok-for-you-algorithm-transparency-instagram-antitrust> (Author: Rebecca Heilweil)

Expert: Facebook is taking a hard look at racial bias in its algorithms. *Recode*, July 22, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/7/22/21334051/facebook-news-feed-instagram-algorithm-racial-bias-civil-rights-audit> (Author: Rebecca Heilweil)

Cited: What does it mean to look at an algorithmic system as a game? *Rajapinta*, June 23, 2020. <https://rajapinta.co/2020/06/25/what-does-it-mean-to-look-at-an-algorithmic-system-as-a-game/> (Author: Jesse Haapoja)

Expert: TikTok offered details about how its most popular feed works. Experts seem unimpressed. *Recode*, June 23, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/6/23/21296056/tiktok-for-you-algorithm-explained-facebook-news-feed> (Author: Rebecca Heilweil)

Cited: Daemons are the programs that run the internet. Here's why it's important to understand them. *The Conversation*, July 29, 2019. <https://theconversation.com/daemons-are-the-programs-that-run-the-internet-heres-why-its-important-to-understand-them-119154> (Author: Fenwick McKelvey)

## STUDENTS SUPERVISED

---

### Ph.D. Advisor

Lili Dudas, 2025-present (co-advisor)  
 Benji Davis, 2024-present  
 Ankolika De, 2022-present  
 Sarah Tran, 2022-present  
 Rebecca Jonas, 2022-2024 (graduated 2024)

### Ph.D. Committee Member

Chenchen Zou, 2026-present  
 Ruyuan Wan, 2026-present  
 Tatiana Chakravorti, 2026-2026 (graduated 2026)  
 Hongyi Dong, 2025-present  
 Jing Xu, 2025-present (Bellisario)  
 Evelyn Yin, 2025-present (Bellisario)  
 Timilehin Durotoye, 2024-present (Bellisario)  
 Tianqi Kou, 2024-present  
 Soumita Mukherjee, 2024-present  
 Jiyeon Kim, 2024-present  
 Afiya Ayman, 2023-2025 (graduated 2025)  
 Amy Ritchart, 2023-2025 (University of Alabama; graduated 2025)  
 Chuhao Wu, 2022-2025 (graduated 2025)  
 Haeseung Seo, 2023 (graduated 2023)  
 Nasim Motalebi, 2022-2023 (graduated 2023)  
 Jonathan Gruber, 2023 (University of Zurich; graduated 2023)

### Visiting Ph.D. Student Supervisor

Xinyi Hong, 2024-2025 (Peking University)

### Master's Advisor

Rhea Kapadia, 2025-present  
Yupo Liu, 2024-2025

**Master's Committee Member**

Deja Workman, 2024-2025 (graduated 2025)  
Erica Mi, 2022 (graduated 2022)

**Honors Thesis Advisor**

David Richards, 2025-2026 (graduated 2026)  
Ananya Gollakota, 2025-present (co-advisor)  
Krystal Leung, 2022-2023 (graduated 2023)