

CHEN LIANG

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Organization theory; strategy; economic sociology; computational social science; platform governance; collective action and polarization; agent-based simulation; organizational learning

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, MA PhD Candidate in Management (Economic Sociology) GPA: 4.9/5.0	Expected June 2027
University of Chicago, Chicago, IL MA in Computational Social Science (STEM) GPA: 3.85/4.0	June 2021
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI BA in Public Policy; Minor in Statistics; GPA: 3.94/4.0	May 2019

WORKING PAPERS

Liang, C., & Yang, V. C. "Data-Making Fans and Platform Governance." Job market paper. Integrates interviews, participant observation, archival evidence, scraped social-media data, and system dynamics modeling to explain a coordination trap among fans, idol agencies, brands, and platforms. (in prep)

Liang, C. "The Toxicity in Tolerance: Modeling How Extremism Emerges from a Moderate Majority." Solo-authored. Uses an agent-based model to show how in-group tolerance can preserve disagreement while enabling an extreme minority to shape collective action. (under review, *Sociological Science*)

Liang, C., & Inada, T. "From Composition to Conduct in the Boardroom: A Dynamic NK Model." Examines how heterogeneous evaluation criteria and issue interdependence shape repeated voting in boardroom. (in prep)

PUBLICATIONS

Introduction to Computational Social Science. Tsinghua University Press, 2023 (in Chinese). Authored 2 of 11 chapters and served as principal reviewer for the remaining 9 chapters

Knight, Frank H. "Science, Philosophy and Social Procedure." Led the English-to-Chinese translation and interdisciplinary editorial review; published in the *Chinese Review of New Political Economy*, Issue 33

Zhu, H., He, F., Wang, S., Ye, Q., & **Liang, C.** (2019). "Zombie Firms and Debt Accumulation: A Theoretical Framework and Chinese Experience." *China & World Economy*, 27(6), 104–126. doi:10.1111/cwe.12298

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

Algorithmic Agency and Data-Making in Fan Organizations. Extends the qualitative data collected for the job-market paper to examine how users' folk theories of algorithms lead to emergent organizational structure; uses natural-language processing to connect the qualitative mechanisms to large-scale online behavior

Policy Expertise under Political Disruption. Builds a Python-based website, text, and network dataset from U.S. think tanks and Twitter (X) to examine how policy experts maintain influence and professional authority in polarized environments; advised by Prof. Andrew Abbott

Organizational Resilience through Emergent Specialization. Develops a solo-authored agent-based model to identify how shared resources and path dependence can generate task specialization among initially homogeneous actors, creating latent organizational capacity that conventional performance measures overlook

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"From Composition to Conduct in the Boardroom: A Dynamic NK Model"

- 2026 Academy of Management Annual Meeting

"Data-Making Fans and Platform Governance"

- 2026 Academy of Management Annual Meeting
- 2025 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting
- 2025 International Network of Analytical Sociologists Annual Meeting
- 2025 European Group for Organizational Studies Colloquium
- 2025 International System Dynamics Conference

"From Opinion Dynamics to Collective Action: How Asymmetric Tolerance Leads to Group Polarization"

- 2023 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting
- 2023 International Network of Analytical Sociologists Annual Meeting
- 2022 Politics and Computational Social Science Conference

"The Multidimensionality of Political Polarization in the U.S. Congress: Topic Networks"

- 2020 International Network for Social Network Analysis Sunbelt Conference

"From Online to Offline: Protests on Democratic and Republican National Conventions"

- 2017 Yale Undergraduate Research Conference

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant and Research Intern appointments unless otherwise noted

Massachusetts Institute of Technology / National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA 2022–2025

With Prof. Nathan Wilmers. Secured sworn-researcher status to use confidential Census microdata; built a 20+ year panel across the Economic Census, Business Dynamics Statistics, Annual Business Survey, Service Annual Survey, Annual Survey of Manufactures, and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics; used econometrics and system dynamics to study the decline in U.S. labor share

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Center for Collective Intelligence, Cambridge, MA 2021–2022

With Prof. Thomas Malone. Designed and administered an Amazon Mechanical Turk experiment on whether large language models stimulate human creativity; managed recruitment, quality controls, and reproducible data delivery

University of Chicago, Knowledge Lab, Chicago, IL 2019–2020

With Prof. James Evans. Led the analysis workstream on a DARPA-funded synthetic conflict environment; designed tests of causal-mechanism recovery and built rare-event regression, graphical-causal, neural-network, and agent-based models

American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC 2018

Office of Derek Scissors. Triangulated hundreds of Chinese investments and construction contracts to update the China Global Investment Tracker; reconstructed ownership for 70+ Chinese state-owned enterprises

Peking University, Research Institute of Maritime Silk Road, Beijing, China 2017

Combined DMSP-OLS nighttime-light imagery, Bloomberg data, financial records, and policy evidence to study infrastructure investment, economic development, and Chinese "zombie firms"

Peking University, Center of New Structural Economics, Beijing, China 2016

With Prof. Justin Yifu Lin. Led a six-person team and produced 100+ pages of Special Economic Zone policy research for Nigeria's federal government; designed questionnaires for subsequent fieldwork

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 2015–2017

Analyzed 50+ Chinese government documents and 3,000+ social-media posts on censorship and propaganda strategy, building comparative evidence on state communication

LabPsiCom, Universidade Lusofona, Lisbon, Portugal 2017

Designed VR research tasks using Unity 3D and C# with psychologists studying autism-related cognitive characteristics

TEACHING AND MENTORING

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management 2022–2026

Teaching Assistant: Developing Leadership Capabilities (2022, 2025, 2026; MBA); Leading Organizations (2024, 2025; Executive MBA); Competitive Strategy (2025; Undergraduate students & MBA); Designing Empirical Research in the Social Sciences (2026; doctoral students)

Voluntary Student Mentor: Economics Mentoring Program (2026)

University of Chicago 2020–2021

Teaching Assistant: Perspectives on Computational Modeling (2021; master's students, graduate core requirement); American Colonial Economic History (2020; undergraduate students)

University of Michigan 2017–2018

Peer Advisor, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. Mentored 26 undergraduate researchers through individualized advising and biweekly seminars on research ethics and statistical methods

PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICE

Peer-Review: *American Sociological Review* (2026); *MIS Quarterly* (2025); Academy of Management Annual Meeting (2025, 2026); International System Dynamics Conference (2025)

Reviewed for: American Sociological Review (2026); MIS Quarterly (2025); Academy of Management Annual Meeting (2025, 2026); International System Dynamics Conference (2025)

Selection Committee Member: MIT Committed to Caring (C2C) Program, 2025–2027

Community Volunteer: Boston Cares; Salvation Army Boston South End Corps; Cambridge Women's Center; Charles River Conservancy and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation; Friday Night Supper Program

AWARDS AND HONORS

MIT Presidential Graduate Fellowship, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2022)

Quadrangle Scholar Research Award, University of Chicago (2021)

Director's Scholarship, University of Chicago (2019–2021)

James B. Angell Scholar, University of Michigan - eight consecutive all-A terms (2015–2019)

Sophomore Honors Award, University of Michigan (2016)

METHODS, SOFTWARE, AND LANGUAGES

Programming and software: Python, R, C#, Stata, Vensim, Unity 3D

Quantitative and computational methods: agent-based modeling, system dynamics, econometrics and causal inference, network analysis, natural-language processing, machine learning, neural networks, rare-event regression, game theory, large-scale computation, and parallelization

Qualitative and mixed methods: interviews, participant observation, archival research, questionnaire design, and mixed-method triangulation

Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native); English (professional)

REFERENCES

Dr. Ezra Zuckerman Sivan, MIT Sloan, ewzucker@mit.edu, (617) 253-1918 (co-chair)

Dr. Ray Reagans, MIT Sloan, rreagans@mit.edu, (617) 715-4154 (co-chair)

Dr. Vicky Chuqiao Yang, MIT Sloan, vcyang@mit.edu, (617) 258-5583

Dr. Johan Chu, MIT Sloan, jsgc@mit.edu, (617) 715-5620

Dr. James Evans, University of Chicago, jevans@uchicago.edu, 773-834-3616