

Kristen Vaccaro

kvaccaro.com
kvaccaro@illinois.edu
github.com/kristenvaccaro
978-846-4257

Education

- 2013–present **PhD in Computer Science**, *University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign*.
HCI & ML. My current focus is understanding how users make sense of, judge and control algorithmic systems, particularly machine learning systems. Past work has also addressed ethics and designing the user-experience for fashion.
- 2011–2013 **Graduate Work in Computational Social Science**, *George Mason University*.
Nondegree coursework and research in “big data,” social network analysis and multi-agent modeling. Primary project examined the evolution of political language over time.
- 2005–2009 **BA in Physics**, *Reed College*, Phi Beta Kappa.
Thesis developed an proof of concept application identifying user’s geographic background based on their speech. Project included signal processing, machine learning, linguistic theory.

Experience

- University of Illinois **Research Assistant**, *NCSA & CSL*, 2015-2018.
Researcher investigating user awareness and understanding of algorithms.
 - On-going project studying user agency when engaging with algorithmic decision-making – how can (and do) users interact with algorithmic systems as they make sense of them?
 - Recent work identified a placebo effect of control settings (users are more satisfied when controls are present, whether they work or not).
- Adobe **Research Intern**, *Creative Technology Lab*, 2015.
Modeled compatibility in the fashion domain, investigating whether a third item could “make or break” an outfit.
- MITRE **Software Engineer**, 2009-2013.
Researcher at federally funded R&D center in two areas: data mining and signal processing.
 - Contributed to data mining and algorithm evaluation work, primarily dealing with identity management, social network analysis and natural language processing.
 - Contributed to the design, development and evaluation of radar systems.

Publications

- CHI 2018 ***The Illusion of Control: Placebo Effects of Control Settings.***
Kristen Vaccaro, Dylan Huang, Motahhare Eslami, Christian Sandvig, Kevin Hamilton, and Karrie Karahalios
- CHI 2018 ***Designing the Future of Personal Fashion.***
Kristen Vaccaro, Tanvi Agarwalla, Sunaya Shivakumar and Ranjitha Kumar
- ICWSM 2017 ***“Be careful; things can be worse than they appear”: Understanding Biased Algorithms and Users’ Behavior around Them in Rating Platforms.***
Motahhare Eslami, Kristen Vaccaro, Karrie Karahalios, and Kevin Hamilton
- UIST 2016 ***The Elements of Fashion Style.***
Kristen Vaccaro, Sunaya Shivakumar, Ziqiao Ding, Karrie Karahalios & Ranjitha Kumar
- CSCW 2016 ***Not by Money Alone: Social Support Opportunities in Medical Crowdfunding Campaigns.***
Jennifer G. Kim, Kristen Vaccaro, Karrie Karahalios & Hwajung Hong

- CHI 2016 ***First I “like” it, then I hide it: Folk Theories of Social Feeds.***
Motahhare Eslami, Karrie Karahalios, Christian Sandvig, Kristen Vaccaro, Aimee Rickman,
Kevin Hamilton & Alex Kirlik
- CHI 2015 ***“I always assumed that I wasn’t really that close to [her]”: Reasoning About
Best Paper Invisible Algorithms in the News Feed.***
Motahhare Eslami, Aimee Rickman, Kristen Vaccaro, Amir Hossein, Christian Sandvig,
Kevin Hamilton & Karrie Karahalios

Workshop Publications

- NSF 2017 ***Algorithmic Appeals, Workshop on Trustworthy Algorithmic Decision-Making.***
Workshop Kristen Vaccaro and Karrie Karahalios
- AAAI 2017 ***An Experimentation Engine for Data-Driven Fashion Systems.***
Symposium Ranjitha Kumar and Kristen Vaccaro
- CSCW 2015 ***Agree or Cancel? Research and Terms of Service Compliance.***
Workshop Kristen Vaccaro, Karrie Karahalios, Christian Sandvig, Kevin Hamilton & Cedric Langbort

Teaching Experience

I have been selected to teach in the Graduate Academy for College Teaching, the University of Illinois’ campus-wide TA training program.

- CS 598 Data Driven Design (2016)
CS 498 The Art of Web Programming (2016)
CS 210 Ethics in Technology (2013-2014)
CS 205 Problem Solving With Data Structures (2015)
CS 102 Little Bits to Big Ideas (2014)

Mentoring

- Senior thesis Ding Ziqiao, Hanzi (Amber) Shen, and Dana Nikolaeva Chambourova
Ind. study Dylan Huang, Will Koster, Chen Qian, Sunaya Shivakumar, and Yuxi Gu
Other Lisa Huang, Tanvi Agarwalla, Kevin Ly, Ankith Subramanya, Ji Yeon In, Rahul Shah,
and Yujie Shao

Honors

ARCS Foundation Scholar Award
Feng Chen Memorial Award
Women in Computer Science Grace Hopper Scholarship
Reed College Commendation for Excellence, selected by the faculty
Phi Beta Kappa

Community Service

Graduate Ambassador, Mentor for graduate and undergraduate students, WCS speaker, reviewer (CHI, UIST, CSCW, IUI, TIIS, Creativity & Cognition)