

Cat Mai

Email: cat.mai@nyu.edu

Homepage: catxmai.github.io

Google Scholar: scholar.google.com/citations?user=Ahem6FwAAAAJ

GitHub: github.com/catxmai

Last updated: July 2026

EDUCATION	Ph.D. Computer Science , New York University (NY, USA) Advisor: Damon McCoy, Cybersecurity for Democracy Focus: usable privacy, platform auditing, targeted advertising.	2022–Present
	B.A. Computer Science , B.A. (Honors) Mathematics , Clark University (MA, USA) Advisor: Michael Satz	2018–2022
RESEARCH EXPERIENCE	Visiting Researcher , Cybersecurity and Privacy Institute at Northeastern University Mentor: David Choffnes - Develop scrapers and data collection tools to measure prices across multiple websites and conditions, analyzing whether user data influences price variation. - Design measurement methodologies to detect discrimination in algorithmic price setting. Research Associate , Agricultural Impacts Group at Clark University Mentor: Lyndon Estes - Trained, integrated features, and ran inference for deep learning models on AWS. - Refined CNN models to classify crop types and regress on field boundaries. Research Assistant , Human–Computer Interaction at Brown University Mentors: Jeff Huang, Talie Massachi - Worked on Automotion, a usability test of mobile device interaction. I modified, retrained machine learning models like CNN, Random Forest, SVM to predict user’s affect. - Submitted manuscript to IMWUT ’21. Our paper reveals insights about using human labelers vs. ML models to predict user emotion from mobile gyroscope data. Research Assistant , Clark University	Nov 2025–May 2026 Jan–Aug 2022 May–Sep 2021 Feb 2020–Jun 2021
TEACHING EXPERIENCE	Graduate Teaching Assistant , New York University Lead weekly labs and office hours for Design & Analysis of Algorithms. Teaching Assistant , Clark University Lead weekly labs and office hours. Prepare solutions and grade assignments. Computer Science Data Structures, Discrete Structures, Automata Theory Mathematics Discrete Mathematics, Honors Calculus I–II, Multivariate Calculus	Feb–Jun 2025 Aug 2019–May 2022

AWARDS	Travel Award , Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium	Jul 2025
	Future Leader PhD Fellowship , New York University	2022–2024
	LEEP Research Fellow , Clark University	2020
	Richard Traina Scholarship , Clark University	2018–2022
TECHNICAL	Languages Python, Java, SQL, R, JavaScript, $\text{\LaTeX}$	
	Tools Docker, Google Cloud Platform, Amazon Web Services	
	Skills Data analysis, Statistical inference, Experiment design, Academic publication	
VOLUNTEER AND SERVICES	Math Tutor , Getting Out Staying Out	2023–2024
	Diversity & Inclusion Committee , American Go Association	2020–2023
	Math Tutor , Massachusetts Correctional Institution	2018–2020

PUBLICATIONS * = equal contribution. Some articles list authors alphabetically.

CONFERENCE PAPERS & REPORTS

Report	Stephanie T. Nguyen, Cat Mai , Zachary Harris, Damon McCoy, David Choffnes. “Data Depot: A deep dive into what the “largest home improvement retailer in the world” really knows about consumers”. [website] [in the news] . Report July 2026.
In submission	Anonymous Authors. “From Scroll to Sale: Exploring the Impact of Interaction Type and Device Price on TikTok Advertisements”.
In submission	Anonymous Authors. “Synthetic Creativity: A Measurement Taxonomy of AI-Generated Content Recommended on TikTok”.
CHI ’26	Julia Kieserman, Mai, Cat , Sara Lignell, Lucy Qin, Athanasios Andreou, Damon McCoy, and Rosanna Bellini. “Caught in a Mafia Romance: How Users Explore Intimate Narratives with Chatbots”. <i>Proceedings of the 2026 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems</i> . [doi] . Association for Computing Machinery.
PETS ’25	Cat Mai , Bruno Coelho, Julia Kieserman, Lexie Matsumoto, Kyle Spinelli, Eric Yang, Athanasios Andreou, Rachel Greenstadt, Tobias Lauinger, and Damon McCoy. “More and Scammier Ads: The Perils of YouTube’s Ad Privacy Settings”. <i>Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies 2025</i> . [doi] .
Remote Sensing	Sam Khallaghi, Rahebeh Abedi, Hanan Abou Ali, Hamed Alemohammad, Mary Dziedzorm Asipunu, Ismail Alatise, Nguyen Ha, Boka Luo, Mai, Cat , Lei Song, et al. “Generalization Enhancement Strategies to Enable Cross-Year Cropland Mapping with Convolutional Neural Networks Trained Using Historical Samples”. <i>Remote Sensing</i> . [doi] .
EGU24	Lyndon Estes, Sam Khallaghi, Rahebe Abedi, Mary Asipunu, Nguyen Ha, Boka Luo, Mai, Cat , Amos Wussah, Sitian Xiong, and Yao-Ting Yao. “Simple temporal domain adaptation techniques for mapping the inter-annual dynamics of smallholder-dominated croplands over large extents”. <i>EGU General Assembly Conference Abstracts</i> . [doi] .
CSCW ’21	Shuo Niu, Cat Mai , Katherine G. McKim, and Scott McCrickard. “#TeamTrees: Investigating How YouTubers Participate in a Social Media Campaign”. <i>ACM Conference on Computer-supported Cooperative Work 2021</i> . [doi] [pdf] .

CHI '21 Shuo Niu, Ava Bartolome*, **Cat Mai***, and Nguyen Binh Ha*. “#StayHome #WithMe: How Do YouTubers Help with COVID-19 Loneliness?” *ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2021*. [\[doi\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#).

POSTERS & EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

Fall Fest '21 Dinithi Silva-Sassaman, **Cat Mai**, Jing Qian, and Jeff Huang. *Predicting Emotion and Attention from Smartphone Behavioral Data*. [\[pdf\]](#). Fall Fest '21 Clark University.

CSCW '21 Katherine McKim, **Cat Mai**, Danielle Hess, and Shuo Niu. *Investigating Drug Addiction Discourse on YouTube*. [\[pdf\]](#).

SELECT COURSEWORK Applied Game Theory, Quantitative Finance, Stochastic Models, Linear Models and Econometrics, Numerical Analysis, Quantum Computing, Abstract Algebra, Real Analysis