

Mo Houtti

Mixed-Methods User Experience Researcher

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My research investigates how we can innovate to reduce technology's harms.
I blend qualitative and quantitative methods, applying the best approach for the questions at hand.
I oversee the entire research process, from planning to collaboration and execution.

EDUCATION //

Ph.D. in Computer Science (Human-Computer Interaction)
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities **Expected 2025**

M.S. in Computer Science
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

B.A. in Computer Science and Philosophy
Middlebury College

RESEARCH METHODS & TOOLS //

interviews · inductive thematic analysis · user-centered design · values-sensitive design · prototyping · user testing · survey data · data analysis · Python · R · experimental design · mixed-methods research · theory development

SELECT RESEARCH EXPERIENCE 2019-2025 //

Survey Analysis for Data-Driven Strategic Decision-Making (@ Google - Trust & Safety Research, **ongoing**)

Leveraged untapped survey data to make strategic decision-making recommendations for Trust & Safety leadership.

- Analyzed nationally representative, multi-country survey data to understand global public opinion on digital safety issues.
- Distilled complex, multi-question datasets into concise, actionable insights for executive decision-making.
- Will publish an internal executive report with actionable recommendations and a research article at a top peer-reviewed venue.

Recommender Systems to Improve Content Gaps (@ Wikimedia Foundation)

Ran a large-scale controlled experiment on a Wikipedia recommender system to assess strategies for improving content gaps.

- Planned and executed a controlled experiment to test an algorithmic approach to reducing Wikipedia content gaps (e.g., gender gap).
- Deployed the experiment to hundreds of active Wikipedia editors by modifying an open-source recommender system.
- Used statistical tools (e.g., generalized linear mixed models) to analyze experiment data and derive actionable insights.
- Published and presented an article at a highly competitive peer-reviewed conference (AAAI ICWSM).

Study of Video Conferencing Platforms' Impacts on Workplace Bias (@ University of Minnesota)

Led a qualitative interview study with professionals across industries to assess video conferencing's impacts on workplace bias.

- Derived actionable improvements for video conferencing platforms by qualitatively analyzing and synthesizing user interview findings.
- Built on findings in two additional studies, culminating in the design and implementation of an innovative LLM-based system.
- Published and presented an article at a highly competitive peer-reviewed conference (ACM CSCW), where it received two awards.

AI System for Feedback Exchange in Virtual Meetings (@ University of Minnesota, **ongoing**)

Led the design, development, and user testing of an LLM-based AI system to facilitate constructive feedback in meetings.

- Designed an innovative AI system by synthesizing research across org studies, psychology, and human-AI interaction.
- Collaboratively developed the system, including by leading a team of 4 junior software developers and a scrum master.
- Employed user testing, with qualitative and quantitative methods, to evaluate the system's efficacy and acceptability.

SELECT PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS //

- **M. Houtti**, I. Johnson, M. Warncke-Wang, L. Terveen. 2024. Leveraging Recommender Systems to Reduce Content Gaps on Peer Production Platforms. *International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM)*.
- **M. Houtti**, M. Zhou, L. Terveen, S. Chancellor. 2023. "All of the White People Went First": How Video Conferencing Consolidates Control and Exacerbates Workplace Bias. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW)*. ★ **Awarded a Best Paper Honorable Mention (top 4% of submissions) and Impact Recognition (for work that demonstrates clear practical impact)**.
- **M. Houtti**, I. Johnson, J. Cepeda, S. Khandelwal, A. Bhatnagar, L. Terveen. 2022. "We Need a Woman in Music": Exploring Wikipedia's Values on Article Priority. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW)*.