

XIAOXIA CAO
Department of Communication
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Johnston Hall, Room 210, P. O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201
Email: xcao@uwm.edu

EDUCATION

Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
Ph.D., Communication (Received in August 2010)

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
M.A., Mass Communication (Received in May 2005)

Beijing University, P. R. China
B.A., Advertising (Received in July 2000)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor, 2017-present
Department of Communication (2020-present)
Department of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies (2017-2020)
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Assistant Professor, 2011-2017
Department of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Media effects, persuasion, media psychology, health communication, political communication, and strategic communication

TEACHING INTERESTS

Persuasion, media effects, public opinion, health communication, political communication, and research methods

RESEARCH

* Co-author was a student during research/publication process

Peer-reviewed Articles

- Cao, X.** (2024). Dosage effects of anti-prescription opioid risk narratives, prescription opioid misuse experience, risk perceptions, and message processing. *Journal of Drug Issues*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00220426241277772>
- Cao, X.** (2024). Character-audience racial matching, prescription opioid misuse experience, the effectiveness of anti-prescription opioid messages: The mediating role of identification and perceived severity. *Health Communication*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2024.2386717>
- Cao, X.** (2024). The impact of political internet memes on opinions: The moderating role of political party identification. *Southern Communication Journal*, 89(3-4), 167-177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2024.2345095>
- Cao, X.** (2024). The Impacts of narrative perspectives of anti-prescription opioid campaigns: The mediating roles of identification, perceived severity, and anticipated guilt. Advance online publication. *Health Communication*, 39(2), 244-257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2022.2163110>
- Cao, X.** (2023). The impacts of the reference focus of anti-prescription opioid campaigns on young Americans: The roles of anticipated guilt and psychological reactance. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 31(4), 312-324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2022.2081691>
- Cao, X., & *Gurcay, A.** (2022). The anxiety factor: Moral traditionalism, interpersonal contact and support for transgender rights and candidates. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 69(13), 2209-2232. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2021.1935622>
- Cao, X., & Xu, J.** (2022). Seeing is believing: The impacts of visual exemplars on American young adults' reactions to anti-prescription opioid campaigns. *Journal of Drug Education: Substance Abuse Research and Prevention*, 50(3-4), 67-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472379211072856>
- Xu, J., & **Cao, X.** (2022). Young adults' stigmatization of people who misuse prescription opioids: An exploratory study. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 30(1), 79-89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2020.1825220>
- Cao, X.** (2020). Revisiting the democratic implications of political discussion disagreement: With whom one disagrees matters. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 17(3), 193-207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2020.1751372>

- Xu, J., & **Cao, X.** (2020). Young adults' (mis)use of prescription opioid drugs: An exploratory study. *Health Communication, 35*(11), 1407-1414.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2019.1636343>
- Cao, X.** (2018). Impact of social information on intentions to volunteer domestically for foreign causes. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 29*(2), 273-283.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21318>
- *Kim, J., **Cao, X.**, & *Meczowski, E. (2018). Does stigmatization motivate people to quit smoking? The effect of stigmatizing anti-smoking campaigns on cessation intention. *Health Communication, 33*(6), 681-689.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2017.1299275>
- Cao, X.**, & *Jia, L. (2017). The effects of the facial expression of beneficiaries in charity appeals and psychological involvement on donation intention: Evidence from an online experiment. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership, 27*(4), 457-473.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21261>
- *Kim, M., & **Cao, X.** (2016). The impact of exposure to media messages promoting (government) conspiracy theories on distrust in the government: Evidence from a two-stage randomized experiment. *International Journal of Communication, 10*, 3808-3827.
- Cao, X.** (2016). Framing charitable appeals: The effect of message framing and perceived susceptibility to the negative consequences of inaction on donation intention. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 21*(1), 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1536>
- Cao, X.** (2015). The influence of fiction versus nonfiction on political attitudes. *Communication Research Reports, 32*(1), 83-92.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08824096.2014.989979>
- Cao, X.**, & Decker, D. L. (2015). Psychological distancing: The effects of narrative perspectives and levels of access to a victim's inner world on victim blame and helping intention. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 20*(1), 12-24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1514>
- Cao, X.** (2014). The effects of narrative perspectives and gender similarity to a victim on sympathy and support for aid to people in need. *Studies in Media and Communication, 2*(1), 28-37. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11114/smc.v2i1.329>.
- Cao, X.** (2013). The effects of facial close-ups and viewers' sex on empathy and intentions to help people in need. *Mass Communication and Society, 16*(2), 161-

178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2012.683928>

Zhang, W., **Cao, X.**, & Tran, M. N. (2013). The structural features and the deliberative quality of online discussions. *Telematics and Informatics*, 30(2), 74-86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2012.06.001>

Cao, X. (2010). Hearing it from Jon Stewart: The impact of *The Daily Show* on public attentiveness to politics. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 22(1), 26-46. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edp043>

Cao, X. (2008). Political comedy shows and knowledge about primary campaigns: The moderating effects of age and education. *Mass Communication and Society*, 11(1), 43-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205430701585028>

Cao, X., & Brewer, P. R. (2008). Political comedy shows and public participation in politics. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(1), 90-99. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edm030>

Brewer, P. R., & **Cao, X.** (2006). Candidate appearances on soft news shows and public knowledge about primary campaigns. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 50(1), 18-35. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem5001_2

Book Chapters

Cao, X. (2008). Soft news and young voters: Why they tune into it and what they get out of it. In T. Kelso and B. Cogan (Eds.), *Mosh the polls: Youth voters, democratic engagement and popular culture* (pp. 165-184). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Brewer, P. R., & **Cao, X.** (2007). Late-night comedy television shows as news sources: What the polls say. In J. S. Morris and J. C. Baumgartner (Eds.), *Laughing matters: Humor and American politics in the media age* (pp. 263-279). London: SAGE.

Encyclopedia Entries

Cao, X. (2008). Dependent variable. In P. Lavrakas (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of survey research methods*. London: SAGE.

Zhang, W., & **Cao, X.** (2008). Nonresponse rates. In P. Lavrakas (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of survey research methods*. London: SAGE.

Other Publication

Cao, X. (2017, June 19). Do happy faces or sad faces raise more money? *The Conversation*.

Work under Contract

Cao, X. (Ed.). (under contract). *Fighting the Opioid Crisis with Communication: Stigma, treatment, support and prevention*. Berlin: Springer Nature.

Cao, X. (under contract). Fighting the opioid crisis with communication: Stigma, treatment, support and prevention. In X. Cao (Ed.), *Fighting the opioid crisis with communication: Stigma, treatment, support and prevention*. Berlin: Springer Nature.

Cao, X. (under contract). The immediate and delayed impacts of the reference focus of anti-prescription opioid risk narratives: The mediating roles of fear and anticipated guilt. In X. Cao (Ed.), *Fighting the opioid crisis with communication: Stigma, treatment, support and prevention*. Berlin: Springer Nature.

Work in Progress

Cao, X. The impacts of visual images of the suffering of individuals with drug use disorder on stigma and opinions toward drug use related policies.

Cao, X. The impacts of disgust appeals on attitudes toward prescription opioids and intentions to avoid misusing the drugs.

Conference Presentations

Cao, X. (2024, April). *The impact of political internet memes on opinions: The moderating role of political party identification*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Central States Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2024, April). *Dosage effects of anti-prescription opioid risk narratives, prescription opioid misuse experience, risk perceptions, and message processing*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Central States Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2023, April). *The Impacts of narrative perspectives of anti-prescription opioid campaigns: The mediating roles of identification, perceived severity, and anticipated guilt*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Central States Communication Association.

Cao, X., & *Gurcay, A. (2021, August). *The anxiety factor: Moral traditionalism, interpersonal contact and support for transgender rights and candidates*. Paper

presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Cao, X. (2021, May). *The impacts of the reference focus of anti-prescription opioid campaigns: The roles of anticipated guilt and psychological reactance*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X., & Xu, J. (2021, May). *Seeing is believing: The impacts of visual exemplars on American young adults' reactions to anti-prescription opioid campaigns*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

*Lim, S., & **Cao, X.** (2021, April). *Media effects on obesity-related health behavior: Application of cultivation theory*. Poster presented at the D.C. Health Communication Conference.

Xu, J., & **Cao, X.** (2020, August). *Stigma toward people who misuse prescription opioid drugs*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Cao, X. (2020, April). *Revisiting the democratic implications of political discussion disagreement: With whom one disagrees matters*. Paper accepted by the Annual Conference of Southern States Communication Association.

Xu, J., & **Cao, X.** (2019, August). *Young adults' (mis)use of prescription opioid drugs: an exploratory study*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Cao, X. (2019, May). *Facebook cross-cutting exposure and political participation*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2015, November). *Bridging the gap: The influence of descriptive social norms on helping behavior toward in-group and out-group members*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

*Kim, J., **Cao, X.**, & *Meczowski, E. (2015, August). *Does stigma against smokers really motivate cessation? A moderated mediation effect of anti-smoking campaigns*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

*Jia, L., & **Cao, X.** (2014, November). *The effects of facial expression of people in need and potential donors' involvement with charities on intentions to donate*.

Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

*Kim, M., & **Cao, X.** (2014, August). *Did Apollo astronauts land on the moon? The cause and consequence of belief in conspiracy theories*. Poster presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Cao, X., & Decker, D. L. (2014, May). *Psychological distancing: The effects of narrative perspectives and levels of access to a victim's inner world on victim blame and helping intention*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X., & *Carmody, C. (2013, August). *Understanding the agenda-setting effect of media coverage of large-scale public protests*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association.

Cao, X. (2013, June). *Framing charitable appeals: The effect of gain-and-loss framing and perceived susceptibility on donation intention*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2012, May). *The effects of narrative perspectives and sex similarity to a victim on sympathy and intentions to help people in need*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2011, November). *The effects of facial close-ups and viewers' sex on sympathy and intentions to help people in need*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2011, September). *Do genre labels matter? The emotional and cognitive impacts of fiction versus nonfiction*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association.

Cao, X. (2009, November). *Pathways to eliciting aid: The effects of geographic proximity and sensory proximity on empathy and help for the victims of chronic problems*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2009, October). *The Internet and tailored charitable appeals: A cross-cultural approach*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers.

Cao, X., & Brewer, P. R. (2009, September). *The Daily Show and perceptions of government*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political

Science Association.

Cao, X. (2009, May). *One event, different interpretations: Readings of the Beijing Olympics, and readings of China*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2008, May). *Learning from Jon Stewart: How do soft news programs inform infrequent consumers of traditional news?* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2007, November). *Visual attacks: How did Democratic challengers capitalize on the unpopularity of the incumbents in the 2006 Senate campaign?* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

Cao, X., & Brewer, P. R. (2006, November). *Political comedy shows and public participation in politics*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

Cao, X. (2006, September). *The Daily Show and public attentiveness to political issues*. Poster presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association.

Cao, X. (2005, September). *Political comedy shows and knowledge about primary campaigns among young Americans*. Poster presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association.

Brewer, P. R., & Cao, X. (2004, September). *Candidate appearances on soft news shows and public awareness of primary campaigns*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

Cao, X. (January 2, 2024). Why public health campaigns about opioid misuse work—or don't. Interview by Laura Otto, *UWM Report*. Retrieved from <https://uwm.edu/news/why-public-health-campaigns-about-opioid-misuse-work-or-dont/>

Cao, X. (November, 2023). Featured expert. Division of Marketing and Communication, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Cao, X. (February 21, 2022). Substance abuse on screen: How media depict drugs and addiction and what it means for viewers. Interview by Rob Ferret, *Central Time, Wisconsin Public Radio*. Retrieved from <https://www.wpr.org/substance->

abuse-screen-how-media-depict-drugs-and-addiction-and-what-it-means-viewers

RESEARCH GRANTS RECEIVED

Research Assistance Fund, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "The impacts of risk narratives in anti-prescription opioid campaigns." PI, \$2969, funded for October/2022-June/2023.

Graduate School Research Committee Award, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, "Bridging the distance: The effect of media messages about human suffering on help for people in need from another country." PI, \$14,078, funded for July/2013-June/2014.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Top Paper Award, Health Communication Interest Group, the Annual Conference of Central States Communication Association, April 2023.

The Third-place Faculty Paper Award (with Jie Xu), the Division of Communicating Science, Health, Environment & Risk, the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, August 2019

The First-place Faculty Paper Award (with *Jinyoung Kim and *Eric Meczowski), the Division of Communicating Science, Health, Environment & Risk, the Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, August 2015

Dissertation Fellowship, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 2008-2009

National Doctoral Honors Seminar (Entertainment Theory Division), the National Communication Association, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, June 2008

Competitive Travel Grant, the Graduate Student Association Council, University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2008

Competitive Travel Grant, the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2007

Research Fellowship (full tuition and stipend), Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 2005-2008

Honor Student Scholarship, the highest honor granted by the Department of Arts,
Beijing University, P. R. China, 1998-1999

COURSES TAUGHT

COMMUN 464: Theory and Practice of Persuasion
COMMUN 700: Quantitative Research in Communication
COMMUN 813: Seminar in Mediated Communication
COMMUN 816/JAMS 810: Media Effects
COMMUN 818: Media and Politics
JAMS 380/COMMUN 360: Entertainment and Politics
JAMS 380: Health and Media
JAMS 505: Research for Strategic Communication
JAMS 614: Mass Media and Public Opinion
JAMS 661: Media Communication and Society: Media Effects and Persuasion
JAMS 701: Media Studies Research Design

MASTERS OF ARTS PORTFOLIO PROJECT (MAPP) DIRECTED

Onyinyechi Blessing Ogboso (2023)

COURSES DIRECTED

COMMUN 370: Quantitative Research in Communication
COMMUN 464: Theory and Practice of Persuasion

GRADUATE RESEARCH DIRECTED

Communication PhD Dissertation Directed

Megan Montgomery (in progress)

Communication PhD Dissertation Committee Memberships

Michael Cody Coker (2022)
Jessica Kahlow (2021)
Michelle Fetherston (2017)

Mass Communication/Media Studies MA Theses Directed

Daniel James Russo (2021)
Jinyoung Kim (2014)
Minchul Kim (2013)
Lei Jia (2013)

Communication/Mass Communication/Media Studies MA Thesis Committee Memberships

Sue Lim (2021)
Anthony Mandella (2018)
Samantha Kaufman (2016)
Katrina M. Schwarz (2014)
Alicia Haywood (2012)
Tatevik Sargsyan (2012)
Kristan Grote (2011)
Weiai Xu (2011)

Graduate Independent Studies Directed

Megan Montgomery (Spring 2023)
Megan Montgomery (Fall 2022)
Sue Lim (fall 2020)
Daniel Russo (spring 2020)
Jessica Kahlow (fall 2019)
Ati Gurcay (spring 2019)
Rachel Anderson (spring 2014)
Jinyoung Kim (fall 2013)
Minchul Kim (fall 2012)
Lei Jia (fall 2012)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Editorial Board

Health Communication, April 2024-present

Journal Reviewer

Atlantic Journal of Communication
Chinese Journal of Communication
Communication Research
Computers in Human Behavior
Health Communication
International Journal of Communication
International Journal of Press/Politics
International Journal of Public Opinion Research
Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media
Journal of Communication

Journal of Health Communication
Journal of Health Psychology
Journal of Homosexuality
Journal of Information Technology & Politics
Journal of Philanthropy & Marketing
Journal of Political Marketing
Journal of Social & Personal Relationships
Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly
Learning & Individual Differences
Mass Communication & Society
Media Psychology
Nonprofit Management and Leadership
Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly
Poetics
Political Behavior
Political Research Quarterly
Psychology & Marketing
Social Media & Society
The Open Communication Journal

Book Reviewer

Traugott, M. W., & Lavrakas, P. J. (2016). *The voter's guide to election polls* (5th Edition). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

External Tenure Reviewer

Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, 2020

Professional Organization Interest Group Board Member

Secretary of Health Communication Interest Group, Central States Communication Association, April 2024-present

Conference Reviewer

International Communication Association
National Communication Association
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Conference Panel Chair

Popular Culture, Entertainment, and Politics, the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, May 2009.

Agenda Setting, the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, May 2008.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

International Communication Association (ICA)
 National Communication Association (NCA)
 Central States Communication Association (CSCA)
 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE

Campus and College Level Service

Reviewer, Junior and Senior Scholarships, College of Letters & Science, 2024
 Member, Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, September 2022-May 2023
 Departmental Representative, Online Program Council, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, September 2021- May 2022
 Member, Graduate Curriculum Committee, September 2019-May 2021
 Member, Advisory Committee for the Future of Department of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies, College of Letters & Science, September 2019-May 2020
 Reviewer, Research and Creative Activities Support Awards, Graduate School, 2016-2017; 2019-2020

Service to the Department of Communication

Member, Graduate Affairs Committee, August 2020-present
 Member, Executive Committee, August 2020-present
 Chair, Personnel Committee, undergraduate program of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies, September 2021-May 2024
 Member, Faculty Search Committee, October 2022-Feb 2023
 Member, Search Committee for Communication Administrative Assistant, March-May 2022
 Member, Search Committee for JAMS Administrative Assistant, January-February 2022
 Member, Communication and JAMS merger committee, December 2020-May 2021

Service to the Department of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies

Chair, Search Committee, February 2019-August 2019
 Chair, Grade Appeal Committee, September 2018
 Member, Executive Committee, 2017-2020
 Member, Graduate Committee, 2011-2012, 2017-2020

Member, Assessment Committee, 2015-2020
Member, Curriculum Committee, 2015-2016
Member, Internship/Scholarship Committee, 2013-2015
Member, Undergraduate Committee, 2012-2013
Member, Search Committee, July 2012

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE

Advisor, The Alliance of Youth Leaders in the United States (Trophy Club Branch),
July 2024-present.

Communication Officer, Northwest Association for Gifted & Talented, Northwest
Independent School District, 2020-2021.

Volunteer, Victoria Garden Initiatives, Milwaukee, WI, 2014-2015
Contributed to the design of the 2015 campaign, Victoria Garden Blitz

Volunteer, Disability Rights Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, 2015-2016
Contributed to the design of the Fund Our Voice campaign
Helped design the 2015 year-end campaign

Last Updated October 17, 2024