

LEPING WANG

Department of Sociology, Center for Research on Inequality and Health,

Vanderbilt University, leping.wang@vanderbilt.edu

 [Google Scholar](#) |  [ORCID](#) |  [LinkedIn](#) |  [Website](#)

ACADEMIC POSITION

Post-doctoral Researcher, Department of Sociology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, June 2025-Present. (PI: Lijun Song, Co-Is: Deborah Carr, Brea Perry, Tara McKay, Qingxia (Cindy) Chen, Siyun Peng)
Project: *The National Study of Older Never-Married Adults* (NSONMA) (Funded by the National Institute on Aging and the National Institutes of Health)

Affiliate, Center for Research on Inequality and Health, Vanderbilt University

Affiliate, Lifespan Policy and Health Lab, Vanderbilt University

Affiliate, LGBTQ+ Policy Lab, Vanderbilt University

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Sociology, Boston University, Boston, MA, 2025.

Dissertation Topic: *The Impact of Social Connectedness on Older Adults' Mental and Cognitive Health: A U.S.- China Comparison.*

Committee: Deborah Carr (Chair), Neha Gondal, Jonathan Mijs, Brady West (University of Michigan)

M.A., Applied Quantitative Research, New York University, New York, 2020.

Thesis Topic: *Human Capital and the Upward Occupational Mobility of Rural Migrant Workers in China.*
(Advisor: Siwei Cheng)

L.L.B., Sociology, Xiamen University, Xiamen, CN, 2018.

Thesis Topic: *Social Capital, SES, Social Identity, and Institutionalized Rural Environmental-Rights-Protection Behaviors.* (Advisor: Rong Hu)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Medical Sociology, Aging and the Life Course, Sociology of Gender, Family Demography, Social Networks, Social Inequality and Stratification, Quantitative/Computational Methods, Global Comparative Methods

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Wang, Leping. 2025. "[Human Capital and the Upward Occupational Mobility of Rural Migrant Workers in China.](#)" *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 95(100997):100997.

Wang, Leping. 2025. "[Unpacking Merit, Fit, and Diversity: A Multi-Faceted Framework to Academic Gatekeeping in Social Sciences at U.S. R1 Research Universities.](#)" *Sociological Inquiry.*

Wang, Leping, and Yang (Claire) Yang. 2025. "[The Impact of Marital Trajectories on Late-Life Social Isolation among Older Adults: A U.S.-China Comparison.](#)" *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies.*

Carr, Deborah, Leping Wang, and Pamela Smock. 2025. "[Do Social Security Benefits Rules Perpetuate Marital Status and Gender Inequalities?.](#)" *The Gerontologist*, p.gnaf158.

Bacon, Rachel, and Leping Wang (equal authorship). 2024. "[Selection into Higher Education and Subsequent Religious Decline in a United States Cohort.](#)" *Social Science Research* 124: 103067.

Carr, Deborah, Leping Wang, and Pamela Smock. 2024. "[Gender Differences in the Economic Consequences of Life-long Singlehood among Older White US Adults.](#)" *Journal of Marriage and Family* 86(4): 1053-74.

Richards, Lindsay, **Leping Wang**, Joashilia Jeanmarie, Shirin Shafazand, Daniel Palazuelos, and Vitina Monacello. 2024. "[Understanding the Impact of a Social Support Program in Immokalee, FL, during the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)" *Healthcare in Low-resource Settings*.

Ballard, Madeleine, Helen Elizabeth Olsen, Caroline Whidden, Daniele Ressler, Lynn Metz, Anoushka Milliar, Daniel Palazuelos, Nandini Choudhury, Fabien Munyaneza, Rene Diane, Kelly Lue, P. Émile Bobozi, Anant Raut, Andriamanolohaja Ramarson, Mamy Andrianomenjanahary, Karen Finnegan, Carey Westgate, Wycliffe Omwanda, **Leping Wang**, David Citrin, Ash Rogers, Moses Banda Aron, Molly Christiansen, Agnes Watsemba, Rehan Adamjee, and Amanda Yembrick. 2022. "[Lessons from an Eight-country Community Health Data Harmonization Collaborative.](#)" *Global Health Action: 15*(1): 1-9.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Wang, Leping, and Jonathan Mijs. "How Blatant, Cultural, and Ambivalent Racism Informs Beliefs about Inequality: Comparison across the United States and the Netherlands." *Revise and Resubmit*.

Greta (Jianjia) Cheng, **Leping Wang**, Tsai-Chin Cho, Alden L Gross, and Lindsay C Kobayashi (equal first author). "The Association between Marital Histories and Late-Life Cognitive Function: Evidence from the United States and China." *Revise and Resubmit*.

Wang, Leping, and Deborah Carr. "The Impact of Social Support on the Cognitive Functioning of Older Adults: A U.S.-China Comparison." (Preparing to submit).

Schmitz, Alina Lena, **Leping Wang**, and Deborah Carr. "Education and cognitive performance in later life: A cross-national comparative study across Europe." (Preparing to submit).

Song, Lijun, **Leping Wang**, and Zhe Zhang. "Pets as Amplifiers, Buffers, or Compensators? Singlehood and Health in Later Life." (Preparing to submit).

Song, Lijun, **Leping Wang**, and Zhe Zhang. "Pet Presence, Kin Structure, and Health in Later Life." (Preparing manuscript).

PUBLIC WRITING

Wang, Leping. "[Measuring Wellbeing among College Students.](#)" *The Learning Well Magazine* (Published by the LearningWell Coalition, an organization dedicated to examining how higher education experiences can lead to improved wellbeing on campus and over the life course).

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

External Grants & Fellowships

International Comparisons of Healthy Aging (ICoHA) Interest Group Student Award, Gerontology Society of America, October 2025.

Travel Support to New Data, Methods, and Theory: Life-Course Cognitive Inequality Workshop, Yale University, March 2026.

Collaborative for Innovation in Data & Measurement in Aging (CIDMA) Institute Travel Grant, The University of Chicago NIA P30 Center on Healthy Aging Behaviors and Longitudinal Investigations (CHABLIS), August 2025, August 2024, August 2023.

Best Practices in Comparative Life Course Research Mentorship Program Honorarium, Case Western Reserve University Department of Sociology, July 2024.

Social Networks and Health Fellowship, Duke University Network Analysis Center (DNAC), March 2025, April 2024.

Travel Stipend to the Population Association of America Annual Meeting, The University of Chicago NIA P30 Center on Healthy Aging Behaviors and Longitudinal Investigations (CHABLIS), March 2025, April 2024.

Network for Innovative Methods in Longitudinal Aging Studies (NIMLAS) Travel Support, University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, January 2026, November 2024, January 2024.
Registration Grant, International Sociological Association Forum of Sociology, February 2020.

Internal Grants & Fellowships

Outstanding Teaching Fellow Award, Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, May 2023.
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Summer Fellowship, Boston University, June-July 2024, June-July 2023, June-July 2022, June-July 2021.
Morris Travel Support Grant, Boston University Department of Sociology, December 2024, May 2024, December 2023, May 2023.
Social Sciences PhD Summer Internship Fellowship, Boston University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences & The Center for Innovation in Social Science (CISS), June-August 2023, June-August 2022, June-August 2021.
The Center for Innovation in Social Science (CISS) Summer 2023 Mini-Grant, Boston University College of Arts and Sciences, May 2023.
Graduate Enrichment Fund, Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, April 2023.
Morris Collaborative Research Grant (with Jonathan Mijs), Boston University Department of Sociology, December 2021.
ICPSR Summer Grant, Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, June-August 2021.
Dean's Fellowship, Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, September 2020-May 2021.
Summer Professional Development Fellowship (SPDF), Boston University Professional Development & Postdoctoral Affairs, April 2021.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Educational Attainment and Multiple Dimensions of Cognitive Health among Older Adults: Do Associations Differ Across European Nations and Regions?” (With Schmitz, Alina L and Deborah Carr).
New Data, Methods, and Theory: Life-Course Cognitive Inequality Workshop, Yale University, New Haven, CT, May 2026 (Oral Presentation).

“Education and Cognitive Performance in Later Life: A Cross-National Comparative Study across Europe.” (With Schmitz, Alina L and Deborah Carr).
Cognitive Aging and Dementia in Policy Contexts Conference, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, May 2026 (Oral Presentation).

“The Association between Marital Histories and Late-Life Cognitive Function: Evidence from the United States and China.” (With Greta (Jianjia) Cheng, Tsai-Chin Cho, Alden L Gross, and Lindsay C Kobayashi).
Population Association of America Annual Meeting, St. Louis, MO, May 2026 (Poster Presentation).

“Pets as Amplifiers, Buffers, or Compensators? Singlehood and Health in Later Life.” (With Lijun Song and Zhe Zhang).
Population Association of America Annual Meeting, St. Louis, MO, May 2026 (Poster Presentation).

“The Impact of Marital History on Late-Life Loneliness and Social Participation: A U.S.-China Comparison.” (With Yang (Claire) Yang).
Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting, Boston, MA, November 2025 (Symposium Presentation).
Collaborative for Innovation in Data & Measurement in Aging (CIDMA) Institute at The University of Chicago Center for Health and the Social Sciences, Ann Arbor, MI, September 2025 (Poster Presentation).

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, Washington, DC, April 2025 (Poster Presentation).
- “Social Support, Social Participation, and Cognitive and Mental Health of Older Adults: A U.S.-China Comparison.”
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Chicago, IL, August 2025 (Roundtable Presentation).
- “The Impact of Social Support and Social Participation on Mental and Cognitive Health among Older Adults: A U.S.-China comparison.”
- Collaborative for Innovation in Data & Measurement in Aging (CIDMA) Institute* at The University of Chicago Center for Health and the Social Sciences, Chicago, IL, September 2024 (Oral Presentation).
- “Social Connectedness and Subsequent Cognitive Functions of American Older Adults, and Their Cognitive Profiles.”
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Montreal, CA, August 2024 (Roundtable Presentation).
- “Substitutability of Social Connectedness and Loneliness among Older Adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic.”
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, Columbus, OH, April 2024 (Oral Presentation)
- Collaborative for Innovation in Data & Measurement in Aging (CIDMA) Institute* at The University of Chicago Center for Health and the Social Sciences, Chicago, IL, September 2023 (Oral Presentation).
- “Merit, Fit, and Diversity Unpacked: How Academic Gatekeeping in Social Sciences Reproduces Inequality.”
- American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, April 2024 (Oral Presentation).
- The Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, August 2023 (Oral Presentation).
- Eastern Sociological Society Meeting*, Boston, MA, March 2022 (Oral Presentation).
- “Authors of their Own Adversity: A Profile of Dutch and American Non-Racists, Racists, and Ambivalent Racists and their Beliefs about Inequality.” (With Jonathan Mijs).
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, August 2023 (Oral Presentation).
- “Selection into Higher Education by Religion and Subsequent Religious Decline in a United States Cohort.” (With Rachel Bacon).
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, August 2023 (Roundtable Presentation).
- “Structural Singlism? An Examination of Economic Security Among Never-Married Older Adults.” (With Deborah Carr and Pamela Smock).
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, New Orleans, LA, April 2023 (Oral Presentation).
- “Gender Differences in Older Adults’ Economic Security: Assessing the Role of Family Histories.” (With Deborah Carr and Pamela Smock).
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Los Angeles, CA, August 2022 (Oral Presentation).
- “Managerial Roles and the Social Network Characteristics of Chinese Urban Residents.”
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Los Angeles, CA, August 2022 (Roundtable Presentation).
- “Gender, Family Histories, and Late-Life Economic Well-Being.” (With Deborah Carr and Pamela Smock).

Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting, Remote, November 2021 (Oral Presentation).
“Human Capital and the Upward Occupational Mobility of Rural Migrant Workers in China.”
International Conference on Computational Social Science, Zurich, CH (Remote), July 2021 (Oral Presentation).
IV International Sociological Association Forum of Sociology, Porto Alegre, BR (Remote), February 2021.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Dr. Deborah Carr, Boston University, Boston, MA, September 2021-May 2025.

Project: “Gender, Marital Histories and Late-life Poverty: Updating Social Security Rules for 21st Century Families.” (Funded by RRF Foundation for Aging)

Research Assistant to Dr. Lijun Song, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN (Remote), November 2024-May 2025.

Project: “National Study of Older Never-Married Adults (NSONMA).” (Funded by the National Institutes of Health).

Mentee, Comparative Life Course Research Training Program, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, July 2024- January 2025.

Project: “The Impact of Marital Trajectories on Late-Life Social Isolation: A U.S.-China Comparison.” (Mentor: Dr. Yang (Claire) Yang). (Funded by the National Institute on Aging)

Social Science PhD Summer Research Intern, Center for Innovation in Social Science. Placement: Mary Christie Institute, Boston, MA (Remote), June-August 2023.

Center for Mind and Culture, Boston, MA, June-August 2022.

Partners in Health, Boston, MA (Remote), June-August 2021.

Research Affiliate, Center for Antiracist Research, Boston University, Boston, MA, March-October 2023.

Research Assistant to Dr. Jonathan Mijs, Boston University, Boston, MA, February-October 2022.

Project: “How Blatant, Cultural, and Ambivalent Racism Informs Beliefs about Inequality: Comparison across the United States and the Netherlands.” (Funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO))

Research Lead, Wasserman Center for Career Development, New York University, New York, October-November 2019.

Research Assistant to Dr. Jiaying You, Xiamen University, Xiamen, CN, March 2017-May 2018.

Project: “Media Information, Investor Behaviors and IPO Pricing: Theoretical Analysis and Empirical Study.” “The “Role of Financial Analysts in China: A Corporate Governance View.” (Funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China)

Research Affiliate, Psychology and Cognition Lab, Xiamen University, Xiamen, CN, February 2017-November 2017.

Project: “Metacognition of the Testing Effect.”

TEACHING

SO 215 *Sociology of Health Care*

Teaching Fellow, Fall 2023 and Spring 2024.

SO 100 *Principles in Sociology*

Teaching Fellow, Boston University Department of Sociology, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Summer in 2023, Summer 2024.

SO314 *Social Problems and Social Change*

Guest Speaker, April 2022.

SERVICE

Professional Service

Ad-hoc Reviewer to *American Journal of Sociology* (2), *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* (4), *Social Networks* (1), *The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences* (1), *Journal of Aging and Health* (1), *Research on Aging* (3), *Chinese Journal of Sociology* (1), *Chinese Sociological Review* (1), *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (2), *Social Science Computer Review* (2).

Reviewer to Network for Innovative Methods in Longitudinal Aging Studies (NIMLAS) Pilot Project, February-March 2026.

Graduate Student Representative, Transnational Initiatives Committee, The Society for the Study of Social Problems, November 2024-November 2025.

Poster Judge, Poster Session on Mortality and Morbidity/Demography of Low- and Middle-Income Countries, *Population Association of America Annual Meeting*, Washington, DC, April 2025.

Graduate Student Representative, Lee Student Support Fund Committee, The Society for the Study of Social Problems, September 2023-September 2024.

Co-Organizer, Boston Field Research Conference (BFRC) Community Day Organization Committee, October-December 2024.

Section Presider

Paper Session on Social Networks, *American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, August 2023

Paper Session on Social Practice and Institutional Constraints, *Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting*, Boston, MA, March 2022

Paper Session on Statistical Methods and Applications, *International Conference on Computational Social Science*, Zurich, CH (Remote), July 2021

Departmental Service, Vanderbilt University

Postdoc Mentor, Vanderbilt University Postdoc Buddy Program (July 2025-Present)

Postdoc Mentor to Graduate Students, Vanderbilt University Department of Sociology (July 2025-Present)

Departmental Service, Boston University

Graduate Student Representative, Morris Funds Committee, Boston University Department of Sociology, September 2024-May 2025.

Social Chair, Sociology Graduate Student Committee (SGSC), Boston University Department of Sociology, September 2023-May 2025.

Graduate Student Representative, Junior Faculty Search Committee, Boston University Department of Sociology, September-November 2024.

Co-Organizer, Quant Lab, Boston University Department of Sociology, April 2023-May 2025.

Editorial Review Board Member, *Armchair Journal*, Boston University Department of Sociology, May 2023-May 2024.

Graduate Mentor, Undergraduate Mentoring Program, Boston University Department of Sociology, October 2022-August 2023.

Mentor, BU Spark! Welcome Back Mini Hackathon, Boston University Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences, September 2023.

Mentor, BU Spark! Civic Tech Hackathon, Boston University Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences, February 2023.

Department Co-Representative, Graduate Student Organization, Boston University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, Boston, MA, September 2021-May 2022.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Document Accessibility Technician, New York University IT & NYU Moses Center, New York, October 2018-December 2019.

Finance Intern, Ernst & Young Department of Finance, Beijing, CN, July-September 2017.

Social Worker Intern, Tongyuan Social Service Center, Xiamen, CN, April-May 2016.

SKILLS & LANGUAGES

Statistical Programming STATA, R, Python, SPSS, Eviews, Colab, Github

Languages English (fluent), Mandarin (native)

Social Network Analysis Pajek, UCINET, PNet

Other Parsehub, Airtable, Qualtrics

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association (ASA)

Population Association of America (PAA)

Gerontological Society of America (GSA)

Collaborative for Innovation in Data & Measurement in Aging (CIDMA) Institute

Network for Innovative Methods in Longitudinal Aging Studies (NIMLAS)

Boston University Center for Innovation in Social Sciences (CISS) Graduate Fellow
(<https://www.bu.edu/ciss/profile/leping-wang/>)

Computational Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Initiative with the Faculty of Computing and Data Sciences at Boston University (<https://www.bu.edu/chass/people/leping-wang/>)

International Sociological Association (RC28)

The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)

REFERENCES

Deborah Carr, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Innovation in Social Science
A&S Distinguished Professor of Sociology,
Boston University
carrds@bu.edu

Jonathan Mijs, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Sociology,
Boston University
mijs@bu.edu

Pamela J. Smock, Ph.D.
Research Professor, Population Studies Center
Professor of Sociology,
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
pjsmock@umich.edu

Lijun Song, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Sociology,
Vanderbilt University
lijun.song@vanderbilt.edu

Neha Gondal, Ph.D.
Faculty of Computing & Data Science
Associate Professor of Sociology,
Boston University
gondal@bu.edu

Brady T. West, Ph.D.
Research Professor, Institute for Social Research,
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
bwest@umich.edu