

Marisa A. Smith

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My work investigates race and politics in news to understand the sociopolitical implications of partisan news on racial identity, racial attitudes, and political polarization.

Research Keywords: race & identity, disinformation, social media, news effects, computational analysis

Education

Ph.D., Communication

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

August 2020

M.A., Communication

The Ohio State University

August 2015

B.S., Criminal Justice

California State University, Sacramento

May 2013

Academic Positions

Assistant Professor

Michigan State University

2020 - Present

Department of Advertising + Public Relations

School of Journalism

Political Science (by courtesy)

Refereed Publications

11. **Smith, M. A.**, Clark, M. D., & Lella, O. S. K. M. (2025). From strategy to sentiment: Examining the role of partisan news in fostering white racial consciousness and shaping attitudes toward critical race theory. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. ⚡ [IF: 2.3]
10. **Smith, M. A.**, Shugars, S., Khanam, S., Mbonu, A., Lella, O. S. K. M., & Myers, C. L. (2025). The black pill: (Re)conceptualizing the Black Right in the era of YouTube influencers. *Social Media + Society*, 11(1), 1–13. ⚡ [IF: 6.8]
9. **Smith, M. A.**, Myers, C. L., Chong, M., Clark, M. D., Lim, S., Rollins, D. D., Fields, V. F., Rodrigues, L., Njonge, W., & Martin, O. (2025). Rooted in white identity politics: Tracing the genealogy of critical race theory discourse in identity-based disinformation. *Political Communication*. 42(5), 815–837. ⚡ [IF: 8.8]
8. **Smith, M. A.** & Haenschen, K. (2024). Contextualizing representations of violence in #BlackLivesMatter coverage with inductive computational content analysis. *Mass Communication and Society*, 27(6), 1609–1635. ⚡ [IF: 3.7]
7. Battocchio, A. F., Thorson, K., Hiaeshutter-Rice, D., **Smith, M. A.**, Chen, Y., Edgerly, S., Cotter, K., Choung, H., Dong, C., Moldagaliyeva, M., & Etheridge, C. (2023). Who will tell the stories of public health inequities? Platform challenges (and opportunities) in local civic information infrastructure. *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 707(1), 144–171. ⚡ [IF: 3.2]
6. Bigman, C. A., Planey, A. M., Williamson, L. D., **Smith, M. A.**, & Smith, S. M. (2023). 'There will be screen caps': The role of digital documentation and platform collapse in propagation and visibility of racial discourses.

5. Fox, J., Vendemia, M. A., **Smith, M. A.**, & Brehm, N. R. (2021). Effects of taking selfies on women's self-objectification, mood, self-esteem, and social aggression toward female peers. *Body Image*, 36, 193–200.  [IF: 5.2]
4. **Smith, M. A.**, Williamson, L. D., & Bigman, C. A. (2020). Can social media news encourage activism? The impact of exposure to mediated discrimination on college students' activism intention. *Social Media + Society*, 6(2), 1–10.  [IF: 6.8]
3. Butkowski, C., Dixon, T. L., Weeks, K., & **Smith, M. A.** (2020). Quantifying the feminine self(ie): Gendered self-stereotyping and social media feedback in young women's Instagram selfies. *New Media & Society*, 22(5), 817–837.  [IF: 6.9]
2. Bigman, C. A., **Smith, M. A.**, Williamson, L. D., Planey, A., & McNeil, S. (2019). Selective sharing on social media: Examining the effects of disparate racial impact frames on intentions to retransmit news stories among US college students. *New Media & Society*, 21(11–12), 2691–2709.  [IF: 6.9]
1. Williamson, L. D., **Smith, M. A.**, & Bigman, C. A. (2019). Does discrimination breed mistrust? Examining the role of mediated and non-mediated discrimination experiences in medical mistrust. *Journal of Health Communication*, 24, 791–799.  [IF: 4.1]

*IF = 5-year Impact Factor

Book Chapters and Reports

Weeks, K., Dixon, T. L., Butkowski, C., **Smith, M. A.**, Benevento, S., Rollins, D., & Tolbert, A. (2024). The portrayal of Black family social instability: A content analysis of family and race across traditional and new media sources. In T. L. Dixon & D. Mastro (Eds.), *US media and diversity: Representation, dissemination, and effects*. Routledge.

Brown, D. K., Snow, J. C., Walker, D., Henderson, J., Williams Fayne, M., Myers, C. L., & **Smith, M. A.** (2023). Lifted voices: Perspectives of residents and leaders. 

Dixon, T. L., **Smith, M. A.**, & Weeks, K. (2021). Race, policing and communication: Old problems, 21st century struggles. In H. Giles, E. Maguire, & S. Hill (Eds.), *Handbook of policing, communication & society*. Sage Publishing.

Dixon, T. L., Weeks, K. R., & **Smith, M. A.** (2019). Media constructions of culture, race, and ethnicity. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press. 

Conference Presentations

Dixon, T. L., Smith, M. A., Lella, O. S. K. M., & Rollins, D. D. (November 2025). #ConferenceSoWhite: A computational content analysis of National Communication Association conference presentation titles [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA. **Top Paper Award**.

Smith, M. A. (September 2025). What is CRT? Information seeking during the 2022 Midterm election [Paper presentation]. Political Communication Pre-Conference, American Political Science Association Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia.

Kreiss, D., Bauer, A.J., Shugars, S., Smith, M. A., & Peck, R. (September 2025). What really Is political communication? Defining the field [Roundtable Panel]. American Political Science Association Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia.

Smith, M. A., Dixon, T. L., Rollins, D. D., & Lella, O. S. K. M. (September 2025). Media use, white racial consciousness, and the 2024 presidential vote [Paper presentation]. American Political Science Association Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia.

Smith, M. A., Clark, M. D., & Lella, O. S. K. M. (June 2025). From strategy to sentiment: Examining the role of partisan news in fostering white racial consciousness and shaping attitudes toward critical race theory [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Chong, M., Smith, M. A., & Lella, O. S. K. M. (June 2025). #CRTIS: Twitter as an information channel for anti-CRT messages [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Haenschen, K., Zhang, A., & Smith, M. A. (June 2025). Don't use "don't": Negative question wording suppresses external political efficacy scores [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado.

Smith, M. A., Lim, S., Chong, M., Lella, O. S. K. M., & Mbonu, A. (October 2024). Tracing the spread of CRT disinformation within partisan ecosystems [Poster presentation]. Association for Information Science and Technology Annual Meeting. Calgary, Alberta.

Haenschen, K., Zhang, A., & Smith, M. A. (March 2024). Don't use "don't care": How negative question wording suppresses external political efficacy [Paper presentation]. Eastern Communication Association Annual Meeting. Cambridge, MA. **Top Paper Award**.

Smith, M. A. (September 2023). "Racist equity and unjust policies:" A case for anti-Black disinformation [Paper presentation]. Political Communication Pre-Conference, American Political Science Association Conference. Los Angeles, CA.

Haenschen, K. & Smith, M. A. (September 2023). Who are "people like me"? Minority status and (mismeasuring) political efficacy [Poster presentation]. American Political Science Association Conference, Los Angeles, CA.

Smith, M. A., Rollins, D., Rodrigues, L., Fields, V., Lim, S., Myers, C. L., Chong, M., & Njonge, W. (August 2023). "Racist equity and unjust policies:" Examining anti-Black disinformation in partisan news about critical race theory [Poster presentation]. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Meeting. Washington, DC.

Smith, M. A. & Haenschen, K. (November 2022). (How to) Read the comments: Analyzing open-ended utterances following exposure to Black Lives Matter news [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA. **Top Paper Award**.

Battacchio, A. F. & Smith, M. A. (August 2022). Reaching the Rust Belt: Exploring identity and intergroup threat in 2020 election speeches [Paper presentation]. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Meeting. Detroit, MI.

Chen, Y., Choung, H., Battacchio, A. F., Smith, M. A., Hiaeshutter-Rice, D., Draeger, M., Dong, C., & Xiao, A. (August 2022). Advancing discursive opportunity structure: the racial justice discourses by news and non-news local community organizations on Facebook [Paper presentation]. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Meeting. Detroit, MI.

Battacchio, A. F., Thorson, K., Hiaeshutter-Rice, D., Smith, M. A., Chen, Y., Edgerly, S.....Werth, L. (August 2022). Localizing social justice stories: Social media and local civic information infrastructure in six Midwestern United States communities [Paper presentation]. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Meeting. Detroit, MI.

Haenschen, K. & Smith, M. A. (May 2022). Ideological framing of Black Lives Matter news coverage drive partisan polarization [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Paris, France.

Smith, M. A. & Haenschen, K. (September 2021). Framing Black Lives Matter: The impact of partisan news on reader attitudes [Paper presentation]. American Political Science Association Conference, Virtual.

Smith, M. A. (May 2021). I saw it on social media: African American stereotype endorsement in the era of social media news consumption [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Virtual.

Bigman, C., Planey, A., Williamson, L. D., Smith, M. A., & McNeil, S. (May 2021). 'There will be screen caps': The role of digital documentation and platform collapse in propagation of racial discourses [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Virtual.

Overbye, H., Smith, M. A., & Dixon, T. L. (November 2020). Incredible news and news credibility: Understanding the link between media use, partisanship, and credibility perceptions of disinformation [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Virtual.

Smith, M. A., Dixon, T. L., Sevilla, M., & Weeks, K. (November 2019). Biased racial (mis)representations and news frames on social media [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

Smith, M. A., Dixon, T. L., & Overbye, H. (November 2019). The perils of disinformation: Racial stereotyping, continued influence effect, and affective political polarization [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

Bigman, C., Smith, M. A., Williamson, L. D., Planey, A., & McNeil, S. (May 2019). Selective sharing on social media: examining the effects of race-related disparate impact frames on intentions to retransmit news stories among U.S. college students [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Williamson, L. D., Smith, M. A., & Bigman, C. (May 2019). Does discrimination breed mistrust? Examining the role of mediated and non-mediated discrimination experiences in medical mistrust [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Butkowski, C., Dixon, T. L., Weeks, K., & Smith, M. A. (May 2019). Quantifying the feminine self(ie): Gendered self-stereotyping and social media feedback in young women's Instagram selfies [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Smith, M. A., Williamson, L. D., & Bigman, C. (November 2018). Can social media news encourage activism? The impact of exposure to mediated discrimination on college students' activism intention [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT.

Dixon, T. L., Weeks, K., Butkowski, C., & Smith, M. A. (November 2018). A dangerous distortion of our families: (Mis)representations of Black and White families in news and opinion media [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT.

Smith, M. A., Weeks, K., & Butkowski, C. (November 2017) The voice of images: The use of images as a form of protest [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX.

Dixon, T. L., Josey, C., Smith, M. A., Stamps, D., & Linz, D. (November 2017). Internet news consumption and media stereotyping: Implications for the socially mediated stereotyping model [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX.

Smith, M. A. (October 2016). #BlackTwitter: An analysis of African Americans' sociocultural construction of Twitter as a Black Public Sphere [Paper presentation]. The Social Media Technology Conference & Workshop, Washington, DC.

Fox, J., Vendemia, M. A., Smith, M. A., & Brehm, N. R. (November 2015). Effects of private and public Selfies on women's self-objectification, mood, self-esteem, endorsement of beauty ideals, and social aggression [Paper presentation]. National Communication Association Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Honors & Awards

2025 Top Paper Award, African American Communication and Culture Division
National Communication Association

2022 Top Paper Award, Mass Communication Division
National Communication Association

2019 The Karl R. Wallace Award for distinguished scholarship by a graduate student
Communication Department, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Affiliations

2024 – Present Media & Democracy Data Cooperative (MDDC) ♀
Executive Board, Publicity Lead

2024 Election Coverage and Democracy Network (ECAD)

Ad-Hoc Reviewer

Communication Monographs, Communication Theory, Computational Communication Research, Discourse, Context, & Media, Information Communication & Society, Journal of Communication, Journal of Information Technology & Politics, Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media, Mass Communication and Society, Media Psychology, National Science Foundation, New Media & Society, Political Communication, Social Media + Society, Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World

Guest Lectures, Invited Talks, Panels & Colloquia

Smith, M. A. (September 2025). *How can political communication scholarship help us understand and address crises facing democracies?* [Closing Plenary Panel with L. Bode, S. McGregor, M. Smith, C. Vaccari; Chair R. Lawrence]. Political Communication Pre-Conference, American Political Science Association Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia.

Smith, M. A. (October 2024). *“Computational Content Analysis”*. Presentation given to MEJO 703: Mass Communication Research Methods, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. [Virtual Event]

Smith, M. A. (April 2024). *“Rooted in Identity Politics: A Critical Disinformation Approach to Understanding the Role of Identity in Disinformation”*. Ukraine Forum: Impact of Russia’s 10-year War on Ukraine, Michigan State University.

Smith, M. A. (April 2023). *“Pandemic Prevention (PIPP) Workshop on Modeling Intervention Acceptance for Disease Mitigation”*. Northeastern University. [Virtual Event]

Smith, M. A. (March 2023). Respondent. A Symposium to Celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (April 2022). Moderator. Disinformation, Media & Democracy, Brown University. [Virtual Event]

Smith, M. A. (March 2021). *“Race and the News”*. Presentation given to Communication & Media Research Group, University of Michigan. [Virtual Event]

Smith, M. A. (January 2021). *“Race and News Media”*. Presentation given to COM 494: Media and the Marginalized, University of San Diego. [Virtual Event]

Smith, M. A. (November 2021). *“Supporting Evidence: Truth in Uncertain Times”*. Sharper Focus, Wider Lens Series, Michigan State University.

Smith, M. A. (November 2020). *“Race and the News”*. Presentation given to Journalism 505: Future of Journalism, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (April 2019). *“Race and News Media”*. Presentation given to Journalism 460: Social Media: Theory and Practice, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (November 2018). *“Race and the Mass Media”*. Presentation given to Political Science 201: Racial and Ethnic Politics in the United States, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (September 2018). *“Racial Microaggressions Workshop”*. Presentation given in the Political Science Department, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (August 2018). *“Racial Microaggressions Workshop”*. Presentation given at the Communication 101 Training Meeting, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Smith, M. A. (August 2017). *“Racial Microaggressions Workshop”*. Presentation given at the Communication 101 Training Meeting, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Media Appearances

White, R. (Host). (2025, March 25). *MSU scholars examine race and identity in receiving and comprehending news on MSU Today with Russ White Podcast* [Audio podcast]. MSU Today. 

(2024, September 11). Media literacy during election season: MSU experts can comment. *MSU Today*. 

Team MIRS. (2024, January 23). Connecting on expanded social media won't be like 2020. *Michigan Information & Research Service Inc.* 

Livingston, M. (2021, November 29). Facebook changes its corporate name to Meta: MSU professors react. *The State News.* 

Professional Workshops

2024 The 2024 Outbraving Summit

Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

2021 The Summer Institutes in Computational Social Science

Howard University

2021 National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity: Faculty Success Program

Teaching

Michigan State University

Graduate Courses

Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods (COM 803)

Contemporary Issues in Journalism (JRN 806)

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (CAS 892)

Undergraduate Courses

Digital Analytics (ADV 442)

Account Planning and Research (ADV 342)

Service

2025 – Present Political Communication Section Executive Committee (Nominations Chair)

American Political Science Association

2025 – Present Political Communication Reading Group Coordinator

College of Communication Arts & Sciences, Michigan State University

2025 – Present Write On! Coordinator

College of Communication Arts & Sciences, Michigan State University

2024 – Present Department Advisory Committee

Advertising + Public Relations Department, Michigan State University

2024 – Present Information and Media Speaker Series Committee

College of Communication Arts & Sciences, Michigan State University

2024 Emerging Scholars Award Committee

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

2021 – 2024 Graduate Studies Committee

Advertising + Public Relations Department, Michigan State University

2021 – 2024 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) Committee

International Communication Association

2023 Lynda Lee Kaid Award Committee

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

2023 Political Communication Section Executive Committee (Member-at-Large)

American Political Science Association

2023 The Summer Research Opportunities Program

Michigan State University

Graduate Advising

Ph.D. Committee Member

Antonia Gordon, Political Science at Michigan State University

Huzaifa Muhammad, Information and Media at Michigan State University

Adanma Mbonu, Information and Media at Michigan State University

Molly Landers, Communicative Sciences & Disorders at Michigan State University

Marialina Antolini (Ph.D., 2025), Information and Media at Michigan State University

Ava Francesca Battocchio (Ph.D., 2025), Information and Media at Michigan State University

Veronica Parker (Ph.D., 2022), School of Education at University of Southern California

M.A. Advisor

Abbey Lieffers (M.A., 2025), Michigan State University

Jason Wright (M.A., 2024), Michigan State University

Todjanae Jones (M.A., 2024), Michigan State University

Sydni Rivers (M.A., 2023), Michigan State University

Breanna Frasher (M.A., 2022), Michigan State University

Chioma Lewis (M.A., 2021), Michigan State University

M.A. Committee Member

Olivia Martin (M.A., 2024), Michigan State University

Melody Draeger (M.A., 2022), Michigan State University

Lea Mitchell (M.A., 2022), Michigan State University

Moldir Moldagaliveva (M.A., 2022), Michigan State University

Professional Memberships

American Political Science Association, International Communication Association, National Communication Association