



COMPUTATIONAL
Social Science@CUHK

WHEN SOCIAL SCIENCE MEETS COMPUTER SCIENCE...

Webinar of Computational Social Science Laboratory (CSSL@CUHK)

Vibe Researching with Agentic AI for Social Sciences

17 June 2026 (Wednesday), 10:30 - 12:00 (UTC+8, HKT)

Venue: Rm 520, Chen Kou Bun Building, CUHK and Zoom (Mixed Mode)

Abstract

AI Agents with persistent memory, tool access, and specialist skills can now execute multi-step reasoning across the entire research pipeline, from idea to submission. This is not merely the fourth wave of research automation — following statistical computation, digital trace data, and machine learning — but the first to automate reasoning itself, and it raises a question that belongs to the sociology of science tradition: what happens to the social organization of knowledge production when machines can perform tasks that previously required years of specialized training? This talk situates vibe researching as a sociological rather than purely technical question. AI agents disrupt Mertonian norms in distinct ways — complicating communalism, challenging universalism, blurring disinterestedness, and straining organized skepticism — and the delegation boundary is cognitive, not sequential, separating codifiable execution (delegate) from tacit judgment, theoretical originality, and field knowledge (protect). A generation–verification asymmetry further structures the human–AI relationship: AI compresses production time by orders of magnitude while verification time remains largely unchanged, with consequences unfolding at individual, institutional, and epistemic levels. Using Open Scholar Skills — a Claude Code plugin the speaker developed covering research workflow from idea formation, peer-review simulation, to replication — as a live case study, the talk closes with the stratification, pedagogical, and normative stakes for the discipline.



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Biography

Dr. Yongjun Zhang is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and the Institute for Advanced Computational Science at Stony Brook University, with affiliations in the AI Innovation Institute, the Center for the Study of Changing Systems of Power, and the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies. His work sits at the intersection of computational social science, AI, and sociology, with recent projects focused on how AI agents reshape the social organization of knowledge production. He is the developer of Open Scholar Skills, an open-source Claude Code plugin of specialist AI skills covering the end-to-end social science research pipeline.



On-site Registration
(non-CSS fellows only)



Zoom Link



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