

Anna Ablove

PhD Candidate, *University of Michigan*

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Research Overview

My research centers on network security and Internet freedom, particularly at the intersection of computer science, policy, and human rights. I focus on topics including network measurement, censorship and geoblocking, and emerging forms of censorship. More recently, I've been interested in exploring how censorship infrastructure operates at scale, and the actors and systems that sustain it.

Education

- Ph.D. in Computer Science and Engineering, University of Michigan, 2023 – *Present*
GPA: 4.0, Advisor: Prof. Roya Ensafi
- M.S.E. in Computer Science and Engineering, University of Michigan, 2022 – 2024
GPA: 4.0
- B.S.E. in Computer Science and Engineering, University of Michigan, 2019 – 2022
Minor in Physics, GPA: 3.7, *magna cum laude*

Conference Publications

- [1] [USENIX'26] **Technical Analysis of the Geedge Networks Firewall Source Code Leak**
Anna Ablove, J. Walker, B. Wolin, N. Niere, F. Lange, A. Ortwein, A. Huremagic, R. Priyanka, A. Zohaib, J. Sheffey, N. Heitmann, J. Alex Halderman, J. Somorovsky, A. Houmansadr, R. Ensafi, M. Wu, and E. Wustrow
In: USENIX Security Symposium 2026, (USENIX '26)
Acceptance rate: 12.5%, 196/1569 (*Cycle 2*)
- [2] [S&P'26] **CenAlert: Amplifying User Voices to Rally Censorship Measurement**
A. Ortwein, Anna Ablove, A. Huremagic, L. Chang, V. Fortuna, and R. Ensafi
In: IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy 2026, (S&P '26).
Acceptance rate: 12.6%, 135/1070
- [3] [NDSS'26] **Characterizing the Implementation of Censorship Policies in Chinese LLM Services**
Anna Ablove*, S. Chandrashekar*, X. Qiang, and R. Ensafi
In: Network and Distributed System Security Symposium 2026, (NDSS '26).
Acceptance rate: 17.9%, 265/1481
- [4] [USENIX'24] **Digital Discrimination of Users in Sanctioned States: The Case of the Cuba Embargo**
Anna Ablove, S. Chandrashekar, H. Le, R. Sundara Raman, R. Ramesh, H. Oppenheimer, and R. Ensafi
In: USENIX Security Symposium 2024, (USENIX '24).
Distinguished Paper Award
Acceptance rate: 18.3%, 417/2276
- [5] [USENIX'24] **Bridging Barriers: A Survey of Challenges and Priorities in the Censorship Circumvention Landscape**
D. Xue*, Anna Ablove*, R. Ramesh, G. Kwak-Danciu, and R. Ensafi

In: USENIX Security Symposium 2024, (USENIX '24).

Acceptance rate: 18.3%, 417/2276

[6] [IMC'22] **TSPU: Russia's Decentralized Censorship System**

D. Xue, B. Mixon-Baca, ValdikSS, **Anna Ablove**, B. Kujath, J. Crandall, and R. Ensafi

In: Internet Measurement Conference 2022, (IMC '22).

Acceptance rate: 26.4%, 56/212

Research Awards and Honors

– **FOCI'26 Best Practical Award** (*July 2026*)

Our paper, “*Digital Discrimination of Users in Sanctioned States: The Case of the Cuba Embargo*”, won the Best Practical Award at FOCI 2026.

– **First Prize in CSE Honors Competition** (*November 2025*)

Placed first in the CSE Honors Competition with the talk, “*Investigating Emerging Private-Sector Censorship Threats*”.

– **USENIX'24 Distinguished Paper Award** (*August 2024*)

Our paper, “*Digital Discrimination of Users in Sanctioned States: The Case of the Cuba Embargo*”, won the Distinguished Paper Award at USENIX 2024.

Service

Academic & Community

- TPC Member, Free and Open Communications on the Internet 2026 (FOCI'26)
- Program Coordinator, Explore CS Research Program, UofM (2025 – Present)
- Tor Administrator, UofM (2025 – Present)

Outreach & Panels

- Censored Planet Representative, Global Gathering 2025, Estoril, PT
- Organizer of Open Measurement Gathering 3, 2025, Online
- Censored Planet Representative, Open Measurement Gatherings (2024 – 2025)
- Panelist, Explore CS Research Program 2025, UofM
- Panelist, CSE Honors College Graduate Studies 2024, UofM
- Panelist, CSE Honors College Graduate Studies 2023, UofM

Reports and Blogposts

- **How Chinese LLM Services Implement Censorship**
Censored Planet, April 1, 2026
- **How Geoblocking Limits Digital Access in Sanctioned States**
The Lawfare Institute, November 18, 2024
- **Digital Discrimination of Users in Sanctioned States**
Censored Planet, August 15, 2024

Experience

- **Research Assistant, University of Michigan** (2022 – *Present*)
I work as a research assistant under my advisor Prof. Roya Ensaifi. My work focuses on problems in the internet freedom, anti-censorship space.
- **Research Assistant, University of Michigan** (May 2021 – August 2021)
I work as a research intern under Prof. J. Alex Halderman investigating the relationship between secure election systems and voter confidence.

Speaking

- **Conference Talk – Extended: “Technical Analysis of the Geedge Networks Firewall Source Code Leak”**
USENIX Security Symposium 2026, Online, September 14, 2026.
- **Conference Talk: “Technical Analysis of the Geedge Networks Firewall Source Code Leak”**
USENIX Security Symposium 2026, Baltimore, MD, August 13, 2026.
- **Guest Lecture: “Measuring and Characterizing Internet Censorship”**
EECS-388, Introduction to Computer Security, Ann Arbor, MI, March 23, 2026.
- **Conference Talk: “Characterizing the Implementation of Censorship Policies in Chinese LLM Services”**
Network and Distributed System Security Symposium 2026, San Diego, CA, February 24, 2026
- **Finalist Presentation: “Investigating Emerging Private-Sector Censorship Threats”**
CSE Honors Competition, 2025, Ann Arbor, MI, November 10, 2025.
- **Conference Talk: “Digital Discrimination of Users in Sanctioned States: The Case of the Cuba Embargo”**
USENIX Security Symposium 2024, Philadelphia, PA, August 15, 2024.

Student Grants and Travel Awards

- **PETS Travel Stipend** (*July 2023*)
Granted to attend FOCI '23 and the PET Symposium 2023 in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- **USENIX GREPSEC Workshop Travel Grant** (*August 2023*)
Granted to attend GREPSEC VI workshop and USENIX '23 in Anaheim, California.