

Runan (Andrew) Lin

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EDUCATION

The University of Chicago - Chicago, IL, graduated May 2025

B.A. in Sociology; Double Major in Media, Arts, and Design

Cumulative GPA: 3.94/4.00, *summa cum laude*

- **Honors:**

- **Phi Beta Kappa**, The University of Chicago, 2025

- Robert Maynard Hutchins Scholar

- Dean's List (2021-22, 22-23, 23-24, 24-25 academic years)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sociology of culture; digital ethnography; identity and gender in online and gaming communities; affect and emotional investment in play; media and social interaction; digital and analog play cultures

Critical media theory; media aesthetics and affect; ludic and affective cultures; play and identity formation; digital ethnography; transmedia storytelling; creative practice as research and critical inquiry

SELECTED PAPERS

“Scaling the Great Firewall: Identity and Resistance in Two Chinese-speaking Digital Diasporas.” Supervised by Professor Caterina Fugazzola, University of Chicago, Autumn 2022, Revised 2025.

Investigates how Chinese-speaking online communities form digital diasporas in response to state censorship. Shows how linguistic othering and collective discourse constitute exclusion-based group identity and redefine belonging beyond geographic migration. Challenges conventional definitions of digital diaspora by demonstrating how online communities can function as exclusive sites of belonging.

“Gender and Tabletop Roleplaying: Play and Identity Exploration.” Supervised by Professor Tessa Huttenlocher, University of Chicago, Winter 2025.

Analyzes how tabletop roleplaying communities mediate gender performance and structure identity experimentation. Finds that emotional engagement with player-avatars conditions the depth of gender exploration, linking affective labor to social identity construction.

“Shared Space and Personal Faith: Community and Individualism in Home Meetings.” Supervised by Professor Omar McRoberts, University of Chicago, Spring 2024.

Analyzes how members of a small Christian organization construct communal religious identity through the transformation of private domestic spaces. Shows how ritual practice, spatial symbolism, and interpersonal interaction mediate the relationship between individual agency and collective belonging in religious life.

“Access to Quality Education in The Public School System: Understanding Educational Accessibility in Chicago through Cluster Analysis.” Supervised by Professor Pedro Amaral, University of Chicago, Spring 2023.

Conducted cluster analysis using Chicago Public Schools demographic and performance datasets (n = 434) to examine the relationship between racial composition, socioeconomic status, and educational quality. Identified five school clusters with distinct demographic and institutional patterns, revealing the complexity of racialized access to quality education in urban contexts.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Servellina - Portugal (Remote)

Game Designer/Concept Artist | May 2025 – September 2025

- Designed core gameplay mechanics and foundational systems during early development phases.
- Developed and implemented combat systems using C# within the Unity Engine, putting into practice how player interaction, design logic, and visual feedback structure engagement and meaning-making in digital media.
- Created visual concepts for enemies and bosses that examined how aesthetic form and narrative design intersect in constructing affective player experience.

- Analyzed collaborative workflows and decision-making processes in an international indie development team, gaining insight into creative labor and distributed production networks.

Weston Game Lab - Chicago, IL

Puzzle Designer/ Content Designer | June 2024 – September 2024

- Designed and contributed to the development of approximately 50 interactive puzzles and minigames for a narrative-driven game experience, and frontend integration using HTML and CSS, ensuring visual consistency and responsive design.
- Investigated through practice the relationship between problem-solving, narrative immersion, and user experience within collaborative creative production. Examined how gameplay can model and express social dynamics of on-campus discourse and discord.
- Produced and illustrated in-game artifacts (achievement stickers, Tarot cards) that explored symbolic representation and player reward structures as systems of meaning and motivation.
- Supported character development by sketching concepts and independently designing two non-playable characters (NPCs).

The University of Chicago - Chicago, IL

Research Assistant | July 2023 – September 2023

- Conducted in-depth academic research under the guidance of Professor Augustus Rose on the contemporary Art scene, San Francisco tech culture, and the social dynamics of auctions.
- Engaged in qualitative research through extensive analysis of primary sources, including personal accounts and news articles, focusing on art fairs to understand the nexus between the contemporary art scene and San Francisco's tech culture.
- Conducted a comprehensive interview with an industry professional in art dealing, gaining firsthand insights into the valuation process of art, further enriching the study's depth on social dynamics in auctions.

Southern University of Science and Technology - Chicago, IL

Digital Humanities Project Management Intern | June 2022 – July 2022

- Cooperated with the Chinese university in developing its virtual laboratory for humanities research projects, communicated with program director on logistics, and reduced language barriers.
- Secured a grant of \$4,000 from UChicago, and researched 10+ top U.S. universities' virtual laboratory projects.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Christians on Campus - Chicago, IL

Events Coordinator | September 2021 – June 2025

- Organized events annually, including coordinating food and transportation logistics for weekly discussion meetings, information sessions, and special cultural events engaging broader UChicago student body
- Led event planning workstream for ~30 members; delegated key tasks and communicated expectations to juniors while overseeing ideation and execution receiving positive feedback from members

Shenzhen Green Rose Social Work Center - Shenzhen, China

Volunteer | July 2020 – September 2021

- Co-led summer camp for 20 children from underserved families.
- Designed and delivered weekly mathematics and English classes, engaging up to 10 elementary-school students per class, adapting teaching methods to meet diverse educational needs and language proficiency levels.

PUBLICATION

Lin, Runan. "Fourth Crusade." The Concord Review, Edited by Will Fitzhugh, vol. 31, no. 3, 2021, pp. 73–134.

Lin, Runan. "How is the modern world different from previous periods of history and why did it come into existence when and where it did?" *John Locke Institute Essay Competition*, First Place (History), 2020. Published on the John Locke Institute website.

SKILLS

Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native); English (proficient); French (conversational); Japanese (elementary)

Skills: Experienced in MAXQDA, Unity, Adobe Photoshop & Premiere, Reason Studios 12; proficient knowledge of R, JavaScript, HTML, and CSS; Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint.