Shannon C. Left

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PROFILE

Doctoral student in Computational Social Science and instructor of record for undergraduate computational data science at George Mason University. Research spans cultural evolutionary theory, agent-based modeling, and the emergence and decay of social systems across cultures, with policy applications. A career in film, television, and advertising production built fluency in human behavior at scale and in leading cross-disciplinary teams.

EDUCATION

- **PhD, Computational Social Science**, George Mason University · Fall 2026 – present
- **MAIS, Interdisciplinary Studies** (Computational Social Science), George Mason University · August 2026
- **BAS, Cloud Computing and Management of Information Systems**, George Mason University · May 2025

TEACHING

Graduate Instructor of Record · Department of Computational and Data Sciences, George Mason University · 2026–2027

- Sole instructor for an undergraduate course in computational data science, responsible for curriculum, lectures, assessment, and grading.

PUBLICATION

Cohen, Y.L., Callahan, J., **Left, S.C.**, & Rothman, D.S. (2026). Introducing Threat-Perceiving Actors in Group-Selective Public Goods Games. In *Advances in Social Simulation (SSC 2025)*, Springer Proceedings in Complexity. doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-31712-4_6

RESEARCH

- **Permission to Change Course** (current, 2026): NetLogo ABM of how stakeholders judge government policy reversals by track record, value fit, and peer trust.
- **Permission to Deviate** (MAIS thesis, 2026): Python and NetLogo ABM of how audiences grant and withdraw prestige through selective trust.
- **Countersignaling and Preferential Attachment in Reputation Networks** (working paper): modified Barabási–Albert model validated against the Epinions signed trust network.
- **Earlier projects (2024–2025):** conspiracy-theory diffusion on YouTube (Python, NetworkX); state-formation ABM adapted from Cederman's Geoism; *The Double Engine of Cooperation*, a NetLogo ABM of group selection.

SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

- **Languages:** Python, R, Java, JavaScript, SQL, Bash, PowerShell
- **Modeling & platforms:** NetLogo, MASON, Mesa, NetworkX, Jupyter, AWS, Azure
- **Certifications:** AWS Cloud Practitioner, Azure Fundamentals, CompTIA Security+ and Network+, CITI Social & Behavioral Research

EXPERIENCE

Production Designer, Art Director, Television Producer · Los Angeles · 2005–2018

- Led departments of artists and craftspeople designing and building large-scale environments for TV, film, live events, and commercials, on budget and on deadline. Credits include *Minute To Win It* (NBC), *The Real World* (MTV), and Cirque du Soleil.

SERVICE

- Volunteer, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Fairfax County, VA