

Morgan Wack

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Postdoctoral Scholar

2024 – Present

Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ), University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland

Research Assistant Professor

2023 – 2024

Media Forensics Hub, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, USA

EDUCATION

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

2023: PhD – Political Science (*Emphases* – Political Communication; Methodology)

Dissertation: “Technology & Elections in Developing Countries: Challenges & Opportunities for Democratic Consolidation”

2020: MA – Political Science (*Emphases* – Political Communication; Methodology)

London School of Economics, London, UK

2016: MSc – Global Politics

Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO

2015: BA – Sociology

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Wack, M. & Parry, D.A. (2025). “Synthetic Diversity: Examining the Effects of Ethnic Targeting Using AI-Generated Political Ads”. *International Journal of Communication*. Vol. 19, 3736-3760.

Saucier, C. J., **Wack, M.**, Linvill, D., Okoronkwo, A., Tatineni, G., & Sezgin, A. (2025). Content Camouflage: How Diversified Posting Patterns Influence Human Detection of AI-Enabled Social Bots. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 108881.

Wack, M.*, Schafer, J.S.*, Kennedy, I., Beers, A., Spiro, E. S., & Starbird, K. (2025). Legislating Uncertainty: Election Policies and the Amplification of Misinformation. *Policy Studies Journal*. *Equal Contributors

Wack, M., Linvill, D., Ehertt, C. & Warren, P. (2025). “Evidence of AI Interference from a State-Backed Disinformation Campaign”. *PNAS Nexus*. Vol. 4, 4.

Wack, M., Magistro, B., & Aslett, K. (2025). “Silence in the Stands: Assessing the Impact of Russian “Sportswashing” on Online Fan Behavior Following the Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine”. *Social Science Quarterly*. Vol. 0, 0.

Parsons, S., Kennedy, I., Bentley, Q., & **Wack, M.** (2025). “Telling My Sons How Angel Reese Stood Toe to Toe with the KKK & Won”: Colorblind Racism & Intersectionality in Sports Discourse on Social Media. *Sociology of Race & Ethnicity*.

Schafer, J.S., Duskin, K., Prochaska, S., **Wack, M.**, Beers, A., Bozarth, L., Agajanian, T., Caulfield, M., Spiro, E.S. and Starbird, K. (2025). “ElectionRumors2022: A dataset of election rumors on Twitter during the 2022 US midterms.” *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*. Vol. 5.

Wack, M. & Jalbert, M. (2024). “Social Truth Queries as a Novel Method for Combating Misinformation: Evidence from Kenya.” *International Journal of Press/Politics*. Vol. 0, 0. 1-25.

Jalbert, M., **Wack, M.**, Arya, P., & Williams, L. (2023). “Social truth queries: Development of a new user-driven intervention for countering online misinformation”. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*.

Magistro, B. & **Wack, M.** (2023). Racial bias in fans and officials: Evidence from the Italian Serie A. *Sociology*, 57(6), 1302-1321.

Bak-Coleman, J., Kennedy, I., **Wack, M.**, Beers, A., Schafer, J.S., Spiro, E., Starbird, K. & West, J. (2022). “Combining interventions to reduce the spread of viral misinformation.” *Nature Human Behavior*: 1-9.

Kennedy, I., * **Wack, M.***, Schafer, J.S., Beers, A., Spiro, E., Starbird, K. (2022). “Repeat Spreaders and Election Delegitimization: A Comprehensive Dataset of Misinformation Tweets from the 2020 U.S. Election.” *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, Vol. 2. *Equal Contributors

Himanshu, Z., * **Wack, M.***, Zhang, Y., Schafer, J.S., Beers, A., Starbird, K., Calo, R., & West, J. (2022). “Auditing Google’s Search Headlines as a Potential Gateway to Misleading Content: Evidence from the 2020 U.S. Election.” *Journal of Online Trust and Safety*, Vol. 1, 4. *Equal Contributors

Ziegler, M., **Wack, M.**, Ingutia, N., Muiruri, I., Njogu, N., Muriithi, K., Njoroge, W., Long, J. & Heimerl, K. (2020). “Can Phones Build Relationships? A Case Study of a Kenyan Wildlife Conservancy’s Community Development.” In *Proceedings of the 3rd ACM SIGCAS Conf. on Computing and Sustainable Societies*: 219-230. **ACM Best Paper Award**.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Wack, M., Mudavadi, K. & Jalbert, M. (2025). Chapter in *Election Observation at a Crossroads*. Ed. Moloney, Thomas. “Election Observer Statements and Domestic Perceptions of Election Integrity.”

Wack, M. & Kharazian, Z. (Forthcoming Chapter in *The Handbook of Disinformation and the Media*). “Existential threat or moral panic? Synthesizing debates about disinformation’s impact”.

ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

Wack, M., Duskin, K., & Hodel, D. (R&R). “Fact-checking Efforts Face Significant Practical Barriers”. *Pre-Print Available*.

Pipal, C., **Wack, M.**, Profos, A., Vogel, E. & Wittstock, N. (R&R). “Increasing the Accuracy and Transparency of Large Language Model Classifications with Iterative Self-Refinement”.

Jalbert, M.* & **Wack, M.*** (R&R). “Misaligned moderation? Intuitions about content moderation are inconsistent with effective practices for reducing conspiracy beliefs”. *Equal Contributors.

Wack, M. (Under Review). “A collaborative digital field study shows how community-led interventions can minimize engagement with election falsehoods”. *Pre-Print Available*. **ICA 2026 Paper Award Winner**.

Wack, M.* & Prochaska, S.* (Under Review). “Making Sense of AI-Generated Disinformation: How Audience Interpretations Influence the Impact of Deepfakes”. *Equal Contributors.

Wack, M., Allan, J., Boatwright, B, & Cranmer, C. (Under Review). “Assessing How Fact-checks Influence Accuracy and Consensus Judgments: Evidence from the Olympics”.

Pipal, C., **Wack, M.**, & Vogel, E. (Under Review). “Learning to Go Political: Audience Reinforcement and the Disproportionate Political Role of Smaller Social Media Influencers”.

Walker, C.*, Birrer, A.*, **Wack, M.***, Schiff, K.*, Schiff, D.*, & Messina, J.P. (Under Review). “Beyond Deception: A New Typology of Political Deepfakes”. *Equal Contributors. *Pre-Print Available*.

IN PREPARATION

Wack, M., Warren, P. & Alam, M. “The Laziness of the Crowd: Selective Attention Among Raters Risks Undermining the Efficacy of X’s Community Notes Program”.

Wack, M. & Long, J. “Examining the Role of Supreme Courts in Managing Perceptions of Election Legitimacy: Evidence from Kenya’s 2022 Election.”

Wack, M. & Wittstock, N. “Re-examining the Effects of Illegitimate Election Victories in the Internet Age”. *Pre-Print Available*.

Wack, M., Vogel, E., Pipal, C., & Esser, F. “Trust in the Digital Age: News Influencers, Political Misinformation, and Audience Perceptions”.

Wack, M. & Paulsen, T. “Does Democracy Die in Darkness? Electricity Outages & Electoral Accountability in South Africa”.

Wack, M., Wittstock, N., & Pipal, C. “In Denial? Tracking How Politicians Frame Anti-Climate Arguments”.

Wack, M., Vogel, E., Pipal, C., Hoes, E., & Esser, F. “News Activation and Democratic Outcomes: Evidence from Zambia”.

Wack, M., Blessing, J., & Mahl, D. “AI Avatars, Health Communication, and Epistemic Authorities”.

RECENT FRONT-FACING REPORTS/ARTICLES

Wack, M., Walker, C., Birrer, A., Schiff, D., Schiff, K., Messina, J.P. (2025). Scrutinizing the Many Faces of Political Deepfakes. *Tech Policy Press*. Available at: <https://www.techpolicy.press/scrutinizing-the-many-faces-of-political-deepfakes/>

Wack, M. (2025). The 2020 U.S. election shows how state election policies can fuel conspiracy theories about voting. *LSE Phelan U.S. Blog*. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2025/10/06/the-2020-us-election-shows-how-state-election-policies-can-fuel-conspiracy-theories-about-voting/>

Wack, M. (2024). AI propaganda campaign in Rwanda has been pushing pro-Kagame messages – a dangerous new trend in Africa. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/ai-propaganda-campaign-in-rwanda-has-been-pushing-pro-kagame-messages-a-dangerous-new-trend-in-africa-234296>

Wack, M., Linvill, D., & Warren, P. (2024). Old Despots, New Tricks – An AI-Empowered Pro-Kagame/RPF Coordinated Influence Network on X. *Media Forensics Hub Reports*. 5. Available at: https://open.clemson.edu/mfh_reports/5

Long, J., **Wack, M.**, & Menaldo, V. (2021). Prosecuting ex-presidents for corruption is trending worldwide – but it’s not always great for democracy. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/prosecuting-ex-presidents-for-corruption-is-trending-worldwide-but-its-not-always-great-for-democracy-156931>

Starbird et al. (2021). *The Long Fuse: Misinformation and the 2020 Election*. (2021), with the Election Integrity Partnership, Stanford Digital Repository. Tech. Rep., Center for an Informed Public, Digital Forensic Research Lab, Graphika, & Stanford Internet Observatory, Stanford Digital Repository. Available at: <https://www.eipartnership.net/>

RECENT INVITED TALKS

Wack, M. (2025). *Does Democracy Die in Darkness? Electricity Outages & Electoral Accountability in South Africa*. Invited Researcher Series. Nuffield College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom. December 2025.

Wack, M. (2025). *External Price Shocks, State Capacity, and Violence from Madagascar’s Vanilla Industry*. Invited Researcher. Department of Politics, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland. December 2025.

RECENT GRANTS

- Clemson Media Forensics Strategic Project Fund.** “Win, Lose, or Disinform?: Election Misinformation in the Digital Age”.
- Morgan Wack (Co-PI), Ayse Deniz Lokmanoglu (Co-PI), & Amira Jadoon (Co-PI)
 - Awarded – \$18,000.
- Google Research Inclusion Research Award.** “Understanding and Co-Designing Responsible Generative AI Tools with Historically Marginalized Communities in South Africa and Kenya”.
- **Morgan Wack** (PI) with Sukrit Venkatagiri
 - Awarded – \$60,000
- UW CIP’s Innovation Fund.** “Synthetic Media and Public Trust”
- **Morgan Wack** (PI) & Stephen Prochaska (Co-PI)
 - Awarded – \$8,898
- UW iSchool’s Strategic Research Fund.** “Testing the effectiveness of peer dialogue facilitation in reducing the influence of online mis- and disinformation”
- Madeline Jalbert (PI), **Morgan Wack** (Co-PI) & Jenna-Lee Strugnell (Collaborator)
 - Awarded – \$15,283
- UW CIP’s Innovation Fund.** “An analysis of the influence of rumors and unfounded conspiracies in Kenya’s 2022 election”.
- Madeline Jalbert (PI) & **Morgan Wack** (Co-PI) – \$10,886.
 - Awarded – \$10,886

RECENT MEDIA COVERAGE

- *Scrutinizing the Many Faces of Political Deepfakes* – [Tech Policy Press](#)
- *The 2020 US election shows how state election policies can fuel conspiracy theories about voting* – [LSEPP](#)
- *AI image from the White House goes viral* – [Deutsche Welle \(DW\)](#)
- *As Iran and Israel fought, people turned to AI for facts. They didn't find many.* – [GPB News](#)
- *A Russian fake news ring was struggling. Then it targeted USAID.* – [The Washington Post](#)
- *Russian propaganda campaign used AI to scale output without sacrificing credibility* – [PsyPost](#)
- *Elon Musk said he’d eliminate bots from X. Instead, election influence campaigns are running wild* – [Rest of World](#)

FELLOWSHIPS

- Election Integrity Partnership Fellowship (2022)
Richard S. Wesley Scholarship (2022)
Craig Newmark Fellowship (2022)
FLAS Fellowship (2020)
Paul Speyer Fellowship (2019)
Peter May Fellowship (2018)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND AFFILIATIONS

- Consulting Scientist for the Intergovernmental Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE)
Member of USAID’s *Research Technical Assistance Center* (RTAC)
Board Member for the *Equality Initiative in Political Science* (EIPS)
Affiliate of the Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life (CITAP)
Languages: Intermediate Spanish and Basic German
Programming: R proficiency; Python, Nvivo, Qualtrics, SurveyCTO, and ArcGIS competency
Certificates: Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences (CSSS) Advanced Concentration

TEACHING

Spring 2024:	<i>Win, Lose, or Disinform? (POL S 3050/Creative Inquiry), Clemson University</i>
Spring 2022:	<i>TA: Data, Technology, & Development in Africa (POL S 362), University of Washington</i>
Winter 2020:	<i>TA: Global Crime & Corruption (POL S 371), University of Washington</i>
Winter 2019:	<i>TA: Religion & World Politics (POL S 307/RELIG 207), University of Washington</i>
Autumn 2019:	<i>TA: International Human Rights (LSJ 320/POL S 368), University of Washington</i>