

Morgan Wack

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POSITIONS

Postdoctoral Scholar, University of Zurich <i>Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ)</i>	2024 – Present
Research Assistant Professor, Clemson University <i>Media Forensics Hub</i>	2023 – 2024
Research Associate, University of Washington <i>Center for an Informed Public</i>	2020 – 2023

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Political Science, University of Washington	2023
M.A., Political Science, University of Washington	2021
M.Sc., Government, London School of Economics	2016
B.A., Sociology, Colorado College	2015

HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Fellow at the Centre for Disinformation in Africa (CINIA)	2026
Best Paper Award, ICA 2026 Global Communication & Social Change Division	2026
Election Integrity Partnership Fellowship	2022
Richard S. Wesley Scholarship, University of Washington	2022
Craig Newmark Fellowship, University of Washington	2022
Best Paper Award, ACM SIGCAS Conf. on Computing and Sustainable Societies	2020
Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship	2020
Paul Speyer Fellowship, University of Washington	2019
Peter May Fellowship, University of Washington	2018

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Publications

1. Pipal, C., **Wack, M.**, Profos, A. A., Vogel, E.-M., Wittstock, N., & Mpadanes, M. (2026). “When does self-correction work for LLMs in content analysis? The role of external structure and task complexity.” *Computational Communication Research*. Accepted.
2. **Wack, M.**, Duskin, K., & Hodel, D. (2026). “Fact-checking efforts face significant practical barriers.” *Political Communication*. Accepted.
3. **Wack, M.** & Parry, D. A. (2025). “Synthetic diversity: Examining the effects of ethnic targeting using AI-generated political ads.” *International Journal of Communication*, 19, 3736–3760.
4. 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.
5. **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.

6. **Wack, M.**, Linvill, D., Ehertt, C., & Warren, P. (2025). “Evidence of AI interference from a state-backed disinformation campaign.” *PNAS Nexus*, 4(4).
7. **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*.
8. Parsons, S., Kennedy, I., Bentley, Q., & **Wack, M.** (2025). “Telling my sons how Angel Reese stood toe to toe with the KKK and won: Colorblind racism and intersectionality in sports discourse on social media.” *Sociology of Race & Ethnicity*.
9. Schafer, J. S., Duskin, K., Prochaska, S., **Wack, M.**, Beers, A., Bozarth, L., Agajanian, T., Caulfield, M., Spiro, E. S., & Starbird, K. (2025). “ElectionRumors2022: A dataset of election rumors on Twitter during the 2022 U.S. midterms.” *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, 5.
10. **Wack, M.** & Jalbert, M. (2024). “Social truth queries as a novel method for combating misinformation: Evidence from Kenya.” *International Journal of Press/Politics*.
11. 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*.
12. Magistro, B. & **Wack, M.** (2023). “Racial bias in fans and officials: Evidence from the Italian Serie A.” *Sociology*, 57(6), 1302–1321.
13. Beers, A., Schafer, J. S., Kennedy, I., **Wack, M.**, Spiro, E. S., & Starbird, K. (2023). “Followback clusters, satellite audiences, and bridge nodes: Coengagement networks for the 2020 US election.” In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, 17, 59–71.
14. 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 Behaviour*, 1–9.
15. 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*, 2. *Equal contributors.
16. Zade, H.* , **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*, 1(4). *Equal contributors.
17. 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 Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies*, 219–230. Best Paper Award.

Book Chapters

1. **Wack, M.**, Mudavadi, K., & Jalbert, M. (2025). “Election observer statements and domestic perceptions of election integrity.” In *Election Observation at a Crossroads*.
2. **Wack, M.** & Kharazian, Z. (Forthcoming). “Existential threat or moral panic? Synthesizing debates about disinformation’s impact.” In *The Handbook of Disinformation and the Media*.

Manuscripts Under Review

1. **Wack, M.*** & Prochaska, S.*. “Making sense of AI-generated disinformation: How audience interpretations influence the impact of deepfakes.” *Equal contributors.
2. **Wack, M.**, Allan, J., Boatwright, B., & Cranmer, C. “Assessing how fact-checks influence accuracy and consensus judgments: Evidence from the Olympics.”

3. Jalbert, M.* & **Wack, M.*** “Misaligned moderation? Intuitions about content moderation are inconsistent with effective practices for reducing conspiracy beliefs.” *Equal contributors.
4. **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.” Pre-print: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2603.11120>.
5. Blessing, J.,* **Wack, M.*** & Mahl, D.* “AI Can Correct but Not Convince: Epistemic Authority and Emotionalized Communication in TikTok Health Misinformation Corrections.” *Equal contributors. Pre-print: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/vzxd6_v1
6. **Wack, M.** “A collaborative digital field study shows how community-led interventions can minimize engagement with election falsehoods.” Pre-print: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/sek9h_v1.
7. Erickson, M.* & **Wack, M.*** “Assessing how shifts in global demand for natural vanilla influenced crime in Madagascar.” *Equal contributors.
8. Walker, C.*, Birrer, A.*, Wack, M.*, Schiff, K.*, Schiff, D.*, & Messina, J. P. “Beyond deception: A new typology of political deepfakes.” *Equal contributors. Pre-print: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5717943.
9. Pipal, C., **Wack, M.**, & Vogel, E. “Who gets counted? Using large language models to close coverage gaps in name-based demographic classification.”
10. **Wack, M.**, Pipal, C., & Vogel, E. “Do citation limits constrain diversity? Evidence from a natural experiment across political science journals.”
11. Pipal, C., Vogel, E., & **Wack, M.** “Researchers waste 80% of LLM annotation costs by classifying one text at a time.” Pre-print: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2604.03684>.
12. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E., Pipal, C., & Warren, P. “Fact-checks can help inoculate LLMs against disinformation.” Pre-print: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/nrs5z_v1.
13. Pipal, C., **Wack, M.**, & Vogel, E. “How rare is political content among social media influencers? Evidence from election and routine periods.”

Manuscripts in Preparation

1. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E.-M., & Pipal, C. “Motivated reasoning models: How LLMs and search engines differentially enable confirmatory evidence collection.”
2. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E.-M., Pipal, C., & Syed Ali, P. “Sanding off the edges (of the Earth): How online communities contribute to the evolution of conspiracy narratives.”
3. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E.-M., & Pipal, C. “Social media as artificial selection: The cultural evolution of conspiracy theories.”
4. **Wack, M.** “Propaganda behind the firewall: How platform bans reshape Russia’s domestic and foreign messaging.”
5. **Wack, M.** & Pipal, C. “Pricing out dissent: Online content regulations and political attitudes in Tanzania.”
6. **Wack, M.** & Pipal, C. “Who goes silent? Selective exit and the composition of online political discourse after state repression.”
7. **Wack, M.** & Wittstock, N. “Inauthentic messaging campaigns, LLMs, and public perceptions in illiberal regimes.”
8. **Wack, M.** & Long, J. “Examining the role of supreme courts in managing perceptions of election legitimacy: Evidence from Kenya’s 2022 election.”
9. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E., Pipal, C., & Esser, F. “Trust in the digital age: News influencers, political misinformation, and audience perceptions.”

10. **Wack, M.** & Paulsen, T. “Does democracy die in darkness? Electricity outages and electoral accountability in South Africa.”

Public Reports and Front-Facing Articles

1. **Wack, M.**, Walker, C., Birrer, A., Schiff, D., Schiff, K., & Messina, J. P. (2025). Scrutinizing the many faces of political deepfakes. Tech Policy Press.
2. **Wack, M.** & Schafer, J. (2025). The 2020 U.S. election shows how state election policies can fuel conspiracy theories about voting. LSE Phelan U.S. Blog.
3. **Wack, M.** (2024). AI propaganda campaign in Rwanda has been pushing pro-Kagame messages. The Conversation.
4. **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.
5. Long, J., **Wack, M.**, & Menaldo, V. (2021). Prosecuting ex-presidents for corruption is trending worldwide. The Conversation.
6. Starbird, K., et al. (2021). The Long Fuse: Misinformation and the 2020 election. Election Integrity Partnership, Stanford Digital Repository.
7. **Wack, M.**, Buckley, N., Schafer, J., & Zhang, M. (2020). Inconsistencies in state-controlled media labeling. Election Integrity Partnership.

GRANTS AND AWARDS (in USD)

- 2026** UZH Graduate School Short Grant, PI, \$5,600
- 2026** Community Building Research Grant Award, Co-PI, \$11,300
- 2024** Google Research Inclusion Award, “Understanding and Co-Designing Responsible Generative AI Tools with Historically Marginalized Communities in South Africa and Kenya”, PI, \$60,000
- 2024** Clemson Media Forensics Strategic Project Fund, “Win, Lose, or Disinform?”, Co-PI, \$18,000
- 2023** UW CIP Innovation Fund, “Synthetic Media and Public Trust”, PI, \$8,898
- 2023** UW iSchool Strategic Research Fund, Co-PI, \$15,283
- 2022** Institute for Data, Democracy and Politics Research Fellowship, Co-PI, \$19,600
- 2022** UW CIP Innovation Fund, Kenya 2022 Election Project, Co-PI, \$10,886

Recent Media Coverage

1. “The misinformation accelerator: To misinformation researchers, AI is a scourge, and a powerful new tool.” Science.
2. “A Russian fake news ring was struggling. Then it targeted USAID.” The Washington Post.
3. “AI image from the White House goes viral.” Deutsche Welle.
4. “Russian propaganda campaign used AI to scale output without sacrificing credibility.” PsyPost.
5. “As Iran and Israel fought, people turned to AI for facts. They didn’t find many.” GPB News.
6. “Elon Musk said he’d eliminate bots from X. Instead, election influence campaigns are running wild.” Rest of World.
7. “How misinformation ‘superspreaders’ seed false election theories.” The New York Times.
8. “Twitter could take these steps to slow viral misinformation, researchers say.” CNET.

RECENT INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Recent Invited Talks

1. **Wack, M.** (2025). “Does democracy die in darkness? Electricity outages and electoral accountability in South Africa.” Invited Researcher Series, Nuffield College, University of Oxford. December 2025.
2. **Wack, M.** (2025). “External price shocks, state capacity, and violence from Madagascar’s vanilla industry.” Invited Researcher, Department of Politics, University of Strathclyde. December 2025.
3. **Wack, M.** & Parry, D. A. (2024). “Synthetic diversity: Examining the effects of ethnic targeting using AI-generated political ads.” Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy (LCSSP) Workshop, Caltech. October 2024.
4. Jalbert, M. & **Wack, M.** (2022). “Misinformation in a divided democracy.” Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics, George Washington University. October 2022.

Recent/Upcoming Conference Presentations

1. **Wack, M.** & Warren, P. (Forthcoming, 2026). “Laziness of the crowd: How cognitive constraints impair crowdsourced moderation.” Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA). September 2026.
3. **Wack, M.** & Prochaska, S. (Forthcoming, 2026). “Making sense of AI-generated disinformation: How audience interpretations influence the impact of deepfakes.” Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA). June 2026.
4. **Wack, M.** (Forthcoming, 2026). “Assessing the influence of community-led interventions on reductions in election falsehoods: Experimental evidence from South Africa.” Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA). June 2026.
5. Walker, C., Birrer, A., **Wack, M.**, Schiff, K., Schiff, D., & Messina, J. P. (2026). “Beyond deception: A functional typology of political deepfakes.” Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA). April 2026. *Equal contributors. Presented by Walker.
6. **Wack, M.**, Warren, P., & Alam, M. (2026). “Optimal Allocation of Fact-Checking Resources on Long-Term Prevalence of Online Misinformation.” 24 Hours of Political Psychology, University of Vienna.
7. **Wack, M.** (2026). “Inefficiencies in Crowdsourced Moderation: How Consensus Drives Conspiracies.” SGKM Annual Conference 2026.
8. **Wack, M.**, Vogel, E.-M., & Pipal, C. (2026). “Do Reference Limits Constrain Diversity? Using LLMs to Improve Name Classification.” COMPTXT Annual Conference on Computational Text Analysis 2026.
9. **Wack, M.**, Pipal, C., & Vogel, E. (2025). “Trust in the digital age: News influencers, political misinformation, and audience perceptions.” ECREA Political Communications, Innsbruck, Austria. September 2025.
10. **Wack, M.**, Pipal, C., & Vogel, E. (2025). “Trust in the digital age.” Amsterdam Trust Summit, University of Amsterdam. August 2025.
11. **Wack, M.** (2025). “Contextualizing the threats (and opportunities) presented by political deepfakes.” Computational Visual Methods and Research Symposium (CVMR), University of Zurich. August 2025.
12. Jalbert, M. & **Wack, M.** (2025). “Moderation in moderation? Intuitions about content moderation are misaligned with effective practices for reducing the spread of conspiracy beliefs.” NOWCAM, Victoria, BC. July 2025.
13. Parry, D. A. & **Wack, M.** (2025). “Synthetic diversity: Examining the effects of ethnic targeting using AI-generated political ads.” AlgoSoc International Conference, Amsterdam. May 2025.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

1. Clemson, POL S 3050/Creative Inquiry, “Win, Lose, or Disinform? Understanding Misinformation in Times of Crisis” (Spring 2024). Self-designed, research-integrated undergraduate course.

Discussion Section Lead and Teaching Assistant

1. University of Washington, POL S 362, Data, Technology, & Development in Africa (Spring 2022).
2. University of Washington, POL S 371, Global Crime & Corruption (Winter 2020).
3. University of Washington, POL S 307/RELIG 207, Religion & World Politics (Winter 2019).
4. University of Washington, LSJ 320/POL S 368, International Human Rights (Autumn 2019).

STUDENT MENTORING AND SUPERVISION

1. PhD Supervision (current): doctoral student in Communication, University of Zurich.
2. PhD Colloquium Lead: Division of Comparative and International Media Research, University of Zurich (2024–Present).
3. MA Thesis Supervision: multiple students at the University of Zurich and Clemson University.
4. Research Seminar Director: Center for an Informed Public, University of Washington (Summer 2021, Summer 2022).
5. Publication Support: I have led the conduct of several research projects alongside graduate students at UW, Clemson, and Zurich as a coordinating mentor.

SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Research and Policy Service

1. Consulting Scientist, International Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE) (2025–Present).
2. Consultant, National Democratic Institute (NDI), Kosovo Disinformation Framework (2024).
3. Member, USAID Research Technical Assistance Center (RTAC) (2024–Present).
4. Affiliate, Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life (CITAP) (2024–Present).

Departmental and Professional Service

1. Board Member, Equality Initiative in Political Science (EIPS) (2024–Present).
2. PhD Colloquium Coordinator, Division of Media Use & Effects, University of Zurich (2024–Present).
3. Department Social Media Coordinator, IKMZ, University of Zurich (2024–Present).
4. Center Coordinator, UW Political Economy Forum (2021–2023).
5. Workshop Host: Influencer Communications Workshop, University of Zurich (March 2026).
6. Co-Organizer, Annual Digital Publics Conference, University of Zurich (October 21–23, 2026).

Recent Journal Reviews

AI and Ethics, British Journal of Political Science, Computers in Human Behavior, Creator and Influencer Studies, Discover Artificial Intelligence, Discover Global Society, Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, Journal of Information Technology and Politics, Political Behavior, Political Communication, Social Networks

PEDAGOGICAL & METHODS TRAINING

1. Didactica Teacher Training Program, University of Zurich (2024–Present).
2. GESIS Workshop, Machine Learning for Text Analysis with Python (2025).
3. Graduate Teaching Methodology Coursework and Workshops, University of Washington (2018–2019).
4. UW Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences (CSSS), Advanced Concentration Certificate.

SKILLS, LANGUAGES, AND AFFILIATIONS

Programming: R, Python, NVivo, Qualtrics, SurveyCTO, ArcGIS.

Languages: English (native), Spanish (intermediate), German (basic).

Affiliations: Center for an Informed Public (UW), Media Forensics Hub (Clemson), CITAP, IPIE, USAID RTAC, EIPS Board.