STEPHEN PROCHASKA

Email: sprochas@uw.edu | Seattle, WA

EDUCATION

University of Washington
Ph.D. Information Science, 2021–Present
Advisors: Kate Starbird and Jevin West

MS Information Science, 2023

MS Information Management, 2021
Specializations: Data Science and UX Design
Capstone: *Understanding Users Across Parler and Twitter: Conversations Prior to January 6th*

Beloit College
BA Psychology, 2013
Minor in Legal Studies
Thesis: *Influencing Altruism: The Effect of Source on Charitable Giving*

PAPERS

*Co-first author

Prochaska, S.*, Farr, D.*, Cruickshank, I., West, J., and Starbird. K., (2027). Conflicting Agendas: Analyzing Conflict Information Environments through Temporal Semantic Clustering. International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM) (Under review)

Prochaska, S.*, Wack, M.* (2026). Making Sense of AI-Generated Disinformation: How Audience Interpretations Influence the Impact of Deepfakes in Kenya. Social Media + Society, 12(3), 20563051261462092. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051261462092

Farr, D., Hui Xian Ng, L., **Prochaska, S.**, Cruickshank, I., & West, J. (2025, December 7). Simulating misinformation vulnerabilities with agent personas. Proceedings of the 2025 Winter Simulation Conference.

Prochaska, S., Vera, J., Tan, D. L., Yamron, B., Venuto, S., Kejriwal, A., Chu, S., & Starbird, K. (2025). Deep Storytelling: Collective Sensemaking and Layers of Meaning in U.S. Elections. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 9(CSCW), 1–44. https://doi.org/10.1145/3757576

Starbird, K., **Prochaska, S.**, & Yamron, B. (2025). What is going on? An evidence-frame framework for analyzing online rumors about election integrity. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 9(CSCW), 1–37. https://doi.org/10.1145/3757522

Lukito, J., Macdonald, M., Chen, B., Brown, M. A., **Prochaska, S.**, Yang, Y., Greenfield, J., Suk, J., Zhong, W., Dahlke, R., & Borah, P. (2025). Candidates Be Posting: Multi-Platform Strategies and Partisan Preferences in the 2022 U.S. Midterm Elections. *Social Media + Society*, *11*(2), 20563051251337541. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051251337541

Schafer, J., Duskin, K., **Prochaska, S.**, Wack, M., Beers, A., Bozarth, L., Agajanian, T., Caulfield, M., Spiro, E., & Starbird, K. (2024). *ElectionRumors2022: A Dataset of Election Rumors on Twitter During the 2022 US Midterms*. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2407.16051

Prochaska, S., Duskin, K., Kharazian, Z., Minow, C., Blucker, S., Venuto, S., West, J. D., & Starbird, K. (2023). Mobilizing Manufactured Reality: How Participatory Disinformation Shaped Deep Stories to Catalyze Action during the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *7*(CSCW1), 140:1-140:39. https://doi.org/10.1145/3579616

Moran, R. E., **Prochaska, S.**, Grasso, I., & Schlegel, I. (2023). Navigating Information-Seeking in Conspiratorial Waters: Anti-Trafficking Advocacy and Education Post QAnon. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *7*(CSCW1), 77:1-77:27. https://doi.org/10.1145/3579510

Venkatagiri, S., Schafer, J. S., & Prochaska, S. (2023). *The Challenges of Studying Misinformation on Video-Sharing Platforms During Crises and Mass-Convergence Events* (arXiv:2303.14309). arXiv. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2303.14309

Moran, R. E., & **Prochaska, S.** (2022). Misinformation or activism?: Analyzing networked moral panic through an exploration of #SaveTheChildren. *Information, Communication & Society*, *0*(0), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2022.2146986

PREPRINTS, WORKSHOP PAPERS, AND WHITE PAPERS

Prochaska, S*., Bayar, M*., Aske, A. B., Schafer, J., & Starbird, K. (2026). New Election, Same Old Story: How Tropes Form a Grammar of Election Rumors (arXiv:2610.37804). arXiv. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2610.37804

Prochaska, S., Vera, J., Lew Tan, D., & Starbird, K. (2024). Misleading Ourselves: How Disinformation Manipulates Sensemaking. Sensemaking Workshop. CHI.

Prochaska, S., Grass, M., & West, J. (2020). *Deepfakes in the 2020 Elections and Beyond: Lessons From the 2020 Workshop Series* (p. 11). University of Washington's Center for an Informed Public. URL

RESEARCH BLOG POSTS

*Posts with "Center for an Informed Public" as the author are anonymized for researcher safety.

Center for an Informed Public*. (2026, October 23). From Confession to Conspiracy: How the Wedgewood Fake Polls Story Spread [Substack newsletter]. The Election Rumor Rundown @ Center for an Informed Public. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/from-confession-to-conspiracy-how

Center for an Informed Public*. (2026, September 27). Recent Utah, Texas incidents fuel rumors and political narratives undermining trust in election integrity [Substack newsletter]. The Election Rumor Rundown @ Center for an Informed Public. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/recent-utah-texas-incidents-fuel

Center for an Informed Public*. (2026, October 6). Federal Fraud Charges Resonate With Debunked Non-Citizen Voting Narratives [Substack newsletter]. The Election Rumor Rundown @ Center for an Informed Public. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/federal-fraud-charges-resonate-with

Center for an Informed Public*. (2026, October 22). Election Rumor Rundown October 22 [Substack newsletter]. The Election Rumor Rundown @ Center for an Informed Public. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/election-rumor-rundown-october-22

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, November 18). Conspiracy theory spreading on social media about Starlink interfering with election results [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/conspiracy-theory-spreading-on-social

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, November 4). A Guide to Voting Machine Rumors [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/a-guide-to-voting-machine-rumors

Prochaska, S., Tomson, D. L., & Starbird, K. (2024, October 29). Making the Case: Evidence Generation Infrastructure in the 2024 Election [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/making-the-case-evidence-generation

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 29). Unfolding blame game between Left and Right as Pennsylvania announces 2,500 fraudulent voter registrations in Lancaster County [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/unfolding-blame-game-between-left

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 24). Follow-up: UOCAVA lawsuits filed in swing states following rumors alleging insecurity in overseas voting processes [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/follow-up-uocava-lawsuits-filed-in

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 23). Florida sues the Department of Homeland Security for citizenship data, sparking rumors [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/florida-sues-the-department-of-homeland

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024h, October 18). Rumors Rapidly Spreading About Reissued Department of Defense Directive 5240.01 [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/rumors-rapidly-spreading-about-reissued

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 14). Breaking News in the Hands of a Few: Newsbrokering on X During the Trump Assassination Attempts [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/breaking-news-in-the-hands-of-a-few

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 10). Error in Arizona's Voter Registration System Fuels Rumors of Non-Citizen Voting [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/error-in-arizonas-voter-registration?utm_campaign=post&showWelcomeOnShare=true

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 9). The Anatomy of 3 Videos Alleging that Many Non-Citizens Are Registered to Vote in U.S. Elections [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/2b6ac873-058f-48b3-8ebf-04cc582fa49d?updated=2024-10-09T02%3A26%3A10.942Z&free_preview=false

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 8). Making Sense of Election Rumors Emerging From Hurricane Helene [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/making-sense-of-election-rumors-emerging

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 2). What to Expect When We're Electing: An Object-Oriented Framework for Pre-Election Rumors [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/2024-election-rumors-object-oriented-framework

Center for an Informed Public*. (2024, October 1). Examining rumors that Democrats are trying to commit voter fraud via the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) [Substack newsletter]. *Election Rumor Research @ Center for an Informed Public*. https://uwcip.substack.com/p/examining-rumors-that-democrats-are?utm_campaign=post&triedRedirect=true

Tomson, D., Starbird, K., Lutz, N., **Prochaska, S.**, Aske, A., McClure Haughy, M., Schafer, J. S., Kharazian, Z., Awwal, A., & Grass, M. (2024, July 15). *Making sense of rumors about the Trump assassination attempt*. Center for an Informed Public. https://www.cip.uw.edu/2024/07/15/trump-assassination-rumors-collective-sensemaking/

Aske, A., **Prochaska, S.**, Bayar, M., Lutz, N., Tomson, D., & Starbird, K. (2024, July 31). *Rumors questioning the legality and legitimacy of the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee*. Center for an Informed Public. https://www.cip.uw.edu/2024/07/31/rumors-kamala-harris-legitimacy-nomination/

Prochaska, S., Engle, K., Agajanian, T., Schafer, J. S., Duskin, K., & Moran, R. E. (2022, November 7). *Misinformed Monitors: How Conspiracy Theories Surrounding "Ballot Mules" Led to Accusations of Voter Intimidation*. Election Integrity Partnership. https://www.eipartnership.net/blog/conspiracy-theories-ballot-mules-voter-intimidation

Prochaska, S., Duskin, K., Nguyen, Sarah, Kharazian, Z., Schafer, J. S., Starbird, K., & Caulfiled, M. (2022, October 7). *Voting Rights Legislation Framed to Support Election Conspiracy Theories About Non-citizens Voting*. Election Integrity Partnership. https://www.eipartnership.net/blog/non-citizen-voting-conspiracy-theory

Caulfield, M., Duskin, K., **Prochaska, S.**, Philips Johnson, S., Denton, A., Kharazian, Z., & Starbird, K. (2022, April 30). *The rise of "trafficking" language in ballot collection narratives*. Center for an Informed Public. https://www.cip.uw.edu/2022/04/30/ballot-trafficking-collection-narratives/

AUTHORED MEDIA ARTICLES

Aske, A., & **Prochaska, S.** (2025). How Strategic Litigation Feeds On and Fuels Political Narrative. Lawfare. https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/how-strategic-litigation-feeds-on-and--fuels-political-narrative

D. Tomson, **S. Prochaska**, and K. Starbird. (2024, November 4) "We research rumors. Here's how the right's 2024 election denial machine has evolved.," MSNBC. https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/election-2024-fraud-rumors-pennsylvania-trump-harris-rcna178710

Starbird, K., & **Prochaska, S.** (2024, October 30). Misinformation is more than just bad facts: How and why people spread rumors is key to understanding how false information travels and takes root. The Conversation. http://theconversation.com/misinformation-is-more-than-just-bad-facts-how-and-why-people-spread-rumors-is-key-to-understanding-how-false-information-travels-and-takes-root-241748

Tomson, D., McClure Haughy, M., & **Prochaska, S.** (2024, July 29). Rumors sparked by assassination attempt spread rapidly on both ends of the spectrum—The Fulcrum. https://thefulcrum.us/media-technology/assassination-rumors-donald-trump

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

*Co-first author

Prochaska, S.*, Farr, D.*, Ng, L., Cruickshank, I., West, J., and Starbird. K., Tracing Information Dynamics in Crisis Events. 2026. International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2).

Stephen Prochaska, Julie Vera, Douglas Lew Tan, Ben Yamron, Sylvie Venuto, Amaya Kejriwal, Sarah Chu, and Kate Starbird. 2025. Deep Storytelling: Collective Sensemaking and Layers of Meaning in U.S. Elections. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 9, 7, Article CSCW395 (November 2025), 44 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3757576

Kate Starbird, **Stephen Prochaska**, and Ben Yamron. 2025. What is going on? An evidence-frame framework for analyzing online rumors about election integrity. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 9, 7, Article CSCW341 (November 2025), 37 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3757522

Tomson, D. , **Prochaska, S.** (2025). Evidence Generation Infrastructure for Election Rumors. Misinformation in Elections Conference, Ronald and Maxine Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy, CalTech.

Prochaska, S., Duskin, K., Kharazian, Z., Minow, C., Blucker, S., Venuto, S., West, J. D., & Starbird, K. (2023). Mobilizing Manufactured Reality: How Participatory Disinformation Shaped Deep Stories to Catalyze Action during the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 7(CSCW1), 140:1-140:39. https://doi.org/10.1145/3579616

Moran, R. E., & **Prochaska, S.** (2021). Misinformation or activism?: Analyzing networked moral panic through an exploration of #SaveTheChildren. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research. https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2021i0.12212*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Washington

Teaching Assistant, Jan–Mar 2026
Research Methods (INFO 300)
Professor: Emma Spiro

Teaching assistant for undergraduate course on research methods. Taught two hour lab sessions every week. Designed and presented lecture on "science gone wrong" describing many ways science can get things wrong, through accident, fraud, or as part of disinformation campaigns. Discussed paths forward institutionally and individually.

Teaching Assistant, Sep–Dec 2025
Data Reasoning in a Digital World
Professor: Jevin West
Teaching assistant for undergraduate course on misleading using data. Designed problem set on the difference between science and pseudoscience. Presented lecture discussing major features of disinformation on social media, emphasizing where data, or lack of data, was used to mislead.

Directed Research Group Lead, Jan–Jun 2023
Project: Participatory Disinformed Deep Stories
Guided and mentored students, teaching them how to perform research combining qualitative and computational methods. Met weekly for collective discussion, and occasional lectures, relevant to the project.

Teaching Assistant, Jan–Mar 2023
Data Science II: Machine Learning
Professor: Jevin West
Teaching assistant for upper level data science course. Designed and gave lecture introducing students to NLP methods. Graded assignments and guided students through projects and problem sets.

Directed Research Group Lead, Jun–Dec 2021
Mobilizing Manufactured Reality project
Guided and mentored students, teaching them how to perform research combining qualitative and computational methods. Met weekly for collective discussion, and occasional lectures, relevant to the project.

SERVICE

Reviewing

International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM)

ACM Transactions on Social Computing

Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (PACMHCI)

International Conference on Computational Social Science (IC2S2)

Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)

International Communication Association (ICA)

Workshop Organizing

Beyond Information: Online Participatory Culture and Information Disorder (CSCW, 2025)

Panels

Foley Institute's "Disinformation and Elections" 2026
Society & Technology's "How do you know what to believe?" 2026
Disinformation and Elections with WA Secretary of State, 2026
Op-Eds for Academics, 2026
Fix Democracy First's Navigating Misinformation Today, 2025

Other

Disinformation Summer Institute, Facilitator, 2026
Disinformation Summer Institute, 2025
Fact Check Ambassador Program Manager, 2020
Spot the Deepfake educational tool lead, 2020

INVITED TALKS

2026: Pro-Democracy Creators and Election Response
2026: Bellevue Rotary Club
2026: Washington League of Women Voters
2026: Disinformation and Elections
2025: King County Elections Commission
2025: Washington League of Women Voters & Current Events Group
2023: University of Washington, Data Science II: Machine Learning
2021: University of Washington, Misinformation and Design
2021: University of Washington, Information School Symposium

FUNDING

Primary Investigator
Center for an Informed Public Innovation Fund
Research Supported as Research Assistant
National Science Foundation
Knight Foundation
Hewlett Foundation
Craig Newmark Philanthropies

AWARDS & HONORS

University of Washington
Information School Capstone Research Award
Understanding Users Across Parler and Twitter: Conversations Prior to January 6th

Beloit College
Undergraduate Honors Thesis
"Influencing Altruism: The Effect of Source on Charitable Giving"

Magna cum laude
Dean's list, 2009-2013

PRESS INTERVIEWS AND COVERAGE

Zadrozny, B. (2025, July 18). *I want to know what's in the Epstein files. But there could be a price.* MSNBC.Com. https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/analysis/jeffrey-epstein-files-trump-report-rcna219360

Vespa, E. (2024, November 12). *Trump won, but amateur election audits proliferate in NC — fueled by misinformation*. Charlotte Observer. https://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article295370799.html

Hernandez, R. (2024, November 4). *UW researcher shares more on the strategy and spread of misinformation as we approach election day*. Oregon Public Broadcasting. Retrieved August 15, 2025, from https://www.opb.org/article/2024/11/04/uw-researcher-shares-more-on-the-strategy-and-spread-of-misinformation-as-we-approach-election-day/

Bump, P. (2024, November 4). *How to Read This Chart*. The Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/newsletters/

Reintjes, T. (2022, November 7). *Midterm-Wahlen in den USA - Wie Wissenschaftler Desinformation um angeblichen Wahlbetrug bekämpfen*. Deutschlandfunk. https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/midterm-wahlen-was-sich-bei-desinformationskampagnen-geaendert-hat-dlf-9acd2d18-100.html

Shuham, M. (2022, October 13). *This Is What It Looks Like When A New Election Lie Goes Viral*. HuffPost. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/researchers-election-lie-disinformation-viral-twitter-colorado-postcards_n_634834c2e4b0e376dc09f099

Tiernan, C. (2022, August 21). *'People have gotten sucked into a lot of lies': Experts say elections are secure, even as Republicans make baseless claims to the contrary | The Spokesman-Review*. https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/aug/21/people-have-gotten-sucked-into-a-lot-of-lies-exper/

James, A. (2022, February 23). *"Deep fakes" could see a crackdown in Washington political campaigns | The Spokesman-Review*. https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/feb/23/deep-fakes-could-see-a-crackdown-in-washington-pol/