

# BRENNAN SCHAFFNER

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## CURRENT POSITION

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**Georgetown University, Washington, DC.**

Postdoctoral Researcher, Fritz Family Fellow

2025–

*Knight-Georgetown Institute and Communication, Culture, and Technology*

## EDUCATION

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**University of Chicago, IL**

Ph.D. in Computer Science

2025

*Dissertation:* Building Evidence Of Dark Pattern Effects On User Attention And Behavior

*Advisor:* Marshini Chetty

*Committee:* Alex Kale, Chenhao Tan, Lior J. Strahilevitz (UChicago Law), Colin M. Gray (IUB)

**University of Chicago, IL**

M.S. in Computer Science

2022

**University of St. Thomas, MN**

B.S. in Computer Science

2020

B.A. in Physics

Minor in Mathematics

## TEACHING

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**University of Chicago - Illinois**

*Instructor*

- Course Title: CMSC 14100—Introduction to Computer Science I (Summer 2024)

*Guest Lecturer*

- Course Title: Usable Security And Privacy (Spring 2025)
- Lecture Title: Dark Patterns *Today*
- Course Title: Usable Security And Privacy (Spring 2024)
- Lecture Title: Dark Patterns, Online Manipulation, and Privacy
- Course Title: Usable Security And Privacy (Spring 2023)
- Lecture Title: Dark Patterns, Online Manipulation, and Privacy

*Teaching Assistant and Group Project Mentor*

- Inclusive Technology: Designing for Underserved and Marginalized Communities (Winter 2025)
- Usable Privacy and Security (Spring 2024)
- Inclusive Technology: Designing for Underserved and Marginalized Communities (Winter 2023)

**University of St. Thomas - Minnesota**

*Mathematics Tutor (2018 - 2020)*

- MATH 005-104 Basic Math Skills, Math Sampler, College Algebra, Trigonometry
- MATH 105-114, Precalculus, Calc I, Calc II, Calc for Business and Social Science
- MATH 128 Introduction to Discrete Mathematics
- MATH 200 Multi-Variable Calculus

## PUBLICATIONS

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1. **B. SCHAFFNER**, Y. ULLOA, R. SAHNI, J. LI, A.K. COHEN, N. MESSIER, L. GAO, AND M. CHETTY. An Experimental Study Of Netflix Use and the Effects of Autoplay on Watching Behaviors. CSCW 2025: *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*  
[DOI: 10.1145/3710928](#).
2. **B. SCHAFFNER**, A.N. BHAGOJI, S. CHENG, J. MEI, J.L. SHEN, G. WANG, M. CHETTY, N. FEAMSTER, G. LAKIER, AND C. TAN. “Community Guidelines Make this the Best Party on the Internet”: An In-Depth Study of Online Platforms’ Content Moderation Policies. CHI 2024: *Proceedings of the CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*.  
[DOI: 10.1145/3613904.3642333](#).
3. **B. SCHAFFNER**, A. STEFANESCU, O. CAMPILI, AND M. CHETTY. Don’t Let Netflix Drive the Bus: User’s Sense of Agency Over Time and Content Choice on Netflix. CSCW 2023: *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*  
[DOI: 10.1145/3579604](#).
4. **B. SCHAFFNER**, N. LINGAREDDY, AND M. CHETTY. Understanding Account Deletion and Relevant Dark Patterns On Social Media. CSCW 2022: *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*  
[DOI: 10.1145/3555142](#).
5. B. TRAN, **B. SCHAFFNER**, J. MYRE, J. SAWIN AND D. CHIU. Exploring Means to Enhance the Efficiency of GPU Bitmap Index Query Processing. DSE 2020: *2020 Data Science and Engineering Journal*.  
[DOI: 10.1007/s41019-020-00148-8](#).
6. B. TRAN, **B. SCHAFFNER**, J. MYRE, J. SAWIN AND D. CHIU. Increasing the Efficiency of GPU Bitmap Index Query Processing. DASFAA 2020: *International Conference on Database Systems for Advanced Applications*.  
[DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-59419-0-21](#).
7. **B. SCHAFFNER**, J. SAWIN AND J. MYRE. Smartphones as Alternative Cloud Computing Engines: Benefits and Trade-offs. FICLOUD 2018: *IEEE 6th International Conference on Future Internet of Things and Cloud*, pp. 244-250.  
[DOI: 10.1109/FiCloud.2018.00043](#).

### Other Papers:

1. **B. SCHAFFNER**, A. BROHN, J. CHEE, K. FENG, M. CHETTY. Designing and Testing a Mobile Application for Collecting WhatsApp Chat Data While Preserving Privacy. February 2023.  
[arXiv:2401.15221 \[cs.HC\]](#).
2. S. WANG, K. MACMILLAN, **B. SCHAFFNER**, N. FEAMSTER, M. CHETTY. A First Look at the Consolidation of DNS and Web Hosting Providers. October 2021.  
[arXiv:2110.15345 \[cs.NI\]](#).
3. N. LINGAREDDY, **B. SCHAFFNER**, AND M. CHETTY. Can I Delete My Account?: Dark Patterns In Account Deletion On Social Media. CHI 2021: *Workshop on What Can CHI do About Dark Patterns?*.  
[Position Paper](#).

## RESEARCH MENTORING

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### PhD Students:

Lan Gao, *University of Chicago, Computer Science* (2023-2024).

## Masters Students:

Michael Cheng, *University of Chicago, Masters in Computer Science* (2023–2024).  
Antonia Stefanescu, *University of Chicago, Master of Arts Program in the Humanities* (2021).

## Undergraduate Students:

Luis Heysen, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science and Applied Math* (2024–2025).  
Jerry Liu, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science and Mathematics* (2023–2024).  
Natasha Messier, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science* (2023–2024).  
Jacqueline Mei, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science* (2023).  
Jay Shen, *University of Chicago, Major: Physics* (2023–2024).  
Riya Sahni, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science and Economics* (2023).  
Michael Cheng, *University of Chicago, Major: Economics* (2022–2024).  
Evan Cholerton, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science and Human Dev.* (2022–2023).  
Jiatong Lee, *University of Chicago, Major: Physics* (2022).  
Grace Wang, *Data Science Institute Summer Lab Research Assistant* (2022).  
Olivia Campili, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science* (2022).  
Neha Lingareddy, *University of Chicago, Major: Computer Science* (2021).

## High School Students:

Ava Kim Cohen, *Local High School Research Assistant* (2023–2024).  
Yaretzi Ulloa, *Local High School Research Assistant* (2022–2024).

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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Seibel Scholars Award - <a href="#">Announcement</a>	<i>Class of 2025</i>
University Unrestricted Fellowship for excellence in research.	<i>Spring 2022</i>
Crerar Fellowship - University of Chicago Computer Science Department.	<i>2020-2021</i>
NSF Funded Researcher at the University of Maryland.	<i>Summer 2019</i>

## REGULATORY COMMENTS

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- California Privacy Protection Agency (CPPA) - August 2022.*  
California Consumer Privacy Act Regulations - Public Participation in the Rulemaking Process  
M. Chetty, M. Kugler, **B. Schaffner**, L. Strahilevitz.  
Submitted Comment: [PDF](#)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) - August 2022*  
Digital Advertising Business Guidance Request for Information  
Acquisti et al.  
Comment ID: [FTC-2022-0035-0029](#)
- European Data Protection Board (EDPB) - May 2022*  
Request for Comments on their “Guidelines 3/2022 on Dark patterns in social media platform interfaces: How to recognise and avoid them”  
J. Chanenson, M. Chetty, C. Crum, N. Feamster, J. Holiman, A. Khanna, K. MacMillan, B. Pandey, A. Peterson, Z. Rothstein, **B. Schaffner**, L. Strahilevitz, J. Yasmeh.  
Feedback Reference: [03/2022-0023](#)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) - May 2021*  
Request for Comments Regarding Topics to be Discussed at Dark Patterns Workshop  
M. Chetty, N. Lingareddy, **B. Schaffner**, L. Strahilevitz.  
Comment ID: [FTC-2021-0019-0111](#)

## PANELS

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Panelists: C. Gray, S. Chivukula, K. Bongard-Blanchy, A. Mathur, J. Gunawan, **B. Schaffner**.  
Title: Emerging Transdisciplinary Perspectives to Confront Dark Patterns.  
April 23-28, 2023, *CHI 2023*, Hamburg, Germany. [ACM DL](#).

## CONFERENCE TALKS

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*CHI 2024* - [Recording](#) *Honolulu, USA (Virtual)*  
“Community Guidelines Make this the Best Party on the Internet”: An In-Depth Study of Online Platforms’ Content Moderation Policies.

*CSCW 2023* *Minneapolis, USA*  
Don’t Let Netflix Drive the Bus: User’s Sense of Agency Over Time and Content Choice on Netflix.

*CSCW 2022* - [Recording](#) *Taipei, Taiwan (Virtual)*  
Understanding Account Deletion and Relevant Dark Patterns On Social Media.

*DAFSAA 2020* *Jeju, South Korea (Virtual)*  
Increasing the Efficiency of GPU Bitmap Index Query Processing.

## SOFTWARE AND ARTIFACTS

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**OCMP-43** *2023*  
We made public a dataset of annotated content moderation policies from 43 of the largest platforms hosting user-generated content with respect to three content moderation topics: Copyright Infringement, Harmful Speech, and Misleading Content. This dataset is published alongside our work at CHI ’24. Visit the [dataset website](#).

**Press this Button to Give The Doorbell Money** *2021*  
In collaboration with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, we created an artistic demonstration of how Ring uses home security systems such as doorbell cameras to build a network of surveillance and wealth.

**REU in Combinatorics and Algorithms for Real Problems** *2019*  
Under Andrew Childs, we developed a python package that implements Jeongwan Haah’s algorithm for quantum signal processing decomposition. It includes a step by step algorithm that decomposes periodic functions (often from quantum signal processing) into a product of primitive matrices, represented as a list of rotation angles. More info [here](#).

## SERVICES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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Programming Committee 2025 Workshop on Technology and Consumer Protection (ConPro ’25)  
Student Support Application Program - EDI program for providing feedback to students from under-represented or marginalized backgrounds on their admissions application.  
Organizer 2023  
Volunteer Reviewer 2022, 2023  
Co-organizer of UChicago CS/Law Working Group on Dark Patterns + Consumer Protections  
CHI 2023 Privacy and Security [Subcommittee Chair Assistant](#)  
Paper Reviewer for CHI 2025  
Paper Reviewer for CSCW 2024  
Paper Reviewer for CHI 2024  
Paper Reviewer for SM+S 2023 (Social Media + Society journal)

Paper Reviewer for CSCW 2023

Paper Reviewer for CHI 2023

Paper Reviewer for CSCW 2022

## REFERENCES

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*Available on request.*