Jason Starace

PhD Candidate & Technical Product Manager

staraceresearch.com | linkedin.com/in/jason-starace | github.com/jstarace

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Computer Science

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID | Expected May 2026 | GPA: 3.7
Dissertation: Strategic AI Reasoning in Interactive Entertainment Systems
Relevant Coursework: Evolutionary Computation, Deep Learning, Adversarial Machine Learning, Neural Network Design, Python for Machine Learning

Master of Science in Computer Science

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID | May 2023 | GPA: 3.69
Relevant Coursework: Evolutionary Computation, Deep Learning, Neural Network Design, Machine Learning, Adversarial Machine Learning

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Minor in Mathematics

California State University Sacramento, Sacramento, CA | May 2020 | GPA: 3.32
Relevant Coursework: Intelligent Systems, Data Structures & Algorithm Analysis, Number Theory, Data Warehousing & Data Mining, Applied Linear Algebra, Database Management Systems

Honors: Dean's List (Fall 2018 & 2019)

Research Focus

Advancing the frontiers of AI reasoning through strategic behavior research. My work develops next-generation AI systems capable of sophisticated goal-oriented decision-making and complex behavioral strategies, from creating compelling interactive experiences to advancing our understanding of how AI can navigate intricate scenarios with nuanced strategic thinking.

Publications

Published

Starace, J., Singh, A., & Soule, T. (2024). *Deceptive Algorithms in Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games*. Serious Games: 10th Joint International Conference, 414-420, Springer Nature.

Accepted

Starace, J. & Soule, T. (2025). *Modeling Player Types with LLMs: A Framework for Belief- and Motivation-Driven NPC Behavior*. Serious Games: 11th Joint International Conference. Pending Publication

Under Review

Starace, J., & Soule, T. (2025). *A Systematic Evaluation of Multi-modal Approaches to Complex Player Profile Classification*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
Starace, J., Singh, A., Tafoya, J., & Soule, T. (2025). *Deceptive Algorithms in Video Games: A Systematic Literature Review*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Professional Experience

Technical Product Manager
Harvard University | Cambridge, MA | 2024 - Present

- Lead cross-functional agile development teams for SDK and microservices products
- Created and maintained comprehensive product backlogs, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives
- Developed and executed product roadmaps for multiple SDK products
- Implemented agile methodologies to improve development efficiency and delivery timelines

Group Product Manager
University of Idaho | Moscow, ID | 2022 - 2024

- Mentored and onboarded new Technical Product Managers, establishing best practices
- Pioneered agile processes and procedures across the university's technology organization
- Led development and implementation of student dashboard serving thousands of users
- Managed multiple product backlogs for university-wide tools and systems

Agile Product Owner
Apple Inc. | Elk Grove, CA | 2014 - 2020

- Managed multi-million dollar portfolio of internal tools supporting global operations
- Led grooming sessions with development, UI/UX, UAT, and training teams
- Created marketing materials and delivered training programs for tool functionality
- Designed and implemented relational databases that streamlined management reporting
- Consistently delivered releases that exceeded MVP requirements through effective stakeholder collaboration

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Research Experience

Research Assistant
University of Idaho | Moscow, ID | Summer 2021

- Investigated AI models for human vision recreation with applications in virtual world creation and AI alignment
- Implemented Mask R-CNN, Human Trajectory Modeling, and A* search algorithms for human navigation simulation
- Presented findings at University of Idaho AI Summit, generating discussions on safe and interpretable AI systems

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Technical Expertise

Programming Languages: Python, C/C++, C#, JavaScript, SQL
AI/ML Frameworks: TensorFlow, PyTorch, Jupyter, Pandas, NumPy, SciKit-Learn
Web Technologies: React, Node.js, Django, Angular, Redux
Databases: MongoDB, MySQL, PostgreSQL, SQLite
Tools & Platforms: Git, CI/CD, Statistical Analysis
Research Methods: Experimental Design, Academic Writing, Data Visualization

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Professional Expertise

Product Management: Agile, Scrum, Waterfall, Product Roadmapping, Requirement Gathering
Leadership: Cross-Team Leadership, Stakeholder Communications, Risk Management
Business Skills: Prioritization, Performance Metrics, Technical Documentation

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Certifications & Training

Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning Graduate Academic Certificate
University of Idaho | December 2024
Coursework: Machine Learning, Applied Data Science with Python, Deep Learning, Evolutionary Computation

Build a Backend REST API with Python & Django
Udemy | March 2021
Focus: RESTful APIs, user authentication, CRUD operations

React -- The Complete Guide
Udemy | March 2021
Focus: Single-page applications, React Router, state management with Redux

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Key Accomplishments

- **Research Impact:** Published peer-reviewed research on strategic AI behavior and deceptive algorithms in interactive systems
- **Product Leadership:** Delivered technical solutions improving workflows for thousands of users across multiple organizations
- **Academic Excellence:** Maintained consistent high academic performance throughout graduate studies
- **Industry Experience:** Successfully managed multi-million dollar product portfolios at Fortune 500 company
- **Cross-Disciplinary Expertise:** Bridge between cutting-edge AI research and practical product development