

Anton Shirikov

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I am a political scientist working on media, misinformation, polarization, and trust. I also study authoritarianism and elites and institutions in post-communist countries. My research relies on surveys, experiments, text-as-data, network analysis, and other quantitative methods.

EMPLOYMENT

The University of Kansas

Assistant Professor 2024–

Columbia University

Postdoctoral Scholar in Russian Politics and Lecturer in Political Science 2022–2024

EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin–Madison, M.A. (2016), Ph.D. in Political Science (2022)

Dissertation: [How Propaganda Works: Political Biases and News Credibility in Autocracies](#) (Co-winner of the Best Dissertation Prize in Comparative Politics, The Department of Political Science at UW–Madison)

Committee: Yoshiko M. Herrera (co-chair), Scott Gehlbach (co-chair), Rikhil R. Bhavnani, Jessica L.P. Weeks, Adeline Y. Lo

Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Candidate of Sciences in Political Science (2007)

European University at St. Petersburg, M.A. in Political Science (2005)

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

PAPERS

2025. [“Is There Really a Dictator’s Dilemma? Information and Repression in Autocracy.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science*. With Scott Gehlbach, Zhaotian Luo, and Dmitriy Vorobyev.

2024. [“Rethinking Propaganda: How State Media Build Trust Through Belief Affirmation.”](#) *Journal of Politics*.

2024. [“Is Postcommunism Over? What Is and Is Not Distinctive About Eastern Europe and Eurasia Three Decades After Communism.”](#) *Problems of Post-Communism*. With Dmitrii Kofanov and Yoshiko M. Herrera.

2024. [“Why Is Trust in Media Low in Post-Communist Countries?”](#) *Problems of Post-Communism*.

2024. [“Fake News for All: How Citizens Discern Disinformation in Autocracies.”](#) *Political Communication*, Vol.41, No.1.

2022. [“The Oligarch Vanishes: Defensive Ownership, Property Rights, and Political Connections.”](#) *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, Vol.17, No.4. With John Earle, Solomiya

Shpak, and Scott Gehlbach. (Prize for the [Best Article](#) in the field of Ukrainian history, politics, language, literature and culture published in 2020–2021, The American Association for Ukrainian Studies.)

2021. [“Who Gets Ahead in Authoritarian Parliaments? The Case of the Russian State Duma.”](#) *The Journal of Legislative Studies*.

2020. [“Eurasia and Post-Communism: Weasel Words?”](#) *East European Politics and Societies & Cultures*, Vol.34, No.2. With Yoshiko M. Herrera and Dmitrii Kofanov.

BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS

2023. [“The Russian Media.”](#) In: Wengle, Susanne (ed.). *Russian Politics Today: Stability and Fragility*. Cambridge University Press. With Scott Gehlbach and Tetyana Lokot.

2022. [“Russia: Muddling Through Populism and the Pandemic.”](#) In: Ringe, Nils, and Lucio Renno (eds.). *Populists and the Pandemic: How Populists Around the World Responded to COVID-19*. Routledge. With Yoshiko M. Herrera and Valeriia Umanets.

2018. [“Sovereignty and Regionalism in Eurasia.”](#) In: Paasi, Anssi, John Harrison, and Martin Jones (eds.). *Elgar Handbook on the Geographies of Regions and Territories*. Edward Elgar Publishing. With Dmitrii Kofanov and Yoshiko M. Herrera.

2013. [“Public Administration in Russia.”](#) In: Liebert, Saltanat, Stephen E. Condrey, and Dmitry Goncharov (eds.). *Public Administration in Post-Communist Countries: Former Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe, and Mongolia*. Routledge. With Dmitry Goncharov.

2010. *Anatomiya Bezdeistviya. Politicheskiye Instituty i Konflikty v Budgetnom Processe Regionov Rossii* [The Anatomy of Inaction. Political Institutions and Conflicts in the Budget Process of Russia’s Regions] (in Russian). Saint-Petersburg: EUSP Press.

OTHER

2024. [“Can Russians Learn to Recognize Propaganda? Understanding of Media Bias Amid the Ukraine War”](#). PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 918 (with Georgiy Syunyaev).

2024. [“Filtering the News: Why Russians Prefer Propaganda and Shield Themselves from Independent Reporting”](#). PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 873.

2024. Book Review: [Seeing Red: Russian Propaganda and American News](#) by Sarah Oates and Gordon Neil Ramsay. *The Russian Review*.

UNDER REVIEW

“Combating information avoidance in wartime Russia: A multidisciplinary field experiment” (with Julia A. Minson, Aaron Erlich, Jordan Gans-Morse, Christopher Higgins, and others)

“Quantifying Narrative Diffusion Across Languages” (with Hannah Waight, Solomon Messing, Margaret E. Roberts, Jonathan Nagler, Jason Greenfield, Megan Brown, Kevin Aslett, and Joshua A. Tucker)

WORKING PAPERS

“Learning About Bias: An Experiment on News Consumption in Russia” (with Georgiy Syunyaev)

“The Rational Level of Trust: A Game and Survey Experiment in Kazakhstan” (with Yoshiko Herrera and Andrew Kydd)

[“Is Trust in Media Decreasing? Evidence From the World Values Survey”](#)

MEDIA

2024. [“Relationship between propaganda and public reexamined through new research.”](#) *KU News*. December 11.

2023. [“How does propaganda work? One Russian scholar is probing the power of Putin’s disinformation regime.”](#) *Columbia Journalism Review*. November 7.

2022. [“Russian journalists report the facts about Ukraine. Why do Russians ignore them?”](#) *The Washington Post*. March 3.

2022. [“Opium for the masses: How propaganda won Russians’ trust.”](#) *Russia.Post*. October 28.

My analysis and commentary have appeared on [PBS NewsHour](#), in [The Financial Times](#), [The Washington Post](#) (1, 2, 3), [Newsweek](#), [HuffingtonPost](#), [USA Today](#) (1, 2), [Euronews](#), [Politifact](#), [CBC](#), [Portland Press Herald](#), [ABC Radio National \(Australia\)](#), [Press Gazette \(UK\)](#), [PÚBLICO \(Portugal\)](#), [La Tercera \(Chile\)](#), [The Daily Dot](#), [Christianity Today](#), and on [Wisconsin Public Radio](#).

CONFERENCES

APSA Annual Meeting (2020, 2021, 2024); MPSA Annual Conference (2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025); PONARS Eurasia Conference (Spring 2024, Fall 2024); The Russo-Ukrainian War and Global Human Security (The University of Kansas, 2024); ASEEEES Annual Convention (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021); NYU-CESS Conference (2021); NESEEEES Annual Conference (2023); Authoritarian Propaganda and Media Control: New Conceptual Approaches and Empirical Evidence (Columbia University, 2023); Studying Russia and the Postcommunist World (Columbia University, 2019); Regime Evolution, Institutional Change, and Social Transformation in Russia: Lessons for Political Science (Yale University, 2018); The Annual Meeting of the Society for Political Methodology (2017); Political Economy in a Changing World (HSE, Moscow, 2021); Wisconsin Russia Project Young Scholars Conference (2018, 2021, 2022); Communication Crossroads (UW–Madison, 2020)

INVITED TALKS & SEMINARS

Oklahoma State University, 2024; University of Pennsylvania, 2023; [George Washington University](#), 2022 ([video here](#)); Columbia University, 2022 and 2023; [Smith College](#), 2022; [Bourse & Bazaar Foundation](#), 2022; [University of Chicago](#), 2022; [University of Helsinki](#), 2021; [Kyiv School of Economics](#), 2020

PUBLIC LECTURES

“Elections and Political Participation in Russia” ([Today in International Politics Speaker Series](#), April 1, 2024); “Russian Invasion of Ukraine and Kremlin’s Propaganda” (Kiwaniis Club of Downtown Madison, 2022); “Who Believes Propaganda? Media and Politics in Russia” (Participatory Learning and Teaching Organization at the Division of Continuing Studies at UW–Madison, 2020); “Russia’s Strategies in Foreign Elections: What Does the Kremlin Want?” (A workshop for Wisconsin educators, 2020)

AWARDS

Research-Intensive Course Development Grant, University of Kansas (\$500)	2025
CREES Course Development Award, University of Kansas (\$4,000)	2025
Best Dissertation in Comparative Politics, University of Wisconsin–Madison	2022
Facebook Foundational Integrity and Impact Research Grant (\$50,000, with Yoshiko Herrera, Mingcong Pan, and Yiming Wang). Project: “ Understanding the Effects of Digital Restrictions on Affective Polarization ”	2021
Summer Dissertation Scholarship from the Department of Political Science at UW–Madison	2021
ASEEES Summer Dissertation Writing Grant (\$6,000)	2020
Summer Initiative Award from the Department of Political Science at UW–Madison	2021, 2020, 2019, 2017, 2016
Graduate student research award from the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia at UW–Madison (\$4,000)	2020
Harriman Institute Research Grant (\$16,000; joint with Georgiy Syunyaev). Project: “ Learning about Bias: An Experiment on News Consumption in Russia ”	2020
Harriman Institute Research Grant (\$10,245). Project: “ Perceptions of Media Credibility in Non-Democracies: Evidence from Russia ”	2019
University Fellowship, UW–Madison	2015–2016, 2019–2020

TEACHING

The University of Kansas

POLS 469: Propaganda in Autocracies (undergraduate), Instructor	Spring 2025
POLS 706: Research Methods I (graduate), Instructor	Spring 2025
POLS 150: Introduction to Comparative Politics (undergraduate), Instructor	Fall 2024
POLS 354: The Politics of Russia and Post-Soviet States (undergraduate), Instructor	Fall 2024

Columbia University

POLS 4457: Russian Propaganda in Global and Domestic Politics (graduate), Instructor	2023, 2024
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University of Wisconsin–Madison

PS919: Intro to Machine Learning (graduate), Lab instructor	2020
PS120: Politics Around the World (undergraduate), Teaching assistant	2019
PS170: Research Methods in Political Science (undergraduate), Teaching assistant	2018, 2020
Calculus and probability refresher course (graduate), Instructor	2019, 2020, 2021

SERVICE

Peer reviews of manuscripts for *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *The Journal of Politics*, *World Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *The World Bank Economic Review*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *Comparative Politics*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Problems of Post-Communism*, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *Demokratizatsiya*, *East European Politics*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *Central Asian Survey*, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *Japanese Journal of Political Science*

Organizer of the conference **Authoritarian Propaganda and Media Control: New Conceptual Approaches and Empirical Evidence**, Columbia University, October 20, 2023

Co-coordinator of the **Columbia-NYU Russia Public Policy** seminar series (Columbia University) 2022–2024

Co-organizer of the conference **Authoritarian Propaganda: Narratives, Public Responses, and Limitations**, Columbia University, April 7, 2023

Co-organizer of the **Comparative Politics Working Group** for graduate students (UW–Madison) 2019–2022

Graduate student coordinator for the **Comparative Politics Colloquium** and the **Political Economy Colloquium** (UW–Madison) 2018–2019

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS); American Political Science Association; Midwest Political Science Association; Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES)

SOFTWARE

R, Python, Stata, SQL, LaTeX, RMarkdown, HTML, Git, Shiny, Plotly, Qualtrics

OTHER EXPERIENCE

I have extensive experience of working as a journalist and editor in Russian independent media. From 2009 to 2015, I served as deputy editor-in-chief and editor-in-chief at Slon.ru and as opinions editor at the RBC news agency.

REFERENCES

Yoshiko M. Herrera, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison, yherrera@wisc.edu

Scott Gehlbach, Department of Political Science and Harris School of Public Policy, University of Chicago, gehlbach@uchicago.edu

Rikhil R. Bhavnani, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison, bhavnani@wisc.edu