

Russian Propaganda in Domestic and Global Politics
POLS GU 4457 Spring 2023
Tuesdays 12:10-2:00pm, 711 International Affairs Building

INSTRUCTOR: Anton Shirikov, as6859@columbia.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Thursday 12-2 pm (open space near room 1227, International Affairs Building) or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

Propaganda is a key tool of contemporary authoritarian politics. Autocrats such as Russia's Vladimir Putin, China's Xi Jinping, or Hungary's Viktor Orbán use state-controlled media to manipulate citizens, and some of them extensively rely on propaganda to undermine democracy in other countries. This course encourages students to think about the specific roles that media and propaganda play in autocracies, focusing on Russia in particular. We will read and discuss cutting-edge empirical research in political science and media studies to understand how autocrats such as Putin manipulate public opinion, why their propaganda can be successful, what its limits are, and how we can spot authoritarian propaganda in practice.

In the first part of the course, we will discuss the common strategies of propaganda in authoritarian regimes such as China or Russia: What do autocrats aim to achieve by manipulating the media? What techniques are at their disposal? How do they manipulate the internet and social media? We will examine how Vladimir Putin has used the media to consolidate his rule, and we will discuss the key ideas and narratives of the Kremlin's propaganda. We will also consider how authoritarian propaganda infiltrates Western media and public discussion, paying special attention to the false narratives about Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The second part of the course examines how the public and the civil society react to authoritarian propaganda: What media do citizens in authoritarian countries consume and like? How do independent media work in autocracies such as Russia, and can independent journalists counteract propaganda narratives? How has the Russian opposition used social media to challenge the regime? Are citizens in the West and other countries vulnerable to the Kremlin's false narratives?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will: (1) examine the social science theories of authoritarian rule and apply these theories to evaluate the strategies of authoritarian propaganda; (2) gain an understanding of the role of media and propaganda in the survival and popularity of contemporary autocrats; (3) learn about the common tactics of the Kremlin's propaganda and the ways to spot them; (4) learn to think critically about the effects of authoritarian propaganda on public opinion, both domestically and on the global scale; (5) practice research skills via systematic analysis of Russian media coverage, propaganda strategies, or other social science topics examined in this course.

EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

This course is a discussion seminar that may incorporate mini-lectures with material not found in the readings. However, the emphasis is on class discussion. Therefore, you are expected to come to class having completed all the assigned readings and prepared to discuss these readings thoughtfully and critically. Active participation in class discussions is essential.

I also strongly encourage you to regularly read at least one news outlet with substantial coverage of Russia and international politics, such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or *The Economist*. Recent developments around Russia will frequently feature in our class discussions and may be referenced to on the midterm exam. Following these developments during the course will also help you develop ideas for your final papers and shape these papers as you work on them.

Attendance. Attendance is mandatory. If you miss any classes due to illness or other emergency, you will need to email me and provide medical or other proof.

Participation. You are expected to participate in class discussions actively and thoughtfully, and this participation will be a large part of your final grade. To receive full grade, you will need to demonstrate engagement with the readings and contribute regularly to the discussion, providing examples, elaborating arguments, and asking thoughtful questions.

Weekly presentations. To facilitate the discussion, each week, one student will prepare a 5-minute presentation on a recent event related to the topic of the week. The presentation should make connections to that week's readings, and the presenter should suggest two questions based on the readings for the class to discuss. You will sign up for presentations during **Week 1** of the class. Each student should be presenting once during the course; if there are more students than class sessions, some students may share presentation duties.

Online reflection tasks (undergraduate students only). On certain weeks, you will post short online reflections on one of the assigned readings. The posts should be between 250 and 300 words long, and they are due on **11.59 pm the day before the class**. The first paragraph should briefly summarize the main argument of the reading. The second paragraph should discuss how the argument may apply to a recent political development related to Russia or another country. The content of the task will be different on Week 8; see course schedule below.

There will be 6 such reflection tasks throughout the class. Everyone should post during Weeks 2, 8, and 10, and you can choose any three of the remaining weeks for the remaining three reflections. However, note that you should not post on the week when you are presenting.

Response paper (essay). You will write an essay (900-1000 words) in which you will critically evaluate an article about Russia or Russian invasion of Ukraine written by a Russia-affiliated expert and compare it with another article on the same topic written by an independent expert. Your goal will be to: (a) highlight some key differences between the arguments and claims presented in two articles, and (b) discuss which claims included in the first article promote the narratives of Russian state propaganda. To that end, you will apply what you have learned in this course about the goals and content of the Kremlin's propaganda. With respect to (b), you will need to clearly state each claim that you consider and provide some evidence supporting your evaluation—e.g., this claim is also promoted by Russian state media or state officials, this claim has been refuted by independent experts, etc. I will distribute several pairs of articles for

you to choose from; you may suggest alternative materials for evaluation. The essay is due **March 10 (end of Week 8)**.

Research paper. The final project for this course is an original research paper on a question chosen by you. The research can be, for example, a content analysis of Russian state media, a survey of media audiences, or an analysis of representations of a particular event by different media and propaganda outlets, and it can use any quantitative or qualitative research methods. The paper can analyze existing publicly available evidence or collect original data. Papers will be evaluated based on the following criteria: (1) clearly stated and meaningful research question; (2) systematic and justified approach to collecting and analyzing the evidence; (3) clear presentation of the findings; (4) meaningful conclusions, which could be generalizations about social phenomena or policy recommendations; (5) connections to readings assigned in the class. The paper should be clearly written. You may but are not required to use Russian-language sources.

Graduate students should aim for a paper that is **18-20 pages** long (12-point font, double-spaced, excluding bibliography/references). Graduate students should use primary sources, such as newspapers, online sources, speeches and policy statements, interviews, etc.

Undergraduate students should aim for a **12-15-page** paper (12-point font, double-spaced, excluding bibliography/references).

The paper can be a small-group project conducted by 2 or 3 students. This will be determined for each project individually in consultation with me. Normally, small-group projects will involve a certain amount of data collection. If a collaboration is approved, each student's individual contribution should be clearly outlined in the research proposal and in a note attached to the final research paper. Small-group projects are expected to be longer than single-authored projects, by approximately 5 pages per each additional collaborator.

Research proposals. You will submit two preliminary proposals outlining your planned research. The **first proposal** is due **February 17 (the end of Week 5)**. This proposal should describe the research question that you are interested in and the possible empirical evidence that you will use/analyze. The proposal should be 1 double-spaced page long and include a preliminary title for your project.

The **second proposal** is due **March 24 (the end of Week 9)**. This proposal should: (1) state a clear research question, which may be revised based on the comments for proposal 1; (2) explain why this question is interesting; (3) refer to 3-4 academic studies on the topic and explain how they are related to your question (e.g., you would like to conduct an analogous study of a different event, or you are questioning some of the study's assumptions or findings); (4) what data or evidence you will use or collect; (5) how you will analyze the data/evidence. The second proposal should be 3 double-spaced pages long and include a preliminary title.

Upon submitting both proposals, you will receive written comments from me and may be asked to schedule a meeting with me to discuss adjustments to the project. If you would like to discuss your plan before submitting the second proposal, you are welcome to come to office hours or schedule an appointment with me. We will also designate some class time to discuss the strategies of social science research and practice developing research questions.

I also encourage you to consult existing textbooks and/or guides on social science research design, such as:

- Powner, L.C. 2017. *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide*. Sage Publishing.
- Minkoff, S. L. 2016. [“A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science.”](#)

Final paper presentations. You will **present the key findings** of your research paper before submitting it, during **Week 14** of the class. The presentations should be 5 minutes long, and they should clearly describe your research question and theoretical expectations, your data/evidence, and your main findings and conclusions. Typically, the presentations will be 5 slides long. The slides are due on **11.59 pm the day before the presentation.**

GRADING

Your final grade is comprised of the following:

Graduate students:

- Weekly discussion participation: 30%
- Discussion section presentation: 5%
- Response paper (an essay on Russian propaganda): 17%
- Research proposal 1 (paper idea/question): 3%
- Research proposal 2 (paper plan): 7%
- Research paper: 33%
- Research paper presentation: 5%

Undergraduate students:

- Weekly discussion participation: 25%
- Discussion section presentation: 5%
- Thoughtful online reflections on weekly readings: 12%
- Response paper (an essay on Russian propaganda): 15%
- Research proposal 1 (paper idea/question): 3%
- Research proposal 2 (paper plan): 7%
- Research paper: 28%
- Research paper presentation: 5%

We will use the following scale for translating any numerical grades into final letter grades:

A: 93.00-100.00%

AB: 87.00-92.99%

B: 83.00-86.99%

BC: 77.00-82.99%

C: 73.00-76.99%

D: 60.00-72.99%

F: below 60%

Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade if posted late by up to 24 hours after the due date/time, and one additional grade down every 24 hours after that. Late online reflection posts will not be accepted.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no required textbook for this class. The required readings are listed below and available for download on the course website. Some readings on the course schedule are marked as optional: you don't have to read them for class discussions, but they may be useful in your research projects.

OTHER INFORMATION

COURSE WEBSITE: The course website is available via [Courseworks](#). Please check it frequently for announcements, information about assignments, and to access the readings and other materials. You will also use the course website to post your weekly reflections on course materials, your research proposals, papers, and presentation slides.

OFFICE HOURS: I encourage you to see me during office hours with any questions. If you are not available during the regular office hours, please email me to make an appointment.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: I take the issue of plagiarism and cheating very seriously. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating on any assignment, you will receive a failing grade for the class, and you will be referred to the Columbia University Office of Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (OJA). If you are not sure how to use and cite the words of others and when it is appropriate to cite others, please ask me.

COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVITY: This class strives to be an inclusive learning community. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, status, abilities, or experience. If there are aspects of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, accurate assessment, or achievement, please notify me as soon as possible. Please feel free to let me and others in the class know your preferred gender pronouns or if you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster.

ACCOMMODATIONS: If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation, you should contact the Office of Disability Services at 212-854-2388 and disability@columbia.edu. Please remember that it is your responsibility to report any learning-related disabilities to the Office of Disability Services in a timely fashion in order to ensure your rights to reasonable accommodations. If you are a student with a disability and you have a DS-certified "Accommodation Letter," please email me or come to my office hours to confirm your accommodation needs.

If your religious observance creates a conflict with any aspects of the course, please let me know well in advance, and I will schedule accommodations.

IMPORTANT DATES

February 17: Research proposal 1 due

March 10: Response paper due

March 24: Research proposal 2 due

April 25: Paper presentations

May 3: Final paper due

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Note: This schedule is subject to change. The changes will be posted on the class website ahead of time.

Part 1: Propaganda strategies in autocracies

Week 1 (January 17): Introductions; Information manipulation in autocracies

SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY PRESENTATIONS

- Guriev, Sergei, and Daniel Treisman. 2022. *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of Tyranny in the 21st Century*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 1 (“Fear and Spin”).
- Walker, Christopher, and Robert W. Orttung. 2014. “Breaking the News: The Role of State-Run Media.” *Journal of Democracy* 25 (1): 71-85.
- Jowett, Garth S., and Victoria O’Donnell. 2018. *Propaganda & Persuasion*. Sage Publications. Chapter 1 (“What Is Propaganda, and How Does It Differ from Persuasion?”).

Week 2 (January 24): The role of propaganda in authoritarian politics

ONLINE REFLECTION POST DUE BY 11.59 PM THE DAY BEFORE THE CLASS

- Guriev, Sergei, and Daniel Treisman. 2022. *Spin Dictators: The Changing Face of Tyranny in the 21st Century*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 3 (“Postmodern Propaganda”).
- Stockmann, Daniela, and Mary E. Gallagher. (2011). “Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China.” *Comparative Political Studies* 44 (4): 436-467.
- Huang, Haifeng. 2015. “Propaganda as Signaling.” *Comparative Politics* 47 (4): 419-437.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1998. “Acting “as if’’: symbolic politics and social control in Syria.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (3): 503-523.
- Yanagizawa-Drott, David. 2014. “Propaganda and Conflict: Evidence from the Rwandan Genocide.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129 (4): 1947–1994.
- *OPTIONAL*: Huang, Haifeng, and Nicholas Cruz. 2022. “Propaganda, Presumed Influence, and Collective Protest.” *Political Behavior* 44: 1789–1812.

Week 3 (January 31): Autocrats and social media

- Tucker, Joshua A., Yannis Theocharis, Margaret E. Roberts, and Pablo Barberá. 2017. “From Liberation to Turmoil: Social Media and Democracy.” *Journal of Democracy* 28 (4): 46-59.

- Gunitsky, Seva. 2015. "Corrupting the Cyber-Commons: Social Media as a Tool of Autocratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (1): 42-54.
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. 2017. "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument." *American Political Science Review* 111(3): 484-501.
- Stukal, Denis, Sergey Sanovich, Richard Bonneau, and Joshua A. Tucker. 2022. "Why Botter: How Pro-Government Bots Fight Opposition in Russia." *American Political Science Review* 116 (3): 843-857.
- Wijermars, Mariëlle, and Tetyana Lokot. 2022. "Is Telegram a "harbinger of freedom"? The performance, practices, and perception of platforms as political actors in authoritarian states." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 38 (1-2): 125-145.
- *OPTIONAL*: Barberá, Pablo, and Thomas Zeitzoff. 2018. "The New Public Address System: Why Do World Leaders Adopt Social Media?" *International Studies Quarterly* 62 (1): 121-130.

Week 4 (February 7): Vladimir Putin as an informational autocrat

- Frye, Timothy. 2021. *Weak Strongman: The Limits of Power in Putin's Russia*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 2 ("Putinology and Exceptional Russia") and 4 ("Better to Be Feared and Loved").
- Robertson, Graeme B., and Samuel Greene. 2017. "The Kremlin Emboldened: How Putin Wins Support." *Journal of Democracy* 28 (4): 86-100.
- Sharafutdinova, Gulnaz. 2020. *The Red Mirror: Putin's Leadership and Russia's Insecure Identity*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2 ("The White Knight and the Red Queen").
- Rogov, Kirill, and Maxim Ananyev. 2018. "Public Opinion and Russian Politics." In: Treisman, Daniel (ed.). *The New Autocracy: Information, Politics, and Policy in Putin's Russia*. Brookings Institution Press: Washington, D.C.
- Chapman, Hannah S. 2021. "Shoring Up Autocracy: Participatory Technologies and Regime Support in Putin's Russia." *Comparative Political Studies* 54(8): 1459-1489.
- *OPTIONAL*: McFaul, Michael. 2021. "Russia's Road to Autocracy." *Journal of Democracy* 32 (4): 11-26.

Week 5 (February 14): Media control under Putin

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 1 (PAPER IDEA) DUE FEBRUARY 17 BY 11.59 PM

- Gehlbach, Scott, Tetyana Lokot, and Anton Shirikov. 2023. "The Russian Media." In: Wengle, Susanne A. (ed.). *Russian Politics Today: Stability and Fragility*. Cambridge University Press.
- Burrett, Tina. 2011. *Television and Presidential Power in Putin's Russia*. London: Routledge. Chapter 3 ("Elite conflict and the end of independent television").
- Schimpfoss, Elisabeth, and Ilya Yablokov. 2014. "Coercion or Conformism? Censorship and Self-Censorship among Russian Media Personalities and Reporters in the 2010s." *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 22 (2): 295-311.

- Kovalev, Alexey. 2021. "The political economics of news making in Russian media: Ownership, clickbait and censorship." *Journalism* 22 (12): 2906-2918.
- Wijermars, Mariëlle. 2021. "Russia's Law 'On News Aggregators': Control the News Feed, Control the News?" *Journalism* 22 (12): 2938-2954.
- Alyukov, Maxim. 2022. "[How \(Not\) to Interpret Russian Political Talk Shows.](#)" *The Moscow Times*. November 19.
- *OPTIONAL*: Beazer, Quintin, Charles D. Crabtree, Christopher J. Fariss, and Holger Kern. 2022. "When Do Private Actors Engage in Censorship? Evidence From a Correspondence Experiment with Russian Private Media Firms." *British Journal of Political Science* 52 (4): 1790-1809.

Week 6 (February 21): The tactics of domestic authoritarian propaganda

- Gessen, Masha. "[Inside Putin's Propaganda Machine.](#)" 2022. *The New Yorker*. May 18.
- Rozenas, Arturas, and Denis Stukal. 2019. "How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia's State-Controlled Television." *Journal of Politics* 81(3): 982-996.
- Tolz, Vera, and Yuri Teper. 2018. "Broadcasting Agitainment: A New Media Strategy of Putin's Third Presidency." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(4): 213-227.
- Sharafutdinova, Gulnaz. 2020. *The Red Mirror: Putin's Leadership and Russia's Insecure Identity*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 7.
- Mattingly, Daniel C., and Elaine Yao. 2022. "How Soft Propaganda Persuades." *Comparative Political Studies* 55 (9): 1569-1594.
- *OPTIONAL*: Alrababa'h, Ala', and Lisa Blaydes, 2021. "Authoritarian Media and Diversionary Threats: Lessons from 30 Years of Syrian State Discourse." *Political Science Research and Methods* 9 (4): 693-708.
- *OPTIONAL*: Paul, Christopher, and Miriam Matthews. 2016. "[The Russian 'Firehose of Falsehood' Propaganda Model: Why It Might Work and Options to Counter It.](#)" RAND Corporation.

Week 7 (February 28): Authoritarian propaganda abroad

- Brandt, Jessica. 2021. "How Autocrats Manipulate Online Information: Putin's and Xi's Playbooks." *The Washington Quarterly* 44 (3): 127-154.
- Yablokov, Ilya. 2015. "Conspiracy Theories as a Russian Public Diplomacy Tool: The Case of Russia Today (RT)." *Politics* 35 (3-4): 301-315.
- DiResta, Renée, Shelby Grossman, and Alexandra Siegel. 2022. "In-House Vs. Outsourced Trolls: How Digital Mercenaries Shape State Influence Strategies." *Political Communication* 39 (2): 222-253.
- Benkler, Yochai, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts. 2018. *Network propaganda: Manipulation, disinformation, and radicalization in American politics*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 8 ("Are the Russians Coming?").
- Roescher, Franziska, Leon Yin, Richard Bonneau, Jonathan Nagler, and Joshua Tucker. 2018. "[What's the strategy of Russia's Internet trolls? We analyzed their tweets to find out.](#)" *The Washington Post*. November 19.

- *OPTIONAL*: Brady, Anne-Marie. 2015. "Authoritarianism Goes Global (II): China's Foreign Propaganda Machine." *Journal of Democracy* 26 (4): 51-59.
- *OPTIONAL*: Cirone, Alexandra, and William Hobbs. 2022. "Asymmetric Flooding as a Tool for Foreign Influence on Social Media." *Political Science Research and Methods* 1-12.
- *OPTIONAL*: Van Herpen, Marcel H. 2015. *Putin's Propaganda Machine: Soft Power and Russian Foreign Policy*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Chapters 1 ("Russian Soft Power") and 2 ("The Three Components of the Kremlin's Soft-Power Offensive").

Week 8 (March 7): Propaganda and Russia's invasion of Ukraine

RESPONSE PAPER (PROPAGANDA EVALUATION) DUE MARCH 10 BY 11.59PM

ONLINE REFLECTION POST DUE BY 11.59 PM THE DAY BEFORE THE CLASS

Note: this week, the weekly online reflection task will be to debunk a recent false news story or a false claim about Russia's invasion of Ukraine (often, such false claims are promoted by Russian state media or Russian officials). You will need to find such a claim, quote or summarize it, indicate its source, and explain why this claim is false. In that regard, the recommendations by De Witte and Kiely and Robertson listed below will be helpful. You don't have to refer to any of these pieces in your post; you can also rely on other news literacy advice and/or evidence reported by reputable news sources.

For examples of recent Russian TV propaganda, you can consult the Russian Media Monitor: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoAw0n5OyITkmejSCMfnnWg> or other resources. There have been plenty of publications on Russia's false claims about Ukraine, so please note that the debunking work should be your own: you cannot just copy a debunking or a disproof from a news story or a fact-checking website.

- Shevtsova, Lilia. 2020. "Russia's Ukraine Obsession." *Journal of Democracy* 31 (1): 138-147.
- Tabarovsky, Izabella. 2022. "Crumbling Memory: Russian Propaganda, World War II, and the Invasion of Ukraine." (A Conversation with David Hoffman.) *The Russia File*.
- Goode, J. Paul. 2022. "How Russian Television Prepared the Public for War." PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 761.
- Mozur, Paul, Adam Satariano, and Aaron Krolik. 2022. "[An Alternate Reality: How Russia's State TV Spins the Ukraine War.](#)" *The New York Times*. December 15.
- Rutland, Peter. 2022. "Why the West is Losing the Global Information War Over Ukraine and How It Can Be Fixed." PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 803.
- Blankenship, Mary, and Aloysius Uche Ordu. 2022. "[Russia's narratives about its invasion of Ukraine are lingering in Africa.](#)" The Brookings Institution. June 27.
- Oremus, Will, and Cat Zakrzewski. 2022. "[Big Tech tried to quash Russian propaganda. Russia found loopholes.](#)" *The Washington Post*. August 10.
- De Witte, Melissa. 2022. "[Seven tips for spotting disinformation related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.](#)" Stanford University. March 3.
- Kiely, Eugene, and Lori Robertson. 2016. "[How to Spot Fake News.](#)" FactCheck.Org. November 18.

HOLIDAY BREAK (March 12-19)

PART 2: Propaganda and the public

Week 9 (March 21): Domestic consumption and perceptions of propaganda

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 2 (PAPER PLAN) DUE MARCH 24 BY 11.59 PM

- Simonov, Andrey, and Justin Rao. 2022. "Demand for Online News Under Government Control: Evidence from Russia." *Journal of Political Economy* 130 (2): 259–309.
- Wojcieszak, Magdalena, Erik C. Nisbet, Lea Kremer, Golnoosh Behrouzian, and Carroll Glynn. 2018. "What Drives Media Use in Authoritarian Regimes? Extending Selective Exposure Theory to Iran." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 24 (1): 69–91.
- Szostek, Joanna. 2018. "News Media Repertoires and Strategic Narrative Reception: A Paradox of Dis/Belief in Authoritarian Russia." *New Media & Society* 20 (1): 68–87.
- Greene, Samuel. 2022. "[The Informational Dictator's Dilemma: Citizen Responses to Media Censorship and Control in Russia and Belarus.](#)" PONARS Policy Memo. June 12.
- Shirikov, Anton. 2022. "Russian journalists report the facts about Ukraine. Why do Russians ignore them?" *The Washington Post*. March 3.
- Alyukov, Maxim. 2022. "[Propaganda, Political Apathy, and Authoritarianism in Russia.](#)" NYU Jordan Center blog. October 26.

Week 10 (March 28): The effects of Russian propaganda on foreign audiences

ONLINE REFLECTION POST DUE BY 11.59 PM THE DAY BEFORE THE CLASS

- Eady, Gregory, Tom Paskhalis, Jan Zilinsky, Richard Bonneau, Jonathan Nagler, and Joshua A. Tucker. 2023. "Exposure to the Russian Internet Research Agency foreign influence campaign on Twitter in the 2016 US election and its relationship to attitudes and voting behavior." *Nature Communications* 14 (62).
- Chapman, Hannah S., and Theodore P. Gerber. 2019. "Foreign Media Broadcasts as a Tool of Soft Power: Agenda Setting and Issue Framing Effects of Russian News in Kyrgyzstan." *International Studies Quarterly* 63 (3): 756–769.
- Peisakhin, Leonid, and Arturas Rozenas. 2018. "Electoral Effects of Biased Media: Russian Television in Ukraine." *American Journal of Political Science* 62 (3): 535–550.
- Erlich, Aaron, and Calvin Garner. 2023. "Is Pro-Kremlin Disinformation Effective? Evidence from Ukraine." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 28 (1): 5–28.
- Fisher, Aleksandr. 2020. "Demonizing the enemy: the influence of Russian state-sponsored media on American audiences". *Post-Soviet Affairs* 36 (4): 281–296.

Week 11 (April 4): Counteracting propaganda: independent journalism and fact-checking

- Cooper, Ann. 2020. "[Conveying Truth: Independent Media in Putin's Russia.](#)" Harvard Kennedy School Shorenstein Center Discussion Paper.

- Yablokov, Ilya. 2022. "Russia's recently exiled media learn hard lessons abroad." openDemocracy. December 6.
- Roudakova, Natalia. 2009. "Journalism as "Prostitution": Understanding Russia's Reactions to Anna Politkovskaya's Murder." *Political Communication* 26 (4): 412-429.
- Huang, Haifeng, and Yao-Yuan Yeh. 2017. "Information from Abroad: Foreign Media, Selective Exposure and Political Support in China." *British Journal of Political Science* 49 (2): 611-36.
- Walter, Nathan, Jonathan Cohen, R. Lance Holbert, and Yasmin Morag. 2020. "Fact-Checking: A Meta-Analysis of What Works and for Whom." *Political Communication* 37 (3): 350-375.
- *OPTIONAL*: Kern, Holger Lutz, and Jens Hainmueller. 2009. "Opium for the Masses: How Foreign Media Can Stabilize Authoritarian Regimes." *Political Analysis* 17 (4): 377-399.

Week 12 (April 11): Counteracting propaganda: opposition, civil society, and social media

Note: no in-person class this week. I will let you know about the format of this class beforehand.

- Reuter, Ora John, and David Szakonyi. 2015. "Online Social Media and Political Awareness in Authoritarian Regimes." *British Journal of Political Science* 45(1): 29-51.
- Dollbaum, Jan Matti, Morvan Lallouet, and Ben Noble. 2021. *Navalny: Putin's Nemesis, Russia's Future?* London: Hurst. Chapters 1 ("Who Is Alexey Navalny?") and 5 ("The Kremlin V. Navalny").
- Lokot, Tetyana. 2021. *Beyond the Protest Square: Digital Media and Augmented Dissent*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield. Chapter 8 ("Russia: Protest in the Age of Networked Authoritarianism").
- Greene, Samuel A. 2022. "You are what you read: media, identity, and community in the 2020 Belarusian uprising." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 38 (1-2): 88-106.
- Metzger, Megan MacDuffee, and Joshua A. Tucker. 2017. "Social Media and EuroMaidan: A Review Essay." *Slavic Review* 76 (1) 169-191.
- *OPTIONAL*: Enikolopov, Ruben, Alexey Makarin, and Maria Petrova. 2020. "Social Media and Protest Participation: Evidence From Russia." *Econometrica* 88 (4): 1479-1514.

Week 13 (April 18): Counteracting propaganda: platforms and systemic solutions

- Nyhan, Brendan. 2019. "We Can't Combat Fake News If We Don't Really Understand It." Medium. March 7.
- Pennycook, Gordon, and David Rand. 2020. "The Right Way to Fight Fake News." *The New York Times*. March 24.
- Benkler, Yochai, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts. 2018. *Network propaganda: Manipulation, disinformation, and radicalization in American politics*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 13 ("What Can Men Do Against Such Reckless Hate?").
- Helmus, Todd C., et al. 2020. ["Russian Propaganda Hits Its Mark: Experimentally Testing the Impact of Russian Propaganda and Counter-Interventions."](#) RAND Corporation.

- Aslett, Kevin, Andrew M. Guess, Richard Bonneau, Jonathan Nagler, and Joshua A. Tucker. 2022. "News credibility labels have limited average effects on news diet quality and fail to reduce misperceptions." *Science Advances* 8 (18).

Week 14 (April 25): Paper presentations

SLIDES DUE BY 11.59 PM THE DAY BEFORE THE CLASS

FINAL PAPERS DUE MAY 3