

Curriculum Vitae — Joshua Weidmann

Harvard University
Department of Economics
<https://joshuaweidmann.com>

EDUCATION

University of Konstanz

MA Politics and Public Administration 2022-2024

- Grade and rank: 1.0/1.0 (Distinction, DI at ≤ 1.2 ; top 7% of 140 graduates)
- Courses: Mathematics for Political Science (DI, ranked 2nd of 16), Causal Inference in Political Science Research (PhD-level; DI, ranked 2nd of 8)

London School of Economics and Political Science

MSc Political Sociology 2021-2022

- Grade: Distinction
- Courses: Quantitative Analysis for Political Science (DI, ranked joint 1st of 42), Quantitative Social Research Methods (DI, ranked 1st of 33), Political Science and Political Economy: Current Issues (auditing student)

University of Mannheim

BA Political Science, minor Economics 2018-2021

- Grade and rank: 1.1/1.0 (Distinction, DI at ≤ 1.2 ; top 5% of 76 graduates)
- Courses: Empirical Political Research (DI, ranked joint 1st of 125), Data Analysis (DI, ranked joint 1st of 108)

Additional coursework

- Real Analysis, summer school, *London School of Economics* (grade: A)
- The Political Economy of Electoral Democracies, *Harvard University* (PhD-level, auditing student)
- Computerized Text Analysis in the Social Sciences, spring school, *University of Oxford*

RESEARCH POSITIONS

Harvard University

Predoctoral Fellow for [David Y. Yang](#) 2024-present

University of Cologne

Research Assistant for [Michael M. Bechtel](#) 2022-2024

London School of Economics

Research Assistant for [Mathias Poertner](#) 2023

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Competitive Narratives, Technological Change, and Government Policy”, with Minsoo Kang, [David Y. Yang](#), and [Noam Yuchtman](#)

“Dialing Up the Empathy: Using AI Chatbots to Conduct Qualitative Interviews in Mass Surveys”, with [Michael M. Bechtel](#), Aaron Cannon, and Michael Hess

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) enables researchers to qualitatively study preference formation through unstructured question formats that were previously too costly for inclusion in large-scale surveys. We evaluate whether AI interviewers, through their empathic capabilities, can elicit richer survey responses and reduce social desirability bias. Our experimental design randomly assigns respondents to one of three interview modes: (i) self-administered, open-ended questions, (ii) a non-empathic chatbot interviewer, or (iii) a highly empathic chatbot interviewer. We then examine response behavior across sensitive and non-sensitive topics, including vote intentions, abortion, hiring discrimination, and favorite candy. The findings reveal whether AI chatbots can qualitatively explore preference determinants while reducing social desirability bias compared to traditional interviews.

“Preferences for Democratic Representation Among the Represented”, with Michael M. Bechtel, Simon Lüchinger, and Lukas D. Schmid

What preferences do voters hold about descriptive representation? We distinguish between self-centered, proportionality-based, and other-regarding representation preferences and explore their prevalence using survey experiments fielded in eight democracies (Australia, Canada, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, Portugal, Turkey, and the United States). Our experiments test how citizens ($N = 13,856$) respond to varying levels of legislative misrepresentation across ideological, geographic, and gender dimensions. We find that citizens favor over-representation of their own ideological group and region, reflecting self-centered preferences. In contrast, both women and men support female over-representation. These patterns appear rooted in how citizens link descriptive representation and key elements of substantive representation such as policy responsiveness and outputs. Our findings shed light on how misrepresentation of political and social groups in parliament affects democratic attitudes.

GRANTS	ECONtribute/German Research Foundation (DFG), “Preferences for Democratic Representation Among the Represented” (EUR 20,000, co-applicant), 2023	
	ECONtribute/German Research Foundation (DFG), “Dialing Up the Empathy: Using AI Chatbots to Conduct Qualitative Interviews in Mass Surveys” (EUR 9,000, co-applicant), 2023	
PRESENTATIONS	2024: European Political Science Association Annual Meeting (presenter)	
TEACHING (TA)	Research Design and Causal Inference (Master's-level), <i>University of Konstanz</i> 2023-24 Empirical Political Research (Undergraduate), <i>University of Mannheim</i> 2019-21	
SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS	Scholarship, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (EUR 30,000), 2020-2024 Award for 3 rd best overall performance in BA Political Science, <i>University of Mannheim</i>	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Languages: German (native); English (fluent) Programming: R, Python, STATA; L ^A T _E X; Qualtrics	
REFERENCES	David Y. Yang Yvonne P.L. Lui Professor of Economics Department of Economics <i>Harvard University</i> davidyang@fas.harvard.edu	Noam Yuchtman Hayek Professor of Political Economy Department of Management <i>London School of Economics</i> n.yuchtman@lse.ac.uk
	Michael M. Bechtel Professor of Political Economy Department of Political Science <i>University of Cologne</i> m.bechtel@uni-koeln.de	