

# Sumitra Badrinathan

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🌐 [sumitrabadrinathan.github.io](https://sumitrabadrinathan.github.io)  
✍ [Google Scholar](#)

POSITIONS     **Assistant Professor of Political Science**     Fall 2022 –  
American University, [School of International Service](#)  
Department of Politics, Governance, and Economics

**Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, University of Oxford     2021 – 2022  
Reuters Institute, [Trust in News Project](#)

EDUCATION     Ph.D., Political Science, University of Pennsylvania     2016 – 2021  
M.A., Political Science, University of Chicago     2014 – 2015  
B.A., Psychology, St. Xavier's College Mumbai     2011 – 2014

RESEARCH  
FIELDS     Misinformation, South Asia, Political Economy, Experimental Methods, Partisanship,  
Social Media, Polarization, Democratic Norms

PUBLISHED  
ARTICLES     (11) **Badrinathan, Sumitra**, Simon Chauchard, and Niloufer Siddiqui. 2024.  
[Misinformation and Support for Vigilantism: An Experiment in India and Pakistan.](#)  
*American Political Science Review*

– Coverage: [The Hindu](#), [Scroll](#)

(10) Fletcher, Richard, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, et al. 2024. The link between changing news use and trust: Longitudinal analysis of 46 countries. *Forthcoming, Journal of Communication*

(9) **Badrinathan, Sumitra** and Simon Chauchard. 2024. [Researching and Countering Misinformation in the Global South.](#) *Current Opinion in Psychology*

(8) **Badrinathan, Sumitra** and Simon Chauchard. 2023. ["I Don't Think That's True, Bro!" Social Corrections of Misinformation in India.](#) *International Journal of Press/Politics: 1–23*

– Coverage: [Hindustan Times](#), [The Print](#), [Scroll](#)

(7) Mont'Alverne, Camila, Amy Ross Arguedas, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2023. [Domain-Specific Influence on Facebook: How Topic Matters when Assessing Influential Accounts in Four Countries.](#) *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, 3

- (6) Mont’Alverne, Camila, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, Amy Ross Arguedas, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2023. [Fair and Balanced: What News Audiences in Four Countries Mean When They Say They Prefer Impartial News.](#) *Journalism Studies*: 1-18
- (5) Ross Arguedas, Amy, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, Camila Mont’Alverne, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2023. [Shortcuts to Trust: Relying on Cues to Judge Online News from Unfamiliar Sources on Digital Platforms](#) *Journalism*: 1-23
- (4) Kim, Eunji, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, Donghyun Danny Choi, Sabrina Karim, and Yang-Yang Zhou. 2022. [Navigating Insider and Outsider Status as Researchers Conducting Field Experiments.](#) *PS: Political Science & Politics*: 1–5
- (3) Ross Arguedas, Amy, **Sumitra Badrinathan**, Camila Mont’Alverne, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2022. [“It’s a Battle You Are Never Going to Win”: Perspectives from Journalists in Four Countries on How Digital Media Platforms Undermine Trust in News.](#) *Journalism Studies*: 1-20
- (2) **Badrinathan, Sumitra**. 2021. [Educative Interventions to Combat Misinformation: Evidence From A Field Experiment in India.](#) *American Political Science Review* 115(4): 1325–1341.
- Winner of the 2021 APSA Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper Award
- (1) **Badrinathan, Sumitra**, Deepaboli Chatterjee, Devesh Kapur, and Neelanjan Sircar. 2021. [Partisan Disagreement: The Role of Media, Personal Networks and Gender in Forming Political Preferences.](#) *Urbanisation* 6(1): 141–157.

UNDER  
REVIEW

[The Religious Roots of Belief in Misinformation: Experimental Evidence from India](#), *with Simon Chauchard*

The Effect of Labeling False Social Media posts in Brazil, India, and the UK, with Richard Fletcher, Simge Andi, Camila Mont’Alverne, Benjamin Toff, Rasmus K. Nielsen

Examining Urban/Rural Gaps in Trust in News Across Four Countries, *with Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, Rasmus K. Nielsen*

Subjective Preferences for Objective News, *with Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, Rasmus K. Nielsen*

BOOK  
MANUSCRIPT

Seeds of Discord: How Misinformation Erodes Democratic Norms in South Asia, *with Niloufer Siddiqui and Simon Chauchard*. (Manuscript in progress for Cambridge Elements series on Politics of Development)

BOOK CHAPTERS	Badrinathan, Sumitra, and Devesh Kapur. 2021. “Religion, Caste, Class, Politics: How Urbanization Affects Social Interactions and Political Behaviors.” In <i>Colossus: The Anatomy of Delhi</i> , edited by Sanjoy Chakravorty and Neelanjan Sircar. Cambridge University Press
WORK IN PROGRESS	<p>Countering Misinformation Early: A Media Literacy Intervention for School Children in India, <i>with Priyadarshi Amar, Simon Chauchard, Florian Sichart</i>  <a href="#">pre-analysis plan</a></p> <p>Deconstructing Meta-Narratives of Misinformation to Reduce Support for Violence: A WhatsApp-based Experiment, <i>with Niloufer Siddiqui and Simon Chauchard</i></p> <p>The Political Economy of Local Journalism and Misinformation: Evidence from North India, <i>with Adam Auerbach</i></p> <p>Sharing Falsehoods in an Information-poor Environment: An Experiment with Indian Teenagers, <i>with Priyadarshi Amar, Simon Chauchard, Florian Sichart</i>  <a href="#">pre-analysis plan</a></p> <p>Home and Away: Explaining the Political Behavior of the Indian American Diaspora, <i>with Milan Vaishnav and Devesh Kapur</i></p> <p>Norms of Deference and Belief in Misinformation, <i>with Simon Chauchard</i>  <a href="#">pre-analysis plan</a></p> <p>The effect of corrections featuring fact-checks from news organisations on false COVID-19 social media posts in Brazil, India and the UK, <i>with Richard Fletcher et al.</i>  <a href="#">pre-analysis plan</a></p> <p>The effect of credibility labels on trust in news, <i>with Richard Fletcher et al.</i>  <a href="#">pre-analysis plan</a></p>
GRANTS & FUNDING	<p>2022 Social Science Research Council’s Mercury Project Award for <a href="#">Bihar Information and Media Literacy Initiative (BIMLI)</a>: A Grassroots Media Literacy RCT for Rural Populations in India: \$500,000</p> <p>2022 Facebook Foundational Integrity and Impact Research Award for Misinformation and Vigilantism in India and Pakistan: Determinants and Solutions: \$100,000</p> <p>2021 <a href="#">Sobti Family Doctoral Fellowship</a> at the University of Pennsylvania: \$12,500</p> <p>2020 Wharton School Russell Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania: \$3,000</p> <p>2018 Judith Rodin Research Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania: \$10,000</p>

SELECT MEDIA	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Niloufer Siddiqui, and Simon Chauchard. September 16, 2024. <a href="#">“Ohio cat rumors – and why misinformation about minorities goes viral.”</a> <i>Good Authority</i>
	Interview for CASI, University of Pennsylvania. May 13, 2024. <a href="#">India in Transition, Election Conversations 2024.</a>
	Interview on Big World Podcast. 1 August, 2023. <a href="#">Disinformation Part 1: India.</a>
	Interview on Scope Conditions Podcast. 27 February, 2023. <a href="#">Can we Immunize Against Misinformation? With Sumitra Badrinathan.</a>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra. 7 June, 2021. <a href="#">“India is facing an epidemic of misinformation alongside covid-19.”</a> <i>The Washington Post</i>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, Jonathan Kay, and Milan Vaishnav. June 10, 2021. <a href="#">“Discrimination against Indian Americans happens more than you might think.”</a> <i>Monkey Cage</i>
POLICY WRITING	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 15 October, 2020. <a href="#">“Why Indian Americans are not becoming Republicans any time soon.”</a> <i>Monkey Cage</i>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, and Simon Chauchard. 28 January, 2020. <a href="#">“Is there a way to counter fake news on WhatsApp?”</a> <i>Hindustan Times</i>
	Mont’Alverne, Camila, Sumitra Badrinathan, Benjamin Toff, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 22 September, 2022. <a href="#">The trust gap: how and why news on digital platforms is viewed more sceptically versus news in general.</a> <i>Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism</i> Press: <a href="#">Scroll</a> , <a href="#">NewsLaundry</a> , <a href="#">Quint</a>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 9 February, 2021. <a href="#">How Do Indian Americans View India? Results From the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey.</a> <i>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</i> Press: <a href="#">Grand Tamasha Podcast</a> , <a href="#">Reuters</a> , <a href="#">Times of India</a> , <a href="#">Indian Express</a>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 14 October, 2020. <a href="#">How Will Indian Americans Vote? Results From the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey.</a> <i>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</i> Press: <a href="#">Wall Street Journal</a> , <a href="#">New York Times</a> , <a href="#">Axios</a> , <a href="#">Reuters</a> , <a href="#">NDTV</a>
INVITED TALKS	2024: U of Rochester, Council on Foreign Relations, Democratic Erosion Consortium, George Washington, Yale South Asia, UMontreal, Brown (scheduled), Michigan (scheduled)
	2023: University of Maryland Political Science Seminar, Google News Initiative Fighting Misinformation Initiative
	2022: NYU Comparative Politics Speaker Series, Brown Harvard MIT Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics, Aarhus University

AWARDS	APSA Political Communication Section's Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper Award	2021
	University of Pennsylvania Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching	2019
	<a href="#">Penn Prize for Excellence in Teaching by Graduate Students</a>	2019
TEACHING & ADVISING	<u>Instructor, American University:</u> Political Misinformation (Spring 2024), Comparative Political Economy (Fall 2024), Experimental Design (Spring 2024)	
	<u>Teaching Assistant, University of Pennsylvania:</u> <a href="#">Statistics for Political Science</a> (Fall 18), Political Change (Fall 19), International Human Rights (Spring 18), Intro to American Politics (Fall 17)	
	<u>Undergraduate Thesis Advising:</u> Megha Rastogi (AU), Jeremy Schaefer (AU), Tanishka Khanna (AU)	
	<u>Research Assistants:</u> Josiah Gottfried (AU), Sukhmani Khalsa (AU), Tipanna Pujari (India), Saneet Chakradeo (AU)	
CONFERENCE TALKS	2024: APSA, ICA, CASI India Political Economy Workshop, SSRC Symposium	
	2023: SPSA Conference, MPSA Conference, EPSA Conference, APSA Conference, CASI India Political Economy, MIT Polarization Workshop	
	2022: MPSA, ICA, APSA, Berlin Meetings on the Political Economy of Development (MoPED), International Fact-Checking Network Global Fact 9 Conference	
	2021: APSA, International Journal of Press/Politics Conference, SPSP Annual Convention, Digital Democracy Workshop, University of Zurich	
	2020: APSA, Harvard Experimental Political Science Conference, SPSA	
	2019: APSA, NYU Experimental Social Sciences Conference, MIT Gov/Lab Political Behavior of Development Conference, SPSA Conference	
SERVICE	<u>Reviewer for:</u> American Political Science Review, Nature Human Behavior, American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics, Journal of Development Economics, Political Behavior, Political Psychology, Harvard Kennedy Misinformation Review, Perspectives on Politics, Journal of Quantitative Description, Comparative Political Studies	
	<u>Advisory Board:</u> UC3M <a href="#">Polarization, Identity and Misinformation</a> (PIM) lab, Stanford/Dartmouth/Penn <a href="#">Polarization Research Lab</a>	
	<u>American University Service:</u> Search Committee Junior Member on Political Economy tenure track search (2023); Faculty mentor in undergraduate Olson Scholars Program (2023, 2024), PhD Placement Director 2024-25	

Disciplinary Service: Award committee member for APSA Political Communication  
Section Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper award (2022)

WORK National Opinion Research Center, Chicago, IL 2015 - 2016  
EXPERIENCE Research Associate, General Social Survey

RA to Dr. Nicholas Stephanopoulos, University of Chicago 2015 - 2016  
Data cleaning, analysis and coding for project on racial polarization  
in voting patterns

Minister of State for Communications and IT 2013 - 2014  
Electoral Campaign, Mumbai, India  
Head of student campaigning, outreach, and GOTV

DATA Languages: R (proficient), HTML CSS (intermediate), Python (intermediate)  
SCIENCE & Programs: Qualtrics (survey & experimental design), Latex, DataWrapper  
TECH Statistical modelling: classic regression and generalized linear models, multilevel modeling

LANGUAGES Native: English, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil; Intermediate: French (C1), Spanish (A2)

FIELDWORK India: Bihar, New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan

CITIZENSHIP India

REFERENCES **Prof. Guy Grossman**  
Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of Pennsylvania  
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**Prof. Matthew Levendusky**  
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**Prof. Marc Meredith**  
Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of Pennsylvania  
[marcmere@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:marcmere@sas.upenn.edu)

**Prof. Devesh Kapur**  
Starr Foundation Professor  
of South Asian Studies  
Johns Hopkins University SAIS  
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