

Sumitra Badrinathan

CONTACT

American University
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Washington, DC 20016

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EMPLOYMENT

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. in Political Science, University of Pennsylvania 2016 – 2021

MA in Political Science, University of Pennsylvania 2018

MA in Political Science, University of Chicago 2015

BA in Psychology, St. Xavier's College Mumbai 2014

RESEARCH FIELDS

Misinformation, South Asia, Political Communication, Experimental Methods

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

(15) Amar, Priyadarshi, Sumitra Badrinathan, Simon Chauchard, and Florian Sichart. 2025. [Countering Misinformation Early: Evidence from a Classroom-Based Field Experiment in India](#). Conditionally Accepted, *American Political Science Review*

- Winner, 2025 APSA Award for Best Experimental Paper
- Honorable Mention, 2025 APSA Comparative Politics Sage Best Paper Prize

(14) Chauchard, Simon and Sumitra Badrinathan. 2025. The Religious Roots of Belief in Misinformation: Experimental Evidence from India. Forthcoming, *British Journal of Political Science*

(13) Altay, Sacha, Simge Andi, Sumitra Badrinathan, et al. 2025. [The small effects of short user corrections on misinformation in Brazil, India, and the UK](#). Forthcoming, *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review*

(12) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Simon Chauchard, and Niloufer Siddiqui. 2025. [Misinformation and Support for Vigilantism: An Experiment in India and Pakistan](#). *American Political Science Review* 119(2): 947–965

- Winner, 2025 APSA Rajni Kothari Award for Best Paper in South Asian Politics
- Press: [The Hindu](#), [Scroll](#), [Political Science Now](#)

- (11) Fletcher, Richard, Sumitra Badrinathan, et al. 2025. [Who Wants Impartial News? Investigating Determinants of Preferences for Impartiality in 40 Countries.](#) *International Journal of Communication* 19: 1581–1603.
– Press: [Neiman Lab](#)
- (10) Fletcher, Richard, Sumitra Badrinathan, et al. 2025. [The link between changing news use and trust: Longitudinal analysis of 46 countries.](#) *Journal of Communication* 75(1): 1–15
- (9) Badrinathan, Sumitra and Simon Chauchard. 2024. [Researching and Countering Misinformation in the Global South.](#) *Current Opinion in Psychology* 55: 101–113
- (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
– Press: [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.

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
UNDER REVIEW	<p>Home and Away: Explaining the Paradoxical Political Attitudes of Indian Americans, <i>with Milan Vaishnav and Devesh Kapur</i></p> <p>– Revise and resubmit, Political Behavior</p> <p>Examining Urban/Rural Gaps in Trust in News Across Four Countries, <i>with Richard Fletcher, Benjamin Toff, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen</i></p>
WORK IN PROGRESS	<p>Book Project – Seeds of Discord: How Misinformation Erodes Democratic Norms in South Asia, <i>with Niloufer Siddiqui and Simon Chauchard</i></p> <p>– Proposal accepted for Cambridge University Press, Elements on Politics of Development</p> <p>Offline but Not Immune: Misinformation Sharing in Low-Connectivity Contexts, <i>with Priyadarshi Amar, Simon Chauchard, Florian Sichart</i></p> <p>Countering Anti-Minority Narratives: A Field Experiment in India, <i>with Niloufer Siddiqui, Simon Chauchard and Abhu Tyagi</i></p> <p>The Political Economy of Local Journalism in India, <i>with Adam Auerbach</i></p> <p>Ethnic Identity vs. Partisan Loyalty: A Multi-Experiment Analysis of Indian American Voting Preferences, <i>with Milan Vaishnav and Devesh Kapur</i></p> <p>From Pilot to Policy: Successes and Lessons from a Long-Term Media Literacy RCT in India, <i>with Priyadarshi Amar, Simon Chauchard, Florian Sichart</i></p>
GRANTS & FUNDING	<p>2025 American University SIS Collaborative Research Award w/ Sarah Khan for Gendered Dimensions of Misinformation in South Asia: \$20,000</p> <p>2022 Social Science Research Council’s Mercury Project Award for Bihar Information and Media Literacy Initiative (BIMLI): 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 Sobti Family Doctoral Fellowship 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, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 29 March, 2025. “Indian Americans and the future of US-India ties.” <i>Hindustan Times</i>
	Interview on the Grand Tamasha Podcast. 5 November, 2024. The Indian American Vote in 2024.
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Niloufer Siddiqui, and Simon Chauchard. September 16, 2024. “Ohio cat rumors – and why misinformation about minorities goes viral.” <i>Good Authority</i>
	Interview for Scroll. May 31, 2024. Interview: Debunking, correcting misinformation helps but it is not enough to change strong beliefs.
	Interview on Big World Podcast. 1 August, 2023. Disinformation Part 1: India.
	Interview on Scope Conditions Podcast. 27 February, 2023. Can we Immunize Against Misinformation? With Sumitra Badrinathan.
	Badrinathan, Sumitra. 7 June, 2021. “India is facing an epidemic of misinformation alongside covid-19.” <i>The Washington Post</i>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, Jonathan Kay, and Milan Vaishnav. June 10, 2021. “Discrimination against Indian Americans happens more than you might think.” <i>Monkey Cage</i>
POLICY PAPERS	Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 15 October, 2020. “Why Indian Americans are not becoming Republicans any time soon.” <i>Monkey Cage</i>
	Badrinathan, Sumitra, and Simon Chauchard. 28 January, 2020. “Is there a way to counter fake news on WhatsApp?” <i>Hindustan Times</i>
	(12) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, Milan Vaishnav, and Annabel Richter. 7 July, 2025. How Indian Americans Live: Results From the 2024 Indian American Attitudes Survey. <i>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</i>
	(11) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, Milan Vaishnav, and Annabel Richter. 10 March, 2025. Foreign Policy Attitudes of Indian Americans: 2024 Survey Results. <i>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</i> – Press: BBC , The Hindu
	(10) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 28 October, 2024. Indian Americans at the Ballot Box: Results From the 2024 Indian American Attitudes Survey. <i>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</i> – Press: Foreign Policy , Al Jazeera , Semafor
	(9) Mont’Alverne, Camila, Sumitra Badrinathan, Benjamin Toff, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 22 September, 2022. The trust gap: how and why news on digital platforms is viewed more sceptically versus news in general. <i>Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism</i> – Press: Scroll , Newslaundry , Quint

(8) Ross Arguedas, Amy, Sumitra Badrinathan, Camila Mont’Alverne, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 4 April, 2022. [Snap Judgements: How Audiences Who Lack Trust in News Navigate Information on Digital Platforms](#). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*

(7) Toff, Benjamin, Sumitra Badrinathan, Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2 December, 2021. [Depth and Breadth: How News Organisations Navigate Trade-Offs Around Building Trust in News](#). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*

(6) Toff, Benjamin, Sumitra Badrinathan, Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 9 September, 2021. [Overcoming indifference: what attitudes towards news tell us about building trust](#). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*

– Press: [Newslandry](#)

(5) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, Jonathan Kay, and Milan Vaishnav. 9 June, 2021. [Social Realities of Indian Americans: Results From the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey](#). *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*

– Press: [WNYC-Gothamist](#), [Times of India](#)

(4) Toff, Benjamin, Sumitra Badrinathan, Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 22 April, 2021. [Listening to what trust in news means to users: qualitative evidence from four countries](#). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*

(3) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 9 February, 2021. [How Do Indian Americans View India? Results From the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey](#). *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*

– Press: [Grand Tamasha Podcast](#), [Reuters](#), [Times of India](#), [Indian Express](#)

(2) Toff, Benjamin, Sumitra Badrinathan, Camila Mont’Alverne, Amy Ross Arguedas, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 3 December, 2020. [What We Think We Know and What We Want to Know: Perspectives on Trust in News in a Changing World](#). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*

(1) Badrinathan, Sumitra, Devesh Kapur, and Milan Vaishnav. 14 October, 2020. [How Will Indian Americans Vote? Results From the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey](#). *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*

– Press: [Wall Street Journal](#), [New York Times](#), [Axios](#), [Reuters](#), [NDTV](#)

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

2025: University of Pennsylvania Comparative Politics seminar, Columbia Media Effects Empirical Workshop, Center for the Advanced Study of India Political Economy Workshop, NYU Political Psychology Meeting

2024: Council on Foreign Relations seminar, Democratic Erosion Consortium seminar, George Washington Comparative Politics Seminar, Yale South Asia panel, University of

Montreal Summer School, Brown-Harvard joint seminar, University of Michigan South Asia Seminar, University of Rochester Conference on Applied Methods, University of Virginia Digital Democracy Symposium, Social Science Research Council Symposium, Center for the Advanced Study of India Political Economy Workshop

2023: University of Maryland Seminar, Google News Fighting Misinformation Initiative, Center for the Advanced Study of India Political Economy Workshop, MIT Polarization Workshop

2022: NYU Comparative Politics Seminar, Brown-Harvard-MIT Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics, Berlin Meetings on the Political Economy of Development

2021: UCLA Politics of Order and Development Lab Seminar, Aarhus University Seminar, University of Zurich Digital Democracy Workshop

2020: Harvard Experimental Political Science Workshop

2019: NYU Experimental Social Sciences Workshop, MIT Gov/Lab Political Behavior of Development Workshop

AWARDS	APSA Experiments Section Best Paper Award	2025
	APSA Comparative Politics Sage Best Paper Award (Honorable Mention)	2025
	American University SIS Collaborative Research Award	2025
	American University SIS Award for Outstanding Scholarship	2025
	APSA South Asia Section's Rajni Kothari Best Paper Award	2025
	APSA Political Communication Section's Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper Award	2021
	University of Pennsylvania Dean's Award for Distinguished Teaching	2019
	Penn Prize for Excellence in Teaching by Graduate Students	2019

TEACHING	<u>Instructor, American University:</u>	
	SIS 896: Experimental Design and Issues in Causality (PhD Seminar, Fall 2025) SIS 673: Comparative Political Economy (MA Seminar, Fall 2024) SIS 676: Political Misinformation and Fake News (MA Seminar, Fall 2023) SISU 306: Experiments in International Studies (UG Lecture, Spring 2025) SISU 380: Political Misinformation (UG Seminar, Spring 2025)	
	<u>Teaching Assistant, University of Pennsylvania:</u> Statistics for Political Science (Fall 2018), Political Change (Fall 2019), International Human Rights (Spring 2018), Introduction to American Politics (Fall 2017)	

CONFERENCES	2025: SPSA, EPSA, APSA (scheduled)
	2024: APSA, ICA
	2023: SPSA, MPSA, EPSA, APSA
	2022: MPSA, ICA, APSA, International Fact-Checking Network Conference

2021: APSA, International Journal of Press/Politics Conference, SPSP Annual Convention
2020: APSA, SPSA
2019: APSA, SPSA

INVITED
MEMBER

Evidence in Governance and Politics ([EGAP](#)) research network (2025–)

SERVICE

Editorial Board, British Journal of Political Science (2025–)

Reviewer for: American Political Science Review, Nature Human Behavior, Nature Communications, American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics, Journal of Development Economics, Political Behavior, Political Psychology, Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review, Perspectives on Politics, Journal of Quantitative Description, Comparative Political Studies, British Journal of Political Science, International Journal of Communication, National Science Foundation

Advisory Board: UC3M [Polarization, Identity and Misinformation](#) (PIM) lab, Stanford/Dartmouth/Penn [Polarization Research Lab](#)

American University Service:

Search Committee Member for Political Economy tenure track search (2023)

Faculty mentor in undergraduate Olson Scholars Program (2023–)

PhD Placement Director (2024–)

PhD Committee (2024–)

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

LANGUAGES

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

FIELDWORK

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

Last update: 08/2025