

# ROBERT SHAFFER

## CONTACT

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## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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2018-Present      Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania

## EDUCATION

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2018      Ph.D., Government, *University of Texas, Austin*  
**Committee:** Zachary Elkins (chair), Bryan Jones, Stephen Jessee, and John Wilkerson  
**Dissertation:** Power in Text: Extracting Institutional Relationships from Natural Language

2016      M.S., Statistics and Data Science, *University of Texas, Austin*

2012      B.A., Political Science, *University of California, Berkeley*

## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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2018      Pete Mohanty and **Robert Shaffer**. “Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS.” Forthcoming at *Political Analysis*.

2017      **Shaffer, Robert**. “Cognitive Load and Issue Engagement in Congressional Discourse.” *Cognitive Systems Research* 44: 89-99.

2017      Pan, Janice, **Robert Shaffer**, Zenia Sinno, Marcus Tyler, and Joydeep Ghosh. “The Obesity Paradox in ICU Patients.” *Proceedings of the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society*.<sup>†</sup>

2014      Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, James Melton, **Robert Shaffer**, Juan F. Sequeda, Daniel P. Miranker. “Constitute: The World’s Constitutions to Read, Search, and Compare.” *Journal of Web Semantics*, 2014.

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<sup>†</sup> Conference paper which involved a competitive submission process and double-blind peer review.

## NON-PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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- 2013                      **Shaffer, Robert.** “Judicial Oversight in the Comparative Context: Biodiversity Protection in the US, Australia, and Canada.” *Environmental Law Reporter* 43, no.2.

## SOFTWARE AUTHORED

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- bigKRLS*                      R package (with Pete Mohanty) implementing improvements to Hainmueller and Hazlett’s (2013) KRLS model, with a focus on incorporating KRLS into R’s high-performance *bigmemory* suite. Available via [CRAN](#) and [github](#).
- constitute\_tools*              Back-end Python toolset designed to assist with Constitute data collection pipeline. Includes a hierarchical parser designed to read legal documents and a series of formatting tools. Available via [github](#).

## INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

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- 2017                      Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, Alex Hudson, and Jesse Baugher. “Constitute and the Semantic Web.” *IPSA/AISP 2017 International Conference*. December, 2017.
- 2017                      Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, and Jesse Baugher. “Constitute and the Semantic Web.” *PoliInformatics Invitational Workshop*. August, 2017.
- 2016                      Zachary Elkins, Robert Shaffer, and Jesse Baugher. “Agnostic Constitute: An Open-Data Platform.” *Sunlight Foundation Transparency Workshop*. October, 2016.
- 2014                      Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, Michelle Wolfe, and Bryan D. Jones. “Attribute Uncertainty and the U.S. Financial Crisis.” *PoliInformatics Invitational Workshop*. November, 2014.
- 2014                      Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, Michelle Wolfe, and Bryan D. Jones. “Attribute Uncertainty and the US Financial Crisis.” *PoliInformatics Challenge, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*. August, 2014.
- 2013                      Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, James Melton, Robert Shaffer, Juan F. Sequeda and Daniel Miranker. “Constitute: The World’s Constitutions to Read, Search and Compare.” *Semantic Web Challenge*. October, 2013

## WORKING PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

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- PolMeth* 2018,  
*APSA* 2017,  
*MPSA* 2017                      Robert Shaffer. “Power in Text: Extracting Institutional Relationships from Natural Language.”

<i>useR!</i> 2016, <i>APSA</i> 2016, <i>MPSA</i> 2017	Pete Mohanty and Robert Shaffer. “Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS.”
<i>PolMeth</i> 2016, <i>APSA</i> 2015	Robert Shaffer and Zachary Elkins. “An Evaluation of Measures of Textual Similarity.”
<i>MPSA</i> 2016	Brian J. Cook, Robert Shaffer, and L. Maria Ingram. “The Design and Implementation of Chemical Disclosure Requirements and Trade Secret Protections in State Fracking Regulation.”
<i>PolMeth</i> 2015, <i>MPSA</i> 2015	Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, and Bryan D. Jones. “The Political Effects of Uncertainty.”
<i>PolMeth</i> 2014	Robert Shaffer. “Power in Language: A Grammar-Based Approach for Measuring Delegation of Authority.”

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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SPRING 2018	Teaching Assistant, Graduate, Statistics II ( <i>for Alison Craig</i> )
SPRING 2017	Teaching Assistant, Graduate, Statistics II ( <i>for Robert C. Luskin</i> )
FALL 2016	Teaching Assistant, Undergraduate, Constitutional Law ( <i>for Benjamin Gregg</i> )
2013 - 2015	Research Assistant, <a href="#">Constitute/Comparative Constitutions Project</a> ( <i>for Zachary Elkins</i> )
SUMMER 2013	Visiting Scholar, <i>Australian National University</i>

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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FALL 2017	Continuing Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$15,000)
SUMMER 2017	NSF/Society for Political Methodology Travel Grant (\$1,100)
SUMMER 2017	Fellow, eScience Institute Data Science for Social Good, <i>University of Washington</i> (\$6,500)
2015-2016	Continuing Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$30,000)
SUMMER 2013	Fellow, Clark Center for Australia and New Zealand Studies, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$6,000)
2012-2013	Malcolm Macdonald Fellow, <i>University of Texas, Austin</i> (\$28,000)

## SERVICE

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2014-present	Founder and Co-Organizer, <i>University of Texas Graduate Conference in Public Law</i>
2016-present	Reviewer, <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> , <i>Journal of Law and Courts</i> , <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>

## SKILLS

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PROFICIENT	Python, R
INTERMEDIATE	HTML, $\text{\LaTeX}$ , C++, SQL
BASIC	Javascript

## REFERENCES

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Zachary Elkins  
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