# Robert Shaffer

## Contact

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## Academic Positions

2018-Present    Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania

## Education

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

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 39th Annual International Conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society.*[†]

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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[†] 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." |

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| *useR!* 2016, *APSA* 2016, *MPSA* 2017 | Pete Mohanty and Robert Shaffer. "Messy Data, Robust Inference? Navigating Obstacles to Inference with bigKRLS." |
| *PolMeth* 2016, *APSA* 2015 | Robert Shaffer and Zachary Elkins. "An Evaluation of Measures of Textual Similarity." |
| *MPSA* 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." |
| *PolMeth* 2015, *MPSA* 2015 | Robert Shaffer, Herschel F. Thomas III, Michelle Whyman, JoBeth Surface Shafran, and Bryan D. Jones. "The Political Effects of Uncertainty." |
| *PolMeth* 2014 | Robert Shaffer. "Power in Language: A Grammar-Based Approach for Measuring Delegation of Authority." |

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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

## Service

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

## Skills

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| Proficient | Python, R |
| Intermediate | HTML, LaTeX, C++ |
| Basic | Javascript |

## References

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