

Matthew D. Simonson

SENIOR LECTURER IN POLITICAL SCIENCE · THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

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Positions

Harvard University

VISITING SCHOLAR (SABBATICAL)

Cambridge, MA

Fall Semester 2026

- Weatherhead Center for International Affairs

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

TENURE-TRACK SENIOR LECTURER (EQUIVALENT TO ASSISTANT PROFESSOR)

Jerusalem, Israel

2023-Present

- Department of Political Science
- Director, Peace and Conflict Lab
- Fellow, Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace

University of Pennsylvania

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Philadelphia, PA, USA

2021-2023

- Penn Identity & Conflict Lab
- Department of Political Science
- Supervisors: Nicholas Sambanis and Erik Wibbels

Education

Northeastern University

PH.D. NETWORK SCIENCE

Boston, MA, USA

2021

- Track: Social Science
- Dissertation: "Cross-Cleavage Capital: The Hidden Power of Interethnic Ties"
- Committee: David Lazer, Jennifer Larson (Vanderbilt University), Laia Balcells (Georgetown University), Risa Kitagawa, Cassie McMillan

Williams College

B.A. WITH HONORS, *cum laude*

Williamstown, MA, USA

2008

- Major: Mathematics & Statistics
- Concentration (Minor): International Studies
- Honors Thesis Advisor: Frank Morgan

Publications

BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS

Simonson, M., Block Jr., R., Druckman, J., Ognyanova, K., Lazer, D. (2024) *Black Networks Matter: The Role of Interracial Contact and Social Media in the 2020 Black Lives Matter Protests*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Elements in Contentious Politics).

PUBLICATIONS

Sambanis, N., **Simonson, M.**, Yaylacı, Ş. (2025) "Once We Too Were Strangers: Can a Heritage of Displacement be Leveraged to Build Support for Present-Day Refugees?" *Journal of Politics*. 87 (3), 1215-1220.

Simonson, M., Lacombe, M., Green, J., Druckman, J. (2024) "Guns and Democracy: Anti-System Attitudes, Protest, and Support for Violence Among Pandemic Gun-Buyers." *Political Research Quarterly*, 77 (3): 962-977.

- Baum, M., Druckman, J., **Simonson, M.**, Lin, J., Perlis, R. (2024). [“The Political Consequences of Depression: How Conspiracy Beliefs, Participatory Inclinations, and Depression Affect Support for Political Violence.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science*, 62 (8): 575-594 .
- Green, J., Druckman, J. N., Baum, M. A., Lazer, D., Ognyanova, K., **Simonson, M.**, Lin, J., Santillana, M. and Perlis, R. H. (2023) [“Using General Messages to Persuade on a Politicized Scientific Issue,”](#) *British Journal of Political Science*, 53 (2): 698-706.
- Green, J., Druckman, J., Baum, M., Ognyanova, K., **Simonson, M.**, (2023). Perlis, R., Lazer, D. [“Media Use and Vaccine Resistance.”](#) *PNAS Nexus*, 2 (5): pgad146.
- Perlis, R., Lunz Trujillo, K., Safarpour, A., Quintana, A., **Simonson, M.**, Perlis, J., Santillana, M., Ognyanova, K., Baum, M., Druckman, J., Lazer, D. (2023) [“Community Mobility and Depressive Symptoms During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States.”](#) *JAMA Network Open*, 6 (9): e2334945.
- Lacombe, M., **Simonson, M.**, Green, J., & Druckman, J. (2022). [“Social Disruption, Gun Buying, and Anti-System Beliefs.”](#) *Perspectives on Politics*, 1-18.
- Perlis, R., **Simonson, M.**, Green, J., Lin, J., Safapour, A., Lunz Trujillo, K., Quintana, A., Chwe, H., Della Volpe, J., Ognyanova, K., Santillana, M., Druckman, J., Lazer, D., Baum, M. (2022) [“Prevalence of Firearm Ownership Among Individuals with Major Depressive Symptoms.”](#) *JAMA Network Open* 5 (3): e223245.
- Perlis, R., Santillana, M., Ognyanova K., Safarpour, A., Lunz Trujillo, K., **Simonson, M.**, Green J, Quintana, A., Druckman, J. (2022) [“Prevalence and Correlates of Long COVID Symptoms among U.S. Adults.”](#) *JAMA Network Open* 5 (10): e2238804.
- Perlis, R., Ognyanova, K., Santillana, M., Lin, J., Druckman, J., Lazer, D., Green, J., **Simonson, M.**, Baum, M., Volpe, J.D. (2022) [“Association of Major Depressive Symptoms With Endorsement of COVID-19 Vaccine Misinformation Among US Adults.”](#) *JAMA Network Open* 5 (1): e2145697.
- Druckman, J., Ognyanova, K., Baum, M., Lazer, D., Perlis, R., Green, J., Volpe, JD., Santillana, M., Chwe, H., Quintana, A., **Simonson, M.** (2021) [“The Role of Race, Religion, and Partisanship in Misperceptions about COVID-19.”](#) *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 24 (4): 638–57.
- Perlis, R., Green, J., **Simonson, M.**, Ognyanova, K., Santillana, M., Lin, J., Quintana, A., Chwe, H. Druckman, J., Lazer, D., Baum, M., Volpe, JD. (2021) [“Association Between Social Media Use and Self-Reported Symptoms of Depression in US Adults.”](#) *JAMA Network Open* 4 (11): e2136113.
- Perlis, R., Ognyanova, K., Quintana, A., Green, J., Santillana, M., Lin, J., Druckman, J., Lazer, D., **Simonson, M.**, Baum, M., Chwe, H. (2021) [“Gender-Specificity of Resilience in Major Depressive Disorder.”](#) *Depression & Anxiety* 38 (10): 1026–33.
- Simonson, M.** (2011) [“The Isoperimetric Problem on Euclidean, Spherical, and Hyperbolic Surfaces.”](#) *Journal of the Korean Mathematical Society* 48 (6): 1285-1325.

IN PROGRESS

- Balcells, L., Pellegrino, A., **Simonson, M.** “Can Foreign Wars Reignite Domestic Conflicts? Survey Experimental Evidence from the Balkans.” Conditionally accepted at *International Studies Quarterly*
- Simonson, M.**, Minozzi, W., Neblo, M., Lazer, D. “All Terrorism is Local: Context, Community, and the Politics of Collective Trauma.” Revise & Resubmit at *Nature Communications*.
- Simonson, M.** *Who Helps the Persecuted? The Resilience of Friendships During Ethnic Violence.*
- Balcells, L., Pellegrino, A., **Simonson, M.** “Projecting Foreign Wars onto Domestic Conflicts: Evidence from the Western Balkans.”
- Ram, Y. and **Simonson, M.** ““Deepfakes at War: AI Images and Public Responses to Civilian Suffering.”

Book Project: **Simonson, M.** *Friendships Under Fire: Networks and Assistance During Ethnic Violence.*

SELECTED MEDIA REPORTS

- Simonson, M.**, Chwe, H., Lazer, D., Ognyanova, K., Baum, M., Perlis, R.H., Druckman, J., Santillana, M., Green, J., Uslu, A. and Gitomer, A. (May 2021) [“The COVID States Project #49: Vaccinating America’s youth.”](#)

Simonson, M., Baum, M., Lazer, D., Ognyanova, K., Gitomer, A., Perlis, R.H., Uslu, A., Druckman, J., Green, J., Santillana, M. and Quintana, A. (March 2021) "[The COVID States Project #45: Vaccine hesitancy and resistance among parents.](#) "

Simonson, M., Lazer, D., Perlis, R.H., Baum, M., Green, J., Gitomer, A., Ognyanova, K., Druckman, J., Lin, J., Santillana, M. and Quintana, A. (January 2021) "[The COVID States Project #37: Gun purchases during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)"

Coauthor on over 40 reports from the COVID States Project, available at: www.covidstates.org.

OP-Eds

Lazer, D., Green, J., Baum, M., Quintana, A., Ognyanova, K., Gitomer, A., Druckman, J., **Simonson, M.**, Chwe, H., Perlis, R., Lin, J., and Santillana, M. (October 30, 2020) "[Analysis These Nine Swing States Will See the Biggest 'Blue Shift' as Ballots Are Counted after the Election.](#)" *The Washington Post*.

Fellowships, Grants & Awards

EXTERNAL FUNDING

- 2025 **Israel Science Foundation**, for "Remobilizing Networks for War" with Daniel Miodownik and Oren Barak (approximately \$265,000 over 4 years with support for postdocs and doctoral students)
- 2024 **Institute for Freedom and Responsibility, Reichman University**, for "Deep Fakes, Deep Uncertainties: Measuring Public Trust in War Crimes Evidence and Accountability in the Deepfake Era"
- 2020-1 **Harry Frank Guggenheim Dissertation Fellowship**, 20,000 one of 10 year-long fellowships awarded to doctoral students in any field studying violence and aggression
- 2020 **Margaret Ross Barnett Fund & James Bryce Fund for International Political Science, APSA Centennial Center**, for "Who Helps? The Resilience of Cross-Cleavage Ties During Ethnic Violence"
- 2016-9 **National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship**, a highly competitive U.S. Department of Defense fellowship fully funding 3 years tuition and stipend

INTERNAL FUNDING

- 2025 **Research Committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Hebrew University**, for "The Day After: Tracing the Political and Emotional Evolution of Survivors of the October 7 Massacre"
- 2025 **Levi Eshkol Institute for the Study of the Economy, Society and Policy in Israel**, for "Deep Fakes, Deep Uncertainties: Measuring Public Trust in War Crimes Evidence and Accountability in the Deepfake Era"
- 2023 **University Research Foundation, University of Pennsylvania**, for "Broadcasting Tolerance: Using Radio to Promote Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in Uganda"
- 2021 **Network Science Institute, Ph.D. Development Fund, Northeastern University**, for "Who Helps? The Resilience of Cross-Cleavage Ties During Ethnic Violence"
- 2017 **Graduate Thesis/Dissertation Research Grant**, Provost and College of Science, Northeastern University
- 2017 **Graduate Student Research Award**, Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict
- 2017 **Tier I Research Grant**, \$50,000 seed grant for interdisciplinary research team awarded by Northeastern University (under advisor's name)
- 2017 **Seed Grant from NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks**, for "When Women Go to War"
- 2016 **Seed Grant from NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks**, for "Mapping Water Access and Conflict in Kampala, Uganda"
- 2015-6 **Graduate Fellow**, NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks, Northeastern University

Teaching

GRADUATE

- 2025-6 **Violence in War Zones**, Hebrew University
- 2023-6 **Experiments, Quasi-Experiments, and Causal Inference**, Hebrew University
- 2024-5 **American Political Thought and Behavior**, Hebrew University
- 2025 **Social Science Methods Bootcamp: Intermediate Statistics in R**, Hebrew University
- 2024 **Network Theory and Analysis**, Hebrew University

UNDERGRADUATE

- 2024-6 **Protest, Rebellion, and Political Violence**, Hebrew University
- 2024 **Honors Seminar: Correlation and Causation**, Hebrew University
- 2020 **Data Science for Social Scientists**, Northeastern University
- 2019 **Social Networks**, Northeastern University (teaching assistant)

Selected Presentations

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| 2026 | “Deep Fakes, Deep Uncertainties: Measuring Public Trust in War Crimes Evidence and Accountability in the Deepfake Era” , American Political Science Association | Boston |
| 2026 | “Wars Abroad and Antisemitism: Experimental Evidence from Bosnia and Serbia” , Israeli Political Science Association | Jerusalem |
| 2025 | “Wars Abroad and Antisemitism: Experimental Evidence from Bosnia and Serbia” , American Political Science Association | Vancouver |
| 2025 | “How Many Enemies are you Friends With? Measuring Interethnic Ties in Contentious Contexts” , Political Networks Conference (Polnet) | Boston |
| 2025 | “War Headlines and Antisemitism: Disaggregating the Effects of News Coverage on Anti-Jewish Attitudes” , European Political Science Association | Madrid |
| 2025 | “Deep Fakes, Deep Uncertainties: Measuring Public Trust in War Crimes Evidence and Accountability in the Deepfake Era” , International Studies Association | Chicago |
| 2024 | “Ethnicity Rosters: A New Method to Measure Diversity in Networks” , American Political Science Association Annual Meeting | Philadelphia |
| 2024 | “Who Rescues?” , International Studies Association Annual Meeting | San Francisco |
| 2023 | “Black Networks Matter” , Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting | Chicago |
| 2023 | Expert Roundtable on “Methods and Ethics in Research on Victimhood” , International Studies Association Annual Meeting | Montreal |
| 2022 | “Causal Inference on Heterogeneous Networks” , Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting (PolMeth) | St. Louis |
| 2022 | “Causal Inference on Heterogeneous Networks” , Political Networks Conference (Polnet) | Online |
| 2022 | “Effectiveness and Durability of Light-Touch Anti-Prejudice Interventions: Evidence from Cyprus” , Overcoming Prejudice Against Immigrant Minorities conference | Philadelphia |
| 2022 | “Did I Just Commit Ethnic Cleansing? Dilemmas of Wartime Assistance” , International Studies Association, Annual Meeting | Nashville |
| 2021 | “Black Networks Matter” , Peace Science Society Annual Meeting | Online |
| 2021 | “Shoot a Stranger, Save a Neighbor: Civilian & Combatant Networks Under Fire” , Jan Tinbergen Peace Science Conference | Online |

2021	“Shoot a Stranger, Save a Neighbor: Civilian & Combatant Networks Under Fire”, Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting	Online
2021	“Kill a Stranger, Save a Neighbor: Civilian & Combatant Networks Under Fire”, International Studies Association Annual Meeting	Online
2020	“Shoot a Stranger, Save a Neighbor: Civilian & Combatant Networks Under Fire”, Peace Science Society North American Meeting	Online
2020	“Black Networks Matter”, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	Online
2020	“Vulnerable Populations and COVID-19 Misinformation”, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	Online
2020	“Kill a Stranger, Save a Neighbor: Civilian & Combatant Networks Under Fire”, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	Online
2019	“Who Rescues? Who Betrays? The Fate of Cross-Ethnic Friendships in Wartime”, American Political Science Association Meeting	Washington, DC
2019	“Who Rescues? Who Betrays? The Fate of Cross-Ethnic Friendships in Wartime”, Political Networks Conference (Polnet)	Durham, NC
2018	“Stuck in the Mud: Roads, Rain and Repression”, Political Networks Conference (Polnet)	Washington, DC
2017	“All Roads Lead to Lagos: Road Networks and the Scars of Extractive Colonialism”, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	San Francisco
2017	“All Roads Lead to Lagos: Road Networks and the Scars of Extractive Colonialism”, Polnet (Political Networks Conference)	Cleveland
2017	“Squash or Scatter? How Resistance Groups Morph Under Government Pressure”, International Studies Association Northeast Annual Conference	Providence

Supervision & Mentoring

2024-	Doctoral Dissertation Supervisor , Shay Yoos, Hebrew University
2025-6	MA Thesis Supervisor , Allison Burison, Hebrew University
2025-	Research Assistant Supervisor , 1 student, Hebrew University
2020-1	Research Assistant Supervisor , 15 students, Covid States Project
2018-22	Research Assistant Supervisor , six students in Bosnia/US
2016	Research Assistant Supervisor , one student in Uganda

Service

2025-7	Secretary , APSA Political Networks Section
2025	Awards Committee , Political Networks Conference (Polnet)
2024-5	Co-Chair , Empirical Conflict Workshop
2024-	Coordinator , Political Science Department Seminar, Hebrew University
2024	Discussant , Society for Political Methodology, Asia/MENA Regional Polmeth Conference
2023	Co-Chair , Political Networks Online Colloquium
2021, 2023	Discussant and Panel Chair , Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting
2022	Program Committee , Political Networks Conference (Polnet)
2022	Co-Chair , Overcoming Prejudice Against Immigrant Minorities Conference
2021-2022	Co-Chair , Penn Identity & Conflict Lab Workshop (weekly)

2020, 2022 **Discussant and Panel Chair**, American Political Science Association Annual Meeting
 2021 **Discussant**, International Studies Association Annual Meeting
 2018-2020 **Co-Organizer**, Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS) Conference
 2018 **Co-Chair**, Boston International Security Graduate Conference
 2017, 2020 **Instructor**, Network Science Bootcamp, Northeastern University

PEER REVIEWER

Journal of Politics (2026), *Political Behavior* (2024-6), *Political Psychology* (2025) *Perspectives on Politics* (2024), Russell Sage Foundation (2024), *Peace and Conflict Studies* (2024), *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* (2023), *Nature Communications* (2022), *JAMA Network Open* (2022), *PNAS Nexus* (2021), *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* (2021), *Behavioural Public Policy* (2019)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association, International Studies Association, European Political Science Association, Society for Political Methodology

Fieldwork

2018-9	Bosnia & Herzegovina , interviews and survey on cross-group assistance during civil war	10 months
2017	Cameroon , exploratory interviews on Anglophone–Francophone conflict & violence	1 month
2016	Uganda , social network survey on inter-tribal friendship formation in urban slums	2 months
2007	Mongolia , survey and interviews of local political participation among nomadic herders	4 months

Technical Skills

Programming & Statistics: R, Python, SPSS, Stan, **Network Analysis:** NetworkX, igraph, NodeX, Gephi, **Web Scraping:** BeautifulSoup, Selenium, **Cloud Computing & Remote Servers:** Google Cloud Platform, Amazon Web Services, rsync, **Miscellaneous:** Unix command line, Jupyter Notebook, GitHub, MAXQDA

Languages

English:	Native
Hebrew:	Proficient
Spanish:	Intermediate
Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian:	Novice
Arabic:	Novice