

Erik Peterson

Rice University
Department of Political Science, MS-24
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Employment

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Rice University, 2025-Present.

Director of Graduate Studies, 2024-Present.

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Rice University, 2022-2025.

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University, 2018-2022.

Postdoctoral Fellow, Program in Quantitative Social Science, Dartmouth College, 2017-2018.

Education

Ph.D., Political Science, Stanford University, 2017.

B.A., Political Science, Northwestern University, 2011.

Research

Peterson, Erik, Joshua P. Darr, Maxwell Allamong and Michael Henderson. 2026. "Can Americans' Trust in Local News Be Trusted? The Emergence, Sources and Implications of the Local News Trust Advantage." *American Journal of Political Science* 70(1): 136-151.

Peterson, Erik, Shannon McGregor and Ryan Block. 2025. "Election Denial as a News Coverage Dilemma: A Survey Experiment with Local Journalists." *Political Communication* 42(5): 774-793.

Peterson, Erik and Jongwoo Jeong. 2025. "Making Issues Matter: Local Media and Policy-Based Evaluations of Politicians." *Political Behavior* 47(2): 847-868.

Archer, Allison M.N. and Erik Peterson. 2025. "The Fragility of the Local News Trust Advantage: Evidence from Republican Attacks on Local News." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 58(2): 177-183.

McCrain, Joshua and Erik Peterson. 2025. "Local Elections Do Not Increase Local News Demand." *Political Science Research and Methods* 13(2): 444-454.

Peterson, Erik and Johanna Dunaway. 2023. "The New News Barons: Investment Ownership Reduces Newspaper Reporting Capacity." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 707(1): 74-89.

Peterson, Erik and Maxwell Allamong. 2022. "The Influence of Unknown Media on Public Opinion: Evidence from Local and Foreign News Sources." *American Political Science Review* 116(2): 719-733.

Peterson, Erik and Manuela Muñoz. 2022. "Stick to Sports': Evidence from Sports Media on the Origins and Consequences of Newly Politicized Attitudes." *Political Communication* 39(4): 454-474.

- Peterson, Erik and Shanto Iyengar. 2022. "Partisan Reasoning in a High Stakes Environment: Partisan Information Gaps on COVID-19." *HKS Misinformation Review* 3(2): 1:20.
- Westwood, Sean and Erik Peterson. 2022. "The Inseparability of Race and Partisanship in the United States." *Political Behavior* 44(3): 1125-1147.
- Peterson, Erik and Ali Kagalwala. 2021. "When Unfamiliarity Breeds Contempt: How Partisan Selective Exposure Sustains Oppositional Media Hostility." *American Political Science Review* 115(2): 585-598.
- Peterson, Erik. 2021. "Paper Cuts: How Reporting Resources Affect Political News Coverage." *American Journal of Political Science* 65(2): 443-459.
- Peterson, Erik. 2021. "Not Dead Yet: Political Learning from Newspapers in a Changing Media Landscape." *Political Behavior* 43(1): 339-361.
- Peterson, Erik and Shanto Iyengar. 2021. "Partisan Gaps in Political Information and Information-Seeking Behavior: Motivated Reasoning or Cheerleading?" *American Journal of Political Science* 65(1): 133-147.
- Peterson, Erik, Sharad Goel and Shanto Iyengar. 2021. "Partisan Selective Exposure in Online News Consumption: Evidence from the 2016 Presidential Campaign." *Political Science Research and Methods* 9(2): 242-258.
- Mummolo, Jonathan, Erik Peterson and Sean Westwood. 2021. "The Limits of Partisan Loyalty." *Political Behavior* 43(3): 949-972
- Westwood, Sean, Erik Peterson and Yphtach Lelkes. 2019. "Are There Still Limits on Partisan Prejudice?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 83(3): 584-597.
- Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson. 2019. "Demand Effects in Survey Experiments: An Empirical Assessment." *American Political Science Review* 113(2): 517-529.
- Peterson, Erik. 2019. "The Scope of Partisan Influence on Policy Opinion." *Political Psychology* 40(2): 335-353.
- Peterson, Erik and Gabor Simonovits. 2018. "The Electoral Consequences of Issue Frames." *Journal of Politics* 80(4): 1283-1296.
- Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson. 2018. "Improving the Interpretation of Fixed Effects Regression Results." *Political Science Research and Methods* 6(4): 829-835.
- Peterson, Erik. 2017. "The Role of the Information Environment in Partisan Voting." *Journal of Politics* 79(4): 1191-1204.
- Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson. 2017. "How Content Preferences Limit the Reach of Voting Aids." *American Politics Research* 45(2): 159-185.
- Peterson, Erik and Gabor Simonovits. 2017. "Costly Values: The Limited Benefits and Potential Costs of Targeted Policy Justifications." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 4(2): 95-106.
- Peterson, Erik. 2016. "The Rich are Different: The Effect of Wealth on Partisanship." *Political Behavior* 38(1): 33-54.
- Druckman, James, Erik Peterson and Rune Slothuus. 2013. "How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation." *American Political Science Review* 107(1): 57-79.

Review Articles/Book Chapter

Peterson, Erik. Forthcoming. "Review of *Through the Grapevine: Socially Transmitted Information and Distorted Democracy* by Taylor Carlson." *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

Peterson, Erik. 2023. "News & Views: Persuading Partisans." *Nature Human Behaviour*. 7(4): 480-481.

Peterson, Erik. 2022. "Review of *News Hole: The Demise of Local Journalism and Political Engagement* by Danny Hayes and Jennifer Lawless." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 86(2): 418-420.

Peterson, Erik, Sean Westwood and Shanto Iyengar. 2021. "Beyond Attitudes: Incorporating Measures of Behavior in Survey Experiments." in *Advances in Experimental Political Science* (Eds. James N. Druckman and Donald P. Green). Pages 239-256. Cambridge University Press.

Working Papers

Peterson, Erik, Allison M.N. Archer, Kishan Bhakta and Sho Izumisawa. "Indirect Influence: How Elite Attacks on Information Providers Affect Public Opinion Formation."

Peterson, Erik, Matthew Tyler and Agustin Prinetti. "Designing for Power: Covariates, Indices, and Efficiency in Survey Experiments."

Peterson, Erik, Tyler Simko, Maranda Joyce, Josh McCrain and Rachel White "The Personnel Costs of Nationalization: Culture War Conflicts Increase School Policymaker Turnover."

Research Presentations

"The Personnel Costs of Nationalization: Culture War Conflicts Increase School Policymaker Turnover." (with Tyler Simko, Maranda Joyce, Josh McCrain and Rachel White).

Duke Behavior and Identities Workshop. January 2026.

Harvard Kennedy School American Politics Speaker Series. October 2024.

"Indirect Influence: How Elite Attacks on Information Providers Affect Public Opinion Formation." (with Allison M.N. Archer, Kishan Bhakta and Sho Izumisawa).

Information and Messages in Sociopolitical Life Conference. University of Houston. May 2025.

Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September 2024.

Annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. April 2024.

"Can Americans' Trust in Local News Be Trusted?" (with Joshua Darr, Max Allamong and Michael Henderson).

Political Communication Pre-Conference for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September 2024.

"Media Scrutiny and Legislator Behavior." (with Jaclyn Kaslovsky).

Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September 2023.

"Covering Election Denial: Local Journalists in the 2022 Midterms." (with Shannon McGregor and Ryan Block).

Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September 2023.

Polarization Research Lab Annual Meeting. March 2023.

University of Pennsylvania American Politics Workshop. January 2023.

“Elite Attacks on Local News.” (with Allison M.N. Archer).

Aarhus University Department of Political Science. May 2023.

Annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. April 2023.

“The Elasticity of Demand for Local News.” (with Joshua McCrain).

Annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. April 2022.

“Making Issues Matter: Local Media and Policy Voting.” (with Jongwoo Jeong).

Annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association. April 2021.

“The New News Barons: Investment-Oriented Ownership Reduces Newspaper Reporting Capacity.” (with Johanna Dunaway).

Annual meeting of the American Political Science Association. September 2020.

Teaching Experience

Media & Politics (Undergraduate)

American Politics Core Seminar (Graduate)

Political Behavior (Graduate)

Causal Inference (Graduate)

Experiments in Political Science (Graduate)

PhD Dissertation Committee Member (Completed)

Max Allamong (Assistant Professor, University of Houston), Spencer Goidel (Assistant Professor, Auburn), Jongwoo Jeong (Assistant Professor, Georgia State), Ali Kagalwala (Post-Doc, Syracuse University), James Kim (Assistant Professor, University of Washington), Dayong Lee (Data Scientist, Russell Reynolds Associates), Robin Saywitz (Assistant Professor, St. Louis University), Kyung Suk Lee (Assistant Professor, Daejeon University), Janica Magat (Lecturer, De La Salle University)

PhD Dissertation Committee Member (In Progress)

Kishan Bhakta, Ryan Block, Sho Izumisawa, Maranda Joyce, Tabitha Koch, Asahi Obata, Agustin Prinetti

Department/School/University Service

Chair. Rice Political Science. Graduate Studies Committee. 2024-Present.

Member. Dean of Social Sciences Review Committee. 2025-Present.

Advisory Board. Rice Center for Computational Insights on Inequality and Society. 2025-Present.

Member. Rice Political Science. American Politics Search Committee. 2025.

Member. Rice Political Science. Social Policy Analysis Major Transition Committee. 2024.

Member. Rice Political Science. REP Search Committee. 2023.

Member. Rice Social Sciences. Director of Quantitative Methods Search Committee. 2023.

Member. Rice Political Science. Speaker Series Committee. 2022-2023.

Member. Rice Political Science. International Relations Search Committee. 2022.

Academic Service

Discussant. Polarization Consortium Workshop. 2025.

Discussant. Political Communication APSA Pre-Conference. 2023.

Discussant/Chair. APSA. 2018, 2020-2021, 2023.

Discussant/Chair. MPSA. 2018-2024.

Discussant. SPSA. 2019.

Discussant. PolMeth. 2019.

Reviewer

American Journal of Political Science, American Politics Research, American Political Science Review, British Journal of Political Science, Cambridge University Press,, European Sociological Review, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, Journal of Politics, Journal of Experimental Political Science, Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties, Journal of Political Marketing, Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, National Science Foundation, Nature Human Behavior, Party Politics, Politics, Groups, and Identities, Political Behavior, Political Communication, Political Psychology, Political Research Quarterly, Political Science Research and Methods, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Public Administration, Public Opinion Quarterly, Research & Politics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Review of International Organizations, Time Sharing Experiments in the Social Sciences

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