

Richard A. Nielsen

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Academic Appointments **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

Associate Professor of Political Science (with tenure), 2020 - current.
Associate Professor of Political Science (without tenure), 2017 - 2020.
Assistant Professor of Political Science, 2013 - 2017.

Education **Harvard University**

Ph.D., Government, 2013
A.M., Statistics, 2010

Brigham Young University

B.A., Political Science, 2007

Book Nielsen, Richard. 2017. *Deadly Clerics: Blocked Ambition and the Paths to Jihad*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics Series.

- Reviewed in *Perspectives on Politics, Politics and Religion, The Middle East Journal*, and *Perspectives on Terrorism*.

Articles Nielsen, Richard. 2023. "Religious Fieldwork for International Relations Scholars," in Tabaar, Huang, et al Forum article "How Religious Are "Religious" Conflicts?," *International Studies Review*, 25 (3). ([link](#))

Peter Krause, Ora Szekely, Mia Bloom, Fotini Christia, Sarah Zukerman Daly, Chappell Lawson, Zoe Marks, Aidan Milliff, Kacie Miura, Richard Nielsen, Emil Aslan Souleimanov, William Reno, and Aliyu Zakayo. 2021. "COVID-19 and Fieldwork: Challenges and Solutions," *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 54 (2): 264–269. ([link](#))

Roberts, Margaret, Brandon Stewart, and Richard Nielsen. 2020. "Adjusting for Confounding with Text Matching," *American Journal of Political Science*, 65 (4): 887–903. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2020. "Women's Authority in Patriarchal Social Movements: The Case of Female Salafi Preachers," *American Journal of Political Science*, 64 (1): 52–66. ([link](#))

- Co-winner of the 2021 APSA MENA Politics Section Award for Best Article.

King, Gary and Richard Nielsen. 2019. "Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used for Matching," *Political Analysis*, 27 (4): 435–454. ([link](#))

King, Gary, Christopher Lucas, and Richard Nielsen. 2017. "The Balance-Sample Size Frontier in Matching Methods for Causal Inference," *American Journal of Political Science*, 61 (2): 473-489. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2016. "Case Selection via Matching," *Sociological Methods and Research*, 45 (3): 569-597. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard and Beth Simmons. 2015. "Rewards for Ratification: Payoffs for Participating in the International Human Rights Regime?" *International Studies Quarterly*, 59 (2): 197-208. ([link](#))

Lucas, Christopher, Richard Nielsen, Margaret Roberts, Brandon Stewart, Alex Storer, and Dustin Tingley. 2015. "Computer Assisted Text Analysis for Comparative Politics," *Political Analysis*, 23 (3): 254-277. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2013. "Rewarding Human Rights? Selective Aid Sanctions against Repressive States," *International Studies Quarterly*, 57 (4), 791-803. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard, Michael Findley, Zachary Davis, Tara Candland, and Daniel Nielson. 2011. "Foreign Aid Shocks as a Cause of Violent Armed Conflict," *American Journal of Political Science*, 55 (2): 219-232. ([link](#))

King, Gary, Richard Nielsen, Carter Coberly, James Pope, and Aaron Wells. 2011. "Avoiding Randomization Failure in Program Evaluation, with Application to the Medicare Health Support Program," *Population Health Management*, 14: S11-S22. ([link](#))

Chapters

Nielsen, Richard. 2022. "The Rise and Impact of Muslim Women Preaching Online," in *Oxford Handbook of Politics in Muslim Societies*, Melani Cammett and Pauline Jones, editors, New York: Oxford University Press. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2020. "Recite! Interpretive Fieldwork for Positivists," in *Stories from the Field: A Guide to Navigating Fieldwork in Political Science*, Peter Krause and Ora Szekely, editors, Columbia University Press. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2020. "Statistical Matching with Time-Series Cross-Sectional Data: Magic, Malfeasance, or Something in Between?" In *The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*, Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese, editors, Sage. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. 2016. "Ethics for Experimental Manipulation of Religion," in *Ethics and Experiments: Problems and Solutions for Social Scientists and Policy Professionals*, Scott Desposato, editor, Routledge. ([link](#))

Other Writing

Nielsen, Richard. 2019. "What Counting Words Can Teach Us about Middle East Politics," MENA Politics Newsletter, 2(2), Fall 2019. ([link](#))

Santiago Segarra, Ali Jadbabaie, and Nielsen, Richard. "Baghdadi's Martyrdom Bump" Foreign Policy. October 29, 2019. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. "Women will soon be issuing fatwas in Saudi Arabia. This isn't as groundbreaking as you'd think." Monkey Cage, washingtonpost.com. October 10, 2017.

([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. "Anatomy by Memory: Sassoon on the Politics of Arab Authoritarianism," H-Diplo Roundtable Review, Vol. XIX, No. 6. October 9, 2017. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. "The Changing Face of Islamic Authority in the Middle East" Middle East Brief, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University. May 9, 2016. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. "Does the Islamic State Believe in Sovereignty?" Monkey Cage, washingtonpost.com. February 6, 2015. ([link](#))

Nielsen, Richard. "Thoughts on the Ethics of Interventions When Studying Religion and Politics in the Middle East," in *The Ethics of Research in the Middle East*, POMEPS Studies 8, July 2, 2014. ([link](#))

King, Gary, Richard Nielsen, and Aaron Wells. 2012. "Letter to the Editor (on McCall and Cromwell)," *New England Journal of Medicine*, 366 (7): 667. ([link](#))

Fellowships and Awards

Andrew Carnegie Fellow, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2017-2019.

Neubauer Junior Research Fellow, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, 2015-2016.

Graduate Fellow, Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, 2012-2013.

Research Fellow, International Security Program, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2012-2013.

National Science Foundation, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, 2012-2013.

Jeanne Humphrey Block Dissertation Award, Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Harvard, 2011.

Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University, 2010.

National Science Foundation, Graduate Research Fellowship, 2009-2012.

Invited Talks

University College Dublin 2022, University of Vermont 2022, Central European University 2021 (virtual), University of Colorado Boulder 2020 (virtual), Boston University 2020 (virtual), Sorenson Impact Center 2019, University of Cairo 2019, University of Rochester 2019, University of Michigan 2018, George Washington University 2018, Urban Institute 2018, Princeton 2018, University of South Carolina 2018, Australia National University 2017, University of Connecticut 2017, New York University 2017, Texas A&M 2017, Northwestern 2016, Harvard 2016, Yale 2016, UT Austin 2016, NYU Abu Dhabi 2016, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign 2016, Columbia 2015, Stanford 2015, Brigham Young University 2013.

Languages

Arabic, French (intermediate reading), Spanish (intermediate reading).

Dissertation Committees

Completed: Aidan Milliff (2022, Florida State University), Matthew Cancian (2022, Private Sector), Andrew Halterman (2021, NYU and Michigan State University), Marsin Alshamary (2020, Brookings), Kacie Miura (2020, University of San Diego), Andrew Miller (2020, United States Naval Academy), Elizabeth Dekeyser (2019, IAS Toulouse postdoc),

Michael Freedman (2019, Haifa University), Marika Landau-Wells (2018, UC Berkeley), Stephen Wittels (2017, private sector), George Yin (Harvard 2017, Dartmouth postdoc).
In progress: Nasir Almasri (chair), Elizabeth Parker-Magyar (chair), Eyal Hanfling (chair), Nina Miller (chair), Jasmine English, Sarah Mohamed (Harvard).

Postdocs Santiago Segarra 2016–2018 (now at Rice University Engineering)
Roozbeh Safshekan 2019–2020 (now in the private sector) Safa Al-Saeedi 2022-2023 (now at Marist College)

Service Treasurer, Middle East and North Africa Politics Section, APSA, 2021-2023

Best Article Committee, Middle East and North Africa Politics Section, APSA, 2022.

Working group chair, Special Commission on Research Ethics in the Middle East and North Africa, 2020-

Section editor for the Quantitative-Empirical Methods section (26 chapters) of *The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*. Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese, editors, Sage.

Nominating Committee, APSA Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research section, 2019.

Referee:

National Science Foundation, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, International Organization, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Journal of Politics, International Studies Quarterly, British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, International Security, World Politics, Comparative Politics, Journal of Conflict Resolution, European Journal of International Relations, Political Science Research and Methods, Terrorism and Political Violence, Review of International Organizations, Journal of Peace Research, Conflict Management and Peace Science, Sociological Methods and Research, World Development, Rationality and Society, The International Journal of Human Rights, Political Studies, Foreign Policy Analysis, Research and Politics, The Energy Journal, Time Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences, Journal of Computational Social Science, Civil Wars, American Journal of Epidemiology.

Last updated January 23, 2024