

# Chad Levinson

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## Current Employment

### **Virginia Tech**

*Assistant Professor*

Government and International Affairs  
School of Public and International Affairs  
College of Architecture and Urban Studies

2018 – Present

## Education

### **University of Chicago**

Ph.D. — Political Science

June, 2017

Dissertation — *Moral Subsidy: The Origins of Influential Interest Groups in US National Security Politics*  
Committee — John Mark Hansen (chair), William G. Howell, John J. Mearsheimer

Abstract: How do interest groups gain influence in US national security politics? I argue that ambitious presidential administrations recruit extra-governmental organizations that agree with the proposed policy and possess independent credibility, to act as collaborators in propaganda campaigns aimed at overcoming public resistance and congressional opposition. Such groups provide a “moral subsidy” — legitimating third-party support — to administrations running deficits in their ability to persuade, and enable them to circumvent laws that prohibit the domestic distribution of government propaganda. Collaborating groups gain access to professional, political, and informational resources that increase their influence. This dissertation uses large-n observational, experimental, and analytic-historical analysis to explain the emergence and development of a network of influential extra-governmental organizations that has taken a central role in US national security politics, which I call the “credibility cartel.”

### **University of Chicago**

A.M. — Social Science

### **Columbia University**

B.A. — English, Columbia College

## Research Interests

National Security Politics, the US Presidency, Civil Society, American Political Development, Information Warfare, Information Technology & Politics, Propaganda

## Academic Employment History

<b>Williams College</b> <i>Stanley Kaplan Postdoctoral Fellow</i> Department of Political Science and Leadership Studies Program	2017 – 2018
<b>University of Chicago</b> <i>Preceptor</i> Committee on International Relations	2014 – 2017
<b>Harvard University</b> <i>Research Fellow, International Security Program</i> Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government	2013 – 2014

## Publications & Research

### *Journal Articles*

“Partners in Persuasion: Extra-Governmental Organizations in the Vietnam War,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 17:3 (July, 2021).

“Gilt by Associations: Executive Appointments to National Security Federal Advisory Committees,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 49:1 (March, 2019).

### *Book Chapters*

**Cutting the Fuse**, Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman, University of Chicago Press, 2010.

– *Chapter 3: Iraq*

– *Chapter 6: Al Qaeda*

### *Commentary*

“Think Tanks and American Interventionism,” *War on the Rocks*, November 24, 2021.

“A (Mostly) Rationalist Critique of the Gaza Blockade,” *Cicero Magazine*, August 16, 2014.

### *Reports*

**Report to the Office of Naval Research on MVEOs**, 2008

– *Iraq Sub-report*

– *Al Qaeda Sub-report*

### *Under Review*

“Surrogate Credibility: Source-Frame Congruence in National Security Appeals,” *American Journal of Political Science*

*In Progress***The Credibility Cartel** (book)

Extra-Governmental Organizations in US National Security Politics

**Soft Power Politics**

Information Warfare, Civil Society, and Social Media

**At the (dis)Pleasure of the President***with George Greanias, Margaret Appleby, & Brooke Guenther**Datasets and Databases***FAC Check**

Author and Programmer

**Measuring American Legislatures** — Nolan McCarty and Boris Shor

Programmer

**Suicide Attack Database** — Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism

Programmer and Designer

## Grants

**Institute for Society, Culture, and Environment, Virginia Tech**

\$30,000

Scholars Program Grant (Principal Investigator)

**LBJ Foundation**

\$1,480

Moody Research Grant

**Truman Library Institute**

\$2,600

Inaugural John K. Hulston Scholarship

**The Roosevelt Institute**

\$750

Grant-in-aid

**The Eisenhower Presidential Library**

\$875

Abilene Travel Grant

**University of Chicago**

\$2,500

Research Travel Grant

## Awards

**American Political Science Association**

2019

Leonard D. White Award for best doctoral dissertation on public administration

**University of Chicago**

2015–2016

Grodzins Prize Lectureship

## Teaching

### *Virginia Tech*

**Introduction to US Government & Politics**

Undergraduate Lecture

**Research Methods I**

Graduate Seminar

**International Politics**

Graduate Seminar

**Contemporary American Foreign Policy**

Graduate Seminar

**Power and Policy in the US**

Graduate Seminar

**Cyber Leaders**

Undergraduate Capstone Program

**Foreign Policy and Diplomacy**

Undergraduate Seminar

### *Williams College*

**Interest Groups and US Foreign Policy**

Undergraduate seminar

**International Security**

Undergraduate lecture

**Introduction to International Relations**

Undergraduate lecture, with James McAllister

### *University of Chicago*

**The US Presidency**

Undergraduate seminar

**Perspectives on International Relations**

Graduate lecture (with Milena Ang, Dina Rashed, and Kevin Weng)

## Presentations

### *Conferences & Workshops*

**International Relations and America's Rise: Institutions, Ideas, and Individuals**

2020

Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society

*Contributor* — Cornering the Credibility Market

- Emerging Trends: New Tools, Threats, and Thinking** 2019  
Intelligence and National Security Alliance  
*Panelist* — Social Computing and Its Impact on Intelligence
- National Security Education Program Colloquium** 2019  
Hume Center for National Security and Technology  
*Panelist* — Technical and Policy Considerations of Cyber Influence Operations
- Cutting the Fuse: Moving Beyond the War on Terror** 2010  
Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism  
*Rapporteur* — Strategy in the Middle East

### *Professional Association Annual Meetings*

- American Political Science Association**
- Panelist* — New Perspectives on the Study of Information Technology and Politics 2019  
*Organizer, Discussant, & Panelist* — Information Warfare Past and Present 2018  
*Panelist* — Leaders and Executive Institutions in Foreign Policy Making 2016
- International Studies Association**
- Panelist* — Foreign Policy Attitudes: Experimental Approaches 2019  
*Discussant* — Diasporas and the Formation of Foreign Policy 2019  
*Panelist* — Experimental Research on Information and Emotions in International Relations 2017  
*Panelist* — Presidential Foreign Policy: Constraints Versus Opportunities 2013
- Midwest Political Science Association**
- Discussant* — Executives and Foreign Policy Making 2018  
*Panelist* — Diasporas, Foreign NGOs, and Policy Outcomes 2012  
*Co-Panelist* — Connecting Behavioral Economics and Political Psychology 2011
- Southern Political Science Association**
- Chair & Discussant* — Political Networks and International Conflict 2016  
*Panelist* — Presidents, Personnel, and Public Management 2016
- Social Science History Association**
- Panelist* — Civil Society, Deliberation, & Policymaking 2015

### *Guest Lectures*

- War and the Nation-State** — John Mearsheimer
- World War II on the Eastern Front* 2016  
*The Causes of World War II in Asia* 2013

## Professional Development

- National Security Executive Leadership Program**  
Virginia Tech, School of International and Public Affairs  
sponsored by The Ridenour Faculty Fellowship

**Summer Workshop on the Analysis of Military Operations and Strategy**

Columbia University's Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies  
hosted by Cornell University

**Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Methods Research**

Consortium on Qualitative Research Methods, Syracuse University

## Service

### *Academic Journals*

**American Political Science Review**

*Reviewer*

**International Security**

*Reviewer*

**Political Geography**

*Reviewer*

**International Theory**

*Reviewer*

### *Committees*

**Honorifics Committee**

Virginia Tech, College of Architecture and Urban Studies

**International Relations Hiring Committee**

*Graduate Student Liaison*

University of Chicago, Political Science Department

**Political Science Association**

University of Chicago, Political Science Department

## Memberships

American Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association, International Studies Association, Southern Political Science Association, Social Science History Association