

Alex Tolkin

Postdoctoral Associate, Duke Initiative on Survey Methodology

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EDUCATION

- 2025 Joint PhD in Political Science and Communication, **University of Pennsylvania**
- Dissertation: *The Effects of Televised Sports Viewing on Beliefs About Political Competition*
- 2023 MA in Communication, **University of Pennsylvania**
- 2013 BA in Political Science, **Washington University in Saint Louis**
- Summa cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

PUBLICATIONS

Tolkin, Alex. 2026. “Reluctant Partisans, not Undercover Partisans: Why Americans Increasingly Identify as Independent.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfag021>
News coverage: [Washington Post](#)

Tolkin, Alex. 2025. “Good Sports or Sore Losers: Sports Fans and Perceptions of Election Legitimacy.” *Political Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10077-9>

WORKING PAPERS

Platform Nudges Fail to Prompt Engagement with Cross-cutting News Sources (with Andrew Trexler, Christopher A. Bail, D. Sunshine Hillygus, Markus Reiter-Haas, and Alexander Volfovsky)

AI Conversation Assistant Does Not Improve Interaction Quality or Openmindedness on Social Media (with Diana Jordan, Christopher A. Bail, D. Sunshine Hillygus, and Alexander Volfovsky)

Sports Versus War: Disambiguating the Game Frame

From Terrorism to Great Power Competition: How Changing International Threats Affect Americans’ Support for Global Engagement (with Jonathan Schulman)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2026:

American Political Science Association	Boston, MA
American Association for Public Opinion Research	Los Angeles, CA
Midwest Political Science Association	Chicago, IL

2025:

Southern Association for Public Opinion Research	Raleigh, NC
American Political Science Association	Vancouver, Canada
Midwest Political Science Association	Chicago, IL

2024:

American Political Science Association	Philadelphia, PA
International Communication Association	Gold Coast, Australia
Midwest Political Science Association	Chicago, IL
Southern Political Science Association	New Orleans, LA

2023:

Directions of Polarization, Social Norms, and Trust in Societies Workshop	Cambridge, MA
American Political Science Association	Los Angeles, CA
International Communication Association	Toronto, Canada
Toronto Political Behavior Workshop	Toronto, Canada
Polarization Research Lab	Stanford, CA

2022:

American Political Science Association	Montreal, Canada
Midwest Political Science Association	Chicago, IL

2021:

American Political Science Association	Virtual
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2019:

American Political Science Association	Washington, DC
International Communication Association	Washington, DC

INVITED TALKS

Good Sports Or Sore Losers? Sports, Ritual, and Perceptions of Election Legitimacy

- UMass Amherst Emerging Scholar Research Talk

TEACHING

Teaching Fellow	Quantitative Research Methods in Communication	2022
Teaching Fellow	Introduction to American Politics	2020
Teaching Fellow	Introduction to Data Science	2019

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Upenn Political Science Graduate Student Summer Grant (\$1000)	2023
Polarization Research Lab (survey time)	2022
Annenberg Summer Fellowship (\$4,000/year)	2019-2023

SERVICE

Reviewer	Political Behavior, JEPS	
Representative	Graduate Student Council	2019-2020
Coordinator	Democracy and Information Group	2019-2020

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2015 - 2018 Data Scientist, *Locus Analytics*

2013 - 2015 Technical Services, *Epic Systems*

PROGRAMMING SKILLS

R, Python, Stata, L^AT_EX