

STEVEN LAUTERWASSER

summary Social scientist of political conflict and public opinion — how contested issues move voters, publics, and legislatures — now applying that lens to AI safety policy. Hands-on AI evaluation: quality and equity of a deployed LLM assistant, plus an independent study of AI responses to political claims. Writing that moves decisions: \$300k+ in grants written largely solo, org-wide strategy guidance, and a 4.7M-view public series.

skills Programming (Python, R, SQL), machine learning (Keras, PyTorch, Tensorflow), statistical modeling (GLMs, multilevel models), data (surveys, data quality, APIs, geospatial, text, & network analysis), visualization (ggplot2, Shiny, Gephi), workflow (BigQuery, Git, testing, non-technical documentation, LLM workflows)

education University of California, Berkeley, PhD in Sociology 2022
University of California, Berkeley, MA in Sociology 2017
University of Chicago, BA in History with Honors 2012

experience **Senior Research Scientist** September 2024 - present
A Healthier Democracy Remote

- Build large-scale datasets, linking operational, administrative, spatial, and voter file data
- Design and analyze RCTs and quasi-experiments to evaluate outreach and turnout impacts
- Produce impact evaluations, translating technical analysis for time-sensitive decisions
- Evaluate a deployed LLM chatbot connecting patients to federal benefits for bias and differential effectiveness
- Lead research strategy, coordinating internal and external partners and securing >\$300k in competitive grants

Machine Learning Consultant August 2024 - present
University of British Columbia; UC Berkeley Remote

- Deploy transformer-based classifiers to identify protest events over 150+ years of *New York Times* reporting, tackling positive-unlabeled learning and extreme class imbalance at scale
- Document models for non-technical users, emphasizing transparent assumptions and limitations

Postdoctoral Research Associate September 2022 - August 2024
Northeastern University Boston, MA

- Built a text-processing pipeline converting 1500+ PDFs into a structured, analysis-ready dataset with rigorous QA and documentation for a mixed technical/non-technical team

Doctoral Researcher 2017-2022
UC Berkeley, Sociology Department Berkeley, CA

- Designed and carried out a multi-year research project on how polarization influences partisans
- Conducted innovative survey analyses in R, including natural experiments from interview timing, structural topic modeling of open-ended responses, and network methods treating responses as coherent belief systems

Research Fellow, Solidarity and Strife: Democracies in a Time of Pandemic 2020-2021
UC Berkeley, Social Science Matrix and D-Lab Berkeley, CA

- Built a data pipeline in Python to clean and process millions of tweets distributed across hundreds of files
- Collaborated with an interdisciplinary academy/industry team on exploratory network and text analyses
- Led an ethics and policy paper on the use of social media data in research

teaching and talking Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award (UC Berkeley, 2021). Designed and taught 8 courses across 12 semesters, including 3 competitively selected independent positions and a capstone seminar (4.86/5.0 evaluation). Writer for Crash Course: Sociology (16 episodes, first episode 4.7M views). 10+ conference presentations and invited talks.