JONATHAN TOLLEFSON

Department of Sociology and Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation
University of Chicago
tollefson@uchicago.edu
www.jonathantollefson.com

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2025 -   **University of Chicago**, Chicago, IL
Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology and Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation

EDUCATION

2019 - 2025   **Brown University**, Providence, RI
Ph.D., Sociology

2016 - 2018   **University of Vermont**, Burlington, VT
M.S., Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources

2011 - 2015   **Brown University**, Providence, RI
Sc.B. with honors, Social Analysis and Research

PUBLICATIONS

R+R   **Tollefson, J.**, Frickel, S., Helgeson, J., and Gore, C. "Adapting to adaptation: Conceptual development and field formation in community resilience planning." *R+R*.

R+R   Demortain, D., Frickel, S., Beck, S., Gray, I., Grundmann, R., Hannud Abdo, A., Kinniburgh, F., Kitson, D., Matzner, N., Rea, C., **Tollefson, J**., and Wetts, R. "Computational science and technology studies? Assembling STS theory-methods packages with computation." *R+R*.

10.   **Tollefson, J.** (Forthcoming) "The racialization of environmental inequality in US cities, 1880-1930." Accepted at *Social Forces*.
- 2023 IPUMS USA Student Research Award
- 2024 Brent K. Marshall Student Paper Award, Society for the Study of Social Problems, Environment and Technology Division
- 2024 Student Paper Award, ASA Environmental Sociology Section – Honorable Mention
- 2024 Candace Rogers Award, Eastern Sociological Society – Honorable Mention
- 2024 Graduate Student Paper Prize, Spatial Structures for the Social Sciences, Brown University
- Featured in IBES spotlight article

9.   **Tollefson, J.**, Frickel, S., Gore, C., and Helgeson, J. (2025) "Community resilience planning: What new methods reveal about the formation and transformation of a field." *WIREs Climate Change* 16(4): e70015.

8.   Candipan, J. and **Tollefson, J.** (2024) "Machine learning and large-scale data for understanding urban inequality." Invited chapter for *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Machine Learning* (Borch, C. and Pardo-Guerra, J.P., eds.).

7.   **Tollefson, J.**, Frickel, S., Gonsalves, S., and Marlow, T. (2023) "Parks, people and pollution: A relational study of socioenvironmental succession." *City and Community* special issue, "Environmentalizing Urban Sociology" 22(4): 286-307.

6.   **Tollefson, J.**, Frickel, S., Gonsalves, S., Marlow, T., Sucsy, R., Byrns, M., and Orpen-Tuz, M. (2023) "Early childcare and education in a post-industrial landscape: Inequalities in exposure to active and relic manufacturing in metropolitan Providence, Rhode Island." *Environmental Justice* 16(4): 309-320.

5.   Frickel, S., and **Tollefson, J.** (2022) "When environmental inequality racialized: Historical evidence from Providence, Rhode Island." *Socius* 8: 1-14.

4.   **Tollefson, J.**, Frickel, S, and Restrepo, M. (2021) "Feature extraction and machine learning techniques for identifying historic urban environmental hazards: New methods to locate lost fossil fuel infrastructure in US cities." *PLOS ONE* 16(8): e0255507.
   - Finalist for the 2022 John Odland Student Paper Award, American Association of Geographers, Spatial Analysis and Modeling Group

3.   **Tollefson, J.** and Panikkar, B. (2020) "Contested extractivism: Impact assessment, public engagement, and environmental knowledge production in Alaska's Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta." *Journal of Political Ecology* 27(1): 1166-1188.
   - 2021 Graduate Student Paper Award, Rural Sociological Society, Natural Resources RIG

2.   **Tollefson, J.** (2020) "Post-Fukushima discourse in the US press: Quantified knowledge, the technical object, and a panicked public." *Public Understanding of Science* 29(7): 670-687.

1.   Panikkar, B. and **Tollefson, J.** (2018) "Land as material, knowledge, and relationships: Resource extraction and subsistence imaginaries in Bristol Bay, Alaska." *Social Studies of Science* 48(5): 715-739.

MANUSCRIPTS

Working Paper	**Tollefson, J.** *"The environmental dimensions of HOLC redlining decisions." Delivered at Population Association of American (Washington, DC. Apr. 10-13, 2025) and American Sociological Association (Chicago, IL. Aug. 8-12, 2025).*
Working Paper	**Tollefson, J.** "Industrial geography and urban inequality formation in the early 20th century."
In Progress	Frickel, S., Demortain, D., Beck, S., Gray, I., Grundmann, R., Hannud Abdo, A., Kinniburgh, F., Kitson, D., Matzner, N., Rea, C., **Tollefson, J**., and Wetts, R. "Environmental knowledge and politics."
In Progress	**Tollefson, J.** "Suburban development and agricultural land conversion: New landscapes of environmental health inequality." *Delivered at Pacific Sociological Association (Sacramento, CA. Apr. 7-9, 2022).*

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

2023	**Tollefson, J.** "Redlining and segregation in Providence, RI." Essay for *Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America.* Richmond, VA: University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab.

2021	**Tollefson, J.** and Frickel, S. "[Gasworks, lost and found.](#)" *Urban Omnibus*. New York: The Architectural League of New York. July 1.
2016	**Tollefson, J.** and Urso, M. "[Black Lives Matter at St. Patrick's Day Parade.](#)" Op-ed in the *Providence Journal*. April 2.

AWARDS

2024	Brent K. Marshall Student Paper Award, Society for the Study of Social Problems, Environment and Technology Division
2024	Candace Rogers Award, Eastern Sociological Society – Honorable Mention
2024	ASA Environmental Sociology Section Student Paper Award – Honorable Mention
2024	Graduate Student Paper Prize, Spatial Structures for the Social Sciences, Brown University
2023	IPUMS USA Student Research Award
2022	Finalist for the John Odland Student Paper Award, American Association of Geographers, Spatial Analysis and Modeling Group
2021	Graduate Student Paper Award, Rural Sociological Society, Natural Resources RIG
2021	First Place Poster Award, Dellinger Symposium (Superfund Research Program of the NIEHS)

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

2025	National Science Foundation Socio-Environmental Knowledge Commons (SEEKCommons) Research Fellowship
	• Research fellowship to support the creation of public-facing data on historical urban built environments. Supported by NSF award #2226425
2024 - 2025	Interdisciplinary Opportunities Fellowship (full funding, 2024-25 academic year), *Institute at Brown for Environment and Society*
2024	Research Fellow: Community Resilience and Risk (Jan. – Dec. 2024), *Georgetown University / NIST-PREP*
	• Georgetown University / National Institute of Standards and Technology
2024	Joukowski Summer Research Award ($1,000), *Brown University*
2023 - 2024	Asa and Horace Learned Fellowship (full funding, 2023-24 academic year), *Brown University*
2023	National Institute of Standards and Technology Professional Research Experience Program (NIST-PREP) Fellowship (full funding, Jan. – Jun. 2023)
2023	Graduate Research, Training, and Travel Award ($3,145), *Institute at Brown for Environment and Society*

2022	Finalist (not awarded) – Raskin Scholarship, *Earth Science Information Partners*
2021	NIEHS SRP Traineeship (full funding, Jan. 2021 – Dec. 2021) • Superfund Research Program of the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences. Supported by NIEHS grant P42ES013660.
2021	Collaborative Research Award ($2,000), *Brown University Department of Sociology*
2020	Collaborative Research Award ($2,000), *Brown University Department of Sociology*
2019 - 2020	Graduate Fellowship (full funding, 2019-20 academic year), *Brown University*
2016 - 2018	Governance of Large Mine Permitting Research Fellowship (full funding, 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years) • Supported by National Science Foundation award #1642226 (PI: Bindu Panikkar).
2017	Florence Tinker Matteossian Memorial Grant ($4,214), *University of Vermont*
2017	Graduate Student Senate Mini-Grant, *University of Vermont*
2017	Rubenstein Graduate Student Association Mini-Grant, *University of Vermont*
2013	Karen T. Romer Undergraduate Teaching and Research Award ($3,000), *Brown University*
Travel Grants	• 2024: Disaster Research Center Workshop Travel Grant, *University of Delaware Disaster Research Center* • 2021: Dellinger Symposium Travel Award, *NIEHS Superfund Research Program* • 2025, 2024: International conference travel grant, *Brown University* • 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021: Graduate School Travel Grant, *Brown University* • 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021: Sociology Dept. Travel Grant, *Brown University* • 2022: GSC Travel Grant, *Brown University*

WORKSHOPS AND PANELS ORGANIZED

2025	Historical and environmental foundations of urban inequality: Insights from new methodological assemblages. Panel organizers: Jonathan Tollefson and Katherine A. Thomas. *Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics.* Montreal, QC. Jul. 9-12, 2025. (Session canceled due to scheduling conflict).
2021 - 2025	2021-25: Environmental Sociology Faculty-Student Workshop, *Brown University.* Met regularly 2021-2025.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND WORKING GROUPS

2024	Keynote lecture. What historic maps reveal about racial-environmental inequality in US cities. *Center for Urban and Regional Analysis Summer Speaker Series.* Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, and Online. Jun. 14.

2024	Invited lecture. Environmental risk and the reorganization of urban inequality in the late 19th and early 20th century. *Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences, 2024 Graduate Fellow Lecture.* Providence, RI. Apr. 26.
2023	Invited lecture. The development and transformation of community resilience planning research: Insights from domain-topic models with chained dimensions. *NIST Applied Economics Office Research Seminar Series.* Washington, DC. Nov. 3.
2023	Invited panelist. The environmental dimensions of urban inequality, 1880-1930. *Spatial Data Science Symposium.* Online. Sept. 6.
2022	Workshop presentation. Energy geography and urban inequality: Computational techniques for historical research. *Computational Environmental STS Working Group (Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire Sciences Innovations Sociétés, Paris).* Paris, France. Jul. 10-13.
2020	Workshop presentation. Manufactured gas and historic environmental inequality. *Urban Theory and Data Lab (Harvard University).* Cambridge, MA. Oct. 29.
2017	Invited lecture. Land use, power, and knowledge at the Northern resource frontier. *Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources Graduate Symposium (University of Vermont).* Burlington, VT. Oct. 13.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025	Nature, built environments, and risk in HOLC "redlining" decisions. *American Sociological Association.* Chicago, IL. Aug. 8-12.
	Socio-environmental foundations of neighborhood segregation in US cities: New historical evidence. *Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics.* Montreal, QC. Jul. 9-12.
	The environmental dimensions of HOLC "redlining" decisions. *Population Association of America.* Washington, DC. Apr. 10-13.
2024	Environmental risk and the reorganization of urban inequality in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Society for the Study of Social Problems.* Montreal, QC. Aug. 9-11. (Paper accepted, session canceled).
	Siloed Interdisciplinarity?: A Multi-level Computational Text Analysis of Community Resilience Planning. *American Sociological Association.* Montreal, QC. Aug. 9-13.
	Community resilience planning: What new methods reveal about the formation and transformation of a field. *Disaster Research Center 60th Anniversary Workshop.* Newark, DE. May 2-5.
	Urban environmental inequality from 1880 to 1930. *Population Association of America.* Columbus, OH. Apr. 17-20.
	The development and structure of community resilience planning research. *Eastern Sociological Society.* Washington, DC. Feb. 29 – Mar. 3.
2023	Urban fossil fuel production and the changing scale of racial segregation, 1880-1930. *International Association of Public Health Scholars.* Baltimore, MD. Oct. 2-5.

Burns, A., and **Tollefson, J.** Inequality in the effects of pesticide exposure on infant health. *American Sociological Association*. Philadelphia, PA. Aug. 17-21.

How industry segregated cities: Using computational data extraction to reexamine the formation of early-20th century segregation. *American Sociological Association*. Philadelphia, PA. Aug. 17-21. (Paper accepted, could not attend due to scheduling conflict).

Burns, A., and **Tollefson, J.** Inequality in the effects of pesticide exposure on infant health. *Population Association of America*. New Orleans, LA. Apr. 12-15.

Environmental inequality and the changing scale of urban segregation in the early 20th century. *Pacific Sociological Association*. Bellevue, WA, Mar. 30 – Apr. 2.

What was the role of environmental risk in the early formation of neighborhood-level segregation? *American Association of Geographers*. Denver, CO. Mar. 23-27.

Tollefson, J. and Silberstein, S. Right-wing extremism online: A quantitative and critical discourse analysis of the Parler website. *American Association for Applied Linguistics*. Portland, OR. Mar. 18-21.

2022   Brownfields and green spaces: Neighborhood change and urban park access in a post-industrial city. *American Sociological Association*. Los Angeles, CA. Aug. 5-9.

Frickel, S., and **Tollefson, J.** When environmental inequality racialized: Evidence from a historical case study. *American Sociological Association*. Los Angeles, CA. Aug. 5-9.

Agricultural land conversion and new geographies of suburban environmental risk. *Pacific Sociological Association*. Sacramento, CA. Apr. 7-9.

Gastown: Fossil fuels and the changing nature of urban environmental inequality at the turn of the 20th century. *Eastern Sociological Society*. Boston, MA. Mar. 10-13.

New methods to locate historic fossil fuel infrastructures: How computational techniques can illuminate 19th century urban environmental hazards. *American Association of Geographers*. New York, NY and online. Feb. 25 – Mar 1.
- Presented as part of John Odland Award session.

2021   Urban environmental inequality in the 19th century and the toxic legacy of the manufactured gas industry: Unearthing early fossil fuel infrastructure in American cities (poster). *Dellinger Symposium of the Superfund Research Program*. Apr. 28.
- Awarded – First Place Poster Award

Urban environmental inequality and the toxic legacy of the manufactured gas industry: Unearthing 19th century fossil fuel infrastructure in American cities. *Pacific Sociological Association*. Online. Mar. 17-21.

2018   Mining, public engagement, and contentious land imaginaries in Bristol Bay and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska. *American Association of Geographers*. New Orleans, LA. Apr. 10-14.

2017	Knowledge, sovereignty, and resource extraction in rural Alaska: A case study of the Donlin Gold public comment process. *ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting.* Quebec City, QC. Dec. 11-15.
	Land as material, habitat and survival: Resource materiality and mining in Bristol Bay and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska. *Society for the Social Studies of Science.* Boston, MA. Aug. 30 – Sept. 2.
2016	Resource materiality and resistance to mineral development in Bristol Bay, Alaska. *ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting.* Winnipeg, MB. Dec. 5-9.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

2025	Brown University, Environmental Studies / "Environmental justice and the city" / *Instructor of Record*
2025, 2024, 2023, 2022	I.E. Business School and Brown University School of Professional Studies / "Society and Culture in the Age of Globalization" / *Teaching Associate* / Prof. Meghan Kallman
2022	Brown University, Sociology / "Organizations and Society" / *Teaching Assistantship* / Prof. Rachel Wetts
2020	Brown University, Sociology / "Methods for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research" / *Teaching Assistantship* / Prof. Rachel Wetts
2018	University of Vermont, Environmental Studies / "Human Ecology, Health, and Sustainability in the Circumpolar Arctic" / Co-taught with Prof. Bindu Panikkar
2017	University of Vermont, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources / "Social Processes and the Environment" / *Teaching Assistantship* / Prof. Cecilia Danks
2017	University of Vermont, Environmental Studies / "Environmental Policy and Activism" / *Teaching Assistantship* / Prof. Trish O'Kane
2016	University of Vermont, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources / "Race, Culture, and Natural Resources" / *Teaching Assistantship* / Prof. Clare Ginger
Guest lecturing	**2024:** Brown University, Sociology / "The Geography of Urban Inequality" / *Guest Lecturer* / Prof. Jennifer Candipan
	2022, 2021: Brown University, Environmental Studies / "Environmental Studies of Pollution" / *Guest Lecturer* / Profs. Meredith Hastings and Scott Frickel

COMMUNITY TEACHING

2015 - 2016	Extraordinary Youth Ensemble (Providence, RI) / *Administrator and teacher* • Developed curriculum and successfully obtained biannual grants from the Rhode Island State Council for the Arts to provide instrument and music history instruction to Providence area high school students.

2014 - 2015	Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (Providence, RI) / *Visiting Artist, Music Instruction*
2014 - 2015	Breakthrough Providence (Providence, RI) / *Teacher, "Demonstration and Organizing"*
	• Developed original student-centered curriculum for 7th-9th grade students. Taught weekly lessons and advised student projects on the role of organizing in bringing about social and political change. Advised teaching assistant.

SERVICE

2021 - 2025	Graduate Student Council (Brown University), Department of Sociology representative.
2025 - 2026	Society for the Study of Social Problems Environment & Technology Division award committee.
2024	Presider, "Urban Environments" roundtable session, *American Sociological Association* annual meeting. Montreal, QC. Aug. 9-13.
2023	Poster Judge, *International Association of Public Health Scholars* annual meeting. Baltimore, MD. Oct. 2-5.
2023	Presider, "Urban Sociology" panel session, *American Sociological Association* annual meeting. Philadelphia, PA. Aug. 17-21. (Could not attend due to scheduling conflict).
2023	Presider, "Environmental Justice" panel session, *Pacific Sociological Association* annual meeting. Bellevue, WA. Mar. 30 – Apr. 2.
2022	Rural Sociological Society Natural Resources Research Interest Group award committee.
2022	"Getting to Know Brown and Rhode Island," panel presentation for incoming graduate students.
Ongoing	Peer review for *American Sociological Review; Social Forces; City & Community; Public Understanding of Science; Population and Environment; The Extractive Industries and Society; Journal of Political Ecology; Journal of Computational Social Science; PLOS ONE.*

AFFILIATIONS

INSTITUTES, LABS, AND WORKING GROUPS

2025 - present	Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation (University of Chicago)
2022 - present	Computational Environmental STS Working Group (Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire Sciences Innovations Sociétés Paris; Technical University Munich; Brown University)
2020 - 2025	Institute at Brown for Environment and Society (Brown University)
2020 - 2022	Urban Theory and Data Lab (Harvard University)
2017 – 2018	Gund Institute for Environment (University of Vermont)

American Sociological Association
- Section Memberships: Environmental Sociology; Community and Urban Sociology; Science, Knowledge, and Technology

American Association of Geographers
Eastern Sociological Society
Interdisciplinary Association for Population Health Science
Pacific Sociological Association
Population Association of America
Rural Sociological Society
Society for the Study of Social Problems

LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL

Language: Japanese (rusty)

I use an array of computational tools in my research and teaching, including statistical analysis in **R**, **Stata**, *and* **SPSS**; *spatial analysis in* **R**, **ArcGIS**, *and* **QGIS**; *automation, web scraping, text analysis, and machine learning applications in* **Python** *and* **R**; *text analysis using the* **CorText** *and* **Sashimi** *methdologies; and qualitative analysis in* **NVivo** *and* **HyperResearch**.