

# ALEX ABDO

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## EDUCATION

### **HARVARD LAW SCHOOL, J.D. *cum laude*, June 2006**

Harvard Project on Wrongful Convictions, Co-Founder  
HLS–YLS Court Classic Public Interest Fundraiser, Co-Director/Co-Founder  
Ames Moot Court Competition  
*Human Rights Journal*, Staff Member  
Hale & Dorr Legal Services Center, Student Attorney  
Harvard Defenders, Team Leader

### **YALE UNIVERSITY, B.S. *magna cum laude*, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology, May 2003**

Phi Beta Kappa  
Distinction in the Major

## EXPERIENCE

### **KNIGHT FIRST AMENDMENT INSTITUTE AT COLUMBIA UNIV., New York, NY**

*Litigation Director* 3/2019–present  
*Senior Staff Attorney* 1/2017–3/2019  
Litigate cases involving free speech, new technology, and emerging or newly salient threats to public discourse, including a challenge to President Trump’s blocking of his critics on Twitter; a challenge to the government’s system of “prepublication review,” which requires millions of former employees of the intelligence agencies to submit their manuscripts to government censors prior to publication; and a challenge to the pervasive secrecy of the Office of Legal Counsel’s formal written opinions, which establish the law for the executive branch. Manage a team of thirteen litigators.

### **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, New York, NY**

*Senior Staff Attorney*, Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project 5/2016–12/2016  
*Staff Attorney*, Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project 3/2014–5/2016  
*Staff Attorney*, National Security Project 3/2011–2/2014  
*Legal Fellow*, National Security Project 9/2008–3/2011  
Litigated cases involving the First, Fourth, and Fifth Amendments to the Constitution, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the USA PATRIOT Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and the Freedom of Information Act. Presented oral argument before the S.D.N.Y., D. Md., D.D.C., and the Second and Ninth Circuits. Participated in the development of advocacy and media strategies. Worked on draft legislation with the Washington Legislative Office. Appeared on radio and television programs on behalf of the ACLU.

### **THE HONORABLE ROSEMARY BARKETT, Miami, FL**

United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit 9/2007–9/2008  
*Law Clerk*

### **THE HONORABLE BARBARA M.G. LYNN, Dallas, TX**

United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas 8/2006–8/2007  
*Law Clerk*

### **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, New York, NY**

*Legal Intern* Summer 2005  
Prepared legal and factual memoranda in cases involving the Alien Tort Statute, the USA PATRIOT Act, and the Child Online Protection Act. Contributed to the research and writing of legal briefs. Performed extensive research on the legislative history of various congressional enactments.

*Legal Intern*

Researched and prepared memoranda regarding legal issues in criminal defense cases. Drafted and filed felony and misdemeanor motions. Interviewed incarcerated clients. Shadowed experienced trial attorney in court.

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & TALKS**

Alex Abdo, *Free speech in black boxes*, Symposium on “Misinformation, Media Manipulation, and Antisemitism” at Columbia University’s Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America, Feb. 6, 2020, <https://knightcolumbia.org/content/free-speech-in-black-boxes>

Alex Abdo, *Testimony before the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board*, Feb. 8, 2019, <https://knightcolumbia.org/content/knight-institute-testifies-privacy-and-civil-liberties-oversight-board>

Alex Abdo, *Facebook is shaping public discourse. We need to understand how.*, Guardian, Sept. 15, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/sep/15/facebook-twitter-social-media-public-discourse>

Alex Abdo & Kate Klonick, *The Supreme Court Takes on the Police Use of Cellphone Records*, N.Y. Times, June 22, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/22/opinion/carpenter-supreme-court-cellphone-records.html>

Alex Abdo & Jameel Jaffer, *Supreme court cellphone case puts free speech – not just privacy – at risk*, Guardian, Nov. 27, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/27/supreme-court-cellphone-data-carpenter-first-amendment>

Alex Abdo, *Why Rely on the Fourth Amendment To Do the Work of the First?*, 127 Yale L.J. F. 444 (2017), <http://www.yalelawjournal.org/forum/why-rely-on-the-fourth-amendment-to-do-the-work-of-the-first>