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FRIEDOLIN MERHOUT

positions

Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Copenhagen, 2023–present.
Fellow, Copenhagen Center for Social Data Science (SODAS), 2019–present.

Visiting Scholar, Department of Sociology, Yale University, 2025.

Visiting Scholar, Department of Sociology, New York University, 2024–2025.

Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Copenhagen, 2019–2023.
Research Group Coordinator, Knowledge, Organization, and Politics, 2021–2025.
Head of Studies, M.Sc. in Social Data Science, 2021–2023.
Research Group Coordinator, Welfare, Inequality, and Mobility, 2021–2023.

CSS@LMU Fellow, Department of Sociology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.
November 2023.

education

Ph.D., Sociology, Duke University, 2019.

M.A., Sociology, Duke University, 2017.

B.A., North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014.

publications

Journal Articles

*Achim Edelmann, **Friedolin Merhout**, Amie Bostic. 2025. "Immigration and Public Support for Social Policy: Accounting for the Gender Composition of Immigrant Populations." *Socius.* 10.1177/23780231251400402
*Shared first authorship.

Séamus A. Power, Crystal Shackleford, **Friedolin Merhout**, Richard A. Shweder. 2025. "Is multiculturalism as American as apple pie? A survey of attitudes toward ethnic and religious diversity in the United States." *Ethos.* 10.1111/etho.70018
Selected media coverage: The New York Times, Phys.org, PsyPost

Nate Breznau et al. 2025. "The reliability of replications: a study in computational reproductions." *Royal Society Open Science.* 10.1098/rsos.241038

Aidan Combs, Graham Tierney, Brian Guay, **Friedolin Merhout**, Christopher A. Bail, Sunshine Hillygus, Alexander Volfovsky. 2023. "Reducing political polarization in the United States with a mobile chat platform." *Nature Human Behaviour.* 10.1038/s41562-023-01655-0
Selected media coverage: Phys.org.

Eaman Jahani, Natalie Gallagher, **Friedolin Merhout**, Nicolo Cavalli, Douglas Guilbeault, Yan Leng, Christopher A. Bail. 2022. "An Online experiment during the 2020 US–Iran crisis shows that exposure to common enemies can increase political polarization." *Nature Scientific Reports.* 10.1038/s41598-022-23673-0

Selected media coverage: Washington Post.

Nate Breznau et al. 2022. "Observing Many Researchers Using the Same Data and Hypothesis Reveals a Hidden Universe of Uncertainty." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* 10.1073/pnas.2203150119
Selected media coverage: Phys.org, Verve Times.

Christopher A. Bail, Aidan Combs, Deen Freelon, Bryan Guay, D. Sunshine Hillygus, Emily Maloney, **Friedolin Merhout**, and Alexander Volfovsky. 2020. "Assessing the Impact of the Russian Internet Research Agency on the Political Attitudes and Behaviors of American Twitter Users." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* 10.1073/pnas.1906420116
Selected media coverage: Forbes, The Seattle Times, Medium.

Friedolin Merhout and Joshua F. Doyle. 2019 "Does Socioeconomic Status Determine Diet Quality if Food Access, Resources, and Nutrition Education are Equalized? An Exploration of College Student Diets." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.* 10.1016/j.jneb.2019.06.021

Christopher A. Bail, Lisa P. Argyle, Taylor W. Brown, John P. Bumpus, Haohan Chen, M. B. Fallin Hunzaker, Jaemin Lee, Marcus Mann, **Friedolin Merhout**, and Alexander Volfovsky. 2018. "Exposure to opposing views on social media can increase political polarization." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* 10.1073/pnas.1804840115
Winner, 2019 APSA Political Communication Section, Paul Lazarsfeld Best Paper Award.
Selected public coverage: 2023 Economic Report of the President, The New York Times, The Washington Post, BBC, Financial Times.

Christopher A. Bail, **Friedolin Merhout**, Peng Ding. 2018. "Examining the Relationship between Ethnic Discrimination and Violent Radicalization in 3,143 U.S. Counties using Internet Search Data." *Science Advances.* 10.1126/sciadv.aao5948
Selected media coverage: NBC News, The Atlantic, Le Soleil.

Under Review

"Using Internet Search Data to Produce Long-Running Comparable Time Series: A Hybrid Method Combining Multiple Sources" (with M. Martinelli)

"How political framing shapes scientists' credibility and correction effectiveness." (with C. Acciai, N. Schroyens, and M. W. Nielsen)

work in progress

"Investigating social desirability bias in survey measures of discriminatory attitudes using digital trace data." (with M. Martinelli)

"Imagined Threats. How misperceptions about the motives of immigrants shape opposition to immigration."

"Assessing the Mechanism and Scope Conditions of Backfire Effects."

"Airsent. A sentiment dictionary for social science research." (with J. Migozzi and I. de Vries)

presentations (selected, past 5 years)

"Using Internet Search Data for Comparative, Longitudinal Research: The Rise of the Radical Right Across Europe." *MZES*, 2025; *New York University*, 2025; *IC2S2*, 2025; *INAS*, 2025; *Stanford University*, 2025; *Yale University*.

"Investigating social desirability bias in survey measures of discriminatory attitudes using digital trace data. *LMU Munich*, 2023; *médialab, SciencesPo*, 2024; *IC2S2*, 2024; *NSA* 2024; *ECSR*, 2024.

"Immigration and Public Support for Social Policy: Accounting for the Gender Composition of Immigrant Populations." *ASA*, 2022; *MZES*, 2024.

"The Role of Scientists in Correcting Misinformation: Political Framing and Source Characteristics." *ACES*, 2024.

"Exposure to Common Enemies can Increase Political Polarization: Evidence from an Experiment with Automated Partisans." *IC2S2*, 2020; *Facebook-CSS*, 2020; *PODS, Universitet i Oslo*, 2023.

"Assessing the Mechanism and Scope Conditions of Backfire Effects." *Universitá di Trento*, 2019; *IAS, Linköpings Universitet*, 2020; *ACES*, 2023.

"Airsent: A Sentiment Dictionary for the Social Sciences." *CREST Sociology*, 2023.

"Teaching Computational Social Science." (with M. Nellimarka) *Sage Methodspace*, 2023.

grants and fellowships

Silicon Sampling for Social Science Experiments (S4E)–Research Stay Grant at NYU, 2024, Carlsberg Foundation, 99,200 DKK ($14,800) .

Early-Career Collaboration Grant at Yale University, 2024, International Alliance of Research Universities, $5,000.

Cultural Consistency as a Predictor of Sharing and Engaging with Misinformation and Inciting News (Co-PI), 2024, SciencesPo SAB, 44,815 EUR ($48,400).

Hate Behind the Screen (HABITS) - Leveraging Online Searches to Measure Discriminatory Attitudes and Assess Social Desirability Bias (PI), 2022, Independent Research Fund Denmark (DFF), 2,865,484 DKK ($385,000).

Jess & Minnie Brady Jaffrey Summer Research Fellowship, 2019, $5,500.

European Symposium on Societal Challenges in CSS Travel Grant, 2018, €800 ($800).

Summer Institute in Computational Social Science Project Grant, 2018, $1,800.

Duke Sociology Department Research Grant, 2017, $550 & 2019, $1,000.

Duke Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship, 2015, 2016,& 2017, $5,500 per summer.

Graduate School of North American Studies Travel Award, 2016, €300 ($300).

Duke Graduate School Research Fellowship, 2014–2015.

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Visiting Scholarship Duke University Graduate School, 2012–2013.

Free University of Berlin, Visiting Scholarship University of California, Santa Barbara, 2012-2013. (declined)

teaching (selected, past 5 years)

Instructor

"Experimental Sociology." BSc/MSc (co-instructor D. Galos). Spring 2024, 2025.

"New Statistical Analysis Strategies" BSc (co-instructor D. Galos). Spring 2024, 2025.

"Introduction to R" BSc. Fall 2021, 2022, 2023.

"Elementary Social Data Science." MSc (co-instructor). Fall 2020, 2021, 2023, 2025.

"Basic Statistics." BSc. Spring 2022, 2023.

"Mining Text for Meaning – Introduction to Quantitative Text Analysis." BSc. Fall 2022.

"Introduction to R" MSc/PhD (co-instructor M. Schaeffer). Fall 2021, 2022.

"Societal Problems." MSc (co-instructors C. Maxwell, M. Chen). Fall 2021.

"Social Data Science Base Camp." MSc (co-instructor). Fall 2020, 2021, 2025.

"More Than Words – Introduction to Quantitative Text Analysis." MSc. Spring 2021.

"Knowledge, Organizations, and Politics." BSc (co-instructor M. W. Nielsen). Spring 2020.

"Digital Methods: From Facebook Ethnography to Computational Social Science." BSc/MSc (co-instructors S. D. Breslin, U. Aslak, K. Albris, and H. B. Carlsen). Spring 2020.

Supervision

UCPH Department of Sociology, 1 BSc & 4 MSc.

UCPH MSc in Social Data Science, 21 MSc.

KU Department of Sociology, 1 PhD.

AAU Department of Sociology, 1 PhD (Co-Supervisor).

KU Department of Computer Science, 1 PhD (Co-Supervisor).

Organizer

"Summer Institute in Computational Social Science, University of Copenhagen Partner Site." June 2020. *Canceled due to COVID-19*

"Summer Institute in Computational Social Science, UCLA Partner Site." June 2019.

software

textnets (contributor)

textnets is an R package providing functionality to conduct automated text analysis using network techniques.

service

Institutional

UCPH Department of Sociology, Ethics Review Board Member. 2022–present.

UCPH Center for Social Data Science, Steering Group Member, 2022 & 2024–present.

UCPH Department of Sociology, Annual Department Conference. 2022, 2023,& 2024.

UCPH Center for Social Data Science, SODAS Panel Series on Fairness in Science Co-Organizer. Spring 2021.

MSc Social Data Science Admissions Committee Chair and Member. 2020–present.

UCPH Department of Sociology, Julefrokost Co-Organizer. 2019.

Duke Polarization Lab Organizer. 2018–2019.

Duke Sociology Faculty Committee Representative. 2017–2019.

Duke Sociology Graduate Student Forum Co-Coordinator. 2016–2017.

Student Health Advisory Committee Member. 2016–2017.

Graduate and Professional Student Council Representative. 2014–2016.

Student Health Insurance Advisory Committee Member. 2014–2016.

Professional

Ad-Hoc Reviewer: *Acta Sociologica, American Journal of Cultural Sociology, American Journal of Sociology, American Political Science Review, American Sociological Review, Behavioural Public Policy, , European Research Council, European Sociological Review, Health Economics, International Journal of Press/Politics, Journal of Data and Information Quality, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Journal of Information Technology & Politics, Mobilization, Nature Human Behaviour, PLOS One, Political Behavior, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, SAGE Publishing–Research Methods, Scientific Reports, Social Problems, Sociological Focus, Sociological Methods and Research, Sociological Science, Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review, Swiss National Science Foundation, The Sociological Quarterly*

Panelist: *31st Nordic Sociological Association Conference* "The Past and Future of Digital Sociology", Norrköping, Sweden. August 2024; *CCCM Seminar Series* (with D. Garcia and T. Gessler.) Birkbeck, University of London. May 2021.

Program Committee Member: *European Symposium on Societal Challenges in Computational Social Science 2019, IC2S2 2024, 2025, Social Informatics 2020, Truth and Trust Online 2021*

Table Presider: *ASA Political Sociology Section. Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. San Francisco, CA. August 2020.*

Tutorial Co-Chair: *IC2S2 2023*

Session Organizer: *31st Nordic Sociological Association Conference. Norrköping, Sweden. 2024.*

skills and languages

German (native), English (fluent), Danish (advanced), R, Python, Stata, Qualtrics, Amazon Mechanical Turk, CloudResearch (TurkPrime), Adobe Creative Suite (Ai, Ps, Acrobat), LaTeX.

Last updated: January 7, 2026