

## Ruth Elisabeth Appel

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Award-winning researcher combining deep technical expertise in AI with empirical social science to shape safe AI development.

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

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AI, trust and safety, bias, misinformation, persuasion, elections, causal inference, data science, wellbeing, ethics, privacy

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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<b>09/2019 – present</b> Stanford, US	<b>Stanford University</b> Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellow (08/2024 – present) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Led research on generative AI content moderation preferences to inform AI alignment</li><li>Showed how to approximate <a href="#">political neutrality in AI</a> and <a href="#">evaluate AI for political bias</a></li><li>Co-led project on strengthening <a href="#">third-party AI evaluation</a></li><li>Showed how social media regulation can inform <a href="#">generative AI regulation</a></li><li>Led research on deceptive campaigns and election interference as part of a large-scale academic-industry collaboration with Meta analyzing data from 250 million users</li><li>Shaped research with Meta on <a href="#">testing misinformation interventions at scale</a></li><li>Worked with cross-functional stakeholders (e.g., research, engineering, legal)</li></ul> SAP Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering & PACS PhD Fellow (09/2019 – 06/2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Led research uncovering <a href="#">why partisans disagree about content moderation</a> in the US</li><li>Led research on a scalable <a href="#">intervention to counter vaccine misinformation</a></li><li>Led research on the <a href="#">ethics</a> and <a href="#">privacy</a> implications of new technologies</li><li>Core contributor to research on an <a href="#">intervention to improve youth wellbeing using an app</a></li><li>Communicated results with relevant stakeholders and the public via meetings with high-level decision-makers, conference presentations, <a href="#">popular press articles</a>, and <a href="#">inputs to policy drafts</a></li></ul>
<b>06/2020 – 09/2020</b> San Francisco, US	<b>Google LLC</b> Quantitative User Experience Research Intern <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analyzed large-scale Google Cloud user log data to provide UX recommendations</li><li>Added to Google's research infrastructure by importing machine learning software packages</li></ul>
<b>02/2019 – 06/2019</b> Durham, US	<b>Duke University, Center for Advanced Hindsight</b> Health Division Research Associate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Designed large-scale experiments to improve health behaviors such as vaccine uptake</li></ul>
<b>09/2016 – 12/2016</b> New York, US	<b>Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations</b> Fifth Committee Section (Administration and Budget) Intern <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prepared and participated in high-level meetings on budget issues and the 2030 Agenda</li></ul>

### EDUCATION

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<b>09/2019 – 06/2024</b> Stanford, US	<b>Ph.D. in Political Communication</b> ( <i>Nathan Maccoby Dissertation Award</i> ) Stanford University; Ph.D. Advisor: Jennifer Pan; GPA: 4.0 Dissertation: Countering Social Media Manipulation Course focus: Research methods, causal inference, science and interpersonal communication Selected courses: ECON293 ML and Causal Inference, ECON281 Experiments for Impact
<b>09/2023 – 06/2024</b> Stanford, US	<b>M.S. in Computer Science</b> Stanford University, Department of Computer Science; Advisor: Dan Jurafsky; GPA: 4.0 Course focus: Artificial intelligence, natural language processing, data science Selected courses: CS224N NLP with Deep Learning, CS399 Political Bias in LLMs
<b>09/2017 – 06/2019</b> Paris, France	<b>Master in Public Policy</b> ( <i>summa cum laude</i> ) Sciences Po, School of Public Affairs Course focus: Emerging technologies and public policy, policy analysis
<b>08/2013 – 10/2016</b> Mannheim, Germany	<b>B.Sc. Economics</b> University of Mannheim, Department of Economics; Minor: Political Science

### SKILLS

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<b>Computer Skills</b>	R, Python, C++, SQL, GitHub, Markdown, LaTeX, and Mendeley
<b>Research Methods</b>	NLP (e.g., AI evaluations, fine-tuning), causal inference, field experiments, survey experiments
<b>Data Skills</b>	Large-scale platform observational and experimental data, lab experiment data
<b>Soft Skills</b>	Cross-functional collaboration, research communication, policy engagement
<b>Language Skills</b>	German (native), English (fluent), French (advanced), Spanish (basic)

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

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- Appel, R. E.** (2025). Generative AI Regulation Can Learn from Social Media Regulation. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2412.11335>. ICML Position Paper Track (oral)
- Fisher, J., **Appel, R. E.**, Park, C., Potter, Y., Jiang, L., Sorensen, T., Feng, S., Tsvetkov, Y., Roberts, M., Pan, J., Song, D., Choi, Y. (2025). Political Neutrality in AI is Impossible—But Here Is How to Approximate It. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2503.05728>. ICML Position Paper Track (oral)
- Longpre, S., Klyman, K., **Appel, R. E.**, Kapoor, S., Bommasani, R., Sahar, M., ..., Chowdhury, R., Liang, P., & Narayanan, A. (2025). In-House Evaluation Is Not Enough. Towards Robust Third-Party Evaluation and Flaw Disclosure for General-Purpose AI. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2503.16861>. ICML Position Paper Track (spotlight)  
★ featured in *WIRED* (2025, March) *Researchers Propose a Better Way to Report Dangerous AI Flaws*
- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023). Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts. *Science Advances*. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.adg6799>  
★ top 5% of all research scored by Altmetric
- Matz, S. C., **Appel, R. E.**, & Kosinski, M. (2020). Privacy in the Age of Psychological Targeting. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.08.010>

## SELECTED WORK UNDER PEER REVIEW

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- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., Nimmo, B., Thomas, D. R., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J., & Tucker, J. A. How deceptive online networks reached millions in the US 2020 elections. Under review at *Nature Human Behaviour*.
- Appel, R. E.**, Roozenbeek, J., ..., & van der Linden, S. Psychological inoculation improves resilience to and reduces willingness to share vaccine misinformation. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/ek5pu>. Under review at *Scientific Reports*.
- Pei, R., Grayson, S. J., **Appel, R. E.**, ..., Jackson, M. O., Harari, G. M., & Zaki, J. Bridging the empathy gap: Reducing empathy misperceptions increases social connectedness. Under review at *Nature Human Behaviour*.

## SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

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- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. How partisanship affects preferences for content moderation in large language models.
- Appel, R. E.**, Athey, S., Karlan, D., Koutout, K., Luca, M., Manjeer, U., Sacher, S., & Wernerfelt, N. Combating misinformation on social media.

## SELECTED POLICY IMPACT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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- Bommasani, R., Singer, S., **Appel, R. E.**, ..., Cuéllar, M.-F., & Fei-Fei, L. (2025). Report of the Joint California Policy Working Group on AI Frontier Models. <https://www.cafontier.gov.org/>
- Appel, R. E.** (2024). Strengthening AI Accountability Through Better Third Party Evaluations. <https://hai.stanford.edu/news/strengthening-ai-accountability-through-better-third-party-evaluations>
- Appel, R. E.** (2024). EU DSA Election Guidelines Input. <https://ruthappel.github.io/assets/pdf/EU-DSA-Election-Guidelines-Input.pdf>
- Appel, R. E.** (2023). It's not just about facts: Democrats and Republicans have sharply different attitudes about removing misinformation from social media. <https://theconversation.com/its-not-just-about-facts-democrats-and-republicans-have-sharply-different-attitudes-about-removing-misinformation-from-social-media-216809>  
★ read 40k times

## SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

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| <b>09/2024 – present</b> | Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellowship                            |
| <b>04/2024 – 04/2025</b> | Stanford TomKat Center Innovation Transfer Grant (\$30,000)             |
| <b>09/2019 – 06/2024</b> | SAP Stanford Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering (\$52,920 p.a.) |
| <b>01/2014 – 06/2019</b> | Student Fellow of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation (€27,665)  |

## SELECTED VOLUNTEER WORK

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| <b>05/2020 – 06/2024</b> | <b>Stanford German Student Association</b>  |
| Stanford, US             | Vice President <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-led Transatlantic Summit on geopolitics and tech (200 participants, \$150,000 budget)</li><li>• Met with international leaders from politics and business</li></ul> |