**Ruth Elisabeth Appel**
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## Executive Summary

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

## Areas of Expertise

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

## Skills

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

## Professional Experience

**09/2019 – present** — **Stanford University**
Stanford, US

Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellow (08/2024 – present)
- Led research on generative AI content moderation preferences to inform AI alignment
- Showed how to approximate political neutrality in AI and evaluate AI for political bias
- Co-led project on strengthening third-party AI evaluation
- Showed how social media regulation can inform generative AI regulation
- 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
- Shaped research with Meta on testing misinformation interventions at scale
- Worked with cross-functional stakeholders (e.g., research, engineering, legal)

SAP Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering & PACS PhD Fellow (09/2019 – 06/2024)
- Led research uncovering why partisans disagree about content moderation in the US
- Led research on a scalable intervention to counter vaccine misinformation
- Led research on the ethics and privacy implications of new technologies
- Core contributor to research on an intervention to improve youth wellbeing using an app
- Communicated results with relevant stakeholders and the public via meetings with high-level decision-makers, conference presentations, popular press articles, and inputs to policy drafts

**06/2020 – 09/2020** — **Google LLC**
San Francisco, US

Quantitative User Experience Research Intern
- Analyzed large-scale Google Cloud user log data to provide UX recommendations
- Added to Google's research infrastructure by importing machine learning software packages

**02/2019 – 06/2019** — **Duke University, Center for Advanced Hindsight**
Durham, US

Health Division Research Associate
- Designed large-scale experiments to improve health behaviors such as vaccine uptake

**09/2016 – 12/2016** — **Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**
New York, US

Fifth Committee Section (Administration and Budget) Intern
- Prepared and participated in high-level meetings on budget issues and the 2030 Agenda

## Education

**09/2019 – 06/2024** — **Ph.D. in Political Communication** *(Nathan Maccoby Dissertation Award)*
Stanford, US

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

**09/2023 – 06/2024** — **M.S. in Computer Science**
Stanford, US

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

**09/2017 – 06/2019** — **Master in Public Policy** *(summa cum laude)*
Paris, France

Sciences Po, School of Public Affairs
Course focus: Emerging technologies and public policy, policy analysis

**08/2013 – 10/2016** — **B.Sc. Economics**
Mannheim, Germany

University of Mannheim, Department of Economics; Minor: Political Science

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

**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

## WORKSHOP PAPERS

**Appel, R. E.** (2024). Generative AI Regulation Can Learn from Social Media Regulation. *NeurIPS Regulatable ML Workshop*, December 2024, Vancouver, Canada. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2412.11335

## UNDER PEER REVIEW

**Appel, R. E.** et al. How deceptive online networks reached millions in the US 2020 elections. Under review at *Nature Human Behaviour*.

**Appel, R. E.** et al. 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.** et al. Bridging the empathy gap: Reducing empathy misperceptions increases social connectedness. Under review at *Nature Human Behaviour*.

Fisher, J., **Appel, R. E.** et al. Political Neutrality in AI is Impossible—But Here Is How to Approximate It. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2503.05728.

Longpre, S., Klyman, K., **Appel, R. E.** et al. In-House Evaluation Is Not Enough. Towards Robust Third-Party Evaluation and Flaw Disclosure for General-Purpose AI. https://sites.google.com/view/thirdparty-ai-evalulation/third-party-ai

★ *featured in WIRED (2025, March)* *Researchers Propose a Better Way to Report Dangerous AI Flaws*

## SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

**Appel, R. E.** et al. How partisanship affects preferences for content moderation in large language models.

## SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

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|---|---|
| **09/2024 – present** | Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellowship |
| **09/2024 – 09/2025** | Stanford High Impact Technology Fund Award ($38,000) |
| **09/2019 – 06/2024** | SAP Stanford Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering ($52,920 p.a.) |
| **01/2014 – 06/2019** | Student Fellow of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation (€27,665) |

## SELECTED VOLUNTEER WORK

**05/2020 – 06/2024** **Stanford German Student Association**
Stanford, US Vice President

- Co-led Transatlantic Summit on geopolitics and tech (200 participants, $150,000 budget)
- Met with international leaders from politics and business