

## Ruth Elisabeth Appel

rappel@stanford.edu | linkedin.com/in/rutheappel | github.com/ruthappel

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

---

AI, social media, causal inference, deceptive networks, misinformation, technology policy, elections, ethics and privacy

### 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: Three Studies of Social Media Manipulation and Efforts to Counter It  
Dissertation Committee: Jennifer Pan, Jeffrey Hancock, Susan Athey, Dan Jurafsky (Chair)  
Course focus: Research methods, causal inference, science and interpersonal communication
- 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: AI, natural language processing, data science
- 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

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

---

- 09/2021 – 12/2021**     **Communication Research Methods**  
**01/2021 – 03/2021**     Teaching Assistant for Professor Jennifer Pan's class  
Stanford University     Evaluations: 4.42/5 from 24 students in Winter 2021, 3.92/5 from 26 students in Fall 2021  
Led sections and created materials teaching research methods and R programming

### PEER-REVIEWED 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>
- Matz, S. C., **Appel, R. E.**, & Croll, B. (2022). Privacy and ethics in the age of Big Data. In S. C. Matz (Ed.), *The psychology of technology: Social science research in the age of Big Data* (pp. 379–420). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000290-012>
- Appel, R. E.**, & Matz, S. C. (2021). Psychological targeting in the age of Big Data. In *Measuring and Modeling Persons and Situations*. Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-819200-9.00015-6>
- 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 RegML Workshop, December 2024, Vancouver, Canada. <https://ruthappel.github.io/assets/pdf/Generative-AI-regulation-can-learn-from-social-media-regulation.pdf>

### UNDER REVIEW

---

- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., 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., Rayburn-Reeves, R., Corbin, J., Basol, M., Compton, 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.**, Soh, S., Garcia, S., Huang, 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

---

- 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.
- Minson, J., Erlich, A., Gans-Morse, J., Higgins, C., **Appel, R. E.**, R., ..., & Zeldin, N. Combating information avoidance in wartime Russia: A multidisciplinary field experiment.
- Longpre, S., Kapoor, S., **Appel, R.E.**, Bommasani, R., Klyman, K., Sahar, M., ..., Narayanan, A., & Liang, P. The Future of Third-Party AI Evaluations.

---

#### POLICY IMPACT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Appel, R. E.** (2024). EU DSA Election Guidelines Input.
- Appel, R. E.** (2023). It's not just about facts: Democrats and Republicans have sharply different attitudes about removing misinformation from social media. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/its-not-just-about-facts-democrats-and-republicans-have-sharply-different-attitudes-about-removing-misinformation-from-social-media-216809>
- Schaake, M., **Appel, R. E.**, Duplichen, D. M., Einstein, L., Elhai, W., Dhafer Muhammad Faishal, M., ... Zhao, J. (2020). *Input on the European Commission White Paper "On Artificial Intelligence – A European approach to excellence and trust."* Retrieved from [https://hai.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/2020-07/HAI\\_WhitePaper\\_v4B.pdf](https://hai.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/2020-07/HAI_WhitePaper_v4B.pdf)
- Matz, S. C., **Appel, R. E.**, & Kosinski, M. (2019). Rethinking privacy in the age of psychological targeting. Retrieved from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2019/11/21/rethinking-privacy-in-the-age-of-psychological-targeting/>

---

#### INVITED TALKS

- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. (2024, September). *How deceptive online networks reached millions in the US 2020 elections*. Cornell Tech, New York, US.
- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. *Reach of deceptive online networks is limited but highly concentrated* (2024, May). Hertie School, Berlin, Germany.
- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. *Reach of deceptive online networks is limited but highly concentrated* (2024, March). Graphika, virtual.
- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. *Reach of deceptive online networks is limited but highly concentrated* (2024, January). Atlantic Council DFRLab, virtual.
- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. *Reach of deceptive online networks is limited but highly concentrated* (2024, January). Google Jigsaw, virtual.
- Appel, R. E.** (2023, November). *Countering misinformation on social media*. NABE TEC, Santa Clara, US.
- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, November). *Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts*. Stanford Data Science Democracy Day, Stanford, US.
- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, October). *Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts*. Content Moderation and Free Speech on Social Media Workshop, Munich, Germany.
- Appel, R. E.** (2021, December). *Ethics and Privacy in the Age of Psychological Targeting*. Promoting Research in Social Media and Health Symposium, San Francisco, US.

---

#### CONFERENCE TALKS

- Appel, R. E.**, Kim, Y. M., Pan, J., Xu, Y., ..., Kiewiet de Jonge, C., Franco, A., Mason, W., Stroud, N. J. & Tucker, J. A. (2024, September). *How deceptive online networks reached millions in the US 2020 elections*. Trust and Safety Research Conference, Stanford, US.
- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2024, February). *Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts*. SPSP Annual Convention, San Diego, US.
- Appel, R. E.**, Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, September). *Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts*. Trust and Safety Research Conference, Stanford, US.

- Appel, R. E.,** Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, July). *Partisan conflict over content moderation is more than disagreement about facts*. IC2S2 Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Appel, R. E.,** Basol, M., Rayburn-Reeves, R., Corbin, J., van der Linden, S., & Roozenbeek, J. (2022, May). *Bad Vaxx Online Game Intervention Increases Discernment and Reduces Willingness to Share Vaccine Misinformation*. ICA Annual Conference, Paris, France.
- Appel, R. E.** (2021, February). *Mental Health in Context: Individual Differences, Activities, and Locations as Predictors of Momentary Stress, Anxiety, and Loneliness*. SPSP Annual Convention, online.
- Appel, R. E.** (2019, August). *Privacy in the Age of Psychological Targeting*. SPSP Summer Psychology Forum, St. Louis, US.
- Appel, R. E.,** Kovel-Lazzarini, M. J., Hamon, L. M., Bitton, C. M., & Young, Z. M. (2018, February). *Community Against Sexual Harassment: A Mobile App Solution to Counter Sexual Harassment*. Global Public Policy Network (GPPN) Conference, New York, US.

#### INVITED POSTERS

---

- Appel, R. E.,** Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, March). *How Partisanship Influences Perceptions of Censorship*. D3 Conference on Inequality in the Digital Age at Harvard Business School, Cambridge, US.

#### CONFERENCE POSTERS

---

- Appel, R. E.,** Pan, J., & Roberts, M. E. (2023, February). *How Partisanship Influences Perceptions of Censorship*. SPSP Annual Convention, Atlanta, US.
- Appel, R. E.,** Basol, M., Rayburn-Reeves, R., Corbin, J., van der Linden, S., & Roozenbeek, J. (2022, February). *Bad Vaxx Online Game Intervention Increases Discernment and Reduces Willingness to Share Vaccine Misinformation*. Psychology of Media and Technology Preconference at the SPSP Annual Convention, San Francisco, US.
- Appel, R. E.** (2020, February). *Privacy in the Age of Psychological Targeting*. SPSP Annual Convention, New Orleans, US.

#### SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

---

<b>09/2024 – present</b>	Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellowship
<b>09/2024 – 09/2025</b>	Stanford High Impact Technology Fund Award (\$38,000)
<b>04/2024 – 04/2025</b>	Stanford TomKat Center Innovation Transfer Grant (\$30,000)
<b>12/2023 – 12/2024</b>	Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society Grant (\$2,000)
<b>01/2024 – 06/2024</b>	Stanford Emergence Accelerator Program for Impact Entrepreneurs
<b>09/2019 – 06/2024</b>	SAP Stanford Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering (\$52,920 p.a.)
<b>09/2022 – 07/2023</b>	Siegel Family Endowment Research Fellow
<b>09/2022 – 06/2023</b>	Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society PhD Research Fellow (\$79,650)
<b>06/2022 – 09/2022</b>	Stanford Impact Labs Summer Collaborative Research Fellow (\$4,000)
<b>02/2020 – 01/2021</b>	Stanford Center for American Democracy Fellow (\$2,000)
<b>01/2014 – 06/2019</b>	Student Fellow of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation (€27,665)
<b>09/2016 – 12/2016</b>	German-American Internship Program Grant (€3,000)
<b>10/2013 – 08/2016</b>	Student Fellow of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (€24,185)
<b>09/2015 – 04/2016</b>	Ontario/Baden-Württemberg Student Exchange Tuition Grant (C\$30,530)

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

<b>08/2024 – present</b> Stanford, US	<b>Stanford University</b> Postdoctoral Scholar & Stanford Impact Labs Postdoctoral Fellow
<b>09/2019 – 06/2024</b> Stanford, US	<b>Stanford University</b> SAP Graduate Fellow in Science and Engineering & PACS PhD Fellow

<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 behavioral science experiments to improve health behaviors such as vaccine uptake</li> <li>Led a workshop on using big data for psychological research</li> </ul>
<b>06/2018 – 08/2018</b> New York, US	<b>Visiting Researcher</b> Columbia University, Columbia Business School; Advisor: Sandra Matz
<b>04/2017 – 06/2017</b> Bonn, Germany	<b>Telekom Deutschland GmbH</b> Strategy Department Intern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiated and presented to senior management research on market potential in edtech</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>
<b>06/2015 – 08/2015</b> Rabat, Morocco	<b>Konrad Adenauer Foundation</b> Policy Research Intern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researched subsidies in Morocco, drafted and edited publications</li> </ul>
<b>06/2014 – 06/2015</b> Mannheim, Germany	<b>Centre for European Economic Research</b> Executive Department Research Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created and maintained an international research cooperation database</li> <li>Drafted, edited and translated reports</li> </ul>

---

#### SELECTED ACTIVITIES AND VOLUNTEER WORK

<b>07/2020 – 06/2024</b> Stanford, US	<b>Communication for Diversity</b> Group Member <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advised PhD applicants from underrepresented groups</li> <li>Organized information events about Stanford’s Communication PhD program</li> </ul>
<b>05/2020 – 06/2024</b> Stanford, US	<b>Stanford German Student Association</b> 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>
<b>09/2023 – 06/2024</b> <b>01/2020 – 05/2021</b> Stanford, US	<b>Wonks and Techies at Stanford University</b> Group Member <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-authored a white paper with suggestions for the EU AI strategy</li> <li>Participated in discussions and a talk series on ethics, technology and policy</li> </ul>
<b>10/2019 – 09/2022</b> Stanford, US	<b>Stanford Network of Wellbeing at Stanford University</b> Steering Committee Member <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a network of mental health stakeholders at Stanford and beyond</li> <li>Promoted student and community wellbeing by organizing large-scale events</li> </ul>

---

#### SKILLS

<b>Language Skills</b>	German (native), English (fluent), French (advanced), Spanish (basic)
<b>Computer Skills</b>	R, Python, C++, and SQL, GitHub, Markdown, LaTeX, and Mendeley

---

#### PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

<b>Reviewer</b>	Nature Communications, PNAS Nexus, Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties, British Journal of Political Science, ACM Designing Interactive Systems (DIS)
-----------------	---

---

#### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)