

Dr. Teresa Völker

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Profile

I am a political scientist working at the intersection of comparative politics, political sociology and political communication. Most of my work focuses on democracy, political conflict, far-right politics, protest, extremism, and public debates. Methodologically, I combine quantitative and qualitative approaches, including text-as-data, network analysis, survey experiments, and interviews.

Current position

2024-current POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW, WZB Berlin Social Science Center

Education

- 2020-2024 PHD in Political Sociology, Freie Universität Berlin
Dissertation: *Mainstreaming the Far Right: How Far-Right Actors and Ideas Shape Public Debates*, summa cum laude (highest distinction)
Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Swen Hutter, Prof. Dr. Caterina Froio
Committee: Prof. Dr. Thorsten Faas, Prof. Dr. Barbara Pfetsch, Prof. Dr. Mirjam Dageförde
- 2016-2019 MASTER OF ARTS in Social Sciences, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Thesis: *Deliberative Democracy in the Age of Social Media: Political Discourses on Facebook during Election Campaigns* (highest distinction)
- 2018 VISITING STUDENT in European Studies, King's College London
- 2012-2016 BACHELOR OF ARTS in Political Science, Communication and Sociology, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Thesis: *Konvergenz der nationalen Politikstile innerhalb der EU? Eine Analyse der Umsetzung der EU Richtlinie zur Energieeffizienz*
- 2014-2015 VISITING STUDENT in Political Science, Università degli Studi di Milano

Academic positions

- 04-07/2025 VISITING RESEARCHER at Science Po Paris
Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics (CEE)
- 2024-current POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW at WZB Berlin Social Science Center,
Dynamics of Political Systems, Center for Civil Society Research, Head: Prof. Dr. Swen Hutter
- Further development and internationalisation of the research programme of the Center for Civil Society Research
 - Data collection and analysis including training and supervision of research assistants
 - Scientific manager of the Civil Society Advisory Board, a transdisciplinary cooperation between civil society organisations and the Center for Civil Society Research
- 2022-current GUEST LECTURER at Freie Universität
Department of Political and Social Sciences
- 2020-2024 DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW: Project 'Political Protest and Radicalization in Germany (MOTRA)', at WZB Berlin Social Science Center, PI: Prof. Dr. Edgar Grande, Prof. Dr. Swen Hutter
- 04-06/2022 VISITING RESEARCHER at the University of Oslo
Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX)
- 2019-2020 RESEARCH FELLOW at Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society, Berlin
- 2018-2019 RESEARCH ASSISTANT at Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society, Berlin,
PI: Dr. Benedikt Fecher
- 2016-2017 TEACHING ASSISTANT at Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Prof. Dr. Andrea Römmele
- 2016 RESEARCH ASSISTANT at Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, PI: Prof. Dr. Hartwig Hummel, Prof. Dr. Eva Heidbreder

Publications

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- [3] Völker, Teresa and Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti, (2024). 'Discourse Networks of the Far Right: How Far-Right Actors become Mainstream in Public Debates'. *Political Communication*.
doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2024.2308601
- [2] Völker, Teresa (2023), 'How terrorist attacks distort public debates: a comparative study of right-wing and Islamist extremism', *Journal of European Public Policy*.
doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2023.2269194
- [1] Völker, Teresa (2019), 'Deliberative Democracy in the Age of Social Media', *Revista Publicum* 5(2).
doi.org/10.12957/publicum.2019.47202

WORKING PAPERS

- [5] Völker, Teresa, 'Lone Wolves or Collective Threats? The Effect of Right-Wing and Islamist Violence on Public Perception' (*under review*)

- [4] Völker, Teresa, 'Far-Right Agenda Setting: How the Far Right influences the Political Mainstream' (with Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti), (*under review*)
- [3] Völker, Teresa, 'Distortion or Reality? How the Public perceives Extremism and Violence' (with Eylem Kanol), (*full draft*)
- [2] Völker, Teresa, Mainstream Responses to the Far Right: Media Strategies and Institutional Constraints (*full draft*)
- [1] Völker, Teresa, 'Counter-Strategies Against the Far Right. A Systematic Review' (with Swen Hutter, Christin Jänicke, Jonas Gunzelamm (*full draft*))

BOOK MANUSCRIPT

- [1] Völker, Teresa, 'Mainstreaming the Far Right: How Far-Right Actors and Ideas Shape Public Debates'

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- [8] Völker, Teresa (2024), 'Extrem normal. Die zunehmende Sichtbarkeit der äußersten Rechten' [WZB Mitteilungen \(183\)](#).
- [7] Völker, Teresa (2023), 'The Drivers of Far-Right Mainstreaming in Public Debates', [OxPol - The Oxford University Politics Blog, 13.12.2024](#).
- [6] Völker, Teresa (2023), 'Politischer Protest und Radikalisierung. MOTRA-Monitor 2022', (with Swen Hutter, Eylem Kanol, Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti, Lennart Schürmann, Ruud Koopmans) [MOTRA-Monitor 2022](#).
- [5] Völker, Teresa (2023), 'Effect of Ideology on Threat Perception and Support for Counter-Terrorism: Experimental Evidence from Germany', [OSF Pre-Registration](#).
- [4] Völker, Teresa (2022), 'Politischer Protest und Radikalisierung. MOTRA-Monitor 2021', (with Edgar Grande, Swen Hutter, Ruud Koopmans, Sophia Hunger, Eylem Kanol, Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti), [MOTRA-Monitor 2021](#).
- [3] Völker, Teresa (2022), 'Terror und Öffentlichkeit. Auf rechtsextreme und islamistische Anschläge wird unterschiedlich reagiert' [WZB Mitteilungen \(176\)](#).
- [2] Völker, Teresa (2021), 'Politischer Protest und Radikalisierung', (with Edgar Grande, Swen Hutter, Ruud Koopmans, Sophia Hunger, Eylem Kanol, Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti), [MOTRA-Monitor 2020](#).
- [1] Völker, Teresa (2021), 'Der Verlust der Vielfalt. Die Corona-Proteste in Deutschland werden durch eine radikale Minderheit geprägt'. [WZB Mitteilungen](#)', (with Sophia Hunger, Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti) [WZB Mitteilungen \(172\)](#).

SOFTWARE AND DATASETS

- [2] Völker, Teresa (2023), '[Terrorism Debate Data \(TDD\)](#)', (*Harvard Dataverse*)
- [1] Völker, Teresa (2021), 'PolDem Coding Tool, Version 1' (with Sophia Hunger, Swen Hutter, Jan Dix, Johannes Müller), annotation tool for text analysis (*Gitlab*)

Awards & competitive grants

- 2024 GRANT *WZB wirkt* funding for the project "Wirksam gegen Rechtsaußen" a research project on civil society organisations and far-right threats, €10,000 (together with Hans Jonas Gunzelmann, Christin Jänicke)
- 2024 WZB NOMINEE for the Leibniz Dissertation Award 2024
- 2022 [Friends of the WZB Award](#) for excellent research of general societal relevance, for the publication 'Terror und Öffentlichkeit. Auf rechtsextreme und islamistische Anschläge wird unterschiedlich reagiert' in *WZB Mitteilungen*, €1,000
- 2018 ERASMUS SCHOLARSHIP for research stay at King's College London, €2500
- 2014-2015 ERASMUS SCHOLARSHIP for research stay at Università degli Studi di Milano, €1400

Teaching

- 2024 INSTRUCTOR, MASTER COLLOQUIUM Department of Political and Social Sciences Freie Universität Berlin, (2 hrs, weekly, one semester, co-taught)
- 2024 INSTRUCTOR, GUEST LECTURE at Social Data Laboratory (Soda Lab), 'Text-as-Data meets Network Analysis', Social Data Science and Computational Social Science, Universität Bremen (2 hrs)
- 2024 INSTRUCTOR, GUEST LECTURE, BACHELOR SEMINAR 'Introduction to Political Communication' at Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), (2 hrs)
- 2024 INSTRUCTOR, GUEST LECTURE, 'Demokratie in Krisenzeiten', Lecture Series 'Demokratie stärken', Technische Universität Berlin (2 hours)
- 2024 INSTRUCTOR, GUEST LECTURE in public schools as part of the WZB school project [denk!mal: Freiheitsbilder junger Menschen](#), (8 hrs)
- 2022-2023 INSTRUCTOR, MASTER RESEARCH SEMINAR 'Dynamics of Protest Politics', Freie Universität Berlin, (4 hrs, weekly, one semester, co-taught)
- 2023 INSTRUCTOR, GUEST LECTURE, BACHELOR SEMINAR 'Die Demokratie und ihre aktuellen Herausforderungen', LMU München, Politische Institutionen in Deutschland (4 hrs)
- 2022 CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING: Teaching in higher education qualification, WZB Berlin
- 2016-2017 TEACHING ASSISTANT, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Prof. Dr. Andrea Römmele

Conferences & workshop presentations

- 2024 HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM, FREIE UNIVERSITÄT, workshop *Political Parties in Contemporary Democracy: Israeli and German Perspectives*, Berlin, paper presenter
- WZB, workshop *Contentious Politics within Civil Society*, Berlin, paper presenter
- DVPW Annual Conference, German Political Science Association, Göttingen, paper presenter
- CES Annual Conference, Lyon, paper presenter & panel chair

- SWANSEA UNIVERSITY Workshop *Responding to the demand? Voters' grievances, PRR success, and mainstream party strategies*, Swansea, paper presenter
- UNIVERSITÄT DUISBURG-ESSEN Conference *Radikaler Islam – Radikaler Anti-Islam (RIRA)*, paper presenter
- ZIF UNIVERSITÄT BIELEFELD, Conference *Dimensions of right-wing extremism in Europe*, paper presenter
- 2023 CENTRE FOR INTEGRATION AND MIGRATION RESEARCH (DEZIM), Conference *In Search of the Radicalized Mainstream*, Berlin, paper presenter
- ECPR General Conference, Prague, paper presenter
- WEIZENBAUM INSTITUTE FOR THE NETWORKED SOCIETY, Workshop *Theorizing Publics and the Far-Right*, Berlin, paper presenter
- EPSA Annual Conference, Glasgow, paper presenter & panel discussant
- MOTRA-K conference *Multiple Crisis*, Wiesbaden, paper presenter & panel discussant
- HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN Workshop *Far Right Research in Berlin*, paper presenter
- 2022 UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN, DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT, Seminar Series *Digital Social Science Core Facility (DIGSSCORE)*, Bergen, paper presenter
- MOTRA-K conference *Radicalisation in times of Corona*, Wiesbaden, paper presenter & chair
- ECPR General Conference, Innsbruck, paper presenter & panel chair
- ECPR Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy, summer school, Paris, paper presenter
- EPSA Annual Conference, Prague, paper presenter
- INSTITUT FÜR PROTEST- UND BEWEGUNGSFORSCHUNG (IPB) Seminar *Politik von Unten Kolloquium*, Berlin, paper presenter
- HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN, Political Behavior Workshop, paper presenter
- UNIVERSITY OF OSLO, C-REX - Seminar, Oslo, paper presenter
- INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH *Lunch Seminar*, Oslo, paper presenter
- 2021 AALBORG UNIVERSITY / SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE Workshop *Methodological Challenges and Opportunities of Researching Radical Right Communication*, paper presenter
- WZB BERLIN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER Workshop *The Rise of Grassroots Radicalism and its Political Effects*, Berlin, paper presenter
- WZB BERLIN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER Workshop *Contentious Interactions: Frontiers in Protest Research*, Berlin, panel chair
- HERTIE SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE, *Political Behavior Workshop*, paper presenter
- ECPR General Conference, paper presenter, online
- DVPW Annual Conference, German Political Science Association, paper presenter, online
- 2019 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, Conference *Future Visions for a Democratic Internet*, Dublin, paper presenter

Invited talks

- 2024 LECTURE 'Mainstreaming the Far Right: How Far-Right Actors and Ideas Shape Public Debates', Université libre de Bruxelles, Centre d'Etude de la Vie Politique Seminar Series *Parties, elections, representation*, Brussels
- LECTURE 'Media Debates and Terrorist Attacks', Lecture Series [European Journalism Fellowship](#), Freie Universität Berlin
- ROUNDTABLE 'Wie schaffen wir stärkere und nachhaltigere Bündnisse gegen Rassismus und Demokratiefindlichkeit?', [CLAIM Allianz gegen Islam- und Muslimfeindlichkeit](#) Annual Congress, Berlin
- LECTURE 'Rechtsaußen als Gefahr für die Demokratie', Lecture Series *SJB Wissensdurstlöcher*, Servicestelle Jugendbeteiligung, Berlin
- ROUNDTABLE 'Strategien gegen Rechtspopulismus und -extremismus: Lehren aus den Zivilgesellschaften Europas', POLIS180 Thinktank Berlin
- ROUNDTABLE 'Verfassungsschutzrelevante Delegitimierung des Staates', Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, Conference: *Rechtsextremismus anno 2024*, Düsseldorf
- 2023 LECTURE 'Die Grenze des Sagbaren', lecture series *Hören-Sehen-Handeln* of the programme 'Demokratie Leben!', Soziokulturelles Zentrum, Bochum
- 2022 ROUNDTABLE 'Social Cohesion', Humboldt Residency-Programm Workshop | Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, WZB, Berlin
- LECTURE 'Narrative der Radikalisierung', programme *Demokratie im Netz*, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung & Das NETTZ, online
- 2021 ROUNDTABLE 'European Citizenship and the Future of Democracy', DECiDe, Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society, Berlin

Transfer

- Since 2024 Co-PI of the transfer research project [Effective against the far right. Evidence-based strategies for dealing with the far right](#)
- Since 2023 Scientific manager of the [WZB Civil Society Advisory Board](#) of the Center for Civil Society Research to facilitate regular exchange between civil society actors and researchers
- Since 2018 Editor of the Blog '[Elephant in the Lab](#)': bold ideas and critical thoughts on science, e.g., Open Science, Ethics and Impact
- 2024 Participant of the science transfer project by the Leibniz-Gemeinschaft [Leibniz im Bundestag](#): knowledge exchange with members of parliament
- 2024 Participant of the WZB science transfer event [Wissenschaft trifft Politik](#): , scientific policy advice

Media & public outreach

- Since 2022 Interviews and expert opinions for: *CBC/Radio-Canada, ZDF, Deutschlandfunk, WDR, NDR, SR, dpa Deutsch Presse-Agentur, Frankfurter Rundschau, Stuttgarter Zeitung, Blick, nd, Katapult Magazin, Krautreporter, Sport1*
- Examples ZDF Documentary [Am Puls mit Dunja Hayali - Wütend, laut, radikal - die neue Protestkultur?](#)
Leibniz Magazin »Der Erfolg der AfD ist eine selbsterfüllende Prophezeiung«
Podcast, *Politischer Pausenpodcast* [Extreme Rechte und Terror: Zwei sich verstärkende Phänomene?](#)

Additional training

- 2024 WZB WORKSHOP: Project management
- 2024 SCICOMM-SUPPORT WORKSHOP: Science communication and hate speech
- 2023 Media training for social scientists, WZB Berlin
- 2022 ECPR SUMMER SCHOOL, Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy, concepts and methods for research on far-right politics, Paris
- 2021 GESIS Seminar in Computational Social Sciences, Social network analysis
- 2021 FREIE UNIVERSITÄT Seminar, Quantitative survey analysis
- 2021 WZB WORKSHOP: R Markdown
- 2020 ECPR METHODS SCHOOL: Quantitative text analysis, CEU Budapest, online

Language & software skills

- Languages German (native), English (fluent), French (advanced), Italian (basic)
- Software R, L^AT_EX, Markdown, MS-Office, Zotero, CMS

Professional membership & services

- Memberships European Political Science Association (EPSA), European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), Council for European Studies (CES), Deutsche Vereinigung für Politische Wissenschaft (DVPW)
- Reviewer European Journal for Political Research, Journal of Politics, Party Politics, Perspectives on Politics, Mobilization, Social Movement Studies
- 2021-2023 Academic council representative for research unit, WZB
- 2020-2021 PhD representative at WZB
- 2020-2023 Member of the Leibniz PhD network