



Alumnus Martin Bruder



Artwork by
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Head of Department „Civil Society-Level Development Cooperation“,
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Martin Bruder



“There are exciting opportunities to combine academic rigour and political impact.”

For Martin Bruder, everything pointed towards a career in academic psychology. But he took different turns in his path and has been working for the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), a non-university research institute, since 2015. He is head of the Department of Civil Society-Level Development Cooperation. At DEval, “academic rigour is important, but it’s not all about publications; our true ‘currency’ is political impact!”

The institute provides strategic evaluations of German development cooperation projects. One evaluation he deals with is about disability-inclusion in development cooperation. In another project, Martin Bruder and his team are examining how volunteering works: “Imagine young people who trade their home countries for social projects in countries of the Global South. Does that change the way they look at themselves and others? Does it change their attitude? And does it have an effect on their social environment in Germany? From a scientific point of view, these are challenging questions worth a whole literature of research. Based on what we know from research and extensive own data collection, we create learning opportunities on how to further develop the programme.” His expertise is in planning and managing evaluations using different methods. Work is done in small research teams and Martin Bruder, who studied psychology, says his experiences with interdisciplinary research at the Zukunftskolleg are very significant for his job: “I work with geographers, economists and social scientists. We all have different ways of thinking, and real acceptance of a person’s specialty is crucial – and not as trivial as it sounds.”

After finishing school, Martin Bruder spent some time in Israel. He volunteered at a Peace Village and was

deeply fascinated by its social and psychological structures. This experience inspired him to study psychology. After earning his bachelor’s degree in Freiburg, he went to Cambridge for his master’s, where he greatly enjoyed the international and open environment. He decided to do his PhD work there and even stayed on in the UK as a postdoctoral researcher. „But eventually, things changed and I became more critical about academic social psychology and had ambivalent feelings towards the career path in science.” Specifically, Martin Bruder did not like the trend in social psychology towards sensationalising findings that had little real-world relevance – and in some prominent cases were based on data fraud or biased analyses.

So he left university and started working at the German Council of Science and Humanities (“Wissenschaftsrat”), an organisation that advises the German government, with a focus on higher education and research. One thing he learned during his time as a scientific project manager was “that there are many brilliant, motivated and fascinating people working outside academia!” But after some time, he felt uneasy with the fact that his specific subject knowledge in psychology was not directly relevant to his work. “I didn’t feel like I had reached my final destination as far as the combination between scientific rigour, psychological knowledge, and political relevance was concerned.” He acquired a deeper understanding of structures in science by working for the German government, but he still had some ideas he wanted to explore.

To do so, he applied to the Zukunftskolleg and was a Fellow from 2010 to 2013. Martin Bruder admits that he had to adjust to being in academia in Germany. The academic career is more structured and predictable in the UK. “But that didn’t stop me! I took every-

thing, all support the Zukunftskolleg offered, and dove right in!” He started with a project in which he examined how others can influence one’s own emotions and how this in turn influences the tendency to be just and fair (or not). Then he started an intense collaboration with Zukunftskolleg Fellow and philosopher Attila Tanyi on moral intuition. They published several articles together. “It was a very abstract philosophical theme, but extremely exciting to see that there is a place for empirical work in moral philosophy.” He says that there are some limitations to the interdisciplinary aspect of the Zukunftskolleg; some fields simply do not overlap enough, but for him it was a very fruitful time. After concluding his projects at the Zukunftskolleg, Martin Bruder now thinks that it is important to “keep in mind what you can contribute to a project and see whether it’s merely a temporary collaboration or a totally new direction in your career.”

His career continued outside university. After his time in Konstanz and before he became part of the DEval team, Martin Bruder worked for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), where he was head of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Research unit. Together with Giovanni Galizia, the Director of the Zukunftskolleg, he participated in a book project about recruiting and integrating international faculty at German universities. The focus of *their chapter* was on Konstanz, which offers unique support for young researchers to find their own way!

Curriculum Vitae

Education

- 2007** PhD, Department of Social and Developmental Psychology, University of Cambridge, UK
“How do you feel about it? The social appraisal of others’ emotional behaviour.”
- 2003 – 2007** PhD student under the supervision of Prof. Antony Manstead, University of Cambridge, UK
- 2004 – 2005** Postgraduate Diploma, Social Science Research Methods, Cardiff University, UK

- 2003** Master’s thesis, Department of Social and Developmental Psychology, University of Cambridge, UK
“Looking through someone else’s eyes: The role of others in emotional reactions to environmental catastrophes.”
- 2002 – 2003** M.Phil. in Social and Developmental Psychology, University of Cambridge, UK
- 1999 – 2002** Psychology studies, University of Freiburg

Career

- Since 2015** Head of Department, „Civil Society-Level Development Cooperation“, German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), Bonn
- 2013 – 2015** Head of Section, “Monitoring, Evaluation, Research“, *German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)* ², Bonn
- 2010 – 2013** Junior Research Group Leader, Department of Psychology, University of Konstanz

- 2008 – 2010** Scientific Project Manager, Evaluation Department, German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat), Köln
- 2007 – 2008** Postdoctoral Researcher, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, UK
- 2007** Research Associate, School of Psychology, University of Southampton, UK
- 2004 – 2005** Research Associate, Department of Psychology, University of Freiburg

Distinctions, Awards and Honorary Posts

- 2010 – 2013** Fellow of the Zukunftskolleg, University of Konstanz
- 2007 – 2008** Postdoctoral Fellowship, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), UK
- 2005 – 2006** Doctoral Scholarship, Evangelisches Studienwerk Villigst