

NETWORK OF EXCELLENCE FOR RESEARCH
IN VIOLENT ONLINE POLITICAL EXTREMISM

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**Researching Violent
Extremism, Terrorism,
and the Internet:
Ethics Issues**



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1. Codes/Guidelines
2. Formal Procedures
3. Data Collection and Processing
4. Publication
5. Researcher Wellbeing





Existing Literature:

- Violent Extremism and Terrorism Research, incl CTS
- Internet Research Ethics/e-Research Ethics





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Any good examples spring to mind?



1. Relevant Codes



- AoIR
- British Psychological Association
- Norwegian Research Council



2. Formal Procedures



- Negotiating/educating(?)
Ethics Review Boards
- Ethical vs. legal considerations
 - UK Terrorism Acts vs. US First Amendment
 - Terms of Service (e.g. deleted tweets)



3. Data Collection & Processing



- Informed Consent – often not practicable or privacy-preserving
- Anonymisation (de-identification?)
- Sharing data – We need more of this
- Securing data



4. Publication



Simple Public vs. Private dichotomy?

- Identification of public figures?
- Identification of users who are already 'outed' in media?
- Identification of users who are clearly seeking validation of their political views, notoriety, or otherwise court publicity?
- What of minors? How do/can we determine real age?
- What of identifying someone as an extremist or terrorist?
- But then what about right to have your views associated with you?



5. Researcher Wellbeing

- Duplicity (fake profiles, gender switching)
- Publication invites blowback, esp. work on extreme right
- Student-specific concerns (e.g. UK Prevent strategy, Rizwaan Sabir)
- Mental and emotional toll

When to Report?



- If a posting has info on three out of four of following, then report it:
 1. Target
 2. Method
 3. Timing
 4. Place



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We're going to add an Ethics Resources page (or pages) to the VOX-Pol website; let me know if you think of any useful resources



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