Plan Overview

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Title: Fascist and far right street formations in Britain 1980-2020 and anti-fascist resistance

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Project abstract:

This project explores parallels, patterns and divergences in extreme right street mobilisations from 1980 - 2020. It also looks at resistance to the extreme right at street level from anti-fascists. It will examine change over time in extreme right groups and patterns of opposition. Organisations such as trade unions working with anti-fascists will be examined, as will splinter groups within the extreme right. The study will use primary source documents that are in the public domain, either through publicly accessible collections such as the Searchlight Archive or because they are open-access webpages. It will also employ some interview data taken from prominent anti-fascists.

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Copyright information:

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Fascist and far right street formations in Britain 1980-2020 and anti-fascist resistance

Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

This project relies on two broad categories of data: material published by extreme right groups and oral history interviews with anti-fascists.

With regard to material published by extreme right groups, here I will be collating data that is already in the public domain. This will primarily involve archival material from the Searchlight Archive at UON and other related archives (e.g. the Wiener Library and the British Library) and will focus on items such as magazines and leaflets generated by extreme right street groups. I will also take data related to the extreme right from their publicly accessible webpages. I expect to find a high volume of material from this process.

Secondly, I will also be interviewing selected anti-fascists who are known in the public domain as active anti-fascists. Taking part in the interviews will be voluntary. I aim to interview up to eight anti-fascists. The aim is to help focus on some of the emotional dynamics of anti fascist activism. This will range from full time employees of anti fascist organisations to those drawn into such actions for a host of reasons. The interviews will last for around an hour, with a break within if participants wish (I will ask participants if they wish for a coffee/tea break). These will allow for deeper qualitative assessments of anti-fascist activism.

Interviewees are chosen should they agree, as several have a wide knowledge in the area studied. Some will have particular knowledge to impart around the later area focused on, from 2009. This is discussed in Gateway, for instance, Weyman Bennett, who I once worked for. All of course will only be interviewed if they are comfortable with the project and their role within it.

There are relatively few such interviews that are accessible, which is why I will need to develop a larger data set. These will be stored as audio files and transcribed as text files.

I will follow the UK Data Service recommendations of the following format for 'data use, sharing and preservation': https://ukdataservice.ac.uk/learning-hub/research-data-management/format-your-data/recommended-formats/

For textual data, I will use Rich Text Format (.rtf).

For Image data, I will use TIFF version 6 uncompressed (.tif).

For audio data, I will use Free Lossless Audio Codec (FLAC) (.flac).

How will the data be collected or created?

In terms of developing archival data, this will follow standard empirical historical approaches to data gathering. I will focus on groups I have identified as historically significant, then search for and explore source material related to street activism and use this to select and focus my data gathering. I expect to take a wide range of images from extreme right publications and other campaigning materials that these groups developed. I will organise data based on the groups that I identify, and order these datasets chronologically for simplicity of access. I will use high-resolution image files when recording data from archives, to ensure data is not lost.

I will structure my files on the basis of the chapters of my research, which will be chronological from 1980s to 2020. My file naming convention will record archives and box references, or data relating to publication details. I will also use a data dictionary method to order my data and will develop an Excel

spreadsheet model to highlight key data and its place in the research. Chapters of research will be itemised to denote the structure of the dictionary. I will utilise the dictionary to input data as I accrue key elements and the source references of the data.

In terms of gathering oral history interviews, I have contacts within the anti-fascist community, so I already know people to approach for an interview. Potentially, I will be able to develop more interviews based on some of their contacts. These interviews will be stored as whole interviews in audio format as well as text transcripts, and I may aim for eight interviews overall. I expect these interviews to be lengthy, semi-structured discussions, allowing for over an hour of reflection. These long-form discussions will allow participants to explain and express themselves fully and clearly. The research setting will be online, using Teams Transaction. Participants can be in a setting they feel best in, such as their home.

My research methodology will also seek to cross-reference claims in interviews with other data sources to ensure the accuracy of my analysis. I may interview up to 8 individuals for the research. This is to ensure a wide and varied set of experiences to inform the project. They will be of different ages, genders and backgrounds. My focus is on capturing emotional dynamics of anti fascism, as well as how some constructed alliances with anti fascist partners in areas like East London. Their thoughts on what they experienced, how they found themselves involved and what they took from it will be key to the research. These interviews will be used to supplement the analysis and allow for deeper exploration of the motivation and perceptions of anti-fascists. I will be following standard Oral History best practice approaches, as developed by the Oral History Society.

I do not expect to be modifying files once I have gathered my data. If any file modifications are necessary, I will ensure that any changes and updates made to files include the revised date, author and how and when any modifications to files are chronologically made. To ensure differentiation between versions of files, I will number the different versions of documents, for instance, document 1.0, document 1.02 and so on. I would use a version control scheme whereby details of which versions of the document exist, what, if any, changes are made by me and when are recorded. I would thus securely keep control of any changes to files and my documents.

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

With regards to my archival material, the datasets will be made be accessible to future researchers. I will record the archival referencing data (collection name, box number etc.) and link this to my file naming system, or where relevant, publication details in my file storage system. Metadata here will include descriptive metadata detailing the images, as well as technical metadata detailing the file information. This will allow ease of access to these details for my research, and also easy location of the source material for any future users of my archive image dataset. This material will be deposited in the Searchlight Archive at UON after I complete my project as a digital dataset.

Quotes from the interviews will be used as part of the PhD thesis. If recordings are deposited in the Searchlight Archive they may be used by researchers for their own purposes. Interviews an be listed anonymous if placed in the Searchlight Archive and as is made clear, the level of anonymity will be limited. Participants do not have to consent to the interview being made available in the Archive.

In terms of the oral history interviews, I will also deposit these in the Searchlight Archive collection once the project is complete, if the interviewee has given consent for such long-term archiving. If not, the interview data will be destroyed after my project. Metadata here will include descriptive metadata detailing the interview, as well as technical metadata detailing the file information. Recordings will be in an audio format only, any video will be removed.

Secondary users will be provided with a document describing the archived interview set and its

metadata. This will detail the name (unless the interviewee has requested anonymity) and the date of the interviews. This will allow the content will be understandable to those who seek to reuse the data once it is deposited in the Searchlight Archive. People seeking to locate my data in the future can correspond with the Searchlight Archivist at UON.

Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

In terms of archival data, I will use material already in the public domain, such as in archives or magazines published by extreme right groups. I will also use open-access websites developed by extreme right groups, but I will not be using social media sites. While this data is all 'open source' and in the public domain, I consider it sensitive data and will ensure it is stored on a password-protected SharePoint drive.

Data related to oral history interviews will be more complex in terms of research ethics processes, and I will be following standard Oral History approaches throughout. To mitigate any possible distress, interviewees will be sent their transcript before it is used in the research.

I understand that for interviewees, giving answers can be both positive and not so positive. What happens after interviews is I would aim for, beneficial to the interviewee's view of the interview. If the interviewee has any concerns at any time before, during or after the interview, I will address these. An interview may be draining for the interviewee and I will also be aware that listening to their own views may be challenging. I may interview up to eight people. This would be 2 per chapter to include anti fascist voices as the work progresses.

I will use a participation consent approach to deal with the issue of the anonymity of participants. This is typical of oral history approaches. In line with this, participants will remain anonymous. I will ensure that interviewees remain unidentifiable.

I will strongly recommend that interviewees not to disclose any disclosure of harm or illegal behaviour. My intention and focus is very much to see the reasoning behind interviewee's perceptions of the extreme right and how they felt driven to oppose them. I want to see what got them into anti fascist thinking and actions, for example, emotional and factual examples of what initially were behind their anti fascist direction. I will guarantee not to identify others who have not agreed to be part of the process and thus their anonymity.

If at any moment before or during the interview, the interviewee is distressed or appears so, I shall immediately stop the interview and attend to their needs. I would terminate any interview if the interviewee needed help regarding their emotional state for instance. I will talk this through with interviewees and discuss any issues they may wish to raise. I will only proceed with their satisfaction with the procedure. This will happen before the interview, and I will ensure each participant knows that the interviews are voluntary.

If at any stage this might be necessary, I'd direct people to the Samaritans and MIND, alongside mental healthcare professionals, of course, for interviewees mental health support.

I have developed an information sheet and a consent form, based on UON templates. These inform participants that the thesis will make reference to interview recordings. I will inform interviewees that any mention by name of friends, family or political opponents can be redacted at any time should the interviewee wish.

I recognise that anonymity can be crucial to not misrepresenting interviewee's views. I base guidance on the anonymization of participants from this guide. https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/data-sharing/anonymisation/how-do-we-ensure-anonymisation-is-effective/

I will ask people who have key information, background knowledge and much experience around this project. Thus, they will be great assets in my studies. Their thoughts, insights and informed views, will

be a focused way of guiding research, though I am aware of some challenges. I may ask one or two participants if they recommend others who may be of interest to the project about possible interviews. I understand though that there are issues of confidentiality and privacy, so would take advice from supervisors before approaching possible interviewees.

I would ensure that no possible interviewee who may be suffering stress or emotional distress would feel in any way they had to participate. I would ascertain this at the earliest stage as possible before any interviews. Any vulnerable person would be safeguarded and I have also read relevant literature on distress and care for any participants. I will prioritise interviewees' wellbeing throughout. If a participant thinks they may be unsure of continuing, I will stop the interview. At every stage of research, participants well being and health is of the utmost priority. I would intervene immediately at any sign of participant distress. I would seek medical assistance and of course inform supervisors.

I will consider who the person wishes to be anonymous from, for instance, family and/or the wider public. I will record via a voice recorder, which supervisors feel will be acceptable. This model looks adequate, Philips DVT1160 8GB Dictation Machine. Hence there should not be problems in data privacy and compliance as regards cameras or the identity of interviewees being noted through tattoos or an item of clothing.

I will inform interviewees that there are certain situations where we may be required by law to disclose information they provide. This could include cases where we are made aware of any criminal activity or harm to themselves or others. If such circumstances arise, I will need to inform the appropriate authorities. I want to assure participants that this would only occur if necessary and in compliance with the law. If an interviewee has any concerns or questions about this, i would ensure they feel free to ask before or during the interview. I would report this also to my supervisory team and ethics committee.

I would breach confidentiality if there is a safeguarding need to do so, such as a risk of harm to the interviewee or others. Legal duties may compel a researcher to do so. I will consult with my supervisors before any such course of action.

I would disguise a person's voice if requested by for example, using a 'voice over'. Were this situation a possibility, I would seek advice of supervisors and inform the Archivist should I implement this. The UK Data Service's advice on the issues of informed consent is relevant. For instance, directions on the voluntary centrality of participants and how data will be stored in the Archive.

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I will comply with Data Protection Law. I will keep updated with any changes to the law, like guidance or case law and any technological impacts. Supervisors would oversee my work, but I am responsible for effective anonymisation. I will collect personal data which is necessary only for my research.

Interviewees will be able to obtain a copy of their interview transcript, along with updates on the project if they wish. I take the duty of care to interviewees seriously, and any mental health issues they may disclose. I would act accordingly with respect to their health should such arise.

I will inform participants how data will be used, stored and shared. Only if I have the agreement from participants would I use and/or share data they may provide, to the Searchlight Archive. If the interviewee does not wish this, then I shall respect their wishes. I will NOT share data during the process above. Use of audio recording in an interview would be in a file stored in a password-protected SharePoint drive. I will tell interviewees that their permission letters and consent forms will be stored in a separate protected UON Research SharePoint.

Their consent and involvement will be able to be withdrawn at any time up to 30 days after the interview if they wish. Participants won't be given an option to redact elements but elements may be redacted by the researcher, such as personal data related to others.

I would ask the interviewee if they wish for any limits on availability or use of their interview. Participants would be told of their rights concerning copyright law and that the interviewee also retains copyright rights. I would ensure that interviewees have copies of the consent and participation information forms and that interviewees know what rights they have.

I have been on online ethical data courses, which are UON-approved and am aware of the complexities and concerns regarding this area. I would inform participants that, should any of their personal data be breached, I would swiftly report this to the Data Protection and Information Governance Team and to supervisors.

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

In terms of archival material from extreme right groups, copyright is likely to remain with the original authors, and unless I know otherwise, I will assume this to be the case. Nevertheless, I will be able to use small sections of this material in my research under the fair usage guidance offered by law, outlined here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright

In terms of oral histories, as with many oral history interviews, the interviewee will retain the copyright of their content. I will also ensure they are clear on how the interview will be stored after the interview is completed. In sum, it may or may not be anonymised according to their preference, and it may be archived in the Searchlight Archive collection after the completion of my project if they consent to this.

It is not considered best practice to develop a Creative Commons licence for oral history interviews.

Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

I will store and back up all my research data on UON SharePoint drive, following UON's IT guidance on backing up research data. I will not be using an external storage device to back up data. This will not require an additional cost.

Forms will be scanned and stored on my SharePoint Drive and paper copies destroyed. Transcripts will be generated and stored on SharePoint. All data, unless put in the Archive, will be deleted at the end of the project. Consent form and recordings will be given to the Archivist for processing.

After the project is complete, relevant data will be deposited in the Searchlight Archive, which has its own resources for storing digital data. This will also not require an additional cost, as the archive has its own resources for maintaining digital collections.

How will you manage access and security?

I will only use the UON SharePoint drive to ensure data is secure. My data will be password-protected, and I recognise that access to data is my responsibility.

I will transfer data from images in the archive from a digital camera directly to my SharePoint drive and destroy the files on the digital camera.

I will save Temas recordings directly to my SharePoint drive.

I do not have collaborators.

I will continue to follow UON IT advice, which is regularly communicated to researchers to ensure I maintain up-to-date approaches to managing access and security.

Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

A selection of my dataset will be kept for long-term use in the Searchlight Archive on an indefinite basis at the end of the project. This will include images I have developed through my archival research. I will present these to the archivist and follow their advice as to which datasets they are prepared to accept, and other data will therefore be destroyed. I will deposit only at the Searchlight Archive.

In terms of oral history interview data, for participants who have consented, audio files and transcripts of oral history interviews will also be deposited in the Searchlight Archive on an indefinite basis.

Future research uses for this data include the deeper study of the British extreme right cultures and antifascist responses.

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

As detailed above, data will be preserved in the Searchlight Archive. There is no cost for data to be put here. I will be able to provide the archivist with my metadata and electronic files, to allow easy transfer of the data, and I do not envisage this to require significant additional time.

Data Sharing

How will you share the data?

Data deposited in the Searchlight Archive after completion of my research project will be discoverable via the archive's online catalogue. Recordings when deposited in the Archive will be in audio only format, the video will be removed.

I will comply with the archive's standard depositor guidance and have discussed this with the archivist, who is happy to take this deposit. This storage will be SharePoint and SharePoint only.

This practice follows earlier research projects that have used material primarily from the Searchlight Archive collection, supplemented with oral history testimonies. These include the completed UON PhD project by Siobhan Hyland, 'Searchlight magazine's Anti-fascist campaign to uncover Second World War era war criminals living in Britain during the 1980s and 1990s.

The results of my work may be published were an opportunity to arise or feature in journals/works on the far right.

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

I do not require prolonged exclusive use of the data after it is deposited in the Archive. With regard to interview data, I do not foresee the need for a data-sharing agreement, as consent for depositing the interview in the archive will be established through the consent form.

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Responsibilities and Resources

Who will be responsible for data management?

During the PhD project, I am responsible for data management. No partners are involved in the research.
After the project's completion, data will be stored on an open-ended basis in the Searchlight Archive at UON and the archive will become responsible for managing the data.

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

Additional software is not required for my research, nor is expert training.