

# ETHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL DILEMMAS IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AMONG THE FAR RIGHT

*This essay belongs to the essay series ‘The Anthropologist’s Toolkit: Reflections on Ethnographic Methodology’. In this series, authors peer into the anthropologist’s toolkit to reflect on what ethnographic methodology constitutes in all its multimodal forms. In this essay, we ask how an ethically sustainable ethnography of the Far Right can be conducted, bearing in mind the risk of normalising both extreme ideologies and the points of view of participants. Abandoning ethnographic methodology in research among the Far Right is also an ethical choice with consequences. Based on our own fieldwork experiences and on previous studies, we reflect on the key ethical dilemmas we have encountered when studying the Far Right. Beyond specific issues arising when contacting and meeting research participants, the concepts used and the language in general also matter.*

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*Keywords:* Far Right, extremism, ethnography, ethics, fieldwork

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## INTRODUCTION: CASE TEITELBAUM

In November 2018, at a conference on violent extremism in Oslo, Benjamin Teitelbaum, an assistant professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Colorado, began his keynote lecture by presenting photos of some well-known Swedish Far-Right activists. Teitelbaum told the audience that, in the media, these people are often called Nazis, extremists, and dangerous people among other labels. After a brief pause, he stated, ‘I call these people my friends’. This arguably provocative statement seemingly surprised many listeners in the audience, including one of the authors of this paper.

However, Teitelbaum was, it appears, completely serious in his commitment regarding both his solidarity and friendship towards

research participants. He emphasised the ethical principles of ethnography, referring to the guidelines of the American Anthropological Association (2012), which state that the ‘obligations to research participants are usually primary’. Teitelbaum (2019) argued that friendship increases reciprocity in the ethnographic process, breaks down the hierarchical positions between scholars and research participants, and, through a closer relationship, the data also become richer in detail.

Publishing his arguments later in article format (Teitelbaum 2019) and in his book (2020), Teitelbaum’s position stirred heavy critique. For example, in his book review, Ronald Beiner (2021; cf. Bell 2019a) asked, ‘who in his or her right mind would want to befriend, advocate for, and collaborate with the racists and fascists who are the subjects

of Teitelbaum's research?' Part of the appraisal seems, on the one hand, to lie in the fact that Teitelbaum approached the Far Right as a group just like any other, 'normalizing' and not 'othering' it (cf. Pasiëka 2017). On the other hand, he understood Far-Right positions too well and lacked critical distance. Teitelbaum's approach, the perspective of collaborative ethnography, has been viewed as something that differs from the more normative, explicitly anti-racist stance and 'anti-racist research agenda' observed by most scholars (Askanius 2019: 880). Nevertheless, Pasiëka (2019: 3) has also stated that she considers 'it erroneous to imply that an anthropologist cannot develop a friendly relationship with some of the Far-Right activists she or he studies, despite disagreeing with them'. Activists are not reduced to their political views and may be likable in other respects.

Considering the ethical principles of ethnographic fieldwork, we discuss ethically sustainable ethnographic practices among communities associated with Far-Right ideas. As Benjamin Teitelbaum (2019) states, in general, the ethical principles of ethnographic research prioritise the protection of the participants' rights and well-being. Ethnographers shall not harm the studied communities in any way. The ethical principles also include public communication: the studied communities should only be commented on in a respectful and truthful way (TENK 2019). Defining what causes harm in a specific situation is, however, 'ongoing and must be sustained throughout the course of any project' (American Anthropological Association 2012).

In addition to protecting the rights of the community, the Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) includes a careful consideration of 'the potential consequences and inadvertent impacts' of the research. When in doubt, the Code suggests

abandoning the research project (American Anthropological Association 2012). However, we argue that, although conducting research among suspicious communities may lead to 'inadvertent impacts', such as the legitimization of radical ideologies, avoiding questionable research topics is also a decision with ethical consequences, which, for instance, narrows the scope of academic research to cover only likeable and non-controversial themes. We ask how both study participants' rights and the ambivalent ethical requirements of the academic community can be brought together.

In this article, we explore our own experiences in this field, which has been called notoriously difficult (cf. Blee 2007), reflecting the dilemma of empathy as well as other related issues, which also feature ethical and methodological considerations. The viewpoints presented in this research report are based on our previous fieldwork experiences and on examples drawn from those. We have conducted fieldwork over several years, including participant observation, among people who may be called representatives of the Far Right or extreme right. One of us has a background in political science, specialised in research on Finnish extremist groups (e.g. Kotonen 2019), and the other is a cultural anthropologist, focused on musical subcultures associated with Nationalist or Fascist ideas (see, e.g., Mustamo 2024). Both of us have also frequently commented on Far Right-related themes in the media.

Kotonen's (2025) research has specifically focused on Far-Right organisations and their evolution in Finland. For this purpose, he has interviewed members of different Far-Right organisations and conducted participant observation among them. In his most recent work, Kotonen (2025) studied the Blue-Black Movement (*Sinimusta Liike*) and its parliamentary election campaign in 2023.

The party, which is openly racist and has self-identified as fascist, has its roots in the Finns Party, from which many key party members were previously expelled. Among their election candidates, the Blue-Black Movement also consisted of several former members of the proscribed neo-Nazi organisation the Nordic Resistance Movement (Kotonen 2025).

Mustamo's (2024) research subject, the Black Metal community, is quite different in nature. Instead of being a group of activists with clear political goals, it consists of musicians and fans loosely united by a similar taste in music and ideological preferences. In general, Black Metal cannot be defined as a Far-Right culture, but there are clear themes, opinions, and identities associated with Far-Right ideologies (Mustamo 2024; see also Buesnel 2020; Olson 2013). Mustamo's most-recent fieldwork among the Far-Right edge of the Black Metal community was included in the multidisciplinary Fascination of Fascism project, which discovered the affective side of fascism within Finnish culture.

Some of the viewpoints described in this article may be relevant to ethnography in general, and some are more specific to the ethnography of the Far Right. As Ellinas (2021: 2) has, however, pointed out, despite similarities, 'Far-Right actors accumulate and accentuate some of the intrinsic challenges of the interview method'. Alongside insights drawn from our own fieldwork experiences and Teitelbaum's case, our reflections here rely on several previous studies, given that a growing body of literature also illuminates the challenges and pitfalls of Far-Right ethnography.

Notably, in addition to ethnographers, some historians in the field of fascism studies, such as Roger Griffin (2012), have also emphasised the need for a methodological empathy and understanding of the study subjects on their own

terms (cf. also Gardell 2021). However, studies that probe insiders' perspectives on Far-Right groups and movements are relatively scarce. In Finland, these very few studies, in most cases, were conducted already in the 1990s, predating the era of social media (see, e.g., Perho 2010; Pekonen 1999).

## WHY DO WE NEED ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE FAR RIGHT?

The Far Right has become an important political force throughout the world. The necessity of gathering primary data, including ethnographic studies among Far-Right members, has been acknowledged in several previous studies (Goodwin 2006; Blee 2007; Pasiëka 2019; cf. also Askanius 2019; Mattsson and Johansson 2021; Gattinara 2020). Considering that subcultures with their less straightforward politics are a key element of the Far-Right movement, understanding these standpoints is even more important.

Many academic studies of Far-Right subcultures are, however, still based on textual materials, such as written manifestos, song lyrics, or online communication. Social media analysis, in particular, has recently become a method of choice for Far-Right studies, since it can be used without any direct contact with research subjects (cf. Pasiëka 2019; Askanius 2019; Fuchs 2018). Encounters with real people render ethnographic studies different from historical or textual analysis. A historian or a media researcher can take a stand more freely based on their own political or ethical values without endangering their chances of entering the field.

Ethnographic research among Far-Right communities is needed for a nuanced understanding of the complex social and

ideological dynamics of those extreme groups. By studying only written sources, we miss the inner differences and contradictions of the communities. Thus, we will be unable to catch people's own viewpoints and their fascination with potentially dangerous ideologies.

As we have noted, such as in the case of fascist ideas within the Black Metal subculture, understanding an extremely ambiguous phenomenon requires endless discussions and affective music experiences. Apart from serious political consideration, there are a huge variety of motives behind participating in the subculture, varying from provocation to tributes to other products of popular culture. In addition, there seem to be significant differences between the scenes in different countries. In Finland, the scene is about to become ideologically polarised, although participating in Far-Right activism is mostly rejected (Mustamo 2024). In comparison, the Black Metal scene in the United States has been connected to various violent actions in recent years (see, e.g., Olson 2020). These kinds of differences could be detected by asking the people involved, not by simply reading lyrics.

Thus, to understand the meanings and dynamics within a community, inside knowledge is worth seeking out and cannot in all cases be wholly replaced with analyses of virtual communities or secondary data (on the lack of primary data in Far-Right studies, see Gattinara 2020; Goodwin 2006). Choosing to triangulate online data and observations with in-depth interviews, doing virtual ethnography whereby one part of the field is online, may of course offer one avenue for research and has produced interesting data as well (see Forberg 2022; on virtual ethnography, see Hänninen and Turtiainen 2022).

## FIELDWORKING IN THE CROSSFIRE OF EXPECTATIONS

As common problems in the ethnography of the Far Right, Blee (2007) has noted access as especially problematic, as well as suspicion from both sides along with the lack of political affinity. These make entering the field and research collaboration more difficult. Such problems are, of course, to some extent, challenges in any type of fieldwork, no matter the target group. However, the expectations specifically differ here.

As sociologist Louise Folkes (2023: 1313) has stated, the researcher's position in relation to the field and the community are constructed in 'kitchen table informal discussions' between the researcher and the participants. Building trust takes time.

Among scholars of Far-Left movements, it is probably more common that the researcher is either a current or former insider of the movement, benefitting the research with already established contacts as well as knowledge of the internal dynamics of the movement (see, e.g., Kuukkanen 2018: 52; Juppi 2004: 19; cf. Blee 2007). Among scholars of the Far Right, such a background is much rarer, although not entirely unknown (see Becher 2022; Malet et al. 2024). In the public, anthropologists are also often currently associated with leftist ideologies (see, e.g., Kolshus 2023), which can be problematic if they try to inspire confidence in a Far-Right community.

Apart from the prejudice of potential participants, a large part of previous ethnographic research among Far-Right communities in Finland has actually sprung from action research among young people, re-education of the participants representing one of the disclosed goals of such research projects (see, e.g., Perho 2010). In general,

activistic aspirations may produce problematic positions when conducting research on political opponents (cf. Bainton and Owen 2019), which we clearly understood during the Fascination of Fascism project with openly anti-fascist aspirations. Therefore, researchers may face participants' suspicions and prejudices, and they need to justify their research interests carefully. While ethnographers are not expected to change participants' minds, academic colleagues may require that they dissociate themselves from extreme ideologies (at least extreme ideologies on the right). Without making that kind of statement, a researcher may endanger their reputation by collaborating with Far-Right participants, and, as Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (2006: 54) write, 'researchers may be stigmatized as well for doing this research in an objective way'. The positioning of the researcher vis-à-vis the people they study is, of course, part of the general dilemma in ethnographic research in general, potentially accentuated when researching the Far Right.

The participants, despite their ideology, are real people with justified emotions, and they expect a respectful encounter with the ethnographer in the field. Because members of Far-Right communities are often quite conscious of the public appearances of researchers, anti-Far-Right statements may harm the trust between the researcher and the community.

Apart from being a profound ethical issue, the public approach to the communities studied is also a pragmatic question. As Mustamo experienced through fieldwork during the Fascination of Fascism project, association with the anti-fascist goals of the project prevented some fieldwork sessions and a few potential participants declined to take part in the study.

Taking an example from Kotonen's (2025) study on the Blue-Black Movement, an openly

fascist party, the researcher may face questions like 'why are you studying the enemy' or 'what is your political background', implying that the researcher perhaps represents left-wing ideology or at least 'tolerant' people. Notably, the Far Right in Finland and elsewhere often appears to align with 'anti-science' or 'alt-science' sentiments (Saresma and Palonen 2022), which may also lead to hostile attitudes towards individual researchers.

In our experience, research subjects sometimes also discuss ongoing research projects with each other. When a researcher contacts them, they often already know about the project and have perhaps already developed a negative attitude towards the project. Prejudices and disrespect shared in the community may discourage potential interviewees from participating. This may obviously make fieldwork more difficult.

The number of Far-Right researchers in Finland is quite low and the number of researchers doing fieldwork even lower. Thus, the research subjects, in most cases, already know the researchers at least by name, which may help to establish relationships with them.

Several challenges may nevertheless lead a researcher to even abandon fieldwork as a method of choice, among them concerns about

physical harm, getting one's hands dirty from the stigma, being labeled 'one of them', finding out that like other human beings in general they have good points and bad ones, or having to face the possibility that the subjects might not be quite what the researcher thought they would be. Some may feel that the information gained would be inaccurate or not meaningful. (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2006: 55)

Several studies on the challenges of ethnography among Far-Right activists have recently raised the question of the possible negative effects on the researcher, including discussing the emotional burden of such research (see, e.g., Gelashvili and Gagnon 2024; Geelhoed et al. 2024). Open hostility, direct threats, or verbal attacks against researchers in the field are not that common in Finland, although such events have occurred. Such research may become more challenging when, for example, the researcher is not from the same ethnic background as the research subjects (Ramalingam 2020).

However, most research participants are either indifferent to or curious about the research. Some participants have even said that they need researchers to write their history (Kotonen 2025). Often, they are interested when someone approaches them and wants to listen to their side of the story, but they may also be baffled by why this has not been done before. The expectations of the participants may nevertheless remain quite low, and if there is anything they wish for, it would be a neutral attitude, whatever it might mean in their case.

## CHALLENGES TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE 'EXTREMIST OTHER'

There are several challenges to the viewpoints of current research on the Far Right. For example, if we, as ethnographers, are intended to primarily take a moral stand on the objects of our study, conducting ethnography among those groups may become practically impossible. Such a stance may restrict the scale of potential study topics. If ethically sustainable fieldwork is limited to unproblematic communities, our awareness is limited to only the positive things taking place in our societies.

Patronising and othering discourses are no new feature of Far-Right studies (see, e.g., Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2006). What is unfamiliar to us is often explained away through references to external influences, 'exoticized' or 'othered' (Pasieka 2019). As Pasieka noted, Far-Right studies often also tend to deprive the study subjects of their agency. For instance, such studies represent Far-Right activists as victims of globalisation, with no positive attributes and merely driven by their emotions and fears.

Since the topic is controversial, choices regarding analytical concepts can be viewed as political statements. Whose definitions and terms are used in the field, in the analysis, and in public? How should we consider irony, parody, and veiled messages in Far-Right cultures?

It might be worthwhile considering the use of concepts and labels like Far Right or extremism before entering the field. In a fieldwork situation, the researcher should in principle consider and respect how members of the community want to be addressed. The researcher should take into account whether participants see the use of labels like extremists or fascists as hostile acts. As Hervik (2020: 92) put it, as a researcher, you should not 'impose your categories upon your field-site or phenomenon under study'. During the analysis, terms such as fascism or extremism may be useful for categorising knowledge, although such terms are not necessarily employed by research participants (see, e.g., Pilkington 2022). This inconsistency between emic and etic concepts is not necessarily problematic, but we need to transparently state whose concepts and definitions upon which we rely.

Terms used by research participants may nevertheless represent an obvious choice while potentially producing seemingly distorted data. As Mattsson and Johansson (2021: 152; see

also Blee 2007) noted, research participants often provide the researcher with a constructed version of their own history, which also applies to the terms used. Typically, people do not consider themselves, for example, extremists, but view such labels as stigmatising (cf. Ammassari 2024), even when their views radically differ from those within mainstream society.

As noted by Blee (1993), while studying the oral histories of the Far Right, especially the Ku Klux Klan, interviewees often desire acceptability, but they also distort their political pasts because of public censure of the ideology they have represented. This may indeed also include sanitising the terms used, and, as a contemporary example, lead to dismissing their radical social media messages as ‘provocations’ and not as something to be taken entirely seriously (interview, 12 January 2023). For them, however, negative stereotypes and the concepts attached to them may not have reflected their own lived experience, but instead considered the narratives produced by outsiders. A research interview is then viewed as an opportunity to communicate one’s own history and to set the record straight. Obviously, this may also include purposeful attempts to mainstream their ideas and thus use the research and researcher to advance their cause.

Comparing several interviews may render the gaps and omissions as well as terminological discrepancies in the stories of Far-Right activists visible. From an ethical perspective, this kind of rectification of data is, however, not without its problems and may also lead to a certain kind of othering, such as when reporting results. One additional problem with most of the terms is that they often do not encompass the complex nature of activism. As such, terms like extremism may also produce an understanding which legitimises the mainstream and excludes radical ideas from society (see Kotonen 2020).

Nevertheless, a common feature in Far-Right research is attempting to understand their messages as veiled (see, e.g., Feldman and Jackson 2014). People communicate differently with different audiences, and politically marginalised groups may use veiled rhetoric in public in order to not appear as dangerous or as stigmatised as they really are or in an attempt to bring their message to the mainstream. At times, this may represent a valid point, although it often lacks references to this characteristic which also exists in mainstream politics. As Erving Goffman (1956) argued, all social interaction is somewhat based on this duplicity: behind the scenes, the rhetoric differs from what is told to the audience that is not part of the in-group or part of the inner circle. Of course, the danger here is also that statements made by certain groups are not taken seriously because of what they represent (cf. Markom 2012).

When studying formal organisations, the researcher may choose to stick with their official definitions, although parties and other organisations typically include members whose positions may differ. Thus, party manifestos and other documents do not necessarily show the entire picture any more than individual statements do. However, the definitions become even more problematic when analysing, for example, subculture.

Some parts of the Far-Right subculture may be categorised as more or less straightforwardly racist and extremist. For instance, in musical subcultures, such as Black Metal, the relationship between actual political positions and Far-Right symbols remains hazy and subject to continual negotiations (Mustamo 2024). There are true believers, as well as much irony, parody, and provocation. During interviews, racist statements are surprisingly rare. Of course, it would be naïve to suggest they do not exist in the subculture; but, for most of

the members of the Black Metal community, the most important motive seems to be something else, such as a fascination with the ultimate evil, which is assigned to the Nazis, at least in the context of Western popular culture (Mustamo 2024).

Participants' attitudes vary, although there is often a notable difference between notions made in public and in private. It may be the case that they lower their voice when discussing terms that they find negative or stigmatising and are relieved when they can use their own terms (interview, 12 January 2023). Nevertheless, some may even enjoy the potential public spectacle and try to embarrass the researcher (see, e.g., Markom 2012). Marginality may also be a conscious choice. When meeting in a public place, attention is often already guaranteed if the interviewee decides to come to a meeting wearing, for example, an outfit of a known racist organisation. These kinds of situations, which researchers may interpret as provocations, may also affect their interpretation. Radical statements or appearances can transform into a 'methodological problem of not being able to believe that someone was really serious about his own statements' (Markom 2012). In this kind of situation, the researcher may also find it difficult not to object and demonstrate that they do not share the views presented by the interviewee.

As noted by Markom (2012), people 'tend to adopt multiple and contradictory positions depending on their current context, surroundings and, above all, their speech communities'. During one-on-one interviews, people may take different positions than they would in a group. At times, how notes are taken even matters. In one of Markom's case studies (Markom 2012), in a fancy restaurant environment, the recording device did not bother the person interviewed at all and did not keep him from making racist remarks.

People may indeed react to recording devices in peculiar ways; one person even dictated a prepared statement for the record (interview, 16 January 2020). Often, people bring additional materials, such as leaflets, to support their views or simply as further information, without the researcher specifically asking for them.

The relative terms used, such as Far Right or extremism, may metaphorically push their targets to the outer limit of the political spectrum (Pasiëka 2019). It is often thought that more extreme elements of the society somehow also reside at the physical margins or peripheries—that is, in rural areas or in suburbs. However, while this may be partly true (see, e.g., Förtner et al. 2020), members of extreme-right organisations come from all walks of life and exist in all corners of the country. Marginalising or othering terms and discourses may veil this fact.

During fieldwork, especially over a longer period of time, some key informants may become acquaintances and, as in the case of Teitelbaum, even friends with the researcher. Besides potential moral problems, more important may be the lack of distance, possibly skewing results. The latter may, of course, be avoided if the sample is sufficiently large to reach the point of saturation where a single interview does not play such a large role.

'Going native', which is obviously a problematic and essentialising term (Weston 2023), has been used in classic anthropology to refer to immersing oneself too deeply when doing fieldwork and not maintaining critical distance from research subjects. This is, of course, one of the classical dilemmas of all ethnographic research. Moreover, the theme of friendship has been dealt with in a few classic works (see, e.g., Rabinow 1977; cf. also Bell 2019a), although such admissions have often been, according to Hall (2020: 7), 'edited out of the ethnographic

narrative'. This dilemma is even more pertinent when studying stigmatised groups such as violent extremists, who are viewed negatively by the majority of the population and are often also of interest to security authorities. The dual role of an ethnographer as a critical observer and simultaneously as a participant of the events observed is thus perhaps even more challenging than usual.

According to Hervik (2020: 93), 'empathy can be an important contribution from anthropology, and may emerge as the ability to provide insightful personalized understandings of 'ordinary' extremist sympathizers'. This means approaching them as persons, not as already established categories or enemies, which is also an important point methodologically. As we argued above, avoiding pre-established categorisations also enables both successful fieldwork and capturing the complexity of the field.

## TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE FIELDWORK AND ETHNOGRAPHIC WRITING

In this essay, we have asked how an ethically sustainable ethnography among the Far Right could be conducted, bearing in mind the risk of normalising both extreme ideologies and the point of view of participants. Abandoning ethnographic methodology in research among the Far Right is also an ethical choice which carries consequences.

To conduct fieldwork among Far-Right communities, we must, to some degree, collaborate with members of these communities. Collaboration takes different forms and degrees, but is also an essential part of fieldwork, beginning with securing the informed consent of research participants. Data are not, as Bell (2019b) emphasised, found but made, and

as such it is relational. The making of the data happens in collaboration with research participants. As shown through the accusations towards Teitelbaum, one obvious question here is where to draw the line. There is the danger that the research process is exploited by participants for their own purposes instead of conducting ethnography in collaboration with a researcher. Participants do not always talk to a researcher just for fun, but may also have their own goals.

These dilemmas, which are also not exclusive to studies of the Far Right, do not disappear when the researcher leaves the field. From the beginning of the research process, the researcher, to some extent, legitimises the object of the research as a valid and important research topic. Marginal groups often celebrate when simply mentioned in the mainstream media. Sometimes, they even explicitly mention that research is needed because, as one research participant stated, 'who else will write our history'.

In addition to working in the field, this question covers ethnographic writing targeting both the academic community and the public. In ethnographic writing, a too empathetic approach to these communities may also serve to help their causes. Thus, Pasieka (2019) also warns of 'over-familiarization', whereby groups and activists may even be rendered too harmless and normal. When reporting results, sufficient analytical distance must thus be considered carefully.

As anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod (2016) stated, ethnographic writings about complex and controversial topics may have an unexpected political afterlife. Abu-Lughod's (2016) ethnographic work on Arab women's lives has broadened Western understandings of their various positions and identities. However, it simultaneously raised questions regarding

whether she ignored critical female and feminist voices from other Arab communities (Abu-Lughod 2016; cf. Malik 2015).

Writing ethnography focused on Far-Right communities can raise similar concerns. How can we cover the diversity of meaning-making within the communities, while simultaneously bearing in mind the possible political consequences, including the use of our writings to justify extreme ideologies?

What should we do, then? In the field, openness towards participants and other members of the communities studied is necessary. Just like in all ethnographic research, we must be clear about the goals of our studies and regarding our own views. To achieve informed consent regarding participation in an ethnographic research project, participants must also be informed about the subsequent uses of the information to which the research grants access—that is, conducting ordinary, ethically sustainable ethnographic fieldwork.

Communication with the academic community and the public is a more complex issue. We do not want to strengthen narratives which oppose our own values. That said, we need to behave respectfully towards the participants of our research in the field and in public. When working with a highly controversial topic, the danger of ignoring ethnographic data that do not fit black-and-white narratives always exists. We must trust our observations and not bend to social pressure, whether it stems from the field or from our colleagues.

Ethnography among the Far Right thus accentuates many problems relevant to any ethnographic inquiry. Critical discussions on findings and methods, as in Teitelbaum's case, are thus even more necessary when dealing with societally problematic groups and people. However, as Teitelbaum (2019) also pointed out, the fact that research participants may, in some

cases, be viewed as a threat or as harmful to society and its key principles should not mean abandoning the ethical standards of research. Rather we must emphasise them further. Depriving the ethical rights of people because of their extremist political positions may advance their cause and confirm their convictions that they are purposefully stigmatised by society and by researchers. By maintaining the same standards as with any other research participant, a researcher may play an important role in dispelling such fears. They may even slightly diminish societal polarisation.

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