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About the Author

Ross W. Bellaby is Senior Lecturer in Security Studies in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Sheffield. His main research examines the application of ethics to violence and security, with specific attention to developing new ethical frameworks for hacking, state intelligence and surveillance, and military use of artificial intelligence in warfare.

The Ethics of Hacking

Political hackers, like the infamous Anonymous collective, have demonstrated their willingness to use political violence to further their agendas. However, many

of their causes – targeting terrorist groups, fighting for LGBTQ+ rights, and protecting people's freedom of expression, autonomy and privacy – are intuitively

This book will create a new framework that argues that when the state fails to protect people, hackers can intervene and evaluates the hacking based on the political or social circumstances. It highlights the space for hackers to operate as legitimate actors; guides hacker activity by detailing what actions are justified

toward what end; outlines mechanisms to aid hackers in reaching ethically justified decisions; and directs the political community on how to react to these

Applying this framework to the most pivotal hacking operations within the last

Nigerian and Ugandan governments' announcements of homophobic legislation,

two decades, including the Arab Spring, police brutality in the USA and the

it offers a unique contribution to conceptualising hacking as a contemporary

By Ross W. Bellaby

good things to fight for.

political hackers.

political activity.

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