


**Please cite the Published Version**

Edwards, Philip  (2021) Surveillance, Safeguarding and Beyond: The Prevent Duty and Resilient Citizenship. Critical Studies on Terrorism, 14 (1). pp. 47-66. ISSN 1753-9153

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2020.1855018>

**Publisher:** Taylor & Francis (Routledge)

**Version:** Accepted Version

**Downloaded from:** <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/626157/>

**Usage rights:**  In Copyright

**Additional Information:** This is an Author Accepted Manuscript of an article published in Critical Studies on Terrorism by Taylor & Francis.

**Enquiries:**

If you have questions about this document, contact [openresearch@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:openresearch@mmu.ac.uk). Please include the URL of the record in e-space. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our Take Down policy (available from <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/policies-and-guidelines>)

# **Surveillance, Safeguarding and Beyond: the Prevent Duty and Resilient Citizenship**

Phil Edwards, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Manchester Metropolitan University

p.j.edwards@mmu.ac.uk @drphiledwards

## **Abstract**

The Prevent Duty mandates education providers to address young people both as vulnerable to radicalisation and as (potentially) resilient. This paper argues that interventions designed to address vulnerability are problematic, as they tend to adopt the logic of safeguarding - a familiar mindset for professionals working with young people - while also extending practices of surveillance. As well as this safeguarding/surveillance nexus, however, the Duty offers openings for resilience-focused school-based interventions, which can assist young people's development into active citizenship.

Drawing on Chantal Mouffe's distinction between 'agonism' and 'antagonism' (Mouffe 1993), I will argue that the Duty endorses interventions to build resilience grounded in the effective capacity for citizenship, understood as enabling individuals both to take sides in ('agonistic') political debate and to engage with the criteria for excluding certain ('antagonistic') positions from political legitimacy. Supporting this argument, findings from mixed-methods research conducted in secondary schools suggest that training delivered under the Duty can offer significant gains in self-confidence and political engagement, and hence in effective citizenship and resilience to extremist messaging.

## **Keywords**

Prevent, resilience, safeguarding, agonism, antagonism

## **Introduction**

The effects on British society of the Prevent counter-extremism programme, and in particular the ‘Prevent Duty’, imposed by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, are complex and continue to develop. Critics have highlighted the reactionary and anti-political implications of the Duty (Mythen, Walklate and Peatfield 2017) and of the associated requirement on education providers to promote ‘fundamental British values’ (Revell and Bryan 2018). The naturalisation of the Duty as an element of professional practice (Busher et al 2019) has led to the inflection of practices such as safeguarding by the surveillant requirements of Prevent (Boukalas 2019). However, the implementation of the Duty has also been associated with creative and emancipatory practice, particularly in education.

This paper argues that the Prevent Duty in education is internally incoherent - calling on teaching professionals to address young people as (potentially) resilient as well as situating them as (potentially) vulnerable - and that the focus on resilience can empower young people who would be disempowered by emphasising vulnerability. Drawing on quantitative and qualitative data on attitudinal change, collected in the course of an evaluation of secondary school Prevent training carried out for the Home Office, I argue that resilience-focused school-based interventions can assist young people’s development into active, agonistic citizenship - an achievement which is both conducive to the development of pluralist democracy and genuinely resilient to the appeal of anti-democratic extremism.

## **Prevent's contradictory themes**

The Prevent Duty mandates that a broad range of mainly public bodies should “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. In the short time since its introduction, a substantial literature has built up on the implementation of the Duty in contexts including healthcare (Heath-Kelly 2017; Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2018; Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019), social services (Chivers 2018), secondary education (Busher, Choudhury, Thomas and Harris 2017; Busher, Choudhury and Thomas 2019; Stephens and Sieckelink 2019) and higher education (Qurashi 2017), and on related topics such as the Channel early intervention programme (Martin 2018) and the promotion of ‘fundamental British values’ (Farrell 2016; Habib 2018; Vincent 2019).

Four interconnected themes emerge from this literature. The first is the analysis of the Duty as a security-based intervention, a move “towards the integration of social policy within a security framework” (Martin 2018: 267). Prevent is understood as constructing its target population - particularly but not exclusively British Muslims - as “a vulnerable population who may be infected with dangerous ideas” (Ramsay 2017: 154) rather than as political subjects, and as expressing “a disdain for the ‘other’ ... cloaked in the language of democracy and tolerance” (Revell and Bryan 2018: 57). While it purports to defend liberal democracy, it has a chilling effect on political debate, aiming to “[prevent] the formation of non-liberal subjectivities ... and freeze society into an eternal liberal present” (Boukalas 2019: 472).

This theme exists in tension with the second theme, the naturalisation of the Duty through assimilation to previously existing professional practices and rhetorics. Some professionals

have treated the Duty cynically, as no more than the latest government directive to be complied with; this results in “a pragmatic attitude ... where the main focus was on achieving compliance” (Qurashi 2017: 2017). Others naturalise the Duty to the point of absorbing it into existing practice, as when “normal social service provision” - eroded by austerity - is supplemented or replaced by interventions triggered through Prevent (Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019: 107). A third group - and perhaps the largest - engage more actively with the Duty: “narratives of professional continuity” are built through a process of translation whereby “existing professional practices [are] reinterpreted and adapted as ‘part of’ or being relevant to compliance with the Prevent duty” (Busher et al 2019: 458).

Thirdly, one specific framework for bridging Prevent with professional practice is prominent and widespread enough to merit consideration as a theme in its own right: safeguarding. The vocabulary of safeguarding, including the related concepts of vulnerability and abuse, has both been used to naturalise the Duty and been changed in the process; in Farrell’s blunt assessment, “[t]he war on terror is now embedded in the safeguarding policies of schools and colleges” (Farrell 2016: 283). Extremism is understood as a threat to which some people are vulnerable, and from which others can protect them: “protecting the vulnerable from the risks posed by extremist thought is understood as analogous to protecting the vulnerable from drug or alcohol dependency” (Martin 2018: 264). Radicalisation, consequently, is understood not as a social learning process but as “a process of abusive exploitation performed upon ‘vulnerable’ persons” (Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019: 93).

This third theme contrasts with a fourth, associated with the discussion of building ‘resilience’ against extremist appeals (Stephens & Sieckelink 2019). Contrary to the argument that Prevent “depoliticises the encounter between students and ‘extremist’ ideas”

(Ramsay 2017: 154) and “turns the citizen from a creative, responsible subjectivity to an endangered one” (Boukalas 2019: 477), this strand of argument suggests that resilience to extremism - a desired outcome of Prevent - can be achieved “by addressing the existential questions and concerns of the student, and by providing them with the tools and resources to affect change in their social and physical environment” (Stephens & Sieckelink 2019: 14). Understood in these terms, the Prevent Duty can create opportunities to revitalise schools’ work on “active citizenship, human rights, democracy and equality” (Busher, Choudhury and Thomas 2019: 457); even the promotion of British values may allow classrooms to become “sites of struggle with opportunities for resistance and critique” (Habib 2018: 150). In short, Prevent may play a progressive and emancipatory role, in schools if not elsewhere.

In the next section, the critique of the ‘vulnerability’ component touched on above is developed, identifying ways in which the vocabulary of safeguarding has been inflected by the assumptions of the ‘surveillant assemblage’ of Prevent, to the point of constituting a safeguarding/surveillance nexus. The third section analyses the ‘resilience’ component of the Duty, drawing on Chantal Mouffe’s distinction between ‘agonism’ and ‘antagonism’ (Mouffe 1993). I argue that the resilience which the Duty aims to build is grounded in an effective capacity for democratic citizenship, enabling individuals both to engage in agonistic debate between opposed positions and to engage with the criteria for labelling other positions as antagonistic to democracy. The fourth section draws on an evaluation of Prevent training in secondary schools, using quantitative and qualitative evidence to argue that the training observed offered significant gains in self-confidence and political engagement, and hence in resilient citizenship. A brief concluding discussion considers potential critiques of the argument advanced and proposes directions for future work.

## **Prevent, vulnerability and the safeguarding/surveillance nexus**

When the Prevent Duty was imposed in 2015, an accompanying schedule enumerated the authorities to which it applied. The schedule includes an exhaustive list of providers of under-18 education and childcare. Guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) sets out the responsibilities which the Duty imposes on all of these:

it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

Schools and childcare providers can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, schools should provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. (Department for Education 2015:5)

The Prevent programme “not only sets the agenda ... but also creates a reality around it as a tangible process that produces a set of associated techniques and mechanisms of prevention” (Mythen, Walklate and Peatfield 2017: 197). As the DfE guidance suggests, these techniques

and mechanisms are associated with the two key concepts of vulnerability and resilience. Rather than being simple antonyms - resilience as the lack of vulnerability, vulnerability as the lack of resilience - vulnerability and resilience have been associated with radically different approaches to the individuals who are the object of the Duty.

As Boukalas (2019) notes, the implementation of the vulnerability component of the Duty has had some highly problematic, even contradictory features: its enlistment of local professional autonomy in the service of a hierarchical, state-centred model; its use of pastoral care to identify and cast out dangerous individuals; its character as a political intervention which denies the autonomy of the (presumptively vulnerable) self and hence forecloses political change (Boukalas 2019: 475-8). These features can be understood by reference to the Duty's conceptualisation of vulnerability, which brings together two distinct conceptual models: safeguarding and surveillance, in particular the 'surveillant assemblage'.

As we have seen, the Department for Education's guidance on the Duty specifically invokes schools' and childcare providers' responsibility for safeguarding. Safeguarding, as a concept and a set of practices, is an established element of the professional habitus of education and children's services; first used in the Children Act 1975 (which gave local authorities a general duty to "give first consideration to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child"), it has subsequently been naturalised through usage. Indeed, Busher et al found that the familiarity of notions of safeguarding to teaching professionals constituted an important bridge between existing professional practice and the relatively novel discourse of Prevent: "It is a safeguarding issue. It's the same, it's about keeping children safe" (quoted Busher, Choudhury and Thomas 2019).



The familiarity of the concept of safeguarding allows the assumptions which it embodies to go unexamined. One way to unpack the concept is offered by the wording of the Care Act 2014, which extended local authorities' safeguarding duties to cover vulnerable adults as well as children. The Act identifies vulnerable adults - the individuals considered as being in need of safeguarding - in these terms:

- 42(1) This section applies where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there)
- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
  - (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
  - (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Significantly, factors to be taken into account by local authorities include “the importance of preventing or delaying the development of needs for care and support or needs for support and the importance of reducing needs of either kind that already exist”.

The mentality which can be inferred from these provisions combines a set of assumptions. Firstly, some people can be identified as having (met or unmet) needs for care and support. Secondly, some individuals with needs for care or support are thereby rendered unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect, and are thus particularly vulnerable to it; these are actual and potential victims. Thirdly, some people can be identified as being consistently abusive or neglectful of others, or as having a tendency to form abusive and/or neglectful relationships: these are actual and potential abusers. The responsibilities of safeguarding

professionals are to: identify abusers and victims; intervene so as to protect victims from abusers; and assist victims in reducing their needs for care and support and forestalling the development of new needs, thus empowering them to protect themselves from abuse and neglect - and ultimately to cease to be actual or potential victims.

Where children are concerned, the first assumption has a potentially universal scope, inasmuch as all children have needs for care and support; however, this does not make the assumption irrelevant, but simply means that all children (may) need safeguarding. The second assumption reflects the complex needs that can make children vulnerable to abuse, while the third relates primarily to adults who either betray or wrongfully assume a duty of care - as in the Department for Education's listing of "drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation". Lastly, the twofold intervention required from safeguarding professionals, once potential victims and abusers have been identified - both to protect victims and to help them develop the capacity to protect themselves - maps well onto childhood interventions; in the teenage years especially, the task of both education and children's services is to help the child become an adult, leaving a child's particular set of vulnerabilities behind.

This breakdown of the assumptions underlying safeguarding shows how readily the logic of safeguarding can be extended to cover the vulnerability component of the Duty. In the 2011 Prevent Strategy, vulnerability is defined as "factors and characteristics associated with being susceptible to radicalisation"; safeguarding is "the process of protecting vulnerable people ... from being drawn into terrorism-related. [sic]" (HM Government 2011: 108). The Prevent Duty frames radicalisation as something that is done to individuals from outside; it assumes "a value-neutral, rational subject who – due to possession of a series of characteristics, personal deficiencies and/or exposure to particular stimuli – becomes corrupted" (Mythen,

Walklate and Peatfield 2017: 192). Radicalisation can thus be assimilated to other forms of abusive behaviour, interference from outside by ill-intentioned adults taking advantage of individuals' vulnerability: in the words of Busher et al's informant, "when I look at a profile of a radicaliser ... and a groomer it's the same tactics and they're targeting the same sorts of vulnerabilities in children" (Busher, Choudhury and Thomas 2019).

Other elements of the safeguarding mindset also find expression in the context of Prevent. It can be assumed that some children have more care needs than others, and that these needs will also tend to produce higher levels of vulnerability; there is perhaps an underlying assumption that terrorist recruiters, like sexual abusers, offer a simulacrum of adult care and validation to children lacking these things. Lastly, vulnerability to radicalisation can be remedied both by obstructing the radicalisers' access to their 'target' and by helping the child build the capacity to resist the radicalisers of her own accord.

In the context of Prevent, however, "[those] at risk of the harm of radicalisation are also implicitly themselves 'risky', because what they are at risk of is being drawn into terrorism" (Ramsay 2017: 153). The individuals being safeguarded are being protected from the possibility of themselves becoming harmful; moreover, this harm is conceptualised in inherently political terms, as potential harm to the state as well as to any direct targets. As Heath-Kelly and Strausz's informant comments, "When you do safeguarding ... you're trying to protect that person. Whereas with this, you're protecting the state from that person" (Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019: 95). These more coercive, and more explicitly political, requirements lead the practice of safeguarding to be inflected by the assumptions of surveillance, the surveillant assemblage in particular.

The surveillant assemblage, as defined by Haggerty and Ericson, is an emergent characteristic of contemporary society: “a potentiality ... [residing] at the intersections of various media that can be connected for diverse purposes”, united by the goal of “transforming the body into pure information” (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 609, 613). The ‘data doubles’ of individual human beings “[are] differentiated according to how useful they are in allowing institutions to make discriminations among populations”; the profiles thus derived “correspond with, and reinforce, differential levels of access, treatment and mobility” (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 614, 618). The surveillant assemblage has a tendency to expand and embrace: to “combine practices and technologies and integrate them into a larger whole”, and to “seek out new target populations that ostensibly require a greater degree of monitoring ... for example, the young, caregivers, commuters, employees, the elderly, international travellers, parolees, the privileged and the infirm” (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 609, 615).

Many features of the Prevent Duty can be recognised here: perhaps most strikingly, the assumption that the entire pupil body of schools (along with the client base of other ‘designated authorities’) constitutes a population requiring ‘a greater degree of monitoring’. This in turn leads to the imposition of a classificatory ‘grid’ on the entire population, distinguishing only between individuals suspected of posing more and less risk - and producing that distinction itself through analysis of data: “[s]urveillance is no longer understood as the result of a pre-existing profile of characteristics; it is now framed as *producing the profile* through large-N induction.” (Heath-Kelly 2017: 39; emphasis in original)). Also characteristic of the surveillant assemblage are the utilisation of multiple data sources in combination - including the production of data from previously unarticulated feelings and suspicions - and the fact that a ‘positive’ result leads to suspect individuals being

channelled [sic] into a reformatory process of self-governance, which in turn is tailored on the basis of more precise classification gained through yet more surveillance.

It can be argued that safeguarding was always already imbued with surveillant assumptions, particularly in the respective roles it assigns to the professionals and the population: the expert, classifying gaze on one hand, the mutely classified bearers of indicators and warning signs on the other. The subjects of both surveillance and safeguarding are expected to submit to the attentions of professionals and their demands for information, and to comply with any course of action they may require in terms of self development and rearticulation of deviant identities. The Duty develops these surveillant assumptions much further, however, and can thus be seen as a departure from - or instrumentalisation of - safeguarding concepts and practices (Coppock and McGovern 2014: 252). Where safeguarding would mandate selective data gathering informed by professional expertise, Prevent works on the basis that information is gathered on an unselective basis, classifying all members of the population: “vulnerability ... is no longer a formal state of reduced capacity ... [but] is extended to potentially cover the entire population” (Heath-Kelly and Strausz 2019: 93). Where safeguarding duties are typically assumed by autonomous individuals, each responsible for her professional domain and making referrals outside it only in extreme circumstances, Prevent integrates this exercise of professional discretion into ‘a larger whole’, gathering information for the benefit of Channel - a network with connections to multiple agencies including the police. A “pastoral gaze, attuned to sensing, seeing and managing vulnerability” (Martin 2018: 264) is at once assumed, invoked and instrumentalised by the Duty; rather than encourage the exercise of professional discretion, healthcare staff are encouraged “not to question whether they are witnessing ‘radicalisation’ in a patient but to simply act, for the sake of contributing data for later calculation” (Heath-Kelly 2017: 39-40).

Lastly, where safeguarding promotes the best interests of the individual being safeguarded (or at least a professional understanding of these) and assumes a degree of individual agency, Prevent “situates the security problematic of becoming (dangerous) at the heart of the pastoral gaze” (Martin 2018: 267). Confronted by individuals at risk of radicalisation, the logic of Prevent “offers no means by which their actions can be read as political dissent” (Revell and Bryan 2018: 68); instead, the Duty calls on professionals to exercise pastoral control over objectified ‘data doubles’, shepherding some away from danger and others into Channel. These aspects of the Duty help explain the three paradoxes referred to by Boukalas - the Duty’s central direction of local autonomy, its use of pastoral care in the service of stigma and outcasting, and its denial of agency to those it addresses as political actors; each is an example of a safeguarding relationship inflected - or warped - by the requirements and assumptions of the surveillant assemblage.

### **Resilience and agonistic citizenship**

There is more to the Prevent Duty than vulnerability, and the safeguarding/surveillant nexus which responds to (and/or produces) it, however. As well as drawing attention to children’s potential vulnerability, the Department for Education’s guidance to the Prevent Duty recommends “build[ing] children’s resilience to radicalisation” (Department for Education 2015: 5). This section reviews the promotion of resilience and suggests a framework whereby this can be understood in a positive light, as a form of capacity-building for citizenship.

Protective interventions framed in terms of their subjects’ vulnerability will tend to emphasise and accentuate those factors which increase vulnerability and reduce resilience,

and - importantly - will tend to address them not by building up their subjects' resilience but by bringing to bear professional and surveillant discourses and practices so as to manage the risks they pose, as well as the risks they face. In the process, characteristics of the individuals labelled as vulnerable will be understood through the lens of vulnerability, with the danger of imposing a 'symptomatic' reading of signs of non-conformity and dissent: as O'Donnell warns, "discourses of vulnerability and victimhood risk pathologising dissenting students" (O'Donnell 2016: 70). Addressing them both as at risk and as potential sources of risk to others - as 'at risk of becoming risky' (Heath-Kelly 2013: 397) - Prevent thus "denies young British Muslims social and political agency" (Coppock and McGovern 2014: 253). Conversely, interventions framed in terms of resilience have the potential to seek out existing elements of resilient practice and self-presentation in its subjects' social existence and encourage them to build on these, utilising their own beliefs and experience as resources rather than focusing protectively on exposures and deficits. This in turn means that the resilience perspective can displace the assumptions associated with vulnerability, seeing the subject at risk of radicalisation "not as vulnerable, but as disempowered or lacking access to the resources to address fundamental concerns" (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 17).

Resilience, originally a term deriving from engineering (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 2), is used both as a descriptive term for reactions to an external shock (Edwards 2016) and as a normative term, which can variously be used to validate the capacity to remain unchanged and the capacity to 'bounce back'. The first of these normative concepts gives us an association between resilience and immunity: "vulnerability [is seen] through the lens of the concept of immunity, or more precisely, lack of *immunity or resilience* in the face of radical or extreme ideas" (O'Donnell 2016: 59; emphasis added). In this perspective resilience is inversely related to vulnerability: to be vulnerable is to have limited resilience; to be resilient

is to have limited vulnerability. Conversely, the second of the two concepts has expanded to include “the ability to transform and evolve ... in the face of stress or adversity” (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 2). To be resilient, in this sense, is to respond to stresses in appropriate or functional ways, even if these cannot necessarily be prescribed in advance: “[b]y its very nature, a resilient response is unpredictable, emerging from the interaction between adversity and the exercising of strengths and capacities” (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 17).

The government’s definition of resilience as “the capability ... to rebut and reject proponents of terrorism” (HM Government 2011: 108) suggests the first of these understandings of resilience: “resilience as a shield”, fostered by inculcating a “value framework that leads to the rejection of extremist ideas” (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 8), so that young people can remain impervious or oblivious to the appeal of would-be radicalisers. Like earlier attempts to define what the Prevent policy is against (Edwards 2014), ‘resilience as a shield’ is incoherent, particularly when the shield in question is associated with ‘fundamental British values’: ‘tolerance of different ... beliefs’ is cited as a fundamental value, but the ‘shield’ model implies that some beliefs are to be rejected outright. Indeed, the logic of the opposition between ‘extremism’ and ‘fundamental British values’ is that “individuals who insist on rejecting or even of challenging fundamental British values ... can legitimately expect to be denied the right to free speech” (Revell and Bryan 2018: 57). Even if we consider ‘fundamental British values’ as a placeholder for “the pillars of political liberalism” (Boukalas 2019: 471), the contradiction remains, as the self-image of liberalism is a society that tolerates ideological diversity: “[w]ithout tolerance, liberalism is nothing. .... Liberal society ... enacts itself by negotiating with the differences inside it” (Burgess 2018: 42-3).



‘Resilience as a shield’ offers itself as a more positive, capacity-building complement to the vulnerability-focused safeguarding/surveillant nexus, but its internal incoherence means that it only restates the same stigmatising, and ultimately anti-political, assumptions. However, the Department for Education’s guidance also urges schools to provide ‘a safe space’ in which children can ‘develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments’. This represents a different, more developmental understanding of resilience, whereby young people can develop the ability to neutralise potentially dangerous influences by situating them within existing patterns of discourse and developing resilience understood as ‘the ability to transform and evolve’. This can be achieved by building capacity in reflective debate, “teaching resilience against black and white views and demonstrating the seductive character of a Utopian worldview, while not discouraging ideals for change” (Sieckelink, Kaulingfreks and De Winter 2015: 339).

The potential of this understanding of resilience can be illuminated by reference to Mouffe’s distinction between ‘antagonism’ and ‘agonism’. In a democracy, Mouffe argues, political opponents “are not seen as enemies to be destroyed, but as adversaries whose ideas can be fought against, even fiercely, but whose right to defend those ideas will never be put into question” (Mouffe 2013: 7). This represents “‘agonism’ (struggle between adversaries)” as distinct from “‘antagonism’ (struggle between enemies)” (Mouffe 2013: 7). Agonistic conflict requires the identification of a ‘frontier’ between two sides, but “this frontier is the result of a political decision; it is constituted on the basis of a particular we/they, and ... it should be recognized as something contingent” (Mouffe 2013: 17). Agonistic politics is “the struggle between opposing hegemonic projects which can never be reconciled rationally, one of them needing to be defeated” (Mouffe 2013, 9); however, agonistic adversaries “do not put into question the legitimacy of their opponent’s right to fight for the victory of their position”

(Mouffe 2013: 7). The frontier between the ‘agonistic’ sphere of democratic politics and the ‘antagonistic’ opponents of democracy is the point where tolerance ends.

Mouffe’s position on the relationship between agonistic democracy and liberalism is not entirely consistent. The full context of the formulation distinguishing enemies from adversaries, quoted above, presents agonistic conflict as functional to liberal democracy:

Conflict in liberal democratic societies cannot and should not be eradicated, since the specificity of pluralist democracy is precisely the recognition and the legitimation of conflict. What liberal democratic politics requires is that the others are not seen as enemies to be destroyed, but as adversaries whose ideas can be fought against, even fiercely, but whose right to defend those ideas will never be put into question.

(Mouffe 2013:7)

Elsewhere, however, Mouffe critiques liberalism as an “attempt to annihilate the political” (Mouffe 1993: 123; she calls for “[a] project of radical and plural democracy” (Mouffe 1993: 152) and “a radicalisation of liberal democratic institutions” (Mouffe 2013: 119-20). The reading adopted here is that contemporary liberal democracy, while priding itself on the tolerance of political difference, excludes agonistic political conflict; instead, it imposes a friend/enemy distinction between the whole of legitimate political practice - characterised by managerial administration and assumed tolerance - and the excluded forces and practices recognised as ‘antagonistic’. In contrast, Mouffe urges the building of a radical or plural democracy, exploiting the professed ideals of actually-existing liberal democracy; such a radical democracy would also be capable of containing agonistic conflict within itself.

Even in a radicalised, agonistic democracy, however, a borderline with ‘antagonistic’ political actors and practices would require to be drawn: “[t]he category of the ‘enemy’ does not disappear but is displaced; it remains pertinent with respect to those who do not accept the democratic ‘rules of the game’” (Mouffe 1993: 4). However, this borderline would be contingent: “every order is the temporary and precarious articulation of contingent practices ... [and] is therefore susceptible of being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices that attempt to disarticulate it.” (Mouffe 2013: 2) The discourse of ‘extremism’ can be understood as an attempt to set this borderline beyond the reach of counter-hegemonic challenge: to label a political position ‘extremist’ is, precisely, to suggest that it cannot have a part in agonistic conflict, but represents an enduringly unacceptable form of antagonism.

Mouffe’s argument offers little guidance in how a radical democratic perspective would populate the category of ‘antagonist’ - bringing with it exclusion from political legitimacy - but does suggest two cautions. One is that ‘antagonist’ labelling, and all that follows from it, should be used sparingly. An ‘antagonist’ is not a particularly entrenched or intransigent political enemy: agonistic conflict is inherently a conflict between irreconcilable adversaries, each of which is committed to defeating the other. Antagonists are those whose political positions and practices are not merely alien to the democratic political sphere but incompatible with its continued functioning. The second caution is the reminder that even this incompatibility is historically contingent: even an antagonist which is now appropriately excluded may, under some future hegemony of values, be an accepted participant in agonistic conflict in a pluralistic democracy. To celebrate one set of values and label another as ‘extremism’ risks eternalising “the temporary and precarious articulation of contingent practices” and blocking the possible emergence of “another form of hegemony” (Mouffe 2013: 2); elevating an agonistic opposition to the status of antagonism, in other words.

It should also be noted that the labelling of agonists and antagonists is not - or should not be - the sole responsibility of political elites. Citizenship is associated with political participation, and thus with both agonistic and antagonistic conflict. A citizen's political participation should thus equip her not only to engage in agonistic conflict and understand the reasons for the exclusion of antagonistic positions, but to challenge this exclusion - and the 'antagonist' labelling - where it does not appear justified. If vulnerability is defined as susceptibility to extremist ideology and extremism is defined by its exclusion from agonistic conflict, perhaps the least vulnerable citizens are those who are equipped to recognise the widest variety of political forces as actually or potentially legitimate agonistic adversaries.

In short, Mouffe's agonistic model of democracy creates the space for a dynamic understanding of radicalisation - and resilience to radicalisation. In particular, an agonistic understanding of politics is key to the project of building resilience through debate. This model of resilience-building can only be a collective undertaking, rather than the top-down didacticism envisaged as building "resilience as a shield". This understanding of resilience - "resilience through connection" - envisages young people as becoming more resilient by building "relationships of trust across society" (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 8); this in turn requires that they are empowered to articulate all the stress factors which affect them and call on their resources for resilience. To promote the development of connective resilience in young people requires "addressing the existential questions and concerns of the student" so as to help students become fully conscious of those concerns, and helping them engage with those concerns by "providing them with the tools and resources to affect change in their social and physical environment" (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 14).

The ‘resilience’ component of the Prevent Duty may thus support an entirely different approach to countering ‘radicalisation’: one which treats ‘extremist arguments’ as something to be engaged with, and political debate as a skill which children can and should develop. The Prevent guidance can be read as suggesting that schools should counter the risk of radicalisation by helping children grow up into active, agonistic citizenship: helping them develop the capacity to counter bad arguments with good ones, and to recognise positions that can and can’t be sustained within the parameters of current agonistic debate.

A focus on ‘resilience through connection’ in education is particularly relevant to teenagers, whose life situation is framed by a continuing transition from vulnerability towards greater resilience - a transition in which challenge and dissent play a normal and functional part: “young persons, to successfully negotiate the transition from childhood to the adult world, have to perform an array of developmental tasks in which the status quo is never sacred” (Sieckelinck, Kaulingfreks and De Winter 2015: 331). It is worth noting that this emphasis on building resilience, as well as the specific focus on combating extremist narratives through agonistic debate, is echoed in UN Security Resolution 2178, the 2014 resolution which launched the UN’s ongoing commitment to countering violent extremism (Ucko 2018): the resolution “contemplates that education (and, presumably, the conflict of views that is necessary for true education) can play an important role in ‘countering terrorist narratives,’ which are invariably simplistic” (Roach 2018: 590).

If the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Prevent Duty has primarily found expression in the safeguarding/surveillance nexus, the forms taken by the ‘resilience’ component have been more plural and offered more openings to radical practice. The official articulation of resilience envisages it, in part, as ‘resilience as a shield’: the capacity to resist radicalising -

antagonistic - influences from outside the scope of legitimate politics. However, the ‘safe space’ guidance creates an officially-endorsed opening for a more dynamic understanding of resilience - ‘resilience through connection’ - which may make it possible to enlist the Prevent Duty in the radical democratic project of building capacity for active, agonistic citizenship.

This is an opening which teaching professionals have already exploited. Busher et al’s respondents “identified ways in which the [Prevent] duty had created opportunities to reinvigorate ... work on active citizenship, human rights, democracy and equality’ (Busher, Choudhury and Thomas 2019: 456-7). Early warnings that the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Duty needed to be supplemented by citizenship education - including “analysing and debating genuinely different perspectives” and “develop[ing] the skills of considering the content, sources and trustworthiness of what [young people] read and hear” (Thomas 2016: 182-3) - may, ironically, have been answered by creative resilience-oriented implementations of the Duty. Even in the context of the promotion of British values, one study found that “classrooms have the opportunity to be sites of struggle with opportunities for resistance and critique”, suggesting that promoting British values can involve developing the capacity for critical debate; significantly, Habib specifies that “where students hear others’ stories *and tell their own*, schools can become critical sites of opportunity for reflection, resistance, and hopeful futures” (Habib 2018: 150, 149; emphasis added).

### **“It’s opened my eyes to speaking out”: building resilience through Prevent**

A recent evaluation project, carried out on behalf of the Home Office, allowed the author to see at first hand, not only the training that secondary school pupils were receiving in their schools’ fulfilment of the Duty, but how some pupils reacted to it.

The team evaluated five providers who delivered training to children (years 4 to 14) and to education and social service professionals working with children. The evaluation involved observation of training delivery, focus group discussions with participants and pre- and post-session surveys assessing attitudinal change.

One provider in particular stood out for its powerful training packages dedicated to the ‘resilience’ component of the Duty. In one session observed by the author, offered mainly to year 9 children, the trainers initiated a series of discussions: on stereotyping and bias in contemporary society; on advertising techniques and their similarities with the methods of propaganda; and on ‘fake news’, the (un)reliability of social media and the need for fact-checking. Although discussion ranged widely, reflecting an evident commitment to creating the conditions for free and undominated discussion, the discussions cumulatively established a set of baseline assumptions:

- Much widely-available information, particularly in the context of discussions of political issues, is presented through tropes and images whose connotations tend to convey persuasive, and usually pejorative, messages.
- These connotative messages often distort, or even conceal, the underlying information.
- This may be done deliberately, with a view to enhanced political persuasion or simply to financial gain.
- It is possible to see through and negate the effect of these messages, by way of practical and analytical techniques which they, the children, can acquire and use.

Considered in terms of capacity-building for active citizenship, this would be a valuable exercise in itself. The remaining elements of the training package built on this foundation and related it directly to the ‘resilience’ component of the Duty - without, however, raising any of the concerns noted earlier relative to the ‘vulnerability’ component.

The penultimate section of the training focused on a range of extremist groups - including groups of the extreme Left and Right as well as Islamist groups - and the reasons why people might be tempted to join them. Although the discussion was not specifically framed in this way, the structure of the session created a strong implication that propagandistic messaging and extremist politics are intrinsically connected: that the recruiting capacity of extremist groups - and their intransigent political positioning - could only be sustained by presenting genuine contemporary issues in distorted and emotive turns. This in turn suggested that by developing the capacity to interrogate advertising messages and political propaganda, the children could also develop personal resilience to extremist appeals.

The training concluded with a discussion of peaceful forms of political campaigning, including positive recommendations of campaigns to which the young people could contribute; in some cases these campaigns covered the same issues as those championed by extremist groups discussed earlier (e.g. animal welfare). Having focused initially on distorted and unreliable messaging, then introduced extremist groups as a particularly rich source of propagandistic distortions of contemporary issues, the training closed by focusing on some forms of relatively undistorted and reliable political communication on those issues, and stressing that the children could themselves contribute to them.



The training thus had a strong and consistent focus on building the capacity to engage in political debate. As well as giving the children opportunities to discuss real-world issues during the session itself, the training encouraged them to develop the ability to challenge and debunk distorted political messaging and emphasised the value of undistorted debate. Crucially, resilience to extremist messaging was presented in terms of the capacity to recognise and counter propagandistic distortions. This suggested, firstly, that extremist arguments should be recognised from their characteristics, not from their labelling as extremist; secondly, that they should be dealt with by offering more and better political dialogue - connecting the issues involved with broader agendas - rather than by silencing.

As well as observing sessions in person, the evaluation team developed attitudinal surveys to be administered before and after the training, measuring attitudinal change on four dimensions: “Understanding of the danger of stereotyped thinking”, “Awareness of the prevalence of unreliable information”, “Ability to counter extremist messages” and “Understanding of the appeal of extremism and of its dangers”. The survey consisted of statements with agreement or disagreement measured on a five-point Likert scale. The training was delivered in two sessions a week apart; surveys were administered by the trainer before the first and after the second session, to a total of 12 form groups and 360 children. The four groups of questions showed a high degree of consistency in both pre- and post-training surveys, with Cronbach’s alpha scores between 0.73 and 0.91.

All four dimensions showed positive attitudinal change between the two surveys, defined as increased agreement or strong agreement with statements coded as positive and/or increased disagreement or strong disagreement with statements coded as negative. However, as Table 1 shows, only the third and fourth dimensions showed changes reaching statistical significance;

statistical significance was reached for some individual statements in the first two dimensions, but not for the composite measure as a whole.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

As these measures are self-assessed by participants, they do not necessarily indicate that they had in fact gained a better understanding of the appeal of extremism (etc). However, they do represent a gain in self-belief and willingness to engage in debate, suggesting that the training resolved existing doubts and/or made participants feel more prepared to commit themselves to debate. It is notable that the statements measuring understanding of the positive appeal of extremism show changes just as substantial, and just as significant, as those measuring the ability to counter extremist messages; this suggests that the children see themselves as having gained in ‘connective resilience’, not merely ‘shield resilience’.

This impression was borne out by comments from a focus group of year 9 children, conducted immediately after the training had completed, all of whom expressed enthusiasm for the training and providers. Thematic analysis of a transcript of the discussion makes it possible to identify five main themes, with some overlap between them. The training was valued for providing opportunities for *unguided discussion*, enabling the participants to *express opinions* and encouraging them to *speak out*; it had made the participants aware of their status, and value, as members of the *younger generation*; and it had heightened their awareness of the shortcomings of the *school environment* in all of these respects. A sixth theme - *extremism* - was conspicuous mainly by its absence.

Pupils valued the training highly for the opportunities it provided for *unguided discussion*. In one pupil's words, "[the subject matter] wasn't new but it gave us a chance to have an open discussion about it and actually give very honest opinions". Undominated dialogue (Habermas 1984) was valued, both as an experience in itself and because it provided opportunities for participants to learn from one another: "when you have an open discussion, you really find out everybody else's opinions and what they think about things".

This last comment connects with a second theme, of the personal value of being able to *express opinions* in a safe, non-judgmental space. This was repeatedly affirmed, as by the participant who related self-expression to a sense of individual and collective empowerment:

we just talked about our opinions more and just opened up more and felt more confident about what we were saying. Then we just saw who had the same opinions as us and it just made us open up and feel like we have a say and we are entitled to our own opinions.

Pupils were aware, and appreciative, of the trainers' role in making it possible for them to express opinions without fear of judgment: "They made us feel so safe, that our opinions would be kept with them and we wouldn't be judged after". This was identified as a support function not currently being carried out by the school: "our school needs to do something about listening to our opinions ... we need a place where we can actually feel safe and have an environment where we can express our own opinions".

Thirdly, the personal value of self-expression was also related to the more consequential value of *speaking out*:

I've always wanted to speak out and talk to people that think, not the wrong opinions because everyone has their own opinions, but think wrong of other people. ... So, for example, Britain First and how they hate immigration. So, I would like to talk to someone and ask them why? [The trainers] have given me the confidence to speak about things that people don't want to speak about.

Other participants felt that the training had taught the group "that our voice actually matters", and expressed the intention to act on this in future: "we will speak out more, a lot [more] ... we shouldn't hold back because of the fear of being punished". Above and beyond simple self-expression, these pupils felt that the trainers had encouraged the group to speak to some purpose, validating speech as communicative action and as political engagement.

A fourth theme was the participants' sense of their contradictory position as teenagers, leading them to assert both their maturity and their status as the *younger generation*: "[the trainers] said, 'You guys are very mature.' So, we wanted to prove that we were mature and that we're the voice of our society now". This self-awareness was also related to the participants' resolve to speak out: "We are the young generation and we need to speak out and be honest about everything that's being talked about day to day".

Without prompting, participants repeatedly contrasted the supportive and encouraging conditions set up by the trainers with the *school environment*, and the trainers with the teachers with whom they were more familiar: "[t]hey were not like teachers; they were really, really listening to us". Multiple participants characterised the training as a 'safe' experience; however, this 'safety' was framed in terms of security, not from the expression of potentially

hurtful opinions, but from the feeling of being judged and silenced - mostly, but not exclusively, by teachers. In Sieckelink et al's terms, what participants valued was not a setting in which "no sensitive political issues could be addressed out of fear for offending a person or a group" but one "where it is safe to talk about politics and ideals" (Sieckelink, Kaulingfreks and De Winter 2015: 338). Indeed, participants felt that their school was only too 'safe' in the first of these senses, with the effect that both offensive statements and opinions which other pupils might find challenging tended to be suppressed without debate:

say somebody is saying something that is discriminating, the teacher would be just like, "Hey, don't say that." And just give them a warning but they don't actually explain why what they are saying is wrong, they just tell them to shut up without giving them an explanation.

Teaching staff were seen as preventing pupils from expressing themselves or speaking out ("when you say something, you get cut off") and as hindering unguided discussion, even in the context of the focus group itself: "now [the teacher]'s gone, you can feel more open because you won't get those looks that say, 'Just stop talking.'"

Another theme should also be mentioned briefly, despite its lack of prominence in the discussion: focus group participants were prompted to discuss *extremism* and how the training had changed the way they thought about it. Despite the enthusiasm expressed for the training itself, responses to this prompt were rather lukewarm; one participant said dismissively, "[i]t's not in my area, it's not where I live, it's just in the news". One participant's spontaneous response to this comment is telling:

It actually changed my thoughts on how it affects my day to day life. Seeing what the teachers are like in our school ... we need to do something about how diverse our community is and how diverse the upper status ... how diverse they are and how to look out for what is actually happening.

Perhaps needless to say, the training had not explicitly related the issue of extremism to the predominance of White senior teaching staff in an ethnically diverse secondary school. Rather, what this comment suggests is that the training had enabled gains in ‘resilience through connection’, empowering children to make the connections between issues coded as political and stress factors in their own lives and articulate strategies for responding to them.

In short, when asked to give their view of the training, focus group participants suggested that it had fostered enthusiasm for undominated discussion, self-expression and political engagement in the participants, as well as self-awareness as young adults. A comment offered by a participant at the close of the focus group sums this up:

I’m glad we had the opportunity to do it because it showed that what we think matters and even if you’re getting in trouble for what you’re saying, that’s not right. Everything matters and what we think matters and everybody is equal and there’s nothing wrong with who we are and what we’re going to become.

Observation, survey data and focus group discussions thus converge in finding this training package highly effective - not necessarily in imparting factual knowledge about extremism, but in building the capacity and willingness to engage rationally in potentially difficult debates. This represents an enhanced capacity, both to combat the distortions characteristic of

propaganda in general and extremist discourse in particular, and to engage in the agonistic political discussion and campaigning which represents a constructive alternative to extremist involvement. Moreover, the training addressed the prescribed topic of extremism by sensitising participants to the existence of a distinction between agonists and antagonists - those whose political positions cannot be admitted to the mainstream of agonistic politics - while also empowering them to debate the location of the antagonistic borderline.

### **Building resilience through Prevent?**

Prevent can be seen as an intervention aiming to shape the field of political conflict, framing any alternative to the liberal democratic status quo as extremist and hence antagonistic to democracy. At least in education, the 'Prevent Duty' has elements that cut against this process, existing in tension with elements tending to further it. The 'vulnerability' strand of the Duty - situating young people as vulnerable to radicalisation - offers a combination of a surveillant mentality with assumptions around young people's vulnerability which are derived from safeguarding practices. The upshot is to restate and reinforce the association between young people and vulnerability - including vulnerability to becoming dangerous in themselves - without empowering them to remedy that vulnerability. The 'resilience' strand, by contrast, can empower young people to engage in 'agonistic' debate, make it their own and to question the assumptions of existing liberal democracy - including assumptions as to the nature of 'extremism'. Thus understood, resilience-focused interventions in education can be recommended as a means of equipping young people to engage in pluralistic democratic practice, including the contestation of society's designation of its political 'antagonists' - those political positions and practices genuinely incompatible with democracy. Creative and emancipatory interventions to promote agonistic resilience have been delivered within the

framework of the Prevent Duty; more emphasis can, and should, be given to this element of the duty, and less to vulnerability and the surveillant assemblage of Prevent.

Against this position, it can be argued that resilience-focused schools training, even if it has the capacity to promote agonistic citizenship, is compromised by the entrenched and well-resourced vulnerability-focused surveillance/safeguarding nexus. Three possible arguments build on this position: the ‘contamination’ argument, the ‘utopian’ argument and the ‘abolitionist’ argument. The ‘contamination’ argument argues that any shift to wholly resilience-focused training is likely to be undermined by the vulnerability-focused context in which it exists. Conversely, the ‘utopian’ argument argues that any suggestion of abandoning the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Duty would underplay the continuing threat of terrorism, against which safeguarding and surveillance may be an appropriate defence. Lastly, the ‘abolitionist’ argument argues that the type of training described here should be dissociated from the Prevent framework and delivered as a form of general citizenship education, without any necessary reference to ‘extremism’ or terrorism.

The first two counter-arguments both fail for the same reason. Even if the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Prevent Duty were abolished overnight, the protean form and multiple embeddedness of Prevent’s surveillant assemblage would enable it to survive and to continue to exert some influence on the ‘resilience’ component. Equally, as an empirical matter it is likely that some referrals to a Channel panel have played a part in preventing terrorist incidents, which would suggest that abolishing the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Prevent Duty would be rash. However, arguments predicated on the abolition of the ‘vulnerability’ component of the Prevent duty fail to address the more modest argument advanced here, that this component should be greatly de-emphasised relative to the ‘resilience’ component.



The ‘abolitionist’ argument incorporates two recommendations: that the training should be offered as a routine form of citizenship education; and that it should be divorced from the issue of extremism. The first is persuasive: our focus group participants themselves suggested that the training should be offered more widely and more often. The second, while it reflects a widely-held view that Prevent in schools is an unwelcome and shallow-rooted innovation, is more questionable. In terms of Mouffe’s framework, antagonism (‘extremism’) is part of the subject matter of agonistic (‘citizenship’) education and cannot reasonably be excluded from it. Moreover, developing the capacity and desire for active participation in agonistic debate equips young people to debate, and challenge, the terms and limits of agonistic debate - in other words, to assess for themselves whether, and how, the labelling of groups and ideologies as ‘extremist’ can be justified, and what further implications any justification has. The discussion of advertising, propaganda and extremism in the session observed - with the suggestion that extremist messaging was no more trustworthy than advertising - is an example of how ‘extremist’ labelling may have unexpected ramifications.

A fourth counter-argument, lastly, focuses on the final theme identified in focus group discussions: the school environment itself. If extremism is reconceptualised as one of a range of “personal and structural stressors” (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 13), with resilience considered in terms of individuals’ capacity to respond to these by effecting “change in their social and physical environment” (Stephens and Sieckelink 2019: 14), it is not immediately obvious that the school setting will lend itself to the promotion of resilience. The pupils quoted earlier suggested that teaching staff were at best indifferent, and often hostile, to their development of resilience through undominated dialogue and free expression; the school environment figured in discussion less as a source of resilience, more as one of the stressors

to which pupils would have liked to respond. But this is not so much an argument against resilience-focused training as a warning that, if done well, it is likely to meet resistance.

The findings discussed here are based on a relatively small sample, without any comparison group; future work could usefully repeat the quantitative and qualitative measures used here on a larger scale, and with a control group (consisting of comparable young people who did not receive the training intervention). It would also be useful to investigate whether findings from a secondary education setting can generalise to other settings where the Prevent Duty applies. More widespread exploitation of the opening provided by the ‘resilience’ component of the Duty may ultimately reduce the salience and power of the ‘vulnerability’ component and the safeguarding/surveillant nexus which underpins it.

## References

- Boukalas, C. 2019. “The *Prevent* paradox: destroying liberalism in order to protect it.” *Crime, Law and Social Change* 72(4) 467–482. doi:10.1007/s10611-019-09827-8
- Burgess, J. 2018. “Introduction to the bureaucratisation of terror”. *Security, Society and Technology* 1(1): 38-50.
- Busher, J. Choudhury, T. & Thomas, P. 2019. “The Enactment of the Counter-Terrorism ‘Prevent Duty’ in British Schools and Colleges: Beyond Reluctant Accommodation or Straightforward Policy Acceptance”. *Critical Studies On Terrorism* 12(3): 440-462. doi: 10.1080/17539153.2019.1568853.
- Busher, J., T. Choudhury, P. Thomas and G. Harris. 2017. *What the Prevent duty means for schools and colleges in England: An analysis of educationalists’ experiences*. Aziz Foundation.

- Chivers, C. 2018. “‘What is the headspace they are in when they are making those referrals?’ Exploring the lifeworlds and experiences of health and social care practitioners undertaking risk work within the Prevent Strategy”. *Health, Risk & Society* 20(1-2): 81-103. doi: 10.1080/13698575.2018.1437121
- Coppock, V. and McGovern, M. 2014. “‘Dangerous Minds’? Deconstructing Counter-Terrorism Discourse, Radicalisation and the ‘Psychological Vulnerability’ of Muslim Children and Young People in Britain”. *Children & Society* 28(3): 242-256. doi: 10.1111/chso.12060.
- Department for Education. 2015. *The Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers*. London: Department for Education.
- Edwards, P. 2016. “Closure through Resilience: The Case of Prevent”. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 39(4):292-307. doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2016.1117326
- Edwards, P. 2014. “How (Not) to Create Ex-Terrorists: PREVENT as Ideological Warfare”. In Heath-Kelly, Jarvis and Baker-Beall (eds). *Counter-Radicalisation: Critical Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Ericson, R. 2007. *Crime in an Insecure World*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Farrell, F. (2016). “‘Why all of a sudden do we need to teach fundamental British values?’ A critical investigation of religious education student teacher positioning within a policy discourse of discipline and control”. *Journal of Education for Teaching* 42(3): 280-297. doi: 10.1080/02607476.2016.1184460
- Habermas, J. 1981. tr. T.McCarthy. *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. I: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Boston: Beacon
- Habib, S. 2018. *Learning and Teaching British Values: Policies and Perspectives of British Identities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Haggerty, K. and Ericson, R. 2000. "The Surveillant Assemblage". *British Journal of Sociology* 51(4): 605-622. doi: 10.1080/00071310020015280.
- Heath-Kelly, C. 2013. "Counter-Terrorism and the Counterfactual: Producing the 'Radicalisation' Discourse and the UK Prevent Strategy". *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 15(3): 394-415. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-856X.2011.00489.x
- Heath-Kelly, C. 2017. "Algorithmic autoimmunity in the NHS: Radicalisation and the clinic". *Security Dialogue* 48(1): 29-45. doi: 10.1177/0967010616671642
- Heath-Kelly, C. and E. Strausz. 2018. *Counter-terrorism in the NHS: Evaluating Prevent Duty safeguarding in the NHS*. University of Warwick.
- Heath-Kelly, C. and E. Strausz. 2019. "The banality of counterterrorism 'after, after 9/11'? Perspectives on the Prevent duty from the UK health care sector". *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 12(1): 89-109. doi: 10.1080/17539153.2018.1494123
- HM Government. 2011. "The Prevent Strategy". Online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>.
- Martin, T. 2018. "Identifying potential terrorists: Visuality, security and the Channel project". *Security Dialogue* 49(4): 254-71. doi: 10.1177/0967010618770070
- Mouffe, C. 1993. *The Return of the Political*. London: Verso.
- Mouffe, C. 2013. *Agonistics*. London: Verso.
- Mythen, G., S. Walklate and E. Peatfield. 2017. "Assembling and deconstructing radicalisation in PREVENT: A case of policy-based evidence making?". *Critical Social Policy* 37(2): 180–201. doi: 10.1177/0261018316683463
- O'Donnell, A. 2016. "Securitisation, Counterterrorism and the Silencing of Dissent: The Educational Implications of Prevent". *British Journal of Educational Studies* 64(1): 53-76. doi: 10.1080/00071005.2015.1121201.

- Qurashi, F. 2017. "Just get on with it: Implementing the Prevent duty in higher education and the role of academic expertise". *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 12(3): 197–212. doi:10.1177/1746197917716106
- Ramsay, P. 2017. "Is Prevent A Safe Space?". *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 12(2): 143-158. doi: 10.1177/1746197917693022.
- Revell, L. and H. Bryan. 2018. *Fundamental British Values in Education: Radicalisation, National Identity and Britishness*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Roach, K. 2018. "The Migration and Evolution of Programs to Counter Violent Extremism". *University of Toronto Law Journal* 68(4): 588-597. doi:10.3138/utlj.2018-0012
- Sieckelinck, S. Kaulingfreks, F. and De Winter, M. 2015. "Neither Villains nor Victims: Towards an Educational Perspective on Radicalisation". *British Journal of Educational Studies* 63(3): 329-343. doi: 10.1080/00071005.2015.1076566.
- Stephens, W. & Sieckelinck, S. 2019. "Being resilient to radicalisation in PVE policy: a critical examination". *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. Online ahead of print. doi: 10.1080/17539153.2019.1658415.
- Thomas, P. 2016. "Youth, terrorism and education: Britain's Prevent programme". *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 35(2): 171-187. doi: 10.1080/02601370.2016.1164469
- Ucko, D. 2018. "Preventing Violent Extremism Through the United Nations: The Rise and Fall of a Good Idea". *International Affairs* 94(2): 251-270. doi:10.1093/ia/iix235
- Vincent, C. 2019. "Cohesion, citizenship and coherence: schools' responses to the British values policy". *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 40(1):17-32. doi:10.1080/01425692.2018.1496011

**Table 1: Measured attitudinal changes in pre- and post-session surveys**

Dimension	Positive		Statistical significance
	Pre-	Post-	
Understanding of the danger of stereotyped thinking	46%	53%	-
Awareness of the prevalence of unreliable information	68%	74%	-
Ability to counter extremist messages	36%	53%	**
Understanding of the appeal of extremism and of its dangers	52%	68%	**

- not significant \*\* significant at  $<.01$

$N = 360$ . Percentages rounded to the nearest whole %.

## **Support**

This work was supported by the Home Office Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) as part of the project OSCT/1718/010 Evaluation of Local Projects That Aim to Increase Individuals' Understanding of Radicalisation.

## **Author**

Phil Edwards is a Senior Lecturer in Criminology at Manchester Metropolitan University. He is the author of *'More work! Less pay!' Rebellion and repression in Italy, 1972-7* (Manchester University Press) and of multiple papers on political violence, radicalisation, counter-terrorism, the rule of law and restorative justice. He is currently working on a book about the contested existence of international law. He blogs at <http://gapingsilence.wordpress.com> and tweets @DrPhilEdwards .