Tristan Adam Hotham

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Research interests

Social media, communications, election campaigns, e-campaigning and political behaviour.

Education

PhD Politics   2016-2020
   University of Bath, Bath.

MRes Politics and International Studies   2014-2015
   University of Bath, Bath.

MA Politics and International Studies   2012-2013
   University of Durham, Durham.

LL.b Law   2009-2012
   University of Exeter, Exeter.

Research and relevant work experience

Founder
Social Media Research Centre.   2020

I have founded the *Social Media Research Centre*, a research house and consultancy that strives to make social media research better. We do two things; we examine social media developing reports that explain the impacts of social media and we help others in making the most of their social media research. So far have advised *gratis* journalists, think tanks such as the *Tony Blair Institute* & *Moonshot CVE* as well as start-ups and charities such as *Ethi.me* and *Animals Asia.*

Research consultant
Whotargetsme, London.   Oct 2019 – Mar 2020

For 5 months during the final year of my PhD I worked as a research consultant for *WhoTargetsMe,* a pressure group focused on understanding and reforming targeted advertising. I worked on two projects over the period, I was tasked with all the research WTM did during the 2019 General Election, and post-election was tasked in creating a GE19 transparency, policy and analysis report to be released in 2020/21.

- Undertook research from inception to conclusion, see my website for a record of articles.
- Created many stories, reports and features that gained national and international attention.
- Researched to tight deadlines via FB's Ad Library, Audience Insights, Crowdtangle and WTM's data.
- Organised an intern and collaborated with *Diga Communications* in disseminating my research.
- Liaised with journalists and partners daily, developing key impacts from my research.

Postgraduate researcher
POLIS, University of Bath, Bath.   2016-2020

The project examined the use of Facebook across 2010-2019 by all major UK parties, with special focus on Labour and the Conservatives, as well as satellite group Momentum. *Supervisors: Peter Allen and David Cutts. Examiners: Mark Shephard & Hilde Coffé.*

- Research was of my own inception and creation, funded by the *Economic and Social Research Council.*
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of social media data. Automated and hand-coded datasets were created analysed via content analysis. Analysis of large amounts of Facebook data, traditional survey data including the BES/EAS and other data sources such as Audience Insights.
- Presented the research at multiple conferences, talks, podcasts and via news media.

- Leadership roles: POLIS Dept. Research Representative, POLIS Dept. Faculty Representative.
- Organising committee for SWDTP Conference 2017, Team member for UACES Conference 2019.

Internship

Journeyman Pictures, London. Jan – Jun 2014

On completing my MA, I worked at *Journeyman*, a leading international documentary distributor and postproduction house. I initially worked organizing the footage library, cataloguing, transcoding, subtitling and adding metadata to the archive and then selling this clipped footage to production houses. Later I worked to sell documentaries including the '*Sundance*' winning '*Return to Homs*', to film festivals and international television networks, including the *BBC*, *Discovery*, *National Geographic*, and *Al Jazeera*.

Teaching experience

Teaching assistant 2017-2019

POLIS, SPS & Widening Participation Office, University of Bath, Bath.

- Postgraduate teaching assistant on three first year modules, two positions on Introduction to British politics PL10417 from 2017-18 and 2018-19, alongside Introduction to politics: theory and analysis PL10967 from 2018-2019.
- Managed over 40 hours of seminars, including creating teaching methods and organized lesson planning. Marked many essays and exams. Guided dozens of students in their essays as a peer mentor.
- Given two full two-hour lectures on social media and traditional media campaigning 1st year students.
- Taught Criminology to underrepresented groups via the 'Access to Bath' Summer School.

Technical skills

- Quantitative social media analysis
- Qualitative social media analysis
- Qualitative and quantitative content analysis

- Microsoft packages / Google docs
- Strong Excel skills, basic R/SPSS statistics skills
- Text analysis, text as data

- Data gathering/management software
- Video and music editing software
- Survey research and interviews

Funding and awards

- **ESRC studentship** 2016-2019
  Valued at ~£58,000
- **Travel grant from EPOP** 2019
  Bursary at £150 to attend the Conference in Glasgow
- **Free invitation to Digital Leaders Conference** 2018
  Bursary £150 ticket to attend the Conference in London
- **Access to Exeter Bursary** 2009-2011
  Bursary to attend the university ~£3000.

Courses of note

Grand Innovation Challenge (30h) 2019
University of Bath.

Cabinet Office Policy School (9h) 2018
Cabinet Office, London.

Media and outreach

I have provided commentary for news stories including on *BBC TV* and *radio*, *Sky News*, *The Economist*, *New York Times*, *Financial Times* and *New Statesman*. I have also created a [YouTube channel](link) where I discuss social media campaigning. Outside of commentary, I have also undertaken work that formed basis of news stories:

- Murphy, Joe. "Tories hiding Boris from London voters in Facebook ads." *Evening Standard*, (2019). [link]

- Doward, Jamie. "Voters 'used as lab rats' in political Facebook adverts, warn analysts." *Observer*, (2019). [link]
- Various. Targeted advertising section, "ITV election night", *ITV News*, (2019). [link]
- Standley, Nathan. "Spending on Facebook political ads reveals 'complicated battleground' as Hull heads to the polls", *Hull Daily Mail*, (2019). [link]
- With Rowland Manthorpe of *Sky News*, broke the story of Facebook's missing adverts before the General Election [link]. This story was published via *Reuters* into the *New York Times*, *Washington Post, The Guardian* and others (2019).

Professional affiliations

PSA 2016-present, EPOP 2016-present, ICA 2020-present.

Publications

Articles in books

Hotham, Tristan. "Behind the curtain of the targeting machine: political parties A/B testing in action." *UK Election Analysis.* The Centre for Comparative Politics and Media Research, p88-90, (2019). [link]

Articles in research blogs

Hotham, Tristan. " Trump v Biden: who is engaging the most followers on Facebook?" *The Conversation,* (2020). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. "Brexit in GE2019 political advertising: an asset for some, a liability for others." *LSE Brexit,* (2020). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. "We need to talk about A/B testing: Brexit, attack ads and the election campaign." *LSE Brexit,* (2019). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. "The Digital Campaign: targeted advertising in the 2019 General Election." *Political Studies Association Blog,* (2019). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. " General Election 2019: What are the parties telling us via their targeted adverts?" *Political Studies Association Blog,* (2019). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. "Facebook risks starting a war on knowledge." *The Conversation, (*2018). [link]

Hotham, Tristan. "Facebook is restricting search results–is this taking transparency seriously?" *The Conversation,* (2018). [link]

Written evidence

Hotham, Tristan. "Mr Tristan Hotham – written evidence (DAD0021)" Digital Technology and the Resurrection of Trust Report, *Select Committee on Democracy and Digital Technologies. Report of Session 2019-21 - published 29 June 2020 - HL Paper 77,* (2020). [link]

Working papers

Hotham, Tristan. "Janus-faced campaigning, the rise of the 'traditional' and 'new methods' campaign on Facebook." *In progress.*

Hotham, Tristan. " Follow the leader. How are leader and party pages used to campaign on Facebook? An analysis of the 2015 and 2017 UK General Elections." *In progress.*

Hotham, Tristan. "A/B testing: what it is and how it worked during the 2019 General Election." *In progress.*

Hotham, Tristan. "Labour's 2017 General Election campaign, what sets Momentum apart from the leader and party page?" *In progress.*

Hotham, Tristan. "Satellite permanent campaigning? Momentum across the 2018 permanent campaign." *In progress.*

Hotham, Tristan. " Political identity ownership in practice. The use of depiction in UK election Facebook content across the 2015 and 2017 General Elections." *In progress.*

Conference presentations

Oral presentations

Hotham, Tristan. *"What do party leader pages do on UK Facebook?"* Political Studies Association Conference, (2019).

Hotham, Tristan. *"Is it party leader pages or party pages that matter most on UK Facebook?"* Elections, Public Opinion and Parties Conference, (2019).

Hotham, Tristan. *"Researching Facebook in troubled times"* SWDTP Conference, (2018).

Hotham, Tristan. *"So who exactly are parties reaching on Facebook?"* SWDTP Conference, (2017).

Hotham, Tristan and Cutts, David. *"Facebook and Big Data: Has it changed party campaigning in Britain forever?"* Elections, Public Opinion and Parties Conference, (2016).

Invited talks

Hotham, Tristan. *Social media and politics today.* Invited lecture for Introduction to Social Theory a 1st year Sociology module. University of Bath, (2019).

References

Dr Peter Allen
Reader in Political Science,
University of Bath, P.A.Allen@bath.ac.uk

Mr Sam Jeffers
Co-Founder of WhoTargets.me
Sam@whotargets.me

Prof David Cutts,
Professor in Political Science,
University of Birmingham, d.cutts@bham.ac.uk

Dr Nick Startin
Honorary lecturer,
University of Bath, n.j.startin@bath.ac.uk