



THE ONLINE HATE PREVENTION INSTITUTE

Empowering communities, organisations and agencies in the fight against hate.

ONLINE HATE PREVENTION INSTITUTE SUPPLEMENTAL SUBMISSION

INQUIRY INTO EXTREMISM IN VICTORIA



SUBMISSION TO
THE LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE (LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL),
THE PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

23 MAY 2022

PREAMBLE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this supplemental material. Shortly after submissions closed for this inquiry another far-right terrorist attack occurred, this time in Buffalo, New York, in the United States. The attack killed 10 people and wounded 3. This supplemental submission shares lessons from a preliminary examination of this latest attack and the way extremism is evolving.

The attacker describes himself as a neo-Nazi in his manifesto. He repeats the same white supremacist “Great Replacement” conspiracy theories we saw in the manifesto from the Australian who carried out the Christchurch attack in 2019. Most importantly he was member of the /pol/ community, the same online community which led to the radicalisation of those responsible for the attacks in Christchurch, Poway, El Paso, and Halle as we have documented in detail.¹

The Online Hate Prevention Institute is in the process of producing a report on the attack. This submission provides early insight from that evolving work. The key point we wish to stress is that the online community responsible for this radicalisation is exceedingly large and includes Australians, and almost certainly Victorians. We are not immune from the threat this radicalisation poses.

This attack, like the previous four we mentioned, was live streamed. Despite improved efforts of the technology companies to prevent the spread of extremism, the attacker used a sophisticated technical setup to enable his video to be spread despite technological interventions from the live streaming service. There were also other efforts by the /pol/ community to recover and spread the abhorrent violent material he recorded. Australians were involved in not only urging such material to be spread, but in providing technical guidance to facilitate it.

The Online Hate Prevention Institute succeeded in removing one copy of the video after watching it go viral, from about 100,000 views to over 3.2 million over a period of 13 hours. Many of those viewers may have saved the video, allowing it to continue to spread from person to person and through less well moderated platforms. Given the way the video of the Christchurch attack inspired this attack, having this video of the Buffalo attack in circulation increases the chance of a further attack.

Our efforts ending the viral spread of this video were a significant mitigation, however the delay of 13 hours, and the resulting viral spread to millions of people might have been reduced if we were better resourced to undertake the specific critical work we do. Unfortunately, there are no grant programs which such bespoke work would fall under. We hope some sort of direct partnership with the Victorian government might be possible and would welcome any suggestions from the committees to help us work with Government to keep the people of Victoria safe.

Dr Andre Oboler
23 May 2022

¹ Andre Oboler, William Allington, Patrick Scolyer-Gray (2019) *Hate and violent extremism from an online sub-culture : the Yom Kippur terrorist attack in Halle, Germany* (Online Hate Prevention Institute) Retrieved May 11, 2022, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2286730824>

ABOUT THE ONLINE HATE PREVENTION INSTITUTE

The Online Hate Prevention Institute (OHPI) is Australia’s only harm prevention charity dedicated to tackling online hate and extremism. We have been doing so since January 2012. In 2021 we were commended by the Legal and Social Issues Committee of the Victorian Parliament for our role as “an entrepreneurial Victorian organisation developing globally innovative technology solutions to address online harms”.²

Our focus on online hate and extremism covers hate against individuals and hate against specific groups within society. Our work on antisemitism, Islamophobia, and far-right extremism has a strong international reputation and is particularly relevant to this inquiry, as is our more direct work focuses on extremism and the way extremist groups use the internet for recruitment, fundraising, and to spread their ideologies of hate.

We have maintained a dedicated focus on online extremism, mostly from the far-right, since 2014.³ Our work in this space was noted and praised in the Victorian Parliament in 2015.⁴ We were a member of the Research Institute on Social Cohesion (RIOSOC) set up by the Victorian Government in 2016. We presented at the Asia-Pasic Launch of Tech Against Terrorism in 2018.⁵ We engaged extensively following the 2019 Christchurch terror attack.⁶ Our work exposed the roots of the far-right ideology that incited the Christchurch attack and further terrorist attacks around the world.⁷

We also support the work of the Australia Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) with our CEO serving as an expert member of Australia’s delegation and serving on IHRA’s Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial. Transnational extremism is a topic of interest to the committee, and we share information with other experts and government officials in this context.

In the last six months we have also been briefing police, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) officials at different levels of government from the UK, Norway, and Sweden. We have also been working with GIFCT, Meta, and others in the technology space on issues related to extremism.

² Report of the Inquiry into anti-vilification protections, Legal and Social Issues Committee, Victorian Parliament, 2021, p 253. https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/lpic-LA/Inquiry_into_Anti-Vilification_Protections_Report/Inquiry_into_Anti-vilification_Protections_002.pdf

³ See generally: <http://ohpi.org.au/terrorism-violent-extremism/>

⁴ “OHPI’s work get a positive mention in the Victorian Parliament”, 7 September 2015, <http://ohpi.org.au/ohpis-work-get-a-positive-mention-in-the-victorian-parliament/> quoting from a speech by Inga Peulich then the Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

⁵ A video of the presentation is available at: <https://www.facebook.com/onlinehate/videos/1677547508989131>

⁶ See generally: <https://ohpi.org.au/responding-to-christchurch-tackling-online-hate-and-extremism/>

⁷ Andre Oboler, William Allington, Patrick Scolyer-Gray (2019) *Hate and violent extremism from an online sub-culture : the Yom Kippur terrorist attack in Halle, Germany* (Online Hate Prevention Institute) Retrieved May 11, 2022, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2286730824>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

DR ANDRE OBOLER

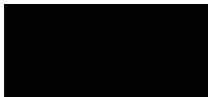
Dr Andre Oboler is the CEO & Managing Director of the Online Hate Prevention Institute. He is an Honorary Associate at La Trobe Law School, a global Vice President of the IEEE Computer Society, serves on IEEE’s Global Public Policy Committee, and is an expert member of the Australian Government’s Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

Dr Oboler was formerly a Senior Lecturer in Cyber Security at the La Trobe Law School, intercultural liaison for a independent inquiry into antisemitism for the Victorian Education Department, co-chair of the Online Antisemitism working group of the Israeli Government’s Global Forum to Combat Antisemitism, an expert member of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combatting Antisemitism, a member of the Swedish Government’s expert advisory group for the Malmo Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, and served for two terms with the board of the UK’s higher education regulator the QAA.

He holds a PhD in Computer Science from Lancaster University, and a B. Comp. Sci. (Hons) & LLM(Juris Doctor) from Monash University. He is a Senior Member of the IEEE, a member of the IEEE Computer Society’s Golden Core, a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a Member of the Victorian Society of Computers & Law.

AUTHORISATION FOR SUBMISSION

This report has been produced by the Online Hate Prevention Institute and is approved for submission to the *Inquiry into extremism in Victoria* of the Victorian Parliament by the CEO. It draws from our public research into the Buffalo attack.



Andre Oboler
CEO, Online Hate Prevention Institute

23 May 2022

THE RISK OF EXTREMISM FROM /POL/

There are critical lessons from the Buffalo attack on May 14th 2022 that are relevant for Victoria. The attack is one of a series of global attacks that have impacted New Zealand, the United States, and Germany. This series of attacks is a result of radicalisation in a specific online community called /pol/, a community which includes many Australians, some of whom are no doubt from Victoria.

Through exposure to the /pol/ community, the attacker was radicalised to the point of carrying out a terrorist attack in the space of just two years.

The /pol/ community operates primarily on the 4chan image board (a type of anonymous online forum) but spaces for it exist on other image boards and platforms. Following previous attacks linked to /pol/ on another board called 8chan (a copy of 4chan) that board closed its /pol/ forum. The /pol/ community is spread across different platforms with people using multiple /pol/ spaces in different places and moving content between them.

After the terrorist attack in Halle, Germany, in October 2019 we published a detailed report examining that attack, similar past attacks, and the underlying culture that gave rise to them. In that work we explained the following about 4chan and /pol/:⁸

4chan provided the foundation for a great deal of popular culture which spread across the Internet and occasionally offline, while at the same time maintaining a “culture of abuse”... [4chan is known for] encouraging suicides, coordinating extreme harassment, and initially hosting the misogyny that led to Gamergate. 4chan has received sporadic bursts of high-profile media attention, usually for its negative impact.

4chan has always cultivated a “too toxic to endure” culture steeped in sarcasm and irony that users claim is intentionally designed to confuse and shock new visitors. This culture was deployed as a tool for excluding certain social groups from participation and establishing subcultural boundaries and signposting group identity. One of the boards within 4chan, however, took this to a new level. The /pol/ board was regularly presented as a “containment zone”, a place within the 4chan community to quarantine behavior that was too toxic even for the rest of 4chan.

⁸ Andre Oboler, William Allington and Patrick Scolyer-Grey 2019, *Hate and Violent Extremism From an Online Subculture: the Yom Kippur Terrorist Attack in Halle, Germany*, Online Hate Prevention Institute, Melbourne. p. 71.
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2286730824>

We went on to explain how /pol/ was originally ironically pro-Nazi. Antisemitic and pro-Nazi content would be posted and commented on approvingly until someone took it seriously, at which point the mob would turn on them for missing the “irony”. As we explained, over time neo-Nazism changed this culture:⁹

While it used to be hard to know what was serious and what was a result of /pol/lacks (users of /pol/) trolling each other, the extreme views which started as a parody became an earnest belief within the /pol/ community. This normalisation of neo-Nazism on /pol/ was in part the results of a campaign by neo-Nazis from Stormfront who sought to convert the /pol/acks to their ideology.

The culture in /pol/ today is deeply antisemitic and pro-Nazi. A selection of posts from today are provided in Appendix 1. The celebration of Nazism and promotion of antisemitism shape the attitudes of those who associate with the community. Links posted to the /pol/ community facilitate further radicalisation of some members of the community.

⁹ Andre Oboler, William Allington and Patrick Scolyer-Grey 2019, *Hate and Violent Extremism From an Online Subculture: the Yom Kippur Terrorist Attack in Halle, Germany*, Online Hate Prevention Institute, Melbourne. p. 71.
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-2286730824>

THE ATTACKER

The starting point for his radicalisation was the Christchurch attack, and in particular the video from the livestream of that attack. In his manifesto the attacker explains:

“Brenton’s livestream started everything you see here. Brenton started my real research into the problems with immigration and foreigners in our White lands, without his livestream I would likely have no idea about the real problems the West is facing.”

The manifesto also states that he joined 4chan out of boredom during COVID in May 2020. He started on other boards, but “eventually wound up on /pol/”. He described how the “infographics, shitposts, and memes” on /pol/ shared messages about the “White race” dying out, Blacks being disproportionately responsible for killing white people, white people’s taxes subsidising Black people through welfare, and that “the Jews and the elite were behind this”.

These far-right narratives are false, and we have deconstructed them in our report on the Buffalo attack.¹⁰ The racist narratives, many supporting the Great Replacement conspiracy theory, led the attacker to further internet research including from sources often shared through the /pol/ community.

In his manifesto the attacker also says,

“I support neo-nazism but I am not a member of any neo-nazi groups, you decide what that makes me.”

This reflects the self-radicalisation that occurs through the /pol/ community as a result of the community’s culture, as well as the online far-right (often explicitly neo-Nazi) disinformation the community shares. Anonymously participating in the community, which can be done with no membership or registration, gives access to this culture without requiring a person joining any particular far-right group.

Our research has revealed a series of bookmarks on the attacker’s browser which reflect his reading and radicalisation:

THE DAILY STORMER

We monitored the Daily Stormer when it first started in 2013. At that time, it had a Facebook page. In an early post we documented, the creator explained what the Daily Stormer was about: “For those who already don’t know, ‘Daily Stormer’ is in english to what ‘Der Sturmer’ was in Germany during the Hitler’s time.” The text accompanied an image of the October 1936 front page of Der Stürmer, a German

¹⁰ <https://ohpi.org.au/buffalo-terrorist-attack/>

newspaper that was a key part of Nazi propaganda and the antisemitic hate whose acceptance in Nazi Germany facilitated the Holocaust.

Following the deadly “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville in 2017 the Daily Stormer found itself repeatedly terminated by its hosting companies and bouncing between servers, banned by GoDaddy and then Google. It was the start of a reconsideration by tech companies of the idea of being “neutral” when it came to neo-Nazism and white supremacy. The Southern Poverty Law Center called it the number one hate site on the internet.

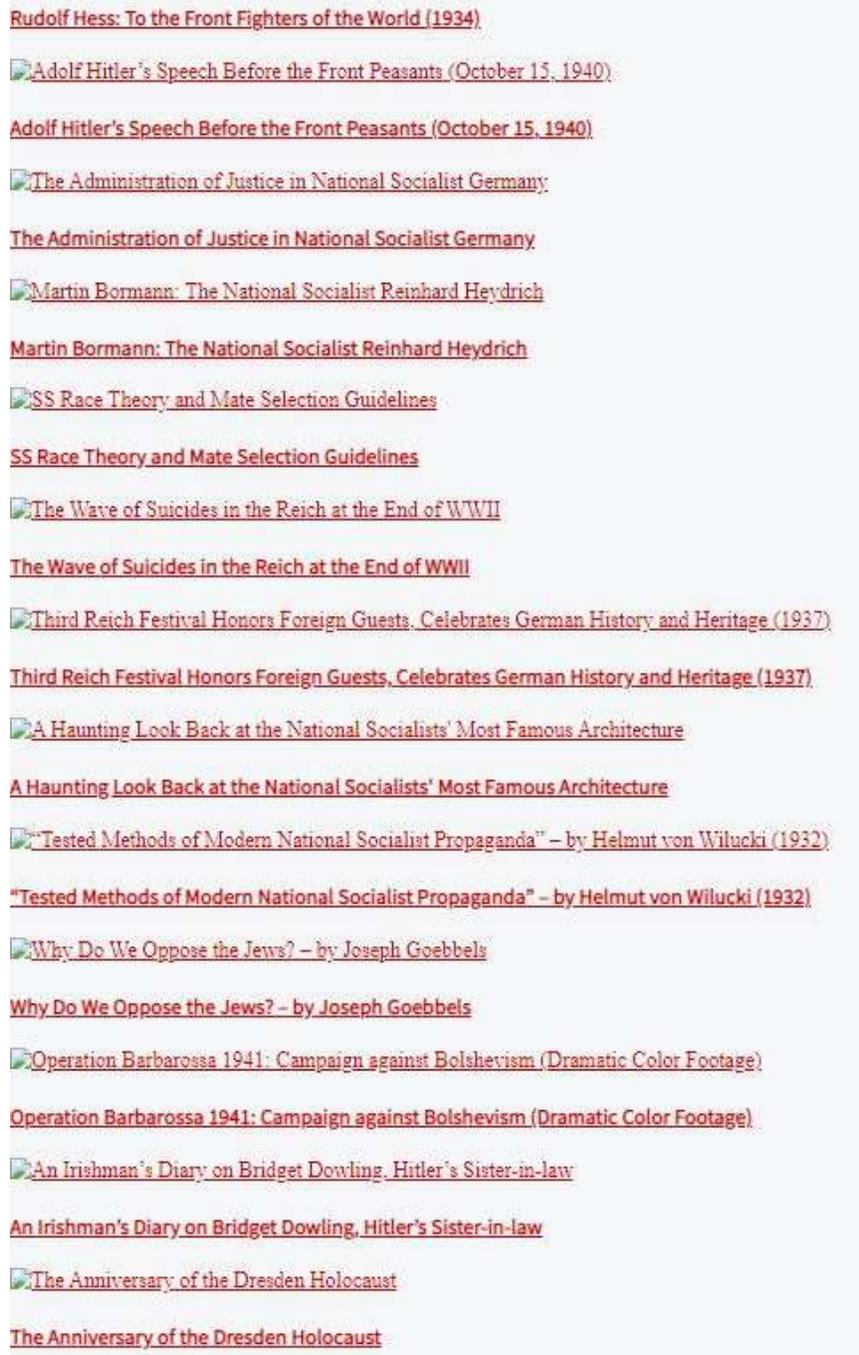


Figure 1 Daily Stormer Facebook post from 2013

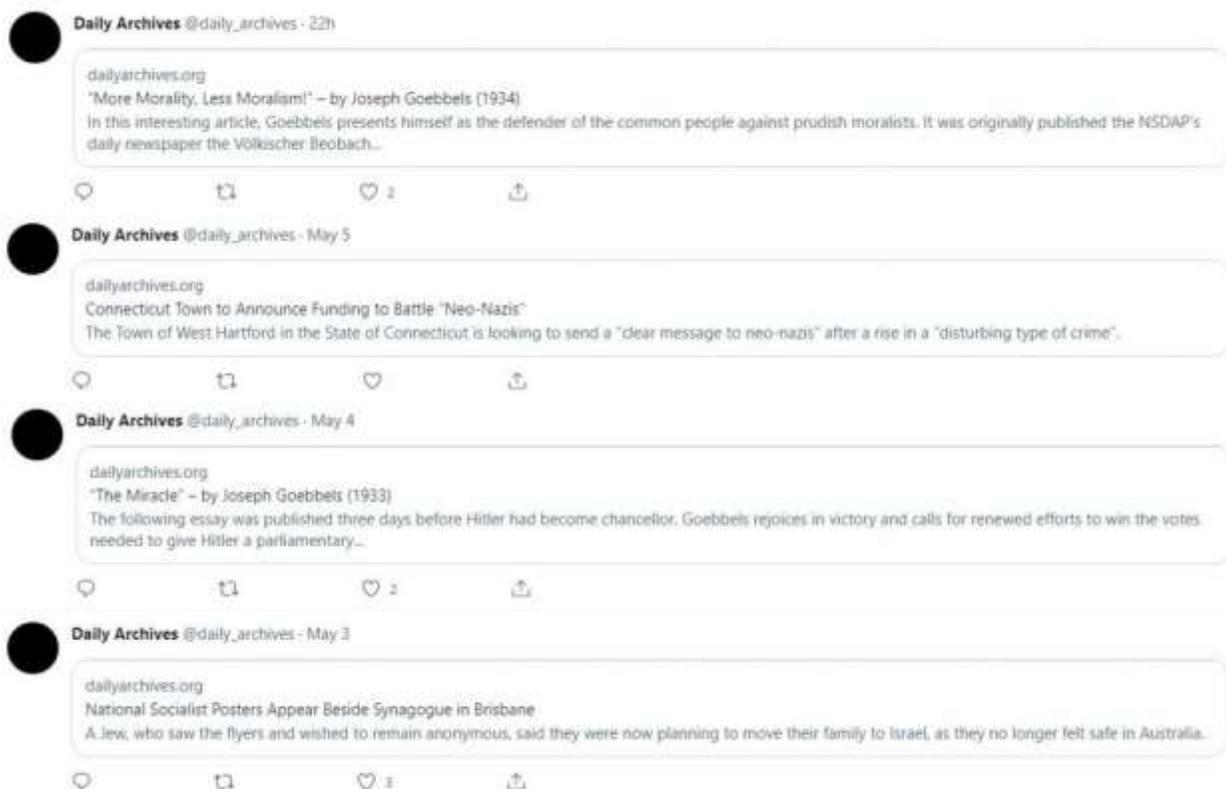
THE DAILY ARCHIVE

The Daily Archive is a site (recently taken offline by GoDaddy) which focused on distributing historic Nazi material, such as speeches by Nazi leaders, in addition to neo-Nazi commentary.

From the Google cache, here's some of the content that was available there until recently:



The daily archive was also, until recently, operating a Twitter account which it used to promote its Nazi articles, as well as other neo-Nazi activities and messages.



NATIONAL VANGUARD

The National Vanguard is an American white nationalist, neo-Nazi organization based in Charlottesville. The article itself, “14 Reasons IQ Race Gap is Genetic”, was published in 2016 and is a promotion of Nazi like racial pseudo-science that argues Black people are inferior to white people. Given the choice of Black targets in this attack, the bookmarking of this article is particularly significant.

THE ROLE OF LIVESTREAMED VIDEO

As already explained, the attacker in Buffalo was radicalised by the video from the attack in Christchurch. That video, subsequent videos of attacks by members of the /pol/ community, we shared widely by the community. That occurred again in the Buffalo attack.

Twitch, the service the attacker used to livestream, reacted far faster in this attack than they had on the last attack in Halle in October 2019. This time the feed but closed by the company while the attack was still in progress. This prevented the video being saved and uploaded to his Twitch channel as occurred in the Halle attack. The attacker, however, had taken some sophisticated steps to work around such an intervention and to enable others to anonymously watch his attack and record it.

His work around involved broadcasting from his camera to his Twitch channel, then playing the channel on his computer as he re-broadcast his screen to a Discord server. This resulted in a loss of quality, but enabled people to watch the livestream on discord without accessing the Twitch service.

The significance of the rebroadcast is that it enabled people to watch and record without directly accessing Twitch, meaning their IP address would not be recorded by Twitch. This provided an even greater degree of anonymity than could be achieved using a proxy server. This in turn would have provided those on Discord more confidence to record and spread the video in the belief their action would be free of consequences. There may, however, still be ways to identify them and hold them accountable for spreading the extremist content.

In addition to his own computer, 21 other people were watching the Twitch channel live and an unknown number on Discord. At least five of those watching on Twitch were from the /pol/ community and took part in discussions after the attack.

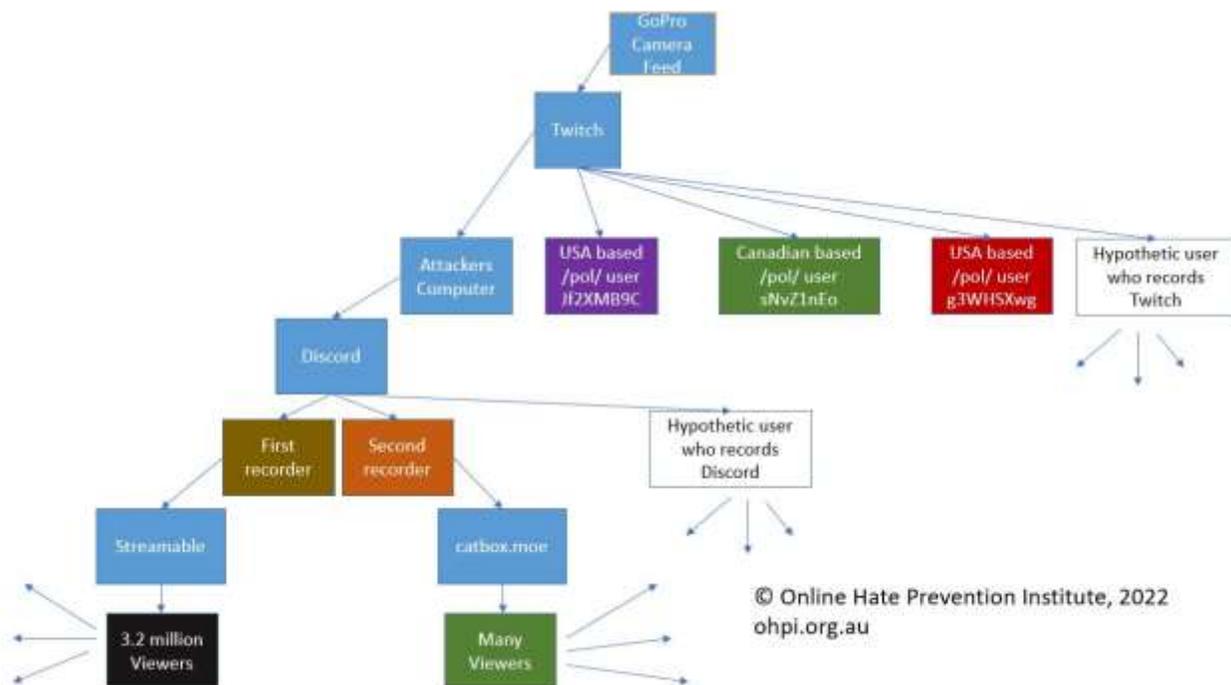


Figure 2 The spread of the Buffalo livestream / video

At least two people watching via Discord recorded the video of the livestream and then uploaded it, each to a different site. The addresses were shared on /pol/ allowing the video to spread. One of the sites was a commercial service based in the US called Streamable and the other a hobbyist site called catbox.moe. Thirteen hours after the attack we found both videos and proceeded to archive them and secured their removal.

The copy on Streamable provided details of the number of views the video was receiving. When we first found the video it had been seen by 107,546 people. We immediately reported it using an online form from the company, selecting terrorism as the reason for our report. We monitored the video for the next 13 hours, recording the rise in views until it reached 3,244,599 views almost 13 hours later. The video was removed shortly after this following an exchange of communication we had with the Managing Director of Streamable's parent company, which is based in the UK.

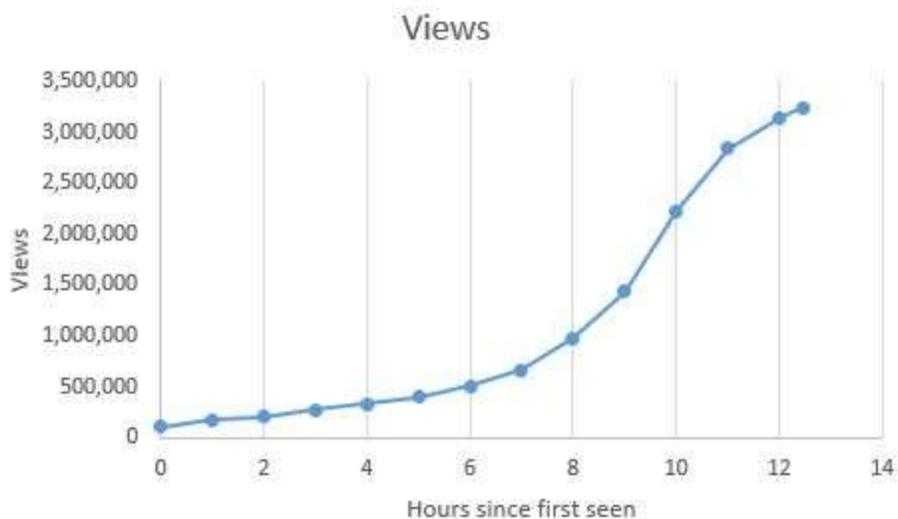


Figure 3 Viewing of the Buffalo video on Streamable

The copy on catbox.moe remained online for at least three more days. We contacted the owner via email asking for the video to be removed and encouraging the owner to contact the FBI and share any data that might be on the server to help identify the poster. The service did not provide any details on the number of views the video received, but it given discussion on 4chan of slow download times, the traffic must have been substantial.

At the same time, the /pol/ community sought to pressure those who had watched the attack on Twitch to share their copies of the live stream. Doing so required recovering the video from the local cache on their computers. Members of the /pol community both urged them to do so, and provided technical support and advice to facilitate this. This included support from users based in Australia, though we don't know their location within Australia.



Online Hate Prevention Institute Supplemental Submission – Extremism in Victoria

- Anonymous (ID: [g3WHSXwg](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:12:41 No.377607843 ▶
[>>377607685](#)
send
- Anonymous (ID: [wwPUAXd](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:12:43 No.377607846 ▶
[>>377607685](#)
now make a webm
- Anonymous (ID: [3fWgmx09](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:12:46 No.377607851 ▶
[>>377607502](#)
It might be if he was targeting nogs
[>>377607240](#)
- Anonymous (ID: [T3pobRev](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:13:00 No.377607872 ▶ [>>377608301](#)
[>>377607685](#)
post webm or catbox matey
- Anonymous (ID: [Jf2XMB9C](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:13:01 No.377607877 ▶ [>>377607998](#) [>>377608190](#)
[>>377607247](#)
[>>377607377](#)
[>>377607513](#)
tell me how to do this. i still have the tab open
- Anonymous (ID: [OQuyaWp](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:13:03 No.377607884 ▶ [>>377607998](#) [>>377608135](#) [>>377608142](#)
[>>377607685](#)
isn't that a frame from the christchurch (or w/e mosque it was) shooting?
- Anonymous (ID: [zH8+DLmA](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:13:23 No.377607920 ▶
[>>377607685](#)
>a fucking leaf
okay now post the video
- >> Anonymous (ID: [836qxTW3](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:14:05 No.377607998 ▶ [>>377608361](#)
[>>377607877](#)
which browser are you using and which version of windows?
- >> Anonymous (ID: [836qxTW3](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:15:52 No.377608190 ▶ [>>377608361](#)
[>>377607877](#)
download this
https://www.nirsoft.net/utils/video_cache_view.html
- >> Anonymous (ID: [Jf2XMB9C](#)) 05/15/22(Sun)05:17:17 No.377608361 ▶
[>>377607998](#)
win 10. firefox, latest. i got ghostery and ublock installed too, hopefully that doesnt interfere



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the way the Christchurch livestream has inspired multiple additional attacks, it is possible this latest video will similarly inspire others and lead to further terrorist attacks. With Victorians participating in the /pol community, Victoria is not immune to the threat posed by this source of radicalisation towards violent extremism.

The role of Australians, potentially Victorians, in facilitating the spread of abhorrent violent material, i.e. the video of the livestream of the attack, is something that needs to be addressed. We must recognise that efforts to spread terrorist material, glorifying terrorism and encouraging further attacks, can be facilitated from Victoria even when the actual attack occurred outside Victoria's borders.

On the positive side, the value of the Online Hate Prevention Institute, previously described by the Committee as “an entrepreneurial Victorian organisation developing globally innovative technology solutions to address online harms”,¹¹ has again been proven. It is unfortunately we weren't able to secure the videos removal more quickly, but we are operating without Government support to facilitate such work.

We must recognise that the response to hate and extremism requires more than just education and the celebration of our multicultural community. It requires work by police and intelligence services, but also the work of specialists in civil society. There are many essential services provided through partnerships between government and charities. In other places governments have invested substantially in charities working to monitor and tackle extremism. Victoria, and Australia as a whole, is falling behind.

Recommendation: It is time to recognise the vital work of civil society organisations based in Victoria that actively work to monitor extremism and prevent its spread. Government should enter into long term partnerships providing funding to support this work and establishing coherent intelligence sharing between civil society and government organisations working in this space.

Recommendation: Based on the experience RIOSC, it is important to differentiate between academic research and the work of practitioners in combating extremism. Both are essential, but they play different roles in building understanding and protecting the community. Both require funding.

While there is always a temptation to limit government funding to “projects”, in order to prevent organisations becoming reliant on government for core operating costs, we believe responding to online hate and extremism is now a core responsibility of government. Either government must itself do far more in this space, or it must enter a partnership with a civil society provider of expertise and action. Such partnerships exist in many other areas of essential services. Whether the government wishes to fund the Online Hate Prevention Institute, or reinvent it, action of some sort is increasingly urgent.

¹¹ Report of the Inquiry into anti-vilification protections, Legal and Social Issues Committee, Victorian Parliament, 2021, p 253. https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/lisic-LA/Inquiry_into_Anti-Vilification_Protections_Report/Inquiry_into_Anti-vilification_Protections_002.pdf

>> **Anonymous** (ID: [11iDgFb6](#))  05/23/22(Mon)15:02:17 No.379014203 ▶
Other than the gore and blood magic, I don't really mind jews

>> **Anonymous** (ID: [Pu/TCwhx](#))  05/23/22(Mon)15:58:47 No.379018745 ▶
[>>379013466 \(OP\)](#)
Stop trying to kill us you fucking jew or there wouldn't be a problem...

>> **Anonymous** (ID: [HO7VOi8p](#))  05/23/22(Mon)14:36:18 No.379012005 ▶ [>>379013110](#)
[>>379011460](#)
>You so called Neo Nazis, hate Muslims
I never said I'm hate muslims nor am i nazi. I just think nazis have been painted as a boogeyman by Jewish propaganda. That being said i am in opposition to muslims/arabs flooding western countries and you portay whitey as the bad guy if they're in opposition to their own replacement, so get fucked cunt. I'm not defending wars waged by Israeli deception in the middle east, but I'm not going to be white guilt tripped either.

>> **Anonymous** (ID: [B61CM0+R](#))  05/23/22(Mon)15:51:53 No.379018206 ▶ [>>379018563](#)
File: [1920s German Trannies.png](#) (1.1 MB, 900x665)

[>>379004951 \(OP\)](#)
He already did something about it. Jews made early 1900's Germany gay and oversexualized as fuck. Go read some History.

>> Anonymous (ID: [HOTVQ88](#)) 05/23/22(Mon)13:26:46 No.379005503 ▶ >>379013073
File: [1524047521725.jpg](#) (428 KB, 729x781)



Asher Kohn [Follow](#)
The narrative gazes also.
May 23, 2016 · 4 min read

How the Nazis derailed the medical advances around sexual reassignment surgery

With one act, they set the trans community back decades

People often say **"the Nazis burned books"**, but they don't mention that the books consisted of pornography – often **of a pedophilic or homosexual nature**. The non-fiction they burned tended to be degenerate philosophy or "science", like **the transgenderist research of Jewish Scientist Magnus Hirschfeld**, a gay rights activist pioneering the first Male-to-Female transgender surgical procedures. Hirschfeld headed the **'Institut für Sexualwissenschaft'** whose mission was to "research" degenerate and deviant sexuality for socially subversive purposes. This idea mirrored other Jewish subversives at the time, like the Frankfurt School's Herbert Marcuse, whose theory of "polymorphous perversity" inspired the Left's embrace of the gay rights movement: **"gay sexuality as revolution"**. By burning this research, Hitler spared the world at least 70 years of plastic surgery monstrosities and normalized mental illness.



If he won they wouldn't still be around, enjoy punishment.