RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW
POLITICS

This checklist should be completed for every research project that involves human participants. **It must be completed before potential participants are approached to take part in any research.** It will be used by the module tutor or supervisor and Research Ethics Officer to identify whether a fuller application for ethics approval needs to be submitted or whether the research can proceed without this.

Section I: Project Details

1. Project title:	The online public discourse around the war on Iraq.
Statement of Research Purpose	This project will examine how the public discourse around the war in Iraq has developed on the BBC website forums.
Project Aims/ Research questions:	To examine how the users of the BBC website have responded to changes in policy in Iraq. The project will also look at how the users of that website form a community and examine the breadth of political positions that are supported and tolerated within that community.
Proposed methods:	Observation of the discussion board. Detailed textual analysis of the postings. Mapping networks of correspondence.
Method of recruiting research participants	The discussion board is public. No additional permission will be sought.
Criteria for selecting research participants	The BBC has been chosen because it represents a non-partisan site for public discussion. Most alternative discussion board sites on this topic are slanted towards a particular perspective on the issue.

Section II: Applicant Details

2. Name of researchers (applicant): JL Paxman
3. Status: Staff
4. Email addresses:
   a) jlp9@le.ac.uk
   b)
   c)
   d)
   e)
5a. Contact addresses:
   a)
   b)
   c)
   d)
   e)
5b. Telephone numbers
   a)
   b)
   c)
   d)
   e)

Section III: For Students Only

6. Module name and number, MA or PhD course and department: PhD politics

7. Module leader's or supervisor's name: Dr D Dimbleby

8. Email address:

9. Contact address:

Section IV: Module Tutors/Dissertation Supervisors Only

Please tick the appropriate boxes. The study should not begin until all boxes are ticked:

The topic merits further research	☒
The student has the skills to carry out the research	☒
The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate	☐
The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are appropriate	☒

Comments from module tutor/ supervisor:

I think that this is an excellent project which merits further study. However I am unclear on the issue of consent in this kind of research. I would appreciate advice from the ethics committee on this issue.

Section V: All Research Applicants

Please outline below whether or not your research raises any particular ethical issues and how you plan to address these issues.

I think that this is an important research topic which merits further research. I don't anticipate there being any ethical issues with this research. All participants are posting about a public issue on a public forum. Participants in this discussion are fully aware that there opinions are entering the public arena. Indeed this is why they choose to post here. The BBC often reports on opinions on its forums in both internet and broadcast mediums.

How many research participants do you intend to involve?   **100+**

Is this figure: **FIXED?** ☐   **APPROX.?** ☒

Are you using a Participant Information and Informed Consent Form?

                    YES ☐   **NO** ☒

If YES, please paste copy form at the end of this application.

Have you submitted a Risk Assessment Form   **YES** ☐   **NO** ☒

Now proceed to the Research Ethics Checklist:

Section VI: Research Ethics Checklist

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box:

	YES	NO
1. Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)	☐	☒
2. Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (e.g. students at school, members of self-help group, residents of nursing home)	☐	☒
3. Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places)	☒	☐
4. Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)?	☐	☒
5. Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	☒
6. Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants?	☐	☒
7. Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	☐	☒
8. Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☒
9. Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	☐	☒
10. Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐	☒
11. Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?	☐	☒

If you have answered 'no' to all questions, paste copy of any Participant Information/Informed Consent Form at end of this document and then sign and date the form overleaf and then submit form to your module tutor/ supervisor. You should also all retain a copy of the form.

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions in Section VI, please return to Section V and ensure that you have described in detail how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research. Answering yes to questions does not mean that you cannot do the research only that your proposal raises significant ethical issues which will need careful consideration and formal approval by the module tutor/ supervisor and the Department's Research Ethics Officer **prior to you commencing your research**. If you answered 'yes' to question 11, you will also have to submit an application to the appropriate external health authority ethics committee. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research should be notified to the module tutor/ supervisor may require a new application for ethics approval.

Signatures: **Date:**

Students: ………………………………………   …………
(all students involved in   ………………………………………   …………
researchmust sign)   ………………………………………   …………
                                     ………………………………………   …………
                                     ………………………………………   …………
                                     ………………………………………   …………

Supervisor/module tutor: ………………………………………   …………

Research ethics officer: ………………………………………   …………

Please paste copies of information/informed contest forms in here before submitting to Supervisor/Module Tutor:

Relevant information and consent form submitted as described above.