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Rotten trees, bad apples? Understanding the intergenerational transmission of extremism

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PhD Propositions

ROTTEN TREES, BAD APPLES?

Understanding the intergenerational transmission of extremism

1. There is no all-encompassing theory that can explain the intergenerational transmission of extremist ideologies, yet an interdisciplinary approach can help us understand some crucial parts of the puzzle.
2. The perceived need to protect children can paradoxically lead extremist parents to either actively instill their ideologies in their offspring, or to consciously refrain from doing so.
3. The societal stigma that comes with growing up in an extremist household can be more damaging than the upbringing itself.
4. We should avoid the terms ‘indoctrination’ and ‘brainwashing’ when discussing the transmission of extremist ideologies, as these concepts are profoundly normative, overly simplistic, and generally lack empirical rigor.
5. Academic collaboration between universities and intelligence services is not just possible, but also very valuable if we want to advance our understanding of extremist communities in the Netherlands and beyond.
6. The prevailing academic tendency to quantify qualitative research outcomes is harmful to social sciences at large, and narrative studies in particular.
7. In their efforts to understand extremism, terrorism scholars tend to isolate themselves in academic echo chambers, becoming guilty of the very closed-mindedness they claim to oppose.
8. Retracting the nationalities of (former) foreign terrorist fighters is not only an inhumane policy measure, but also counterproductive from a security perspective.
9. Honoring our ancestors means taking their worldviews seriously enough to question them, not just preserving them unchanged.
10. A society’s moral progress hinges on each generation’s willingness to break away from existing norms and values that promote division over unity.