

Annotated Bibliography

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Topic: Is hacktivism a form of civil disobedience or cyber terrorism?

1. **Gaweł, H. (2024).** *Hacktivism. Internet Policy Review*, 13(2).
<https://doi.org/10.14763/2024.2.1751>

This article provides a comprehensive overview of hacktivism by examining how scholars have defined and interpreted the concept over time. Gaweł explains that hacktivism combines hacking techniques with political or social activism and explores the debate over whether it should be viewed as digital civil disobedience, cybercrime, or something in between. The article also discusses the influence of hacker ethics, free expression, and information freedom on hacktivist movements.

This article defines the major concepts I intend to study and introduces the competing perspectives I will be discussing throughout my research.

2. **Romagna, M. (2024).** *Social Opportunity Structures in Hacktivism. Journal of Crime and Justice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2024.2372054>

Romagna investigates why individuals become hacktivists through a series of interviews with thirty hacktivists. The study finds that hacktivist participation is influenced not only by political beliefs but also by social relationships, and opportunities to participate in collective action. The article presents them as members of organized social movements driven by shared identities and ideological goals, rather than criminals.

This article supports the argument that many hacktivists resemble traditional political activists engaged in digital forms of protest, supporting the civil disobedience side of the discourse.

3. **Hosford, K. (2025).** *A bibliometric analysis of academic output (2000–2020). Journal of Digital Forensics, Security and Law*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19393555.2025.2459741>

Hosford analyzes decades of academic literature to identify how researchers have defined and studied hacktivism and cyberterrorism. The article reveals that these concepts are frequently debated, sometimes overlap, and have evolved alongside changes in technology and global politics. It also identifies the major research themes and gaps in the existing literature.

This article provides valuable context by showing how scholarly thinking about hacktivism and cyberterrorism has developed over time and demonstrates that there is no universally accepted distinction between the two concepts.

4. **Iftikhar, S., et al. (2024).** *Cyberterrorism as a global threat: A review on repercussions and countermeasures. Discover Applied Sciences.*

This review article examines cyberterrorism from legal, political, and national security perspectives. It defines cyberterrorism, discusses notable cyberattacks against governments and critical infrastructure, and explains the economic and societal consequences of these attacks as well as strategies governments and organizations use to prevent and respond to cyberterrorism.

This article establishes what cyberterrorism actually is and provides the criteria for comparing hacktivism with cyberterrorism.