

Technology has always been important for Robert Gorwa and his family. Growing up in Vancouver, the Internet helped keep them in touch with their Polish roots, and computing offered a new beginning for his father, who began studying programming. While pursuing a BA in International Relations at the University of British Columbia, Robert had a chance to study the infrastructures and processes that so inspired him as a youth, working with UBC Professor Taylor Owen on a number of projects relating to technology and politics, including co-authored work published in *Foreign Affairs* and a collaborative project on the effects of digitally-mediated conflict on Canadian diaspora populations, run on CBC's *The Current* and *OpenCanada*. With Professor Owen's guidance, Robert began studies at the University of Oxford's Oxford Internet Institute (OII), a world-leading research and teaching institution looking at the relationship between digital technology, politics and society.



Robert Gorwa

Following a life-changing year at the OII, Robert is now pursuing his doctoral studies in Oxford's Department of Politics and International Relations. His doctoral dissertation examines an increasingly important political issue that has recently captured the attention of both the public and of policymakers: the contested and complicated relationships between states, citizens and multi-national technology firms. Robert is interested primarily in the global politics of platforms like Facebook and Google, and the

governance and security questions posed by this new type of politically salient private actor.

As a firm believer in the importance of public scholarship and engagement, especially relating to these complex technology policy issues, Robert seeks to contribute to the public understanding of these topics through opinion writing for publications such as the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Wired Magazine*, the *Washington Post*, and *Quartz*, as well as through public talks at events held across Europe and the United States (for instance: the Centre for Democratic Citizenship at Concordia University; Data & Society Research Institute in New York; the Public Policy Forum in Ottawa; and the annual Stanley Foundation "Strategy for Peace" conference in Washington, DC).

Most recently, Robert spent the summer of 2018 based at Stanford University, where he continued work on a long-term project on Facebook moderation, transparency, and

accountability. Robert remains committed to the Canadian conversation around major tech policy and governance issues, which he continues to explore in the Canadian context through his ongoing work with Taylor Owen and the Public Policy Forum in Ottawa. While living and studying in the UK, Robert hopes that he can serve as an unofficial Canadian ambassador for these vital, next-generation social and political issues, and strives to make a meaningful public contribution through his academic studies and public engagement.