

**Information Sheet about the Research Study**  
**Technologically Mediated Identity Among the Otherkin**  
**IRB# 061407**

You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Alex Dent of the Department of Anthropology, George Washington University (GWU). The research will be conducted by Devin Proctor, a PhD student working under Dr. Dent. Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the construction and maintenance of Otherkin identity along multiple layers of interaction: social media, virtual worlds, online gaming, and face-to-face interaction. I hope to gain insight into the ways in which all cultural groups that rely on online presence perform and communicate identity along different modes of media.

If you choose to take part in this study, the following will occur:

- Devin Proctor will spend time with you and talk to you about your experiences both on and offline. He will also be participating in meetings, gameplay, and other everyday occurrences with you.
- The total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study could be minutes to hours at a time, over the next year, depending on the circumstances of the situation.
- You may refuse to answer any questions and you may stop your participation in this study at any time.
- Devin Proctor will take notes by hand in a field notebook. These notes may include descriptions of behavior and direct quotations and will follow anthropological ethical considerations to remain as true to the situation as possible. In interview situations, Devin Proctor may use a digital voice recording device. Devin Proctor WILL NOT conduct any video recording. In virtual spaces (Second Life, social media, and/or online gaming) Devin Proctor will take occasional screenshots capturing text and events during gameplay, since taking hand written notes would be difficult. Only those who have given consent will have their text/ image involved in this study. In social media contexts, screenshots will not be used, but text may be copied from posts.

Possible risks or discomforts you could experience during this study:

- There is always possible psychological stress and anxiety involved with being observed.
- Any research involves a loss of privacy, but your information will be handled as confidentially as possible (see below).

- You may feel uncomfortable with some topics discussed, but have the option to not take part in conversations or to stop participation in the study at any time.

You will not benefit directly from your participation in the study. The benefits to science and humankind that might result from this study are, on the small and large scale, to further anthropological knowledge.

- This study could benefit the Otherkin community itself. Treatments of Otherkin by social media and television news have led to a shallow and skewed understanding of the community and of the belief system. As an anthropological study, this work would hope to achieve a deeper and more honest portrayal.
- On a larger scale, this study will provide insight into how people in Western industrialized societies conceive of personal identity in a culture so digitally mediated. At all times, many of us are negotiating different relationships across email, social networks, online games (for some of us), and physical interpersonal relations. This study will analyze how we juggle these different identities and how they influence our concepts of our own personal identity.

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential, however, this cannot be guaranteed. No names are used in the recording of data in this project. All participants will be assigned a number that only the researcher will have access to. The codex for these numbers will be kept in password-protected files. If results of this research study are reported in journals or at scientific meetings, the people who participated in this study will not be named or identified.

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University, at telephone number (202) 994-2715, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting the primary researcher, Devin Proctor, at [dproctor@gwu.edu](mailto:dproctor@gwu.edu). You may also contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Alex Dent, at [asdent@gwu.edu](mailto:asdent@gwu.edu).

Your willingness to participate in this research study is implied if you proceed.

\*Please keep a copy of this document in case you want to read it again.

**I agree to take part in this study as**

signature

date (m / d / yyyy)