



## **INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM**

### **(Forum Posts)**

**Study Title:** Thieves, Rogues, Trolls, Rebels: An Ethnographic Exploration of Digital Piracy (Working Title)

**Researcher:** Tom MacDonald (a.k.a. pirateanthro)

**Researcher's Contact Information:** [th\\_macdo@live.concordia.ca](mailto:th_macdo@live.concordia.ca) (unsecure), [pirateanthro@protonmail.com](mailto:pirateanthro@protonmail.com) (secure)

**Faculty Supervisor:** Dr. Maximilian C. Forte

**Faculty Supervisor's Contact Information:** [maximilian.forte@concordia.ca](mailto:maximilian.forte@concordia.ca)

**Source of funding for the study:** n/a

You are being invited to participate in the research study mentioned above. This form provides information about what participating would mean. Please read it carefully before deciding if you want to participate or not. If there is anything you do not understand, or if you want more information, please ask the researcher via email, the thread or private forum message.

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the research is to discuss digital piracy as an online practice as constructed by those who participate in it. It intends to discuss the ways in which piracy offers an alternative means of disseminating digital content through technologies largely controlled by its participants. It aims to discuss these topics with those who participate in digital piracy to gain an understanding of how they perceive their own participation, discourses surrounding piracy, actors who seek to reduce piracy, technological changes and upcoming legislation attempting to streamline intellectual property laws.

### **B. PROCEDURES**

If you participate, you will be asked to consent to the use of a post you have previously made on an internet forum or to the collection of posts made within a specific thread for the purposes of academic research. The specified thread is: (url) . In the event of consent being requested for a specific post outside the scope of a specified thread, the post will be reproduced in this consent form. You may be asked questions about (a) particular post(s) by the researcher, which may feature one of the following topics:

- Online methods of watching/reading/listening to digital content (movies, music, TV shows, books etc.).
- Views on upcoming laws and trade agreements that have an effect on anti-piracy laws (e.g. Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement).
- Views on changing ways of watching/listening/reading/ to digital media (e.g. Netflix, Spotify, downloading vs. streaming vs. physical copies).
- Personal opinions and views on recent events in peer-to-peer filesharing culture (e.g. Kickass Torrents shutdown)

In total, participating in this study will take between 0.5 to 3 hours of your time.

It is also possible that the researcher may contact you for additional details or clarification of statements made in the forum posting. Should any further details or clarifications be necessary, the intent and purpose of these inquiries will be made clear to you in the email/private message asking for further details. As the participant, you have the right to decline providing further details as well as the right to withdraw at any point in the research.

### **C. RISKS AND BENEFITS**

You might face certain risks by participating in this research. These risks include:

- Minimal chance of identification: This risk will be reduced to the best of the researcher's abilities by limiting the collection of data that could personally identify the participant while maximizing the anonymity of the discussion. The researcher will conduct all discussions and research over a secure and encrypted email server, accessed on a laptop running a secure operating system (Tails) through a Tor browser. Any information that is collected will be encrypted, stored on a secure external filesystem, encoded in published research and destroyed after a five-year time period as per section D of this consent form.

This research is not intended to benefit you personally.

### **D. CONFIDENTIALITY**

We will gather the following information as part of this research:

- Forum posts in the specified thread:  
<https://katcr.co/community/index.php/topic,2088.0.html>
- Emails/Private Messages exchanged between the researcher and the participant discussing forum posts

We will not allow anyone to access the information, except people directly involved in conducting the research. We will only use the information for the purposes of the research described in this form.

The information gathered will be anonymous where possible. That means that it will not be possible to make a link between you and the information you provide.

In the event of potentially identifying information being gathered (e.g. username), the information gathered will be coded. That means that the information will be identified by a code, rather than a username or an email address.

We will protect the information by storing any original data and coding information on a secure filesystem (encrypted external drive) and limiting access to the researcher (Tom MacDonald).

We intend to publish the results of the research. However, it will not be possible to identify you in the published results.

We will destroy the information five years after the end of the study, or alter it to the point where it will be impossible to determine if you had participated in this project.

## **F. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION**

You do not have to participate in this research. It is purely your decision. If you do participate, you can stop at any time. You can also ask that the information you provided not be used, and your choice will be respected. If you wish to withdraw, all emails and private communications between yourself and the researcher will be deleted. If you decide that you don't want us to use your information, you must tell the researcher before January 31st 2017.

There are no negative consequences for not participating, stopping in the middle, or asking us not to use your information.

## G. PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION

Please copy the following statement into a private message ([pirateanthro@protonmail.com](mailto:pirateanthro@protonmail.com)) to the researcher, while also answering the security question at the end of this form. Doing so will be considered as a signature and a declaration of consent:

*I have read and understood this form. I have had the chance to ask questions and any questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this research under the conditions described.*

**Please note that the date listed on the email/forum post/ private message with this confirmation will be treated as the date of consent.**

If you have questions about the scientific or scholarly aspects of this research, please contact the researcher. Their contact information is on page I. You may also contact their faculty supervisor.

If you have concerns about ethical issues in this research, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7481 or [oor.ethics@concordia.ca](mailto:oor.ethics@concordia.ca).

For the purposes of the security question, please copy and paste the following line into the message and answer the question about the photograph reproduced below (please do not include the photograph):

How many figurines/objects/characters are in this photograph?



1 Photo by Roger Ahlbrand <https://www.flickr.com/photos/rogersview/6862910721/in/album-72157628971245411/>