



INFORMED CONSENT

Project Name: Real World Assumptions Constructed Through Virtually Embodied Experiences

Purpose of the Study: This research project studies how experiences in a virtual world, like Second Life, might influence people's expectations for real world experiences.

Expected Duration: The researcher will interview each participant. Interviews will last an hour or less. The researcher will also exchange e-mail messages with the participant to set up the telephone interview and to clarify any information received during the interview. A follow-up interview (also an hour or less) may be scheduled once the data is processed.

Procedures to be Followed: The researcher will ask the interviewee to describe how interactions with the Second Life interface may have carried over into real life: Does the participant ever find himself/herself trying to accomplish something in real life that he/she would do in Second Life? One absurd example might be flying or teleporting. Does the participant ever, for even a brief instant, anticipate flying or teleporting to move from one location to another? If the researcher and the participant identify transfer expectations, then the researcher will probe the participant to describe those transfer expectations, their correlates (the real life expectation and the Second Life activity), and why they might occur. The participant will also be asked to provide references that refer other Second Life community members known to have had similar transfer expectations. The researcher will ask that referrals include e-mail contact information.

Foreseeable Risks or Discomforts: There should be no risks associated with this study beyond those normally experienced in everyday life.

Benefits Which May Result from Research: This research will inform the Center for Educational Technologies' game research program. Findings will be used to design and implement learning environments for enhanced learning achievement.

Alternative Procedures or Courses of Treatment: This research simply collects relevant participant experiences. Therefore, there are no related alternative procedures or courses of treatment.

Confidentiality: Any reporting of interview data will be confidential. Some interview participants have publicly posted their views on transfer experiences to a Second Life listserv. The researcher has obtained permission from those individuals to quote those listserv posts, using appropriate citation and reference formatting. The researcher will not report connections between the individuals' listserv posts and their interview protocols.

Participant Rights: The participant has the right to ask pertinent questions about the research, subject's rights, and research-related injury to the subject. Subjects can contact the researcher through e-mail at debbie@cet.edu or by telephone (304-243-4327) between 8:30a.m. and 5p.m., Eastern time.

Institutional Review Board: The Institutional Review Board at Wheeling Jesuit University has approved this study. Participants with questions about their rights as human subjects may contact the board chair, Dr. Beverly Carter, at (304) 243-2340 or carter@wju.edu.

I, _____,
[print first and last name]

certify that I am 18 years of age or older. I have been a member of the Second Life community. I agree to participate in this study, as outlined above.

Signature _____
Date _____

Please sign this form and mail or FAX it to:
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Fax: 304-243-2497 (attn: Debbie Denise Reese)