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## Concerns about the conduct of Kevin Hsu and his study on the furry fandom

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To: irbcompliance@northwestern.edu  
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Hello there

I am a 40 year old professional engineer with around 15 years of experience in the oil & gas and low carbon industries, currently based in London, England. I am also a longtime member of the furry fandom.

I contribute to a website at [www.adjectivespecies.com](http://www.adjectivespecies.com), which is a by-furry for-furry collaborative blog dedicated to exploring our community. Kevin Hsu contacted me in early November 2014, having read some of my online essays, asking for input into a new study of furries.

Since then Kevin and I have corresponded at length, discussing his general premise (the application of "erotic target location error", ETLE to furries), his experiences with the furry fandom, and his proposed methodology and survey. In that time I have expressed several significant reservations to Kevin about his conduct. I now wish to share these with you.

Kevin is researching sexuality and sexual behaviour, which is a sensitive topic. In this case he is exploring a link between furry and zoophilia, which is particularly sensitive. In my opinion his conduct has failed, and continues to fail, to meet acceptable standards.

I trust that I am forwarding these concerns to the relevant body.

Some specific concerns (note that words in quotes are as written by Kevin, taken from emails he has sent me, I'm happy to share these emails on request):

### **Kevin has been "outright barred" from recruiting furries at a furry convention**

Kevin told me that he was barred by the organisers of Midwest Furfest, a convention that attracted around 4,000 furries in December 2013, from recruiting participants, "outright barred by the con organizers from recruiting any con-goers to participate in a pilot study of furries' sexuality".

Kevin did approach furries on that convention, which he did *after* being barred by the organisers. He said "I merely went and mingled with furries to gain an inside perspective and build trust, because that is something I learned was important to furries before they would open up. I only broached the subject of sexuality once I felt that the person and I were at a comfortable level, but even then, some of the furries didn't want to talk about it."

Kevin told me he talked to about 10 furries, and that "At least 75% of the furries I talked to were unwilling to discuss sexual aspects of the fandom".

### **Kevin attempted to approach, in person, particularly vulnerable members of the furry fandom**

Kevin noted to me: "At Midwest Furfest, there did seem to be a higher than expected number of cross-dressers and transfolk mulling about" He expressed his interest in approaching them, and was frustrated that he didn't get a chance.

He said that the decision to bar him was a "sham", and that he should be allowed to approach and bring up the topic of sexuality with con-goers (who he judged to be over 18) because he discovered "tables upon tables of explicit furry porn" for sale.

### **Kevin's survey uses several trans slurs**

Kevin's survey uses very poor language. Furry has a large proportion of transgender people and genderqueer people - around one in four based on the data I have seen - people who are vulnerable and sensitive to poorly-chosen language.