**Participant Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: Investigation of the (in)formative influences upon incel identity

**Researcher**: Stuart Lucy

**ERGO number:** 78681

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

**What is the research about?**

As part of an ERSC funded PhD, this project aims to engage directly with adult members of the incel community to investigate from their own perspectives experiences throughout their lives that have affected them personally.

I, Stuart, the researcher, am keen to understand more about your experience and engagement with Incel communities. I want to allow individuals identifying with incel to offer, in their own words, opinions on specific aspects of their lives.

I hope to gather sufficient data from a broad range of incels to produce a critical narrative analysis of the life course events and how these relate to decisions to identify as an incel.

It is possible some of the questions may probe potentially difficult past or present traumatic personal situations you may have experienced. The sensitive nature of these questions may produce adverse feelings and reactions and so if you think you would likely react to these questions in way that would significantly affect your mental health and wellbeing, you should take great consideration before deciding to participate. As I am not trained to deal with the effects of trauma, any distressing line of questioning will be terminated, and, If at any time during the interview process it becomes difficult for you to continue, you are free to leave, request for your data to be destroyed and support helplines will be offered.

**Why have I been asked to participate?**

You have been approached specifically due to your self-identification as an incel.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you choose to take part, an interview process will take place across a digital messaging medium of your choosing (e.g. Reddit messaging/email/Facebook) in which I will ask you a series of initial questions that you can respond to you however you see fit. Based on your responses to these initial questions, follow-up questions may be asked to gather more detailed information about a specific issue you have raised or experience that has been described.

Questions will first concern demographic information before moving on to issues relating to childhood and adolescence as well as the journey to and in incel identity. This interview is a space for you to give full and detailed personal views about your life and the events in it.

Responses you provide will be copied to Word documents and stored in the UoS repository for later analysis. All messages received on the platform you have chosen will be deleted following the completion of the interview.

The interview will likely span days or weeks depending on the frequency of your answers to questions. The time required of you will depend on the amount of information and motivation you have to engage with the research.

**Are there any benefits in my taking part?**

Participating in this research is an opportunity to provide detailed personal perspectives and information to explain your previous life experiences, identity and relation to the incel community in your own words.

**Are there any risks involved?**

This process may result in the recall of potentially sensitive and traumatic incidents or periods of your life which could cause adverse negative feelings and emotions to arise. While you are free to decline to answer any question and leave the interview process at any time, you should consider the potential consequences upon your wellbeing before engaging.

If you experience any negative emotional or psychological issues from the interview process, contact details of trained professional helplines and text services are listed below and will also be offered at the start and close of the interview process.

NHS (UK): Emergency 999, urgent 111

Samaritans (UK): 116 123

Papyrus HOPELINKUK (<35yrs UK): 0800 068 4141 Mon – Fri,10am-10pm

Samaritans (USA): 1 (800) 273-TALK.

SAMSHA Disaster Distress Helpline (US): 1-800-985-5990/ Text “TalkWithUs” to 66746

NAMI (US): 1-800-950-6264/ Text 62640

**What data will be collected?**

Special category information of age and ethnicity will be collected. Within the life course information collected about you, additional special category information such as political opinions or philosophical and religious beliefs *may* be collected as a result of answering interview questions. Your provided contact email and offered pseudonym will also be collected.

Data will be collated from your email responses into an anonymised Word document. This document, along with your consent, form will be stored in an encrypted, secure University of Southampton data repository and within a password protected desktop computer locked in a secure University of Southampton office.

Your contact details will be stored in a database within a password protected desktop computer locked in a secure University of Southampton office and deleted upon completion of the interview unless you would like to be contacted with research publications containing your data.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential. No third parties will be involved in the interview process.

To ensure anonymisation of your data, your consent form will be stored with an anonymised file name corresponding to your stored interview data. All data is password protected on an encrypted, password protected, secure university cloud storage system.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign and return the consent form that was sent to you with this information sheet to formally indicate you have agreed to take part.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

If you decide to withdraw at any time during data collection, or within two weeks of the interview concluding, please state this in an email sent to the email address you have received this information sheet from and all data will be removed and destroyed.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

The aim of this research will be to produce an unpublished thesis which once completed you may access upon request to the email address you have received this information from.

If any published journal articles or book/book chapters arise from this data, you will be contacted from the email account you received this information from and on request, a copy of the article provided and, where possible, any book chapter/book.

Your personal data will be held in the University of Southampton repository for no longer than 12 months. Further research conducted by myself may arise from your interview data but will not be shared with anyone else. This data will be fully anonymised through removal of any identifiable characteristics (e.g. your data file will be saved via a number system not your name).

**Where can I get more information?**

If you have any further questions or require more information, please feel free to contact the researcher, please send an email to the address you received this information sheet from.

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please feel to contact Stuart who will endeavour to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Head of Ethics and Clinical Governance (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

To contact the researcher, please send an email to the address you received this information sheet from.

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

All data will be anonymised

**Thank you.**

I greatly appreciate you talking the time to read this information sheet and considering to take part. If you have any questions please feel free to enquire via the email address you have received this information from.