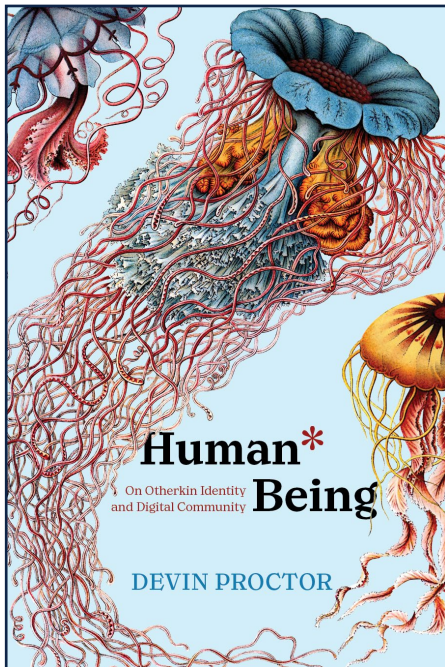




Human* Being

On Otherkin Identity and Digital Community

Devin Proctor

A groundbreaking digital ethnography of the Otherkin community

Human Being: On Otherkin Identity and Digital Community* is an ethnographic exploration of the Otherkin—a technologically-mediated community of practice whose members identify as other-than-human—breaking down barriers of identity and calling into question assumptions about what it means to be a human. Based on a decade of ethnographic research, *Human* Being* examines Otherkin engagement with the techno-virtuality afforded by the internet—through chat forums, personal blogs, 3D virtual worlds, Facebook, YouTube, Tumblr, Discord, TikTok, and Reddit—troubling conventional notions about our relationships with the virtual and our understandings of the Self. The Otherkin represent a larger shift in body identity, shown by increasing numbers of people identifying as trans, nonbinary, fluid, and neurodiverse; bodies open to nuance, complication, and multiplicity. Devin Proctor closely examines internal community debates about the limits of non-human identity, avatar creation practices in virtual worlds to approximate inner realities, and the policing of identity constructs toward a stable definition of the phenomenon. However anomalous, even fantastical they may seem, the Otherkin offer a window into our own complex notions of bodies, Selves, and technologies.

Devin Proctor is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Elon University. He explores digital culture, identity construction, and new media.

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“Such a nerdy book, in the absolute best way. An excellent read for anyone curious about being human—the boundaries, the agency, the stakes. Citing broadly, historicizing thoughtfully, and drawing on deep ethnographic immersion, this book’s careful contemplation of otherkinity is a genuine resource for anyone making sense of contested identities or oppositional epistemologies.”

—Katrin Tiidenberg, Tallinn University