

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE OF STUDY: Black Twitter Engagement Study

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jeffrey Lane, Ph.D.

This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide information that will help you decide whether you want to take part in this study. It is your choice to take part or not. After all of your questions have been answered and you wish to take part in the research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. You will be given a copy of the signed form to keep. Your alternative to taking part in the research is not to take part in it.

Who is conducting this research study and what is it about?

You are being asked to take part in research being conducted by Dr. Jeffrey Lane who is a Rutgers assistant professor in the Dept. of Communication, Justine Quow who is a Rutgers graduate student from the Dept. of Communication, and Fatoumata Ceesay who is a Rutgers graduate student from the Dept. of Sociology. The purpose of this study is to understand how and when Black members of Twitter become part of the Black Twitter community, and the role of audience engagement in this process.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

The interview will take about *1 hour and 30 minutes* to complete it. We anticipate *50* subjects will take part in the study. Subjects will be asked to take a short survey collecting demographics and general information on their social media use. After the survey, each participant will be interviewed once. This will be an in-depth interview that includes computer screen-sharing to look at examples of posts/interactions from the interview participant's Twitter account during the past six months. These interviews will be conducted remotely through Zoom and the interviews will be audio- and video-recorded for the researchers to examine.

What are the risks and/or discomforts I might experience if I take part in the study?

Breach of confidentiality is a risk of harm but a data security plan is in place to minimize such a risk. Also, some questions may make you feel uncomfortable. If that happens, you can ask to skip those questions or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit the interview your responses will NOT be saved.

Are there any benefits to me if I choose to take part in this study?

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this research. You will be contributing to knowledge about how Black people express their racial identity and engage with audiences on Twitter.

Will I be paid to take part in this study?

Each participant will receive a \$30 electronic stipend/payment upon completion of the interview.

How will information about me be kept private or confidential?

All efforts will be made to keep your responses confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. We will refer to your Twitter profile during the interview. The identifiable information of your Twitter handle, Twitter name, profile picture, and header picture will be stored with your responses. The collected information will not be destroyed after the completion of the study. It will be used exclusively for research purposes and your personal and Twitter information will not be named in any reports published from this



research. We will securely store your identifiable information on a password-protected server, separate from the consent materials. No information that can identify you will appear in any professional presentation or publication.

What will happen to information I provide in the research after the study is over?

The information collected about you for this research will not be used by or distributed to investigators for other research.

What will happen if I do not want to take part or decide later not to stay in the study?

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part now, you may change your mind and withdraw later. In addition, you can choose to skip interview questions that you are not comfortable answering or stop the interview at any time. You may also withdraw your consent for use of responses you provided during the interview, but you must do this in writing to the PI, Dr. Jeffrey Lane.

Who can I call if I have questions?

If you have questions about taking part in this study, you can contact the Principal Investigator: Dr. Jeffrey Lane, Assistant Professor of Communication, email address: jeffrey.lane@rutgers.edu, contact number: 917-974-4997.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact the IRB Director at: Arts and Sciences IRB (732) 235-2866 or the Rutgers Human Subjects Protection Program at (973) 972-1149 or email us at humansubjects@ored.rutgers.edu.

Please keep this consent form if you would like a copy of it for your files.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

1. Subject consent:

I have read this entire consent form, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been discussed. All of my questions about this form and this study have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

Subject Name (printed): _____

Subject Signature: _____

Date: _____

2. Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:

To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed all the important details about the study including all of the information contained in this consent form.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____