

The identification as nonhuman is a leveling of human exceptionalism. It brings the nonhuman to the same level of discourse as the human. And it humbles the human to accept that it lives in a vast community of species that it has obligations toward. If you are wondering why certain species are favored, it is likely because those species have always been close to humankind. And that doesn't show anything. Identification is a product of familiarity. Is it not?

I think otherkin and therians are closely tied to issues of neuroatypicality. Regardless if otherkin invoked stigmatization and abuse of others through ostentatious performance of being oppressed or if people would have considered it taboo and disturbing anyway, I think it is safe to say that many actual otherkin have gone silent in public settings because of the appropriation of general society on the internet in the abuse of their identity for the sake of humor and attacking the transgender community. And the misinterpretation of some younger individuals.

Nyctokin is right when he says this: "...otherkin aren't oppressed. At all. Sure, people give us shit online, like, a lot, but that's not the same thing as passing legislation about where you can pee." Now, he is academically incorrect there being no connection between trans and otherkin. As I said, theorists are demonstrating a connection, whether or not anyone wants it to exist. And it is already there in the philosophical groundwork for feminism, queer theory and animal rights. They are abstract correlations. Even highly intelligent people are blinded by subjective bias when a correlation is deeply analytic, and the intuitive, emotional response is to deny it. This is a real problem in the sciences even. Even still, the treatment of otherkin on the internet is deeply upsetting to me. I hardly even participate in any conversations with otherkin communities because it is under constant fire, not only from total assholes, but now the transgender community for being its weird sibling it wants nothing to do with. Some of the otherkin I know either are very sensitive people or they have erected a defensive posture against the slightest attack. Some are perfectly fine. It takes all types. But it has been demonstrated that virtual attacks effect individuals psychologically to an almost identical degree as they would in person. Harassment is real.

Some otherkin are young. Keep in mind that the internet is place where age is distorted as much as the rest of one's physical identity. Some otherkin, I don't doubt suffer from depression or other difficulties. And some otherkin may have other conditions. Imagine you are 16-year-old who feels alienated, may suffer from the early stages of depression, identify as nonhuman (and likely are already an outsider), and you might not have developed social resilience to deal with shit thrown against your identity. That 16-year-old is also capable of writing a blog or using tumblr. And the things he/she does also effects social perception of the group.

And this isn't to say that the identity is tied to depression at all (after all, to claim that a trans identity is disordered simply because some people who are trans happen to have neurological conditions is bullshit), but rather, being an unusual individual (which someone who identifies as otherkin might be regardless of whether they ever called themselves otherkin) exacerbates the alienation one might already feel from society. And it isn't surprising that individuals who identify as nonhuman may feel at odds with society already.

Even the imagined sense of oppression as a surrogate for one's fear is still real fear. Don't forget that. Maybe irrational. But just as vivid and present.

--[Justin Scheibel](#) , [Reddit](#)