

INFORMATION AND CONSENT DOCUMENT

« Social learning among hackers »

Who is leading the project?

It is me, Jessie Wala Ahmad. I am a master's student at the University of Montreal in the School of Criminology. My supervisor is David Décary-Hétu, who is an Associate Professor also at the School of Criminology.

What is the project?

The goal of my project is to better understand the learning mechanisms of hackers. To do this, I plan to meet with a dozen adults, 18 years and older, who have broken into a computer system in an unauthorized way in the last 24 months.

If I participate, what will I have to do?

You will have to participate in an interview with me during which I will ask you questions about how you learned and developed your technical intrusion skills. The interview should last approximately 60 minutes. It will be conducted virtually, using the secure and anonymous communication platform, Telegram, allowing you to participate in the private or secure environment of your choice.

I will be confined to a closed office in my private home, preventing any external noise or interruption during the interviews. With your permission, I will record the interview so that I can transcribe what you tell me without leaving anything out, but I will delete the recordings as soon as the verbatims are ready. If you prefer that I not record you, we can conduct the entire interview via chat.

Are there any risks or benefits to participating in this research?

There are no risks in answering my questions. It is completely anonymous, and at no time during your participation will I ask you for personal information. Also, I am not affiliated in any way with a law enforcement organization, and I would not ask you any questions that might be compromising. However, for some reason this experience may be stressful or anxiety-provoking for you. If you wish, you can simply decide not to answer some of my questions, or even end the interview at any time.

You will not be paid for your participation and you will not receive any personal benefit. However, your participation may help us understand how hackers learn their skills.

What will you do with my answers?

I will take all of the responses collected to do qualitative analyses, which will be published in my master's thesis.

A summary of the research project and its results may be published on the supervisor's website at the same address where you downloaded this document.

Will my personal information be protected?

Yes, no personally identifiable information will be collected for your participation. In addition, the information collected will be stored securely. The recordings will be deleted, and the transcripts (verbatim) will be stored locally on my personal computer at home, in an encrypted .zip file. Only my supervisor and I will see the content of the transcripts. These transcripts will then be archived by my supervisor on secure servers, to be destroyed 7 years after the end of my project.

The general results of my project may be used in publications or communications, but always in a completely anonymous manner since no personal information will be collected at any time during your participation.

Do I have to answer all the questions and go through with it?

No. You can decide not to answer one or more questions. You can also decide at any time that you no longer want to participate in the interview and that you are leaving the project. In this case, you can even ask me not to use your answers for my research and to destroy them. However, once the data release process is underway, I will not be able to destroy the analyses and results of your responses.

Who can I talk to if I have questions during the study?

If you have any questions, you can contact me directly at jessie.ahmad@umontreal.ca, or securely on [Telegram](https://www.telegram.com): @justjess2021.

This project has been approved by the Research Ethics Board - Society and Culture of the University of Montreal. If you have any concerns about your rights or the responsibilities of the researchers regarding your participation in this project, you can contact the committee by e-mail at ceresc@umontreal.ca or visit the website: <https://recherche.umontreal.ca/participants>.

If you have any complaints about your participation in this research, you can contact the ombudsman (a "citizen's advocate") of the University of Montreal at 514-343-2100 or ombudsman@umontreal.ca (the ombudsman accepts collect calls).

How can I give my consent to participate in the study?

In order to preserve your anonymity, you will not have to sign any form. You will simply need to read this information and consent document and give me your explicit consent before the interview begins, either vocally or in writing during the chat session.

CONSENT

Participant Declaration

- I understand that I can take my time to think before agreeing or not agreeing to my participation.
- I may ask questions to the researcher and demand satisfactory answers.
- I understand that by participating in this research project, I am not waiving any of my rights or releasing the researcher from her responsibilities.
- I have read this information and consent document and agree to participate in the research project.

Researcher's commitment

I have explained the conditions of participation in the research project to the participant. I have answered the questions asked to the best of my knowledge and have ensured that the participant understands. I undertake to respect what has been agreed upon in this information and consent document.

Researcher's signature:  _____

Date: April 21st 2021 _____

Last name: Ahmad _____

First name: Jessie Wala _____