

# ALTERNATIVE WORLDS: METAPHYSICAL QUESTING AND VIRTUAL COMMUNITY AMONGST THE OTHERKIN

DANIELLE KIRBY

## *Introduction*<sup>1</sup>

The advent and subsequent popularisation of the Internet and the World Wide Web has given rise to significant transformations within the religious world, effecting communicative and sometimes structural changes that have been variously embraced by both mainstream and alternative forms of religiosity (Dawson: 387). The long term impact of this transition is currently unknown, but already new methods of religious participation have arisen that range from emailed prayer requests (Larsen 2004: 17), to the acceptance of virtual ritual participation (Larsen 2004: 19) as valid religious practice. The religious presence within the virtual world of the Internet is considerable (Larsen 2004: 17), as all major and many alternative religions have located themselves within the virtual landscape (Cowan 2004: 120). On the fringe of this religious expansion into the worlds of cyberspace, however, are groups that situate themselves well outside the frameworks of religiosity as are commonly accepted as valid (Helland 2004: 23). These groups are not only innovative in the content of their beliefs, but are also unique in that they have apparently developed as communities almost entirely on the Internet. Hyper-real religions (Possamai 2005; Possamai 2006; Possamai 2007) constitute a notable element of this religious relocation, most particularly remarkable in their overt proximity to popular culture source material and postmodern relation to notions of fiction and truth. This chapter looks at one such group, the Otherkin, with an aim to providing an introduction to the community, focusing upon the shared central philosophies of the constituent members, and the locales within which the community as a whole functions.

The Otherkin fall into the category of hyper-real religion in a fairly unproblematic fashion, taking as the definition that they are “religions

---

<sup>1</sup> This chapter was originally published in *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on the Sacred*, ed. Frances Di Lauro (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2006). This current version has been updated to reflect developments within the Otherkin community.

and spirituality that mix elements from religious traditions with popular culture" (Possamai 2007: 1). In the case of the Otherkin, the relevant religious tradition is perhaps best understood as contemporary paganism and more broadly western occultism, but, as will be demonstrated, the explicit utilisation of popular culture source material for unequivocally spiritual and metaphysical means is clearly evident within the community.

### *The Otherkin*<sup>2</sup>

The Otherkin are a loosely affiliated group of likeminded individuals who have formed a virtual online community. Their shared belief is that some people are, either partially or completely, non-human. To quote, "Otherkin is a collective noun for an assortment of people who have come to the somewhat unorthodox, and possibly quite bizarre, conclusion that they identify themselves as being something other than human" (Windtree n.d.). Further, they are "an alternative community that accepts everything from therianthropes to extraterrestrial fae" (Ten 2005). Therianthropes are a "deity or creature combining the form or attributes of a human with those of an animal" (Walens 1987), and fae are an alternative term for fairies (Newall 1987: 246). In practice, there are a variety of self-knowledges supported within the community, including constructions of the individual as, for instance, a human body with a non-human soul, multiple souls within the one body, a human who is a reincarnated non-human, and there are even occasionally those who claim physical status as non-human. The types of non-human entities referenced in this context include dragons, elves, vampires, lycanthropes, fairies, fae, and angels, as well as a plethora of specific creatures sourced from ancient myth through to popular culture media creations.

Beyond the premise of the group, there seems little in common across the community, with participants engaging in an eclectic personal mix of magic, philosophy, metaphysical questing and self-inquiry. As an interim classification, the Otherkin fit broadly within the ideas encapsulated by the Neopagan movement and religions of re-enchantment (Partridge 2004), although it needs to be stressed that such a classification is only

---

<sup>2</sup> The material pertaining to the Otherkin community has largely been drawn from otherkin.net and associated sites. All quotes are directly referenced, and general statements are the result of an ongoing synthesis of Otherkin material, and are subject to reworking as is necessary.

general. To construe this group as specifically Neopagan or technopagan obscures the focus of the participants. The Otherkin relationship to paganism should be seen as a shared body of knowledge rather than in terms of similar intentions or practices, although individual participants may or may not adhere to some form of pagan belief. There exists a shared body of knowledge common to paganism and western esotericism in so far as participants utilise concepts with facility that are broadly accepted within these areas: ideas such as astral travel, dream interpretation, alternative realities, magic, reincarnation and the like see, for instance (Hanegraaff 1998; Harvey 2000; York, 2000). There are further parallels between Otherkin and pagan beliefs in their willingness to consider fiction (that is acknowledged as such) as a valid evocative spiritual tool. There are also some structural similarities between paganism and the Otherkin, or perhaps rather an absence of structure that is common to both groups: most specifically in the weight and priority given to personal lived experience (Harvey 1996: 10), and the lack of unified creed or dogma (Hume 1997: 51; Ireland 1999: 99). As a community, the Otherkin function largely without formalised authority structures, and, with regards to their online presence, focus largely upon support and information sharing within the community (Zaleski 1997: 111–112).<sup>3</sup>

### *Otherkin.net*

Otherkin.net is one of a number of focal points for the Otherkin community online. Between 2006 and 2011, its listed membership has ranged from between 798, to over 2500 in 2010, with present numbers at 348, reflecting a recent update of inactive profiles. As it is not necessary to sign up to access Otherkin information there are likely to be many more casual browsers, and there are, of course, any number of other sites that Otherkin may choose to engage with. This constituency is thinly spread across the world, with American, Asian, and European countries most heavily represented (Otherkin.Net 2003). Judging from the members names, there is no particularly obvious gender inequity, although it is impossible to be sure, given the overt identity construction that occurs online. The site contains a wealth of information, including essays, links to Otherkin websites, media reports on Otherkin, an Otherkin directory,

---

<sup>3</sup> Zaleski notes that the internet may well prove to be more intrinsically supportive of groups that do not hold to a hierarchical structure.

and events information. The entire site reflects a grass roots philosophy in so far as it does not present a monolithic message, but rather attempts to make accessible a variety of views about the nature of the Otherkin. For instance, the essay section reflects this tendency well. A new member or interested seeker is initially directed to introductory papers outlining the general substance of what constitutes the Otherkin. Beyond this recommended reading, there is a large selection of articles, sixty-seven on the website as of November 2011,<sup>4</sup> written by Otherkin about Otherkin. The content of these articles range from personal reflections upon the experience of being an Otherkin (Dandelion\_Ae 2001), to expressions of discontent with certain trends evident within the community.<sup>5</sup> There are papers pertaining to specific aspects of their belief structure, such as soulbonding (O'dea 1999) and magic (Hedgie 2002), as well as papers that admonish participants for various forms of illogic (Seavixen 2004). This variety is reflective of the diversity of interest and focus within the group, and is indicative of their generally inclusive attitude.

There are a number of cosmological assumptions that underpin the community that diverge from more traditional constructions of a religious or spiritual milieu. Primary amongst these is the largely tacit postulation of multiple and/or parallel universes; alternative worlds separate to our own but not entirely unrelated. As a general rule, a spiritual or religious hierarchy is conceptualised as just that—a vertical axis with god/des/s at the top, humans somewhere in the middle, and the relevant negative aspect of the divine is located at the bottom. The Otherkin construction of the cosmos, on the other hand, is one far more densely populated with alternative spaces, and also one seemingly devoid of absolute value judgements that would infer any scale of relational importance that could be mapped into a linear system. Although not clearly stated, the strong impression is given that, to an Otherkin paradigm, multiple alternative worlds are at least potentially infinite in number. If a pagan philosophy asserts the animation or ensoulment of the non-human parts of this world (Hume 1997: 44; Harvey 1996), the Otherkin *en masse* extrapolate this animism not just into the regions of this world, but into many others also.

<sup>4</sup> Internet site, <http://otherkin.net/articles/bytitle.html>. Accessed 2/11/2011.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, deploring the tendency to construct their position in binary opposition to the prevailing mainstream western culture Dandelion\_Ae. *Us vs Them* [Online]. Website Us vs Them. At: <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/usThem.html>. Accessed 27/1/2005.

*Otakukin*

The origins and/or locations of these multiple worlds are not clearly stated within the community, nor does it appear to be an issue of any specific interest to participants. The creatures populating both this and other worlds, however, seem to lie closer to the heart of Otherkin self-inquiry. Take, for instance, the case of the otaku kin or ota'kin (Ten 2005). The term *otaku* comes from the Japanese, literally meaning house, but colloquially used somewhat similarly to 'geek' or 'nerd', albeit with more sociopathic overtones (Schodt 1996: 43–46). This particular branch of the Otherkin network specifically refers to those participants who experience their non-human aspect through anime and manga.<sup>6</sup> A slightly more broad term used in regards to this type of belief is mediakin, which pertains to characters sourced from media without the necessary Japanese association.

The Otakukin appear to be somewhat fringe even within the Otherkin community, presumably at least partially due to the overtly fictional and extremely recent sources for such characters and creatures. The primary issue appears to be one of authenticity: creatures from traditional mythology and the cannon of the fantasy genre are accepted as validly archetypal, if not outright actual, whereas more recent additions to that particular pantheon are considered somewhat more suspect. The otaku kin, as they premise their metaphysics in explicitly popular forums, have various understandings to explain the processes by which a fictional creation can be more than a figment of the author's imagination. To quote from the Temple of the Ota'kin,

[t]he initial concept of a supposedly 'fictional' paradigm and/or cosmology having partial or complete basis in an alternative reality is not uncommon among Otherkin. Sections of the community accept as reasonable extrapolations of fact Tolkien-esque elves and fae, Pernian dragons, and other phenotypes resembling or derived from allegedly 'fictional' sources. (Ten 2005)

The article then goes on to offer two potential explanations of the methods by which reality can be ascribed to fictional sources.<sup>7</sup> The first refers to an author essentially acting as a channel or conduit, not necessarily intentionally, and relating as fiction what is actually an alternative reality.

<sup>6</sup> Anime is an umbrella term used to refer to Japanese animation and cartoons, while manga refers to comics. These genres are often heavily laden with myths, legends, fantasy, and apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic themes (Napier 2000).

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the role of authorship and text in Otherkin terms, see Kirby (2009).

The second possible explanation effectively states that, by repeated attention and focus, individuals (as participants interacting with and within the specific texts) give weight, power, and specifically energy to the thought forms, thus allowing them a life beyond the confines of the text.

### *Soulbonding*

Constructions such as this are important foundational assertions of an Otherkin paradigm, and are necessary in order to understand the type of conceptual frameworks within which the Otherkin function. While there are a number of various concepts that fall into this category, *soulbonding* is the example that will be referred to here, as it is quite a complex conglomerate of relatively simple ideas that also reaches beyond the bounds of the Otherkin community. To briefly summarise, soulbonding refers to the various relationships that may develop between a participant and another entity, physical or otherwise, and it is approached as it is named: as a bond between souls. A soulbond is “someone with whom you tend to reincarnate time after time . . . even to the extent of having agreed to permanently share soul development” (O’dea 1999). Alternatively, it is “the adoption into one’s mind, into personal mental space, of characters from history, video games, films, books, TV, anime, daily life” (Ragland 2005), “a fictive or real person adopted into one’s mindspace” (Astreasweb.Net 2007). As is to be expected, the idea is not a static one, but rather a cluster of experiential knowledge which is emphasised differently according to the agenda and philosophy of each individual participant.<sup>8</sup> To quote one participant,

I have my own ideas about what Soulbonds are. Like most Soulbonders, I believe that my Soulbonds are truly alive and not just made-up things. I’ve heard a lot of people propose that story-worlds really exist, and story-makers “channel” them from wherever they really are. This is a great explanation for some people, but it doesn’t quite work for me.

My own belief is that a thing that has love, devotion, or even plain fascination poured into it gains a sort of spiritual life. In our era of mass communications, where fictional characters can reach millions of people, massive amounts of life are poured into these characters, and I believe that this gives

---

<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the data on soulbonding is sourced from a variety of personal home pages and the like, and most particularly the soulbond database (<http://illvision.net.sbdata/> n.d.), which is a now defunct site that was designed to collect and make available information on soulbonding for participants based upon personal experiences, and as of August 2005 contained 30 participant responses to an apparently participant-composed questionnaire.

them life as spirit-entities. I see Soulbonders as people whose love and fascination for a character is so great that it gives spiritual life to their own vision of a character (reality, especially in fiction, is subjective. No two people have exactly the same take on a given character), creating a Soulbond, who is at once an aspect of that character's spirit, an aspect of the Soulbonder's personality, and a unique person with a will of their own. (Gilkey n.d.)

Soulbonding at the spiritual/metaphysical end of the Otherkin paradigm becomes a full blown interpersonal relationship, and occurs in all the variety that human to human relationships may, be that as a lover, a friend, or a mentor and so on. In these cases, the non-human entity is an entirely self-contained individual, albeit almost never physical, and interacts with the participants as such. Participants may experience their soulbonds as nominally outside themselves, and although some refer to having had their bodies taken over occasionally, this does not appear to be a regular occurrence. The spaces within which the soulbonds exist vary between participants, with some locating them within a 'soulscape', others within the physical realm, and others referencing the astral, and others again simply referring broadly to alternative realities or dimensions. A soulscape appears to be one's inner space, a personal landscape contained within the self that may or may not extend beyond the bounds of the psyche (Also 2011).

In a slightly different context, soulbonding is also used to refer to the nature of relationship that can occur between an author and their fictional creations (Fenrir). In this situation, the soulbonded character is not necessarily understood as animated beyond the bounds established by mainstream western perspectives of reality, and is still by and large treated as a product of one's own psyche. Alternatively, soulbonding is viewed by some as the end result of an entity finding pathways into this reality, the access point being the body of the participant (Jade 2002). Another accepted form of soulbonding, which rests much easier within the bounds of popular western culture, is simply one that occurs between two human people, generally lovers. There are, of course, many more variations upon this theme, but these brief examples suffice to indicate the spread of interpretations placed upon the same term.

### *Virtuality*

The spaces within which these fictional characters and non-physical entities occur and exist, be it a personal soulscape, the astral, or an entirely distinct alternative reality, are (to some extent at least) related to and

reinforced by the new spaces afforded by the internet. It is entirely relevant that public discussions about soulbonding have apparently largely taken place on the Internet, as is the existence of the Otherkin network as an almost entirely online phenomenon. This is not to dismiss or diminish the validity of such beliefs, but rather to highlight the continuity between the content of such paradigms and the nature of online engagement. Both the structure of community interaction and the specific beliefs are benefited from online participation. Not only are some pragmatic issues facing the community immediately overcome, such as the geographic spread of participants (Willson 1997: 147), but the very virtual world they populate in itself reinforces the experiential reality of non-tangible worlds within which one may make perceptible, in both the physical and the virtual worlds, actions originating in a non-physical context. The idea that one may have meaningful communication with an unknown disembodied presence (Holmes 1997: 37) is no longer confined to the realms of fantasy or mysticism, but is rather a simple fact of everyday life. Email, online banking and shopping, web surfing and the overabundance of other types of online activities all tacitly reinforce the premise of genuine disembodied engagement and interaction. Further, in the western technologised world at least, the lived experience of the world incorporates in large portions communication media that simultaneously attenuates and facilitates interaction (Holmes 1997: 43), and this has been ever increasingly the case for a number of decades. Personal tangible interaction is no longer necessarily the mainstay of human engagement, and this development is playing itself out within the sphere of religious and spiritual activity as much as any other.

The Otherkin community are developing in relation to these new spaces. While there are occasional physical meetings, or gathers, the pragmatics of physical geography makes it nigh on impossible for any offline meeting to be representative of the community at large. Correspondingly, the few physical gatherings that there are appear to be aimed more towards specific sub-sections of the community rather than attempting to facilitate all. The Otherkin appear to function within smaller units, generally divided by the types of creatures associated. This means that there are, for instance, elvish, angelic, or draconic communities that nominally associate themselves with the term 'Otherkin', but create their own, more specific discourses and spaces in more personally meaningful and relevant contexts. There are also other communities that, to an outsider perspective, appear to share the same philosophy, yet clearly disclaim any association with the Otherkin. It has been noted, and certainly appears



to be the case here, that new religious movements in their initial stages often appear to be “expressions of marginal subcultures” (York 2000: 141). Indeed, the entirety of the Otherkin network can be seen as a large number of extremely specific and small subgroups that interlink and exchange at the whim of individual participants. Take, for instance, two elvish web rings: A Ring of Elves and Elven Realities.<sup>9</sup> Web rings provide an extremely interesting example of virtual geography insofar as they represent communities of interest in a participant-oriented and created environment. These two web rings both contain largely similar pages, all obviously oriented towards elflore, but they represent two discrete information pathways. They interrelate only through the Elven Realities website, as this site is linked to both web rings, and then more broadly to each other through the Otherkin network. The fact that these sites, to an outsider, appear to be largely similar is not reflected in participants chosen affiliations, and demonstrates the ease and facility with which subgroups are simultaneously discrete and inter-relational. On the other hand, any one particular linkage should not necessarily be assumed to hold deep significance due to the ease and simplicity with which these connections are made. Such arrangements also reiterate the need for extremely careful research techniques when dealing with these forms of interaction, as association can be easily and incorrectly assumed simply on the basis of subject matter.

### Conclusion

Although admittedly brief, this chapter has gone some way towards providing a *précis* of the Otherkin community. While its area of concern may be situated well outside the bounds of what is generally considered to constitute a religion, there can be little question that the internal focus upon superempirical experience (Griel 1994: 3) locates it firmly within the sphere of personal metaphysical or spiritual inquiry. Simultaneously, the Otherkin highly proximate relationship to popular fictional narrative clearly locates such beliefs within the framework of hyper-real religiosity. This relationship becomes most apparent within the context of Otakukin and Mediakin, and related concepts such as soulbonding, but is nonetheless present within the broader community as well. With regards to the

---

<sup>9</sup> A web ring is a series of sites that the designers choose to link together, which can then be navigated between in various forms. See <http://m.webring.com/hub?ring=elvenrealities>  
<http://n.webring.com/hub?ring=aringofelves> n.d.

general paradigm asserted, the Otherkin appear to be closely related to Neopaganism and more generally to other forms of self-reflexive<sup>10</sup> western esotericism. Structurally, they clearly function as a segmented polycentric integrated network (York 2000: 142). As this type of organisational configuration was first noted in relation to a certain type of new religious movement, of which belief systems such as Neopaganism and Wicca stand as premier examples, it is unsurprising that this should be the case. However, the community's reliance upon the Internet as the primary source of interaction and communication calls into question the usefulness of this form of categorisation. The specific nature of the Internet, particularly the World Wide Web, is designed precisely to be negotiated in such a non-hierarchical manner, and it follows that groups situated within such a locale would be inclined towards these types of flexible interaction (Zaleski 1997: 111–112; Dawson 1999: 168). The Internet stands as a genuinely new space, with its own unique geography, language, and cultural norms. While it supports a vast array of religious discussion and participation, it is in cases such as the Otherkin community where the significance of the medium comes to the fore. Although beliefs of this nature undoubtedly existed before the introduction of the Internet, this new global space has allowed an unparalleled opportunity for the consolidation of such personalised spirituality into a larger community.

#### References

- Also. 2011. *Soulscapes*. Soulbonding.net. At <http://www.soulbonding.net/soulscapes/>. Accessed 3/11/2011.
- Astreasweb.Net. 2007. *Glossary* Astreasweb.net. At <http://www.astraeasweb.net/plural/glossary.html>. Accessed 3/11/2011.
- Cowan, D. E. H. and K. Jeffrey. 2004. "Virtually Religious: New Religious Movements and the World Wide Web." In J. R. Lewis, ed., *Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*. New York: Oxford University Press, 119–140.
- Dandelion\_Ae. n.d. *Us vs Them* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/usThem.html>. Accessed 27/1/2005.
- . 2001. *Why an elf?* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/whyAnElf.html>. Accessed 21/1/2005.
- Dawson, L. 2004. "Religion and the Internet: Presence, Problems, and Prospects." In P. Antes, A. Geertz and R. Warne, ed., *New Approaches to the Study of Religion*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 385–405.

<sup>10</sup> The term 'self-reflexive' is used here to denote belief systems that are constituted primarily as a result of personal experience and reflection, as opposed other currents within within the western esoteric tradition that lean more heavily upon structured knowledge.

- Dawson, L. 1999. "New Religions and the Internet: Recruiting in a New Public Space". *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. 14:1, 17–39.
- Fenrir, R. n.d. *what soulbonding isn't*. At [http://childofmana.tripod.com/soulbonding\\_what-it-isnt.htm](http://childofmana.tripod.com/soulbonding_what-it-isnt.htm). Accessed 3/11/2011.
- Gilkey, L. n.d. *Essay*. At [http://soulbonding.tripod.com/soulbonding\\_otheressays.htm](http://soulbonding.tripod.com/soulbonding_otheressays.htm). Accessed 3/11/2011.
- Griel, A. L., and T. Robbins. 1994. "Introduction: Exploring the Boundaries of the Sacred". In A. L. Griel and T. Robbins, ed., *Between Sacred and Secular: Research and Theory on Quasi-Religion*. Connecticut: JAI Press.
- Hanegraaff, W. 1998. *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*, New York, State University of New York Press.
- Harvey, G. 1996. "The Authority of Intimacy in Paganism and Goddess Spirituality". *Diskus*, 4, 34–48.
- . 2000. "Fantasy in the Study of Religions: Paganism as Observed and Enhanced by Terry Pratchett". *Diskus*, 6.
- Hedgie, T. 2002. *What's Magic?* At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/whatMagic.html>. Accessed 10/1/2006.
- Helland, C. 2004. "Popular Religion and the World Wide Web: A Match Made in (Cyber) Heaven". In L. Dawson, ed., *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*. London: Routledge.
- Holmes, D. 1997. "Virtual Identity: Communities of Broadcast, Communities of Interactivity". In D. Holmes, ed., *Virtual Politics: Identity and Community in Cyberspace*. London: Sage. 26–45.
- Hume, L. 1997. *Witchcraft and Paganism in Australia*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press.
- Ireland, R. 1999. "Religious diversity in a new Australian Democracy". *Australian Religion Studies*, 12, 94–110.
- Jade. 2002. *Soulbonding?* Bentspoons.com. At <http://bentspoons.com/Shaytar/soapbox/notes>. Accessed 21/8/2005.
- Kirby, D. 2009. "From Pulp Fiction to Revealed Text: a study of the role of the text in the Otherkin Community". In E. Arweck and C. Deacy, ed., *Exploring Religion and the Sacred in a Media Age*. England: Ashgate.
- Larsen, E. 2004. "Cyberfaith: how americans pursue Religion Online". In L. Dawson, and D. Cowan, ed., *Religion Online: Finding Faith on the Internet*. New York: Routledge. 17–20.
- Napier, S. J. 2000. *Anime: from Akira to Princess Mononoke*, New York, Palgrave.
- Newall, V. 1987. "Fairies". In L. Jones, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. 2nd ed. Detroit: Macmillian Reference USA.
- O'dea, D. 1999. *Soulbonds* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/soulbonds.html>. Accessed 27/1/2005.
- Otherkin.Net. 2003. *geographic listing* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/community/directory/geog.html>. Accessed 3/12/2008.
- Partridge, C. 2004. "Alternative Spiritualites, New Religions, and the Reenchantment of the West". In J. R. Lewis, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*. New York: Oxford University Press. 31–45.
- Possamai, A. 2005. *Religion and Popular Culture*, New York and Oxford, Peter Lang.
- . 2006. "Superheros and the Development of Latent Abilities: A Hyper-real Re-enchantment?". In L. Hume and K. McPhillips, ed., *Popular Spiritualities: The Politics of Contemporary Enchantment*. England & USA: Ashgate. 53–62.
- . 2007. *Yoda Goes to the Vatican*. The 2007 Charles Strong Lecture.
- Ragland, G. 2005. *Soulbond Sense* Karitas.net. At <http://www.karitas.net/pavilion/library/articles>. Accessed 21/8/2005.
- Schodt, F. L. 1996. *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*, Berkley, Stone Bridge Press.
- Seavixen. 2004. *Tolkien. Is. Not. A. Reference* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/tolkienNotReference.html>. Accessed 27/1/2005.

- Ten, K. 2005. *Temple of the Ota'kin*. At <http://otakukin.otherkin.net/>. Accessed 10/1/2006.
- Walens, S. 1987. "Therianthropism". In L. Jones, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. 2nd edition. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA. Vol. 4, 9155–9156.
- Willson, M. 1997. "Community in the Abstract: A Political and Ethical Dilemma?". In D. Holmes, ed., *Virtual Politics: Identity and Community in Cyberspace*. London: Sage Publications. 145–162.
- Windtree, T. n.d. *What are Otherkin?* Otherkin.net. At <http://www.otherkin.net/articles/what.html>. Accessed 27/1/2005.
- York, M. 2000. *Invented Culture/Invented Religion: The Fictional Origins of Contemporary Paganism*. New York, Seven Bridges Press.
- Zaleski, J. 1997. *The Soul of Cyberspace: How New Technology is Changing Our Spiritual Lives*, New York, HarperCollins.