

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT



TO: Secondary School Students Parents/Guardians and Survey Participants

Date: February 2022

Full Project Title: Discovering a 'Good Read': Pathways to reading for Australian teens in a digital age

Researchers: Associate Professor Leonie Rutherford (Principal Investigator, Deakin University); Professor Michael Dezuanni (Queensland University of Technology); Professors Katya Johanson and Andrew Singleton (Deakin University).

General Outline of the Project:

Our research investigates young Australians' leisure reading tastes and practices, and who or what influences their choices. We are surveying secondary school-aged Australians to know more about how teens make decisions regarding the books they read. We would like to improve knowledge in the community and professional organisations about young people's reading. We want to inform librarians, teachers and publishers to help them improve their services to teenagers. This research is funded by a grant from the Australian Research Council (Project LP180100258).

Participant Involvement:

We have selected this school (and class) to participate in our study and the principal has also given permission for us to administer the survey.

What does participation entail? Students are asked to complete a survey that asks about reading habits and preferences and some other background information. The survey will be conducted either at school or at a time convenient to students and will be done on a device such as a phone, computer or tablet. Students will receive a link to access the survey, which will be hosted on the QUALTRICS online survey platform. It will take about 10-15 minutes to complete, depending on the answers.

Participation is voluntary and students do not have to answer any questions they don't want to. They can withdraw at any point until the survey is completed and submitted.

Participation should not cause harm or stress. Participants can talk to teachers or the school counsellor if they want to discuss any issues further.

Consent Procedure:

Students

Students will be able to give their consent at the start of the survey by answering a question about whether they agree to participate. It is very common in research on teenagers (13-18) to provide consent for themselves when completing a survey. In the estimation of the researchers in this project, we are satisfied that the survey participants are 'sufficiently mature to understand and consent, and [are] not vulnerable in ways that warrant additional consent from a parent or guardian*', especially given the uncontroversial nature of questions that are asked in the survey. (*National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research Chapter 4.2: Children and young people, p.65).

If students do not want to do the survey they can inform their teacher that they don't want to participate or select 'No, I won't do the survey' as their answer to the first question.

Parents and guardians

If you consent to your child's participation in this project, you do not need to take any further action.

If you do not want your child to participate in the project, please use the QR code or link on the next page to tell us that you do not consent to your child's participation.

Scan this QR CODE to access the consent form:



Or click on this link:

Consent link: <https://bit.ly/3GTCzB1>

Confidentiality

The surveys are **completely anonymous** and it will not be possible, even for the researchers, to identify which student completed any given survey. The published results won't identify any of the schools who participate in the survey.

Data Storage

Storage of the data (survey results) will adhere to the University regulations and be kept on Deakin's secure data repository and will be accessed only via password-protected and encrypted computers. Data will be kept for 10 years following any publications arising from the research.

Results

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research findings, these will be posted on the project website <https://teenreading.net/research/> from September 2022. Publications and reports will also be available on the website. This project will produce reports, conference papers and journal articles.

Ethics Committee Clearance:

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the Deakin University Human Research Ethics Committee (#2019-455) and the QUT Human Research Ethics Committee (#2000000479). The project has met the policy requirements from the NSW Department of Education (SERAP 2020467).

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:
The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 03 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number 2019-455.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L M. Rutherford".

Associate Professor Leonie Rutherford (PhD)
Writing and Literature Area
School of Communication and Creative Arts
Deakin University, Waurn Ponds VIC 3226
Tel: +61 3 5227 1469
Email: leonie.rutherford@deakin.edu.au