

Information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET SOCIAL SCIENCE/ HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Project: #loveyourshelfie: Tracking Harlequin Mills & Boon Novels as Objects in 21st-Century Australia

You are invited to participate in a research study of the significance of paperback Harlequin Mills & Boon (HM&B) novels in contemporary literary culture. Your involvement forms part of a larger project about the production of popular fiction genres and texts in twenty-first-century Australia.

1. What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to build knowledge about how and where print editions of HM&B novels by Australian authors circulate after their publication, and to consider how this relates to developments in digital and online literary culture.

2. Why have I been invited to participate in this study?

You have been invited to participate in this study due to your involvement in one or more of the social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and/or your interest in popular romance fiction.

3. What does this study involve?

You are invited to do one or both of the following, as many times as you wish during the data collection period (1 December 2016 - 1 March 2017):

- Find and photograph one or more of 50 selected books published by Harlequin Mills & Boon between 1996 and 2016, and share your photograph(s) on Instagram and/or Twitter with the hashtag #loveyourshelfie, or by posting it to the Summer of Romance Facebook page.
- Share a written response to the question “Where did you find this book?” on Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter.

The photographs and narratives collected by the researchers will help us work out what happens to Australian HM&B novels after they're published. Your involvement will give insight into the status of HM&B books as material objects in contemporary culture.

Sharing a photograph and/or a written response using the hashtag #loveyourshelfie on Instagram or Twitter, or on the project's Facebook page, implies consent to your data being included in the study. You will not have to sign any additional forms.

4. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

This research will record participants' public user names on social media. It does not seek to record politically or economically sensitive material, but as the photographic and textual data will be shared on public social media, there is the possible risk that such material may be inadvertently revealed. You may withdraw this information from inclusion in the research at any time and you may do so without providing an explanation.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any stage, or to withdraw any unprocessed data you have supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice by emailing one of the researchers listed below. If you withdraw, any data we have collected from you up to that point will be destroyed. Your decision to participate or not, or to withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, their institutions, or affect any services you may receive now or in the future.

5. What if I have questions about this research?

Please contact any of the researchers if you have any questions or if you would like more information about the project.

- Lisa Fletcher (University of Tasmania): lisa.fletcher@utas.edu.au
- Jodi McAlister (University of Tasmania): jodi.mcalister@utas.edu.au
- Kurt Temple (University of Tasmania): krtemple@utas.edu.au
- Kathleen Williams (University of Tasmania): kathleen.williams@utas.edu.au

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study you should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on 03 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Office is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will be required to quote Ethics Ref No: H0016088.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.