

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title

Online to offline quarrels: How romance in mass media can influence our romantic relationships.

Date that data collection will start:

10/03/2026

An Invitation

Kia Ora,

Thank you for your interest in this study! My name is Ezra Elle Galang, and I am a student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) completing my Master of Arts degree in Psychology. I would like to invite you to participate in my study investigating romantic relationships, conflict resolution, and mass media. If this interests you, I am more than happy to welcome you to take part in this study.

This research study will contribute towards the completion of my Master's degree. Please take your time to read the following information carefully. If you have any questions or would like further clarification, the research team of this study can be reached using the contact information provided below.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research study is to understand how content from mass media, particularly regarding romance, can influence how couples perceive and act within their romantic relationships. In academic research, there is an abundance of information on how mass media can influence and change the thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of its users. Romance has been an extremely popular genre in media, and this can be seen in the rise of romance movies, television shows, books, and social media trends. However, there has been no proper focus on whether the romance genre in media has the potential to influence couples and how they behave. The overall aim of this study is to understand how this media genre can influence users' romantic relationships. Understanding this connection can give valuable insights into our existing knowledge about mass media and interpersonal relations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You would have been invited to participate in this research by clicking the link on a social media post or by scanning the QR code presented on the advertisement poster. Both the link and the QR code redirect you to the questionnaire, where this participant information sheet is located.

This study is open to anyone over the age of 16 who has a current or past experience of a serious romantic relationship (i.e. a meaningful and committed emotional connection between partners who share long-term goals). This does not include individuals whose main romantic relationship experience is a polyamorous or open relationship, or a long-distance relationship.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice), and whether you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. Submission of completed questionnaires will be taken as consent and agreement to participate. However, you are free to withdraw at any time. To do this, simply

stop answering the questionnaire and close your browser window on which the survey is presented. As this is an anonymous survey, it will not be possible to withdraw your information after you have filled it in or completed the survey.

What will my participation involve?

You will be asked to fill out an anonymous online questionnaire on a device (e.g., laptop, phone) consisting of general demographic questions and relationship demographic questions. This will be followed by questions about your media content consumption and your feelings and behaviour in relationships.

What are the benefits?

The benefits of this study will allow you to actively explore and reflect on your relationships with others, romantic or otherwise, as well as your online habits and the content you consume. Understanding the effects of both the physical and digital world have on us can provide great guidelines on how we navigate our current and future personal relations. The findings will also contribute to current literature studying the ever-changing interaction between mass media and romantic relationships. Overall, this study can benefit the academic and general community that is interested in understanding human social behaviour in diverse contexts.

What are the costs?

This questionnaire should only take 20 to 25 minutes to complete. Aside from time, there are no further costs to participating in this study.

What are the discomforts and risks?

This study involves answering questions about your media consumption and romantic relationships and has the possibility of emotionally triggering participants. If you feel uncomfortable at any point during the survey, you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any time by closing your browser window on which the survey is presented. However, there are no significant risks when participating in this study, and any discomfort will unlikely exceed what you may experience in everyday life.

If any of the questions in the survey make you feel uncomfortable and you would like to talk to someone, you can contact the following helplines:

Lifeline - (+64) 0800 543 354

Youthline - (+64) 09 376 6645

Or find your local helpline at www.findahelpline.com.

What will happen to information about me?

All collected information will be anonymous, meaning that the research team and any readers will not be able to identify you. This study will only collect information on demographics, consumption of media content, and romantic relationships. No identifiable or sensitive personal data will be requested.

All collected anonymous information from participants will be securely stored on AUT's OneDrive with restricted access only to the research team. The data will be kept indefinitely, in accordance with the Open Science movement in psychology to ensure research transparency. The anonymous information you give us may be used for future research related to this study. It may also be given to other researchers, but they will not be able to identify you from the data we collect and provide them.

Will the results of the study be published?

The results of this research will be published in my completed Master's thesis. This thesis will be available to the public through the AUT institutional research repository.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the primary Project Supervisor, Ying Wang, y.wang@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 5012, or the secondary Project Supervisor, Stef Gomes-Ng, stef.gomes-ng@aut.ac.nz.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTECH, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Who do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Participant Information Sheet for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Primary Student Researcher Contact Details:

Full Name - Ezra Elle Galang
Email - ezraelleg@gmail.com

Primary Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Full Name - Ying Wang
Email - y.wang@aut.ac.nz

Secondary Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Full Name - Stef Gomes-Ng
Email - stef.gomes-ng@aut.ac.nz

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on [09/03/2026], AUTECH
Reference number [26/63].**