



Letter of Invitation for Research

Date: September 1st, 2020

Project Title: Gen Z's Practices for Resisting Ads

Principal Investigator (PI):

Karen Louise Smith, PhD

Department of Communication, Popular Culture & Film

Brock University

karen.louise.smith@brocku.ca 905.688.5550 x6497

INVITATION

All students who enrolled in Media and Culture: Texts and Practices (CPCF 1F25) in fall 2020-winter 2021, are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to better understand the everyday media practices of Generation Z (Gen Z), which consists of individuals born between 1995-2015. We are particularly interested in learning how Gen Z understands advertising and *if* and *how* the cohort avoids or resists advertisements. Additionally, we want to find out if engaging in research with faculty assists you to be successful in your studies at Brock.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, at different points in the course you will be asked to use an online survey platform, called Qualtrics, to: a) complete a media diary, b) write a 250 word reflection, c) fill out an online survey, and d) complete another 250 word written reflection and answer some questions about your participation in the project. You may participate in as many of these activities as you choose as the course progresses. Total participation is expected to be under 2 hours (or approximately 30 minutes per activity).

Approximately 30 students from the CPCF 1F25 class will be recruited to participate in follow-up interviews. Interviews will examine project themes, last approximately 45 minutes and take place through video conferencing, or potentially in person if the public health conditions permit.

Please also note that if you choose to participate in the Gen Z research project, we will ask permission to follow up with you by email, and we plan to check in with you around 2022-2023 or 2023-2024, when we expect many members of the CPCF 1F25 class may be graduating.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

Some people think that engaging in a research project with faculty can help students succeed at university. We hope that participating in this project provides this type of benefit for you. Additionally, you can earn a MAXIMUM of 4% towards your final CPCF 1F25 grade by participating in the 4 Qualtrics based activities (1% per activity to a total of 4%). A draw will be held for 10 gift cards, each worth \$10, for student participants who complete all 4 Qualtrics based activities, as research participants in our study. All interview participants will receive a \$15 gift card to thank you for your time. The risks of participating in this research are similar to what you experience in everyday life (i.e., you could feel embarrassed about not knowing a term, and there are typically some risks when sharing information online, such as someone seeing your work if you are on a public computer).

CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to ensure that you receive grades for completing research elements on Qualtrics, members of the research team will communicate your name and Brock email to your instructor or TAs to indicate your completion of each activity. Additionally, names and emails will be used to link your responses together across the various stages of the project. Your CPCF 1F25 instructor, Dr. Marian Bredin, will not be accessing data that identifies you from the research until after final grades are submitted (approximately May 2021).

When analyzing data and reporting results, the research team will treat your data with confidentiality. Your name will not appear in any publication or report from this study. Results may share both aggregate results and anonymous, individual quotations from the Qualtrics based research activities or interviews. Data collected and analyzed through this project will be stored, processed or transferred using secure cloud systems and the researchers may also download data to be stored on password protected computers. The researchers will also use email and potentially video conferencing tools, to communicate with you during the project. The researchers will select online tools with strong security, but we cannot fully guarantee confidentiality when using online platforms.

The only people permitted to access the identifiable research data will be Dr. Karen Smith, her research team and the people supporting necessary research tasks. Any transcriptionists or assistants will sign third-party confidentiality agreements.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not feel comfortable participating in this research project, you can complete alternative activities in CPCF 1F25 to earn your grades. On Sakai, you will also find that there are two pathways to submit your responses to Qualtrics. You can choose to submit your responses on Qualtrics for 'research purposes' or for 'learning purposes.' If you choose the 'learning purposes' pathway our team will *not* treat your

responses as research data, but we will ensure you receive course grades for completed activities. If you request feedback on a submission, we will communicate with you to offer comments, or share your responses with a TA for CPCF 1F25 to provide comments. In terms of voluntary participation, you can also decline participating in a follow-up interview.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE STUDY

You can quit submitting responses on Qualtrics at any point during your participation. If you wish to withdraw any of your responses submitted through Qualtrics, please contact Dr. Karen Smith by email (karen.louise.smith@brocku.ca) by April 30, 2021. If you wish to withdraw your interview data from the project, please contact Dr. Karen Smith by email 2 weeks after your interview.

Fully withdrawing from the project may be impossible after analysis for the project is underway or results have been shared through updates, presentations or publications.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals, books, blog posts and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available on the Brock CPCF research webpage <https://brocku.ca/social-sciences/cpcf/research/>.

CONSENT

A consent check box will be presented for each research activity on Qualtrics and an interview consent form will be provided for you to sign off on.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact **Dr. Karen Smith** using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University #20-006. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.