



School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences
Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AL

**Study: Investigating the impact of online disinhibition
on the behavioural effects of swearing**

STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

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Experimenter:		
Christopher Dobson	c.g.dobson@student.reading.ac.uk	

We would be grateful if you could assist us by participating in our study '*Investigating the impact of online disinhibition on the behavioural effects of swearing*'. Online disinhibition is the psychological phenomenon whereby increased anonymity in online interactions reduces the level of accountability felt. It is suggested that this phenomenon may explain why behavioural effects of swearing (e.g., an increase in pain tolerance and physical strength) do not appear to replicate using online testing methodologies. We are, therefore, interested in understanding how methodological changes may alter levels of online disinhibition, altering subsequent behavioural effects of swearing.

The study comprises **three** testing sessions, each taking approximately **10 - 15 minutes**. Each session is online, differing only in how present the researchers are, and uses the same procedure. Initially, you will be asked to repeat either a swearword (Fuck) or a non-swearword (Flat) out loud, at your normal speaking volume and rate, for 20 seconds. After this, you will undertake a computerised 'balloon inflation' task where you collect points each time you pump up a balloon without it bursting. Upon completion of the balloon inflation task, you will complete a lexical decision task, responding to whether a displayed word rhymes with the previously repeated word. You will then provide ratings of how offensive the repeated word is to you and how humorous you found repeating it. Next you will complete a self-report emotional questionnaire. After this, you will be given a short break in which you can solve a wordsearch puzzle. You will then repeat all the tasks except the wordsearch, vocalising the other word for 20 seconds before the balloon inflation task. We are also collecting basic demographic information to monitor the diversity and inclusivity of those who take part.

Your data will be kept confidential and securely stored, with only an anonymous number identifying it. No information linking that number to you will be stored.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time, without reason or penalty, by closing your browser. Upon completion of all three sessions, you can enter a draw to win a £75 Amazon gift voucher, should you wish. If you were recruited through SONA, you can claim 0.75 SONA credits instead of entering the draw. You are free to contact the Experimenter (using the details provide above) to ask any questions you may have about this study before you begin.

This study has been reviewed by the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct (#####; expiry date: ##/##/####).

Thank you for taking part in our study.

Dr Anthony Haffey and Christopher Dobson



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STUDY CONSENT FORM

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Email

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Experimenter:

Christopher Dobson

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Please read the following, and tick the box preceding it, to confirm it has been read and you agree to it.

- ☐ I have read the information sheet regarding the project: Investigating the impact of online disinhibition on the behavioural effects of swearing.
- ☐ I understand the experimental procedure as explained on the information sheet and that it will involve repeating out loud the swearword 'Fuck' for 20 seconds.
- ☐ I understand what information is collected about me, how it will be used in relation to the study, how it will be kept safe, and my rights in relation to my data.
- ☐ I understand participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without detriment.
- ☐ I understand that I can withdraw at any time by simply closing my browser window.
- ☐ I understand that the data I provide will be anonymous and cannot be linked back to me.
- ☐ I understand that I can download copies of the study 'Information Sheet' and this 'Consent Form' by clicking the link at the bottom of this form, or by requesting copies by emailing the experimenter listed above.
- ☐ To confirm that you are reading each item before agreeing, please leave this unticked
- ☐ I confirm that I am over the age of 18.
- ☐ I confirm that I am a native English speaker.
- ☐ I understand that the data collected as part of this study will be preserved and made openly available in an anonymized form, so that they can be consulted and re-used by others.
- ☐ I understand that by clicking '**Continue**' (which begins this study) that I am providing **informed consent** to take part in this study.

This study has been reviewed by the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct (#####; expiry date: ##/##/##).

Thank you for taking part in our study.

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