SOCIAL SCIENCES HREC
FULL COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Important

Please email an electronic version of this application plus the supporting documentation as Microsoft Word documents to:

Katherine.Shaw@utas.edu.au

A .pdf attachment is acceptable for appropriate documents, eg., advertisements, posters, etc.

A signed copy of this form also needs to be forwarded electronically.

If you have any questions, please call: 6226 2763


1. Title of proposed investigation

Please be concise but specific. Titles should be consistent with those used on any external funding application.

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

2. Expected commencement date: Expected completion date of project:

April 1, 2014  April 1, 2015
### 3. Investigators

**CHIEF INVESTIGATOR**  
Note: This is the researcher with ultimate responsibility for the research project.  
**The Chief Investigator cannot be a student.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given Name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Position:** Senior Lecturer in English  
**Qualifications:** PhD

**Staff ID:** 02023927

**School & Division:** Education

**Contact Address:** Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania, Locked Bag 1307, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

**Telephone:**  
**Email:** angela.thomas@utas.edu.au  
(Required)

### A. CO-INVESTIGATOR(S)

1)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given Name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Position:** Practitioner Lecturer  
**Qualifications:** MEd

**Staff ID:** 060863

**Contact Address:** Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania, Locked Bag 1307, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

**Telephone:**  
**Email:** wendy.wilson@utas.edu.au  
(Required)
4. Research Merit

Please note that for student projects, School approval is required. Applications for student projects cannot be accepted until School approval has been granted.

All other applications are required to have undergone a peer review process prior to submission.

Peer reviews should be conducted by independent and experienced researchers in a relevant discipline.

(a) School Approval

Is this a student project that requires School approval (e.g. being completed in partial fulfilment of an Honours, Masters or PhD)?

Yes ☐ No ☑

If no, please complete part (b) Peer Review

(b) Peer Review

Has the research proposal, including design and methodology, undergone a peer review process?

Yes ☒ No ☐
If YES – please provide details:

Who reviewed the proposal and when was it reviewed?

This proposal was reviewed by Dr Chris Rayner, on February 7th, 2014

What did the review process involve?

Dr Rayner provided detailed feedback on all aspects of the application, and these were acted upon. The application documents were then resubmitted to Dr Rayner for final peer review prior to submission to the University ethics committee.

What were the recommendations (if any), and how were these acted upon?

Dr Rayner provided a number of recommendations. Some were related to clarifying or providing further detail on aspects of the study (e.g. recruitment procedures), and ensuring consistency between the application and supporting documents. There were also some comments which reflect the need to address issues associated with:

- the complexity of the study (involvement in school space, time, and with the cooperation/involvement of teachers),
- the vulnerability of the participants (teenage girls in dependent and unequal relationships with teachers and principals), and
- the sensitive nature of the data (potential disclosure of bullying, and issues associated with body image, emotional wellbeing – including images and video).

Finally, Dr Rayner commented that it would be useful to further justify and explain the research design and data analysis methods.

Each of Dr Rayner’s recommendations were addressed, point by point, throughout the application documents. In summary, this included providing clarification and further detail where indicated, addressing how the research met the requirements of the national statement in more detail, considering the role of school guidance counsellors as well as external counselling services, and explaining the methodology in more detail.

Please confirm the peer review has stated that the proposal:

- Has a set of clearly identified aims? 
- Is well designed and methodologically sound?
- Is based on a thorough review of the current literature and previous studies on related topics? (NS 1.1(c))
- Has been designed or developed using methods appropriate for achieving its stated aims? (NS 1.1(b))
- Is expected to yield valid and useful data, if conducted according to the protocol?
- Will be conducted or supervised by persons with appropriate experience, qualifications and competence? (NS 1.1(e))
- Is justifiable by its potential benefit? (NS 1.1(a))
(c) Editorial Review

Has the application, including the public documents, undergone an editorial review?  

Yes ☐  No ☒

*If YES – please provide details:*

*If NO – please explain why:*

As CI of the project, Dr Angela Thomas wrote all application documents. As a second investigator on the project, Mrs Wendy Wilson reviewed each of the documents and provided editorial feedback.
### 5. Approvals from other Departments / Institutions

Does this project need the approval of any institution other than the University of Tasmania (e.g., Department of Education, particular wards in hospitals, prisons, government institutions, or businesses)?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

*If yes, please indicate below the Institutions involved and the status of the Approval, and attach relevant documentation. Please also indicate if the approval is dependent on HREC approval.*

Name of Other Institution(s): Department of Education Status: An ethics application to the Department of Education is yet to be submitted, and will be dependent on HREC approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does this project need the approval of any other HREC?</th>
<th>Yes [ ] No [ ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*If NO, why not? (e.g. all participants are within Tasmania)*

All participants are within Tasmania.

### 6. Is the investigation a follow-up of a previous study?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

*If yes, what is the ethics reference number of that study? H- - - - -*

What was the title of that study?
7. Funding

*Under the National Statement (2.2.6) a researcher must disclose:*
- the amount and sources or potential sources of funding for the research; and
- financial or other relevant declarations of interest of researchers, sponsors or institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this research being funded?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☒</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*If yes, please detail amount and source of funds (NS 5.2.7)*

If this application relates to Grant(s) and/or Consultancies, please indicate the Title and Grant Number relating to it.

If no external funding has been obtained, please indicate how any costs of research will be met:

No costs will be claimed against this research. It will be conducted in local schools, and recording equipment will be via a recording app on the Chief Investigator’s iPad. Costs for transcribing interview data will be drawn from researchers’ consultancy account.

Do the investigators have any financial interest in this project? Yes ☐ No ☒

*If yes, please give details:*

8. Keywords and Acronyms  Please provide definitions for any technical terms and acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Lay Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embodiment</td>
<td>The ways in which cultural expectations of gender (in this research it will be femininities) create beliefs and behaviours about and on the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BID</td>
<td>Body image distortion: whereby tween and teen girls with a normal or underweight body have a false perception that they are overweight and are at risk of unsafe weight-loss behaviours and eating disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body shaming</td>
<td>A form of bullying, particularly with tween and teen girls whereby they tease other girls about their weight, appearance or other body issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tween</td>
<td>Girls of approximate age 11-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinspiration</td>
<td>Images of thin, anorexic female bodies collected and posted online to inspire girls to become thin</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-anorexic sites</td>
<td>Online communites which promote anorexia (and/or other eating disorders such as bulimia) by providing detailed guides and tips on how not to engage in eating, “thinspiration” images to inspire and promote an eating disorder, and forums for members to support each other in achieving weight loss goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfie</td>
<td>The practice of taking photographs of ones-self and posting them online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thigh gap</td>
<td>A state of thinness such that when standing up there is a noticeable gap between the thighs caused by lack of flesh – “thin” upper thighs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bikini bridge</td>
<td>A state of thinness such that the hip bones protrude to such an extent that a bikini does not lay flat across the body but is held up by the protruding hip bones (originally a “hoax” condition but once picked up by media became a “real” phenomenon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othering discourse</td>
<td>An “othering” discourse relates to the ways in which the discursive and social practices of a particular group serve to discriminate and marginalise another group, excluding that group and causing unequal power dynamics as a consequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjectivity</td>
<td>Following Foucault, ‘subjects’ are constructed through the complex interplay between power and language; subjectivity is constituted and reconstituted in texts (including visual texts) and talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived experience</td>
<td>Subjectivity as ‘lived experience’ (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992) goes beyond discursive notions of ‘the subject is language’ (Mansfield, 2000, p.38), and focuses on the attributes of emotions and physicality as applied to social contexts. As such, researching lived experience is a form of social research that accounts for ‘the complex manner in which emotion, cognition, and the lived body intertwine’ (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992, p.3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-based research</td>
<td>Use of artistic expressions in any of the arts (literature, art, music, drama, multimedia… etc.) as a means to understanding and investigating experiences of participants (McNiff, 2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Rationale and Background for the Project:

Please give a plain English description of the aims of this study.

The aims of the study are three-fold:

1) to seek girls’ responses to literature that explores issues of femininity relating to embodiment, body image, being beautiful, body shaming, eating disorders, peer relationships and girlhood

2) to investigate girls’ own lived experiences of being a girl with respect to the issues raised in literature

3) to compare and contrast responses and lived experiences from three different aged groups of girls (tweens, early teens, later teens)

Please give a plain English description of the research justification for this study.
Jane, the fox & me (Britt & Arsenault, 2012/2013) is a novel-length picturebook which explores contemporary issues of girlhood: being ostracised, taunted and teased by other girls, experiencing body image problems and potentially developing an eating disorder as a consequence, and trying to navigate through complex feelings of loneliness and “otherness”. This book mirrors current research about contemporary issues of girlhood within wider cultural contexts that relate to identity, femininity, embodiment, and girl-to-girl relationships.

From an early age girls grow up immersed in fairytales, romantic fiction, and media images which construct the narrative of a beautiful thin woman whose attractiveness represents the passport to a perfect life (Malson, 1997). Girls are not only surrounded by images, discourses and social practices relating to female bodies, but they invest in the creation of such images and discourses in active and potentially damaging ways themselves. “Body shaming”, “slut shaming”, “selfie” trends from the “thigh gap” to the “bikini bridge”, gossip sites, magazine covers, “thinspiration”, and pro-anorexia sites have become a set of pervasive mainstream discourses in which young girls are performing “schizoid feminine subjectivities” (Renold & Ringrose, 2011). At the centre of these discourses, femininity is directly equated to the body, which in turn becomes the subject of both love and hate, spectacle and ridicule, and innocence and sexuality (Thomas, 2007).

In the novel, the main character Helene is teased about her body. Early research in Australia about girl bullying (Leckie, 1997) suggested that girls use more psychological approaches to bullying, such as “teasing, name calling and criticising others’ appearances” (Leckie, 1997, p. 2). This is revealed to still be the case in more recent research, such as the Canadian-based research by Boyer (2010) who noted that girl-to-girl violence typically includes: “social alienation, spreading of rumors, and otherwise manipulating the victim’s peer group” (Boyer, 2010, p.33-34), and the US-based research by Taylor (2011) who argued that “…by engaging in “othering” discourses of their peers’ body fat, adolescents, regardless of their size, were able to discursively construct themselves as “normal” in comparison” (Taylor, 2011, p.178).

This project aims to use the picturebook Jane, the fox & me as a means to invite girls to discuss issues of girlhood and femininity, to determine the kinds of discourses about the body and use of the body as an instrument of psychological peer pressure that exist in Tasmanian contexts. By asking girls to respond to the issues raised in the novel, we will also be opening up a safe discursive space for girls to discuss their own lived experiences of the body, girl-to-girl teasing, alienation, relationships with other girls and the affectual and behavioural impact of these experiences. Girls will have opportunities to share responses through two forms of interview (focus group; individual) and an arts-based response, whereby they will be invited to write and/or create art to demonstrate their perceptions of self, body, femininity and peer relationships. Three groups will be selected as focus groups (pre-teen (tween), early teen and late teen) to provide three different perspectives on the issues, and to explore the varying factors that impact on girls’ subjectivities as they move from girlhood to late adolescence.

The research will provide particular insights into girlhood and femininities as experienced by girls in a local context. Such insights will be examined from both national and international perspectives, and as such, the research has the potential to add a local voice to the broader global dialogue about tween and teen girls’ issues.
Please list the most relevant and recent literature references, both by the investigator and/or by others, that support the justification for the study.


10. Participants

**Number of Participants**
How many participants do you intend to recruit? 30

Provide *research justification* for the number of participants you intend to recruit (this question relates to research justification for your sampling approach).

This study will involve three focus groups of girls: 10 tweens, 10 early teens and 10 late teens. The 30 participants will provide rich and detailed data for a qualitative study, and the three groups will represent a cross section of girls, enabling researchers to track the changing issues in girls’ experience across age groups.

**Selection of Participants**

Clearly describe the experimental and, where relevant, control groups. Include details of sex, age range, and any special characteristics (ethnic origin, demographic details, health status etc.). Give a justification for your choice of participant group(s).

This study will involve three focus groups of girls, one from a local primary school, one from a local high school, and one from a senior secondary school. The first group will consist of 10 girls in year 6 (and will be aged approximately 11 - 12 years of age); the second group will consist of 10 girls in year 8 (and will be aged approximately 13-14 years of age) and the third group will consist of 10 girls in year 11 (and will be aged approximately 16 - 17 years of age).

Participants will be selected randomly, from all year level girls at each school. The principal will then be asked to remove any participant who is not considered of sufficient maturity to respond to the issues raised in the literature.

Size number in groups: Each of the focus groups will be of approximately ten students. Stage 1 of the project involves a discussion in a focus group. Ten is considered the uppermost number suitable for focus group studies. The “rule of thumb” recommended number of participants in a focus group is 6-10 participants. This is because “below 6, it may be difficult to maintain a discussion; above 10, it may be difficult to control one” (Morgan, 1997, p.43). Selecting the upper limit of ten per group allows for the possibility of withdrawals or no shows from this stage of the research.

Number of groups: the study involves three focus groups to provide perspectives from three different age groups. The findings will provide rich descriptions of three different age group perspectives. Results will not be generalisable, however they may provide insight and justification for further future research with a larger number of participants.

Will the project involve any of the following participants? Please indicate how each of the following 'types of research participants' will be involved in the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary intent of (or affected by) research</th>
<th>Possible coincidental recruitment</th>
<th>Design specifically excludes</th>
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A PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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Form updated 19.11.2013
10. Participants

| (a) | Pregnant Women? | (NS 4.1) | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| (b) | Minors, i.e. children under 18 years of age? | (NS 4.2) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (c) | People highly dependent on medical care who may be unable to give consent? | (NS 4.4) | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| (d) | People with a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or mental illness? | (NS 4.5) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (e) | People who may be involved in illegal activities? | (NS 4.6) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (f) | People in other countries? | (NS 4.8) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (g) | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? | (NS 4.7) | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (h) | People who are identifiable by their membership of a cultural, ethnic or minority group? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

For each group identified as a “Primary intent of (or affected by) research”, show how your research complies with the relevant chapter of the National Statement.

If you answered “Primary intent of (or affected by) research” to (g) you must also attach a statement indicating how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sensitivities will be recognised (see the following publication for guidance: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/e52syn.htm)

For each group identified as “Design specifically excludes”, please explain how and why these participants will be excluded.

The design specifically excludes: (c) People highly dependent on medical care who may be unable to give consent? And (f) People in other countries.

The project aims to seek local girls’ responses to literature that explores issues of femininity relating to embodiment, body image, being beautiful, body shaming, eating disorders, peer relationships and girlhood. The participants will be girls in local Tasmanian schools who are selected because of their maturity to discuss issues of femininity. No girls will be selected if they are dependent on medication and unable to give consent. No girls from other countries will be participants in this project.
10. Participants

Research merit and integrity:
Thirty girls will be the participants in this research, drawn from three different local schools. In the first instance, the school principals of each school will be approached via an email attaching the “communication letter to principal” (see attached documentation for a copy of this letter) and invitation for a face to face meeting with the researchers to further discuss the aims and potential for the research within the school. If the principal accepts the invitation, the researchers will describe the participants required (age group and maturity of girls, 10 girls per school), to be negotiated with one or more of the teachers of girls in that age range. Once each principal and respective teacher(s) have identified suitable participants, these girls will meet with the researchers, who will explain the research aims. Researchers will take care to explain that the issues to be explored in the research include sensitive issues such as how they feel about their body, and about potential teasing or ridicule they have experienced about their body or about being a girl. Girls who agree that they are interested in participating in the research will then be given information forms and consent forms for both themselves as well as a set to take home to their parents. Parents will be invited to a follow-up information sessions with the researchers should they wish to further discuss the research and ask any questions they have prior to deciding whether or not to give consent. Through these steps, the school community has received clear communication, and participants (and their parents) will have had access to information that will lead to informed consent or otherwise.

The research and its methods are appropriate for the participants, as they will involve the participants in activities which enrich normal classroom activities. Each group of ten girls will read a narrative together as a whole group and this will be followed by a focus group discussion and interview about the book. Girls will then be invited to create a piece of artwork and/or fiction representing their response to the literature, followed by an individual interview about their response. Responding to literature is an activity which integrates valid national Australian English curriculum outcomes related to literature, and will take place as a special English experience completed in normal school hours. The interviews of individual girls will be a maximum of 30 minutes each and will have negligible impact on their normal classroom activities is English.

Justice:
The girls are between 11-17 and will be selected based on their maturity and capability to both understand what is required of them and provide informed consent.

Beneficence:
At each of the three stages of research design (focus group interview; responding to literature through art and/or writing; and individual interview) the Chief Investigator and the second researcher will both be present. It is anticipated that the experiences will allow participants opportunities to explore positive strategies for dealing with bullies, develop a strong sense of self-worth and identity, and form positive relationships with others. Having both researchers present at all times will allow for one researcher to take the lead, while the other researcher can carefully monitor the participants to ensure the safety, emotional and psychological security, and wellbeing of participants at all times. A teacher or the principal and the school guidance officer will be available should any visible or vocal signs of distress be identified by the researchers. Researchers will plan the timing of the research to coincide with school guidance officers’ presence and availability within the school to ensure professional care and support is accessible before, during and immediately after the research visit. Furthermore, information sheets provided to participants will remind them of support services (both physical and online counselling services) should discussions about body image or bullying cause any negative effects.

Respect:
Both the child and the child’s parent/guardian will consent to the child’s participation in the research.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How will participants be recruited? From where will your participants be recruited?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you recruiting through advertisements? If so, indicate where they will be placed and append a copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the participants University or DHHS staff, or regular patients in a particular clinic? If so, detail how they will be approached i.e. through personal invitation, email etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants will be recruited from three local schools, a primary school, a high school and a senior secondary school. The targeted schools will be Riverside Primary School, Riverside High School and Newstead College (subject to DoE ethics and school principal approval). Should any principals decline the invitation to be involved in the research, the communication letter to principals will be sent out to other local principals in an equivalent school (based on age of girls required). As the project is an unfunded project, only local Launceston schools will be included in any necessary extended search for participants.

Teachers of relevant year groups and the respective principals will be consulted about the research (see Appendix A). Recruitment will be a three step process: Step 1: will involve a random selection of girls (for example, all girls in year 6, or all girls in two classes). Step 2: the principal should then eliminate any girl from the random group who (based on their experience and history with the girl throughout her years of schooling) does not have the maturity to discuss these sensitive issues. Step 3: the parents and girls be clearly advised of any foreseeable risk in the information sheet provided (see Appendix B and Appendix D), prior to consent, and girls and their parents (or guardians) will be invited to discuss the research with the CI, prior to consenting (see Appendix C and Appendix E).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Data Source and Identifiability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the project involve information sourced from databanks?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

If yes, state which one(s) and indicate what permission for access is required. Include a description of any conditions of access and attach any relevant approvals.
11. Data Source and Identifiability

Is the data collected about individual participants:

a) Non-identifiable?
Non-identifiable data is data which have never been labelled with individual identifiers or from which identifiers have been permanently removed, and by means of which no specific individual can be identified. A subset of non-identifiable data are those that can be linked with other data so it can be known that they are about the same data subject, but the person’s identity remains unknown.

☐

b) Re-identifiable?
Re-identifiable data is data from which identifiers have been removed and replaced by a code, but it remains possible to re-identify a specific individual by, for example, using the code or linking different data sets.

☐

c) Individually Identifiable?
Individually identifiable data is data where the identity of an individual can reasonably be ascertained. Examples of identifiers include the individual’s name, image, date of birth or address, or in some cases their position in an organisation.

☒

Please note that this question refers to the format in which data is collected and stored, rather than the format in which data is published.

Please give details of the information that will be collected:
The information collected will be in the following forms:

1) Audio recordings of each of the two focus group interviews (de-identified)

2) Audio recordings of each of the 30 individual interviews (de-identified)

3) Arts-based responses from each of the 30 participants. Please note: participants will be able to choose whether their art work, written work, performance, or work in a medium of their own choice is de-identified or not. Participants who choose the performance option (“selfie”, dance or dramatic response) will be identifiable visually but not by name, unless the participant requests to be identified by name. It is not envisaged that the research publications will be read by the general public however as Tasmania (and Launceston) is a small place, there is potential for an image of a participant in a publication to be recognised. For this reason, participants will have this possibility clearly explained before they select this option. The researchers also envisage that there is a possibility that the school principal may desire to share the student responses with the wider community to raise awareness of the issues of body image and bullying, by making a public display of the artwork and responses. This
11. Data Source and Identifiability

will be clearly communicated in the information sheets as a possibility and consent to share with the school community will be an option on the consent form.

12. Federal Privacy Legislation

The following questions are part of the requirements concerning federal privacy legislation.

(a) Is this project medical research (including epidemiological research?)

If yes, will you require the use or disclosure of information from a Commonwealth agency?

If yes, will the information to be disclosed be personal information, i.e. identifiable information?

If yes, will you be obtaining consent from the individuals to whom the information relates?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Go to (b)

(b) Is this Research relevant to public health or safety, or to the management, funding or monitoring of a health service?

If yes, does the research involve the collection, use or disclosure of information from a private sector organisation?

If yes, will you be collecting, using or disclosing health information?

If yes, will consent be obtained from the individuals to whom the health information relates?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Go to (Question 13)

13. Procedures

Describe the procedures to which participants will be subjected or the tasks they will be asked to carry out (please detail exactly what you will be doing).

Angela Thomas and Wendy Wilson will be visiting each research site on four occasions to collect
three kinds of data.

The research is designed in three stages, with each stage assigned a specific task. The three tasks participants will be asked to do are:

1) Read together the picturebook *Jane, the fox & me*, and discuss the issues raised in the book in a focus group interview (approximately 1.5 hours at each research site). This will be done during class time, at a location such as the school library so as not to disturb other students that are not participating in the research. As this will an enriched English and arts activity, it will be providing participants with an authentic purpose for reading and (in stage 2) then responding in various ways to Literature, and their participation will not detract from their regular work in English. Non participating students will be working on similar kinds of experiences in their classroom, which also involve reading and writing for authentic purposes. This is applicable to both stage 1 and stage 2 of the research design. *Interview schedule for focus group discussion is attached.*

2) Create an arts-based response of their own choice (such as: writing, art, performance) that highlights their personal experiences and thoughts relevant to the issues raised in the picturebook (approximately 3 hours over two sessions with an option to complete response in participants’ own time). This will take place in either the library, art room or resource room in the school. Visits to the respective schools will be timed to fit in with the school timetable for use of such rooms – the room dedicated for research will be booked in advance in negotiation with the principal to ensure this is possible. As noted above, the response to literature activities fit in with normal English classroom activities, but with a specialised and authentic purpose in line with the research aims. Participation will not detract from the students’ normal progress with English work. *Choices for arts-based responses attached.*

3) Engage in an individual interview to discuss both the issues in the book and the nature of their arts-based response (approximately 30 minutes per participant). Once again, this stage of the research will be undertaken in an available room that will be booked solely for this purpose. Participants will be extracted from their normal classrooms for 30 minutes for the interviews. This amount of time is considered negligible in the context of the school term, and girls will have been selected based on their maturity and knowledge that they will miss 30 minutes of “usual” classroom experiences. *Interview schedule for individual interviews is attached.*

In addition to these procedures, the option to display arts-based responses from stage 2 of the research is one that has been considered as being potentially valuable to the participant and the school community. Displaying student work on these kinds of themes is the kind of thing that would be happening during the normal course of the participating students’ school involvement. However, such a display of work would not compromise the participants’ anonymity and confidentiality in connection with the publications arising from the research. The option of displaying students’ work will be one raised with the principals from the three participating schools, and participants (and their parent) will have the option to consent to this given to them on the respective participant consent forms.
# 14. Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will photographs be taken?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will video-recordings be made?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will interviews or focus groups be audio-recorded?</td>
<td>☒</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you answered “Yes” to any of the above, please describe the information to be collected, and provide a research justification.

Stage 2 of the project requires participants to create an arts-based response to the issues raised in the literature. These responses (see attached document) range from writing a piece of poetry or fiction to creating pieces of artwork. All responses will be considered data to be copied, analysed and used for publication. Data analysis of stage 2 data will include either linguistic and/or multimodal discourse analysis, depending on which arts-based option was selected. Analysis techniques will be used to investigate how discourses of femininity were constructed in the participants’ literary responses.

Some data may be in the form of photographs for two possible reasons:
1) Where the art work is too large to photocopy or scan, a photograph will be taken of the work by the researchers;
2) In the event a participant selects to create a series of “selfies” they will be asked which selfies they permit to be used for project data (subject to the prior written consent of participant and their parent). In this case, the photograph is being taken by the participant and is a primary data source.

Some data may be in the form of video data. If any participant opts to create a performance (dance or dramatic interpretation) in response to the issues raised in the novel, we would like to record that using photographs and/or video. We envisage that older teens (16-17 year old girls in the third focus group) may like to select this option. It will be especially important to take video of performances to analyse the ways that girls use their bodies in their performances.

With participants’ permission, audio recordings will be made of all interviews.

What options will participants be offered to check the information collected?

Interview data will be transcribed and participants will have the option to read through the transcriptions for accuracy. The proposed timeline for each stage of the project (see below) allows for this opportunity to be available in October, at which time the CI will notify the principal and negotiate visits to schools where transcripts will be offered to participants to check the accuracy of what was said.

**Proposed Timeline:**
April: Stage 1 in each of three research sites
May: Stage 2 in each of three research sites
June: Stage 3 in research site 1
July: Stage 3 in research site 2
August: Stage 3 in research site 3
September – October: interview data transcribed
October: Interview transcripts available for any girl wanting to check accuracy of transcriptions.
December: Sharing of preliminary results with research sites

15. Disclosure and Consent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the project collect information from which individual participants can be identified? (NS 2.2)</th>
<th>Yes ☑ No ☐</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>If yes, could the research be conducted using non-identifiable information?</em> Yes ☑ No ☐</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does this project use any form of implicit or passive consent? (NS 2.2.5, 2.3)</td>
<td>Yes ☑ No ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>If yes, please describe how your research complies with the relevant section of the National Statement.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>It will be the participant’s choice whether their arts-based response (stage 2 of the research design) is identifiable or not. Participants will be well aware that the choice is theirs, and this will be made clear on the information sheet provided to them and their parents. They will be reminded during stage 2 of the research design that whether they label their work with their real name or a pseudonym is their choice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will there be any deception of participations including concealment and covert observation? (NS 2.3.1, 2.3.2)</td>
<td>Yes ☑ No ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>If yes, please describe how your research complies with the relevant section of the National Statement.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe how participants will <strong>consent</strong> to participate in this study and how they will be informed of their rights (NS 2.2.1-2.2.7). Attach copies of your Information Sheet and Consent Form (where relevant) and give an explanation of the process by which you will obtain consent. <em>(Pro forms for Information Sheets and Consent Forms are available on our website at: <a href="http://www.research.utas.edu.au/human_ethics/social_science_forms.htm">http://www.research.utas.edu.au/human_ethics/social_science_forms.htm</a>)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please see attached information sheets and consent forms.</td>
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</table>
| Once the principal has selected a group of potential participants, the CI will explain the research to them in an information session, and they will be given the consent forms, as well as the parental consent forms, to take home and also discuss with their parent(s). The CI will return to the school some days later to collect the consent forms, providing ample time for the girls (in
consultation with a parent) to decide whether or not they will accept the invitation to participate. The CI will assure the potential participants that the choice is completely their own, and there will be no coercion or pressure on any girl to participate.

16. Reimbursement

Is any reimbursement, payment, or other reward (outside of course credit) being offered to participants in the study? (NS 2.2.10)

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please state what will be offered, what amount will be offered and for what purpose (e.g. a voucher as a prize, reimbursement to cover expenses etc.).

17. Intrusiveness

Are there any aspects of the study that are intrusive in areas ordinarily considered personal and private, or that could create apprehension and anxiety for participants?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Are you collecting personal details or private information?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Is there any kind of dependency relationship between the researcher and any of the participants?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If you answered “Yes” to any of the above, please explain in more detail.

Issues about bullying, body image and girlhood may create anxiety in participants if they have been subject to any negative experiences that remain upsetting for them. Talking about the issues may bring up psychological wounds. This is discussed further below (in 18. Potential benefits and harms).

Personal information such as age will be recorded.

18. Potential benefits, risks and harms (NS 2.1)
18. Potential benefits, risks and harms (NS 2.1)

(a) What are the possible benefits (if any) of this research to:

(i) The participant?
- Girls will have an opportunity to safely discuss issues related to bullying, body image and femininity. The picturebook has a central character, Helene, who suffers teasing, taunting, and body shaming. The girls will be able to discuss first the negative impact these experiences have on Helene, but secondly they will be able to discuss the coping mechanisms Helene drew on to overcome her problems. This may provide girls with positive strategies for dealing with bullies, developing a strong sense of self-worth and identity, and forming positive relationships with others.
- Creating an arts-based response (poetry, writing, picturebook, art work, photography, performance…) will provide a creative, productive and metaphorical means to explore how the fictional issues experienced by Helene relate to their own real, lived experiences.
- If any participants consent to displaying their arts-based responses in a public space, such a display could have additional personal benefits such as positive effects on self-esteem.

(ii) The wider community?
- The research will provide an insight into what issues of femininity, embodiment, and / or bullying are experienced by thirty girls drawn from three different schools. This may help inform those three school communities and potentially impact the conversations and policies about such issues. Whilst physical bullying is a transparent behaviour and (relatively) easy to deal with, psychological bullying is less overt and psychological harm less visible. The research may bring to light information that was hitherto unknown.
- The research will add to the global scholarship on girlhood and femininity and the issues that are currently experienced in one local context.
- The research will reveal the potential of quality contemporary literature as a means to explore, discuss, and assist girls to negotiate their anxieties as they move from girlhood to adolescence and beyond to womanhood.
- The research will explore how arts-based responses to literature allow girls to explore aspects of their own feminine identities
- If any participants consent to displaying their arts-based responses in a public space, such a display could be beneficial by opening up awareness and discussion about the issues faced by girls.

(b) What are the possible risks or harms of this research to the participants? (NS 2.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Could your research evoke anxiety or lead to the recall of painful memories?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Will participants be asked to provide any information or commit any act, which might diminish self-respect or cause them to experience shame, embarrassment or regret?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
18. Potential benefits, risks and harms (NS 2.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will any procedure be used which may have an unpleasant or harmful side effect?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the research use any stimuli, tasks, or procedures, which may be experienced by subjects as stressful, noxious, or unpleasant? (NS 2.1)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you induce or create physical pain beyond mild discomfort?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your research explore potentially confidential business practices or seek to elicit potentially confidential commercial information from participants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any other possible risks or harms of this research to the participants?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

If you answered yes to any of the above, please describe how your research will comply with the National Statement (2.1). In addition, please describe the process(es) you will use to manage possible risks (e.g. if interviews may cause distress, provide details of support processes that will be put into place). If participants are to be referred to support services, contact details for these services must be included on the participant information sheet.

Compliance with statement:

This research complies with the national statement in two ways: 1) a number of mechanisms are in place to deal with any psychological harms that occur; and 2) a monitoring process has been factored into the research design.

In the focus interviews, the discursive space will be focussed on the issues as reflected in the literature and as such the experiences of the fictional characters will provide a safe distance from personal anxieties. The individual arts-based responses are personal and private ways for girls to explore any anxieties they may have about such issues, and no girl will be required to complete this work if they indicate any signs of psychological distress. The individual interviews will allow each girl to talk as much or as little as they feel comfortable (within their allocated time). Visible signs of distress may include tears, shaking, a flushed face, nervousness or an inability to communicate with the researchers, participant complaints of nausea, a stomach upset, a headache, restlessness, irritability or withdrawal. As two researchers will be present during each stage, one will take the lead in organising the activities and asking questions during interviews, whilst the second researcher will carefully monitor participants for evidence of distress. In the event of any evidence of distress, the distressed participant will be invited to speak with the school guidance officer and/or their teacher or principal, all who will be available during the research. Furthermore, the participant information sheet will include information about other counselling services available via phone and online.
18. Potential benefits, risks and harms (NS 2.1)

Because there are three kinds of data being collected, the research design has been structured so that the tasks begin with a focus on a fictional character’s experiences of bullying and body image. If any girls experience discomfort talking about the fictional character, this will be monitored by researchers and the girls can cease their participation. The second task offers a range of options for individual, personal and private response. This will also be monitored carefully and no girl experiencing discomfort will be asked to continue on with the tasks. If any girl opts to create a performance in the second task, it is possible that they may feel self conscious or embarrassed. If this occurs, they will be able to change and select a different option that does not cause any embarrassment. The third task is an individual interview, and questions will be open ended to allow girls to respond at the level they find most comfortable. Girls will not be pressed to continue with the interview if they express any discomfort. Teachers and parents will be cognisant of the time of the girls’ interviews and will be aware that the issues being discussed may raise discomfort and will be able to monitor girls immediately following the interview. As also previously mentioned, the research will be carefully timed to take place during times when the school guidance officer is accessible, should any participant need to speak immediately to a counselling professional. Additionally, each of the three targetted schools have a school chaplain who could be contacted for support. Should the girls want to seek external support, a list of anonymous supports services (such as Kids Helpline, Lifeline and Beyond Blue) are also listed with contact details (phone number and / or website) on the participant information sheet.

A statement on both sets of information sheets clearly explains the following:

If the participant feels any stress at all, she has the option to withdraw from the project immediately.
If, during the interviews, the participant is stressed in any way, researchers will stop the interview and talk with her about why she is stressed. Researchers may refer her to the principal and/ or the school psychologist to support her. If she discloses any information that concerns the researchers about her health or safety, or the health and safety of other students in the school, the researchers will be obliged to refer this to the school principal. The principal may then take action such as referral to the school psychologist, or investigation and possible discipline of a bully in accordance with the school bullying policy.
If, during the interviews, the participant discloses any information about psychological or physical abuse that she has experienced, the researchers and the school principal will be required under mandatory reporting laws to report this to child protection.
If the participant feels any stress either during or after the research, she will be advised to talk about this with her teacher or principal, or the school psychologist, the school chaplain or to you, her parents about her feelings. Additionally, a list of support services are listed at the bottom of the girls’ information sheet.

Risk Assessment: Low risk
Girls will be selected randomly, however from this random selection the principal will remove any girl they believe does not have the maturity and ability to discuss issues such as bullying and body image. Girls will be given options to discontinue their participation at any time. The school guidance officer will be available should any girl experience distress. Our assessment is that the likely risk is minimal and falls within the “low risk” category (some possible psychological discomfort), however the processes to manage any risks allow both exit strategies and immediate availability of adults known to the girls, including the school guidance officer to provide care if
18. Potential benefits, risks and harms (NS 2.1)

Discomfort is experienced. Additionally, each of the three targetted schools have a school chaplain who could be contacted for support. Should the girls want to seek external support, a list of anonymous supports services (such as Kids Helpline, Lifeline and Beyond Blue) are also listed with contact details (phone number and / or website) on the participant information sheet.

If you plan to refer distressed research participants to external support services such as Lifeline, BeyondBlue, Kids Helpline, etc. you will be placing an additional burden on predominantly volunteer / not-for-profit / charitable organisations, typically funded by public donations. We ask you to undertake a risk assessment for this project – factoring in the number of participants and the likelihood of distress so as to calculate the actual costs you are imposing on your chosen support organisations – and to consider making a contribution to cover the counselling expenses your project will create.

19. Monitoring

What mechanisms do you intend to implement to monitor the conduct and progress of the research project?

This is outlined above in 18. Potential benefits, risks and harms.

Please ensure that you include annual reporting to the HREC, and the reporting of any adverse incidents or unexpected outcomes, as required by Section 5.5 of the National Statement.

Regular reports will be provided to the UTAS research ethics committee. Researchers will collaborate with participants, teachers and the principal of the school on an ongoing basis to ensure that the research is progressing without any adverse effects. Any adverse effects/events will be reported to the HREC immediately.

20. Feedback

What feedback will be given to participants? (NS 1.5)

Feedback will be presented both informally and formally in the form of written articles or vignettes.

How will feedback be given?

Feedback will be directly communicated to the teachers, the school and the school system (Tasmanian Education Department).

Based on the proposed timeline, preliminary findings are anticipated in December. Participants and their parents will be invited to meet the principal and any other interested school community member to listen to a presentation about the initial outcomes of the research in person by the CI.
It is also anticipated that publications about the research will not be completed until mid-2015, at which time a written report will be provided to the school principals and the DoE via email. Further publications may be published later than this time dependent upon journal turn around time. Information about any such academic publications will be made available to school principals and the DoE.

21. Data Storage

Please state how and where your data will be stored, for how long it will be retained, and how it will be destroyed or archived.

Address any issues of data security.

Please note: Data must be stored in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, which recommends a minimum retention time of 5 years after publication.

UTAS researchers should refer to the UTAS Research Data Management policy and procedures.

Digital data will be stored on a password protected disk drive. Physical data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Data will be retained for 5 years, after which it will be disposed of in consultation with the delegated head of the relevant data management organisational unit.

The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the UTAS Management of Research Data Policy ask researchers to consider the potential value of their data for further research, making this available for use by other researchers where there is no ethical, privacy or confidentiality objection and disseminating a full account of their research as widely as possible.

Is there any ethical reason NOT to share the data from this project?

YES.

There are three reasons why the data is unsuited for sharing and archiving.
1. We are dealing primarily with children (not young people on the cusp of becoming adults who might be considered ‘almost adult’ themselves)
2. The data are innately sensitive in nature, dealing with girls’ experiences of body image, peer pressure, teasing and girlhood. The two researchers will have developed relationships with the school community and will have established trust to use the data which has not been extended to the wider research community at large.
3. The data requires special consent from girls’ parents – and there is good reason to suspect parents might hesitate to approve their daughters’ involvement in such a sensitive project, were the data to be made public.
### 22. Other Ethical Issues

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any issues of researcher safety?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If you answered “Yes”, please explain how these will be managed.</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there in your opinion any other ethical issues involved in the research?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If you answered “Yes”, please explain in more detail.</td>
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### 23. Declarations

#### a) Statement of Scientific Merit:

The Head of School or the Head of Department is required to sign the following statement of scientific merit:

“This proposal has been considered and is sound with regard to its merit and methodology.”

The Head of School’s or Head of Department’s signature on the application form indicates that he/she has read the application and confirms that it is sound with regard to:

(i) educational and/or scientific merit; and

(ii) research design and methodology.

This does not preclude the SSHREC from questioning the research merit or methodology of any proposed project.

If the Head of School is one of the investigators, this statement must be signed by an appropriate person. This may be the Head of School/Department in a related area or the Dean. The certification of scientific merit may not be given by an investigator on the project.

Name

Position
b) Conformity with the National Statement

The Chief Investigator is required to sign the following statement:

I have read and understood the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007. I accept that I, as chief investigator, am responsible for ensuring that the investigation proposed in this form is conducted fully within the conditions laid down in the National Statement and any other conditions specified by the HREC (Tasmania) Network.

Name: Angela Thomas

Position: Senior Lecturer in English Education

Signature

Date: 2/02/2014

c) Signatures of other investigators

I acknowledge my involvement in the project and I accept the role of the above researcher as chief investigator of this study.

Name: Wendy Wilson

Signature: 

Date: 2/02/2014
CHECKLIST

Please ensure that the following documents are included with your application:

- Information sheet/s (if not attached ensure you have explained why in Section 10)  
- Consent form/s (if not attached ensure you have explained why in Section 15)  
- Questionnaires (if applicable)  
- Interview schedules (if applicable)  
- A copy of any permissions obtained i.e. Other HREC, Other Institutions (if applicable)  
- All documents relevant to the study, including all information provided to subjects.  
- Telephone Preambles (if applicable)  
- Recruitment Advertisements (if applicable)  
- Email Contents (if applicable)  

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Fee Schedule as of 1 July 2013

- Researchers affiliated with the University of Tasmania or the Department of Health and Human Services for the purposes of the research: No charge to the Researcher
- Full Applications by External Researchers: $600

Invoice Details

- Name:  
- Organisation/University:  
- ABN Number:  
- Address:  
- Phone:

TO SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION:

1. You must email an electronic copy of this application form (can be unsigned)
and all supporting documents to:

Katherine.Shaw@utas.edu.au

(Please submit as Microsoft Word documents) .pdf versions are acceptable for appropriate documents, eg., posters or advertisements, some questionnaires etc.

2. A signed copy of this form also needs to be forwarded electronically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has the 'Statement of Scientific Merit' been signed</th>
<th>□</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have all investigators signed the form?</td>
<td>□</td>
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Appendix A: Principal information letter

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

Dear ___

I write to you regarding a project that I am engaged in with my colleague, Wendy Wilson. Wendy Wilson was formerly a teacher at Riverside Primary School but has recently commenced work as a practitioner lecturer at the University of Tasmania.

The projects aims include the following:

4) to seek girls’ responses to literature that explores issues of femininity relating to embodiment, body image, being beautiful, body shaming, eating disorders, peer relationships and girlhood
5) to investigate girls’ own lived experiences of being a girl with respect to the issues raised in literature
6) to compare and contrast responses and lived experiences from different aged groups of girls (tweens and early to late teens)

By exploring these aims, we also expect that data may inform schools’ understanding and identification of issues related to teasing and/or other challenges girls face with body image.

To achieve these aims, Wendy and I would like to conduct the research with a group of 10 year 6 girls, 10 year 8 girls and 10 year 11 girls. To this end, we would like to invite principals from Riverside Primary School, Riverside High School, and Newstead College to consider our request that we conduct the research at your schools. We would request that principals (and relevant teachers) assist us by randomly selecting a group of girls in your school at the relevant year level, and then remove any girls from this random selection who do NOT have the maturity to discuss issues of body image, beauty, peer relationships, bullying and other similar issues about being a girl with the researchers. We aim to conduct the research over four sessions at each school site. There are three stages to our research design as follows:

4) Read together the book *Jane, the fox & me*, and to discuss the issues raised in the book in a focus group interview (approximately 1.5 hours at each research site).
5) Create an arts-based response of their own choice (such as: poetry, a short story, illustrated diary entry, picture book or art work) that highlights their personal experiences to the issues raised in the picture book (approximately
3 hours over two sessions with an option to complete response in participants’ own time)

6) Engage in an individual interview to discuss both the issues in the book and the nature of their arts-based response (approximately 30 minutes per participant).

To assist us throughout the three stages of the research we would ask principals to help us locate a suitable space that would be free on the school timetable, such as a library, art room, or resource room, and work with us to make room bookings for the four visits we will make to the school. We would extract the girls from their normal classrooms to work with us on these four occasions. We would also need to time such visits to fit in with times when the school guidance officer and/or school chaplain would be present in the school, should any girl experience distress and require counselling after being interviewed about their own experiences with body image and potential teasing they have experienced related to their body.

If, during the interviews, any participant is stressed in any way, researchers will stop the interview and talk with her about why she is stressed. At this time, we may refer the girl to you, the principal and/or the school psychologist to support her. If any girl discloses any information that concerns us about her health or safety, or the health and safety of other students in the school, the researchers will be obliged to refer this to you, and both the participant and the parent information sheet will explain that you may consider the need to take action such as referral to the school psychologist, or investigation and possible discipline of a bully in accordance with the school bullying policy.

If, during the interviews, the participant discloses any information about psychological or physical abuse that she has experienced, we will talk with you and together take any action deemed necessary such as that required under mandatory reporting laws to report this to child protection.

If the participant feels any stress either during or after the research, she will be advised to talk about this with her teacher or with you, or the school psychologist, the school chaplain or to her parents about her feelings. Additionally, a list of support services are listed at the bottom of the girls’ information sheet.

A fifth and final visit to the school is intended for late October 2014, when girls will be provided an opportunity to read through and check the accuracy of transcripts of their interviews in stage 3. This would be a brief visit to coincide with non-school time such as recess or lunch, and would not impact on class time.

The benefits of this research project include the following:

- The research will provide an insight into what issues of femininity, embodiment, and/or bullying are experienced by three local groups of girls.
This may help inform school communities and potentially impact the conversations and policies about such issues. Whilst physical bullying is a transparent behaviour and (relatively) easy to deal with, psychological bullying is less overt and psychological harm less visible. The research may bring to light information that was hitherto unknown.

- The research will add to the global scholarship on girlhood and femininity and the issues that are currently experienced in one local context.
- The research will explore the potential of quality contemporary literature as a means to explore, discuss, and assist girls to negotiate their anxieties as they move from girlhood to adolescence and beyond to womanhood.
- The research will explore how arts-based responses to literature allow girls to explore aspects of their own feminine identities.

All data from the project will be anonymised, and students’ identities protected at all time. Data will consist of interview transcripts (interviews will be audio recorded) from the focus group discussion of the novel (stage 1), photographs of the artwork or copies of the written work, and interview transcripts of individual interviews.

Provisos:
1. If any girl wishes to have their own name included on their arts-based response, they have the option of asking researchers to identify those Responses.
2. If any girl opts to create a performance as a response to the issues explored in the literature, researchers will seek her permission to record the performance. This will be entirely optional.

We anticipate that principals may see it worthwhile to display students’ work from stage 2 of this process, and that participants may wish their real names to be attached to displayed work. However both the girl and her parent would need to consent to this. Real names will never be included next to any images or photographs used in publications from the research.

Girls are able to withdraw from the project at any stage of the research process until the end of October, 2014, after checking interview transcripts for accuracy.

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Tasmania (APPROVAL NUMBER TO BE INSERTED HERE). Following school approval, we would then discuss suitable research participants with you and provide them with information sheets, consent forms, and parental information sheets and consent forms inviting them to participate in the project.
It is anticipated that the data collection will be completed by the end of 2014, but that publication of data will occur over the next two - three years. Findings of the research may be presented at conferences and written up in journals without any identifying information.

Thank you for considering this request. If you have any questions regarding this request, you are more than welcome to be in touch with me, as the Chief Investigator of the project. I welcome hearing from you and invite you to contact me via email on angela.thomas@utas.edu.au if you are happy for me to conduct this research project in your school.

Kind Regards,

Angela Thomas
Appendix B: Parent information sheet

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

Parent Information Sheet

Invitation

Dear _____,

We are two researchers from the University of Tasmania, Angela and Wendy. Angela Thomas is a senior lecturer in English Education, and Wendy Wilson is a lecturer in Curriculum and Pedagogy. We would like to invite your daughter to be part of our research project which explores ideas about being a girl.

What is the purpose of this study?

Many new fiction books are being published that tell stories of what it is like to be a girl, to be concerned with body image, and to experience bullying and teasing by other girls that can be hurtful. We want to share one book with your daughter that does this – it is a picture book called Jane, the fox & me. We want to know what your daughter thinks about the ideas raised in this book, and to share with us the kinds of body image issues or examples of bullying they have witnessed or experienced. It is important to us to understand how girls growing up in Tasmania feel about these issues and to know what influences these feelings.

Why has your daughter been invited to participate?

Your daughter has been randomly selected to participate in this project because she is a girl in the age group we want to work with. Your daughter’s participation is completely voluntary, and if at any time they wish to leave the research project they may do so and it will not in any way affect their school work, their results, their relationship with the teacher, the school, or the University.

What will your daughter be asked to do?

There are three things we will ask your daughter to do for this research project. These are:
1) As part of a group of 10 girls she will read *Jane the fox & me* and will be asked to discuss the themes and issues raised in the novel together with the researchers.

2) She will be asked to create an artistic response to share her own thoughts about the issues we have discussed together as a group, using the picture book as a starting point. The choices will include: writing (poetry, story, picture book), art (painting, drawing, mixed media, visual diary), digital media (animation, photography) or performance (dance, dramatic interpretation).

3) She will be invited to be interviewed by the researchers about her own thoughts and experiences about the issues from the book, based on the piece of writing or art she has created.

During stage 1, we will record a group discussion involving your daughter about the book using a digital audio recording device. We expect that stage 1 will take approximately 1.5 hours.

Stage 2: If your daughter opts to do a written response, we will take copies of the writing. If your daughter opts to create art, we will take photographs of the artwork. If your daughter opts to use digital media, we will take digital copies of that work. If your daughter opts to create a performance, we will video her performance. We expect that stage 2 will take two sessions of approximately 1.5 hours each.

In stage 3 we will record your daughter in an interview using a digital audio recording device. We expect the interview to take 15-30 minutes.

The research will take part in two locations. The locations for the talking and interviews will be held in the school library. The location for the writing or artwork will either be in the library or a school classroom (art area), depending on your daughter’s choice of art or writing. The research will take place in school time, at a time we work out with your daughter’s teacher to ensure that it does not impact on their other school work.

**Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

We think it may be very helpful to your daughter to talk about the issues she may be experiencing about body image, bullying and other related issues about being a girl. We also think she will enjoy creating her own piece of writing or art based on the ideas in *Jane, the fox & me*.

We think that the school would also like to know what problems your daughter has seen or experienced, especially about bullying. Her ideas could help teachers and the principal learn about the issues faced by girls, and this in turn may help future groups of girls.

**Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**
Sometimes talking about problems witnessed or experienced might cause distress. If your daughter feels any stress at all, she has the option to withdraw from the project immediately.

If, during the interviews, your daughter is stressed in any way, we will stop the interview and talk with her about why she is stressed. We may refer her to the principal and/or the school psychologist to support her. If she discloses any information that concerns the researchers about her health or safety, or the health and safety of other students in the school, the researchers will be obliged to refer this to the school principal. The principal may then take action such as referral to the school psychologist, or investigation and possible discipline of a bully in accordance with the school bullying policy.

If, during the interviews, your daughter discloses any information about psychological or physical abuse that she has experienced, the researchers and the school principal will be required under mandatory reporting laws to report this to child protection.

If your daughter feels any stress either during or after the research, she will be advised to talk about this with her teacher or principal, or the school psychologist, the school chaplain or to you, her parents about her feelings. Additionally, a list of support services are listed at the bottom of the girls’ information sheet.

**What if my daughter changes her mind during or after the study?**

If your daughter changes her mind about participating in the research she is free to withdraw at any time up until the end of October, 2014, after viewing and checking the accuracy of the interview transcripts, without explaining why.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

We will keep the audio recordings of the interviews and the copies or photographs of the writing or art for a period of 5 years. It will be kept in a private and secure place and will be treated confidentially. After 5 years we will destroy any data not used in publications.

**How will the results of the study be published?**

When the research has finished Angela and Wendy will be sharing the findings with other teachers and researchers who are interested in what it is like to be a girl and the kinds of issues girls are facing in Tasmania. We plan to share what we find at conferences, in articles and in book chapters. We will send a list of our publications to the principal and if any of them interest you or your daughter, you may email Angela and ask for a copy.

When we talk about your daughter and her work, we will use a pseudonym at all times. When we show copies of writing or art that your daughter has created, this may include photographs of her work, but we will not use her real name at any time.

If any girl opts to create a performance as a response to the issues explored in the literature, researchers will seek her permission to record the performance. This will
be entirely optional. Your daughter will also have the final say on which images we are permitted to use in our publications.

Your daughter’s teacher or principal may also ask your permission (and her permission) to display any artwork or writing created for the project, or if she creates a performance, to share that performance with other students. Both you and your daughter may choose whether to consent to this or not. If you and your daughter want to have her real name included with her art work you may consent to this, but when we write about her work we will not use her real name.

**What if I have questions about this study?**

If you have any questions about this research you may contact the researchers by email or phone. Our details are:

Angela Thomas  
Email: angela.thomas@utas.edu.au  
Phone: 6324 3719

Wendy Wilson  
Email: wendy.wilson@utas.edu.au  
Phone: 6324 3719

“This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number [Hxxxxx].”

**Finally, this information sheet is for you to keep, but you will also be given a consent form to sign and return to the researchers to show that you consent to your daughter participating in the project.**

Thank you for considering this information.

Kind Regards,

Angela Thomas

[signature]

Wendy Wilson
Appendix C: Parent consent form

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

1. I agree that my daughter can take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study requires my daughter to be involved three stages: 1) talking in a group about a novel and its central character who experiences problems with self-esteem, body image and bullying; 2) creating a piece of writing, art or performance to show her ideas about body image; and 3) being interviewed about her own experiences of bullying and body image and discussing the piece of writing or art that she created.
5. I understand that participation involves the risk(s) that my daughter might feel upset if she has experienced bullying or is worried about her body and appearance.
6. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed.
7. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
8. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information my daughter supplies to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research. The only limit to confidentiality will be the thoughts that my daughter shares in stage 1, the group discussion about the novel as other girls in the group will hear my daughter’s thoughts. The only exception to confidentiality will be in the instance that my daughter specifically asks the researchers to attribute her name to their artwork or performance.
9. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that my daughter cannot be identified as a participant.
10. I understand that my daughter’s participation is voluntary and that she may withdraw at any time until the end of October, 2014, without any effect.
Special options for Stage 2: creating a piece of art, writing or performance to show some of your daughter’s ideas about body image

Please tick which applies:

I consent to my daughter using her real name on her artwork, writing or performance
☐ Yes  ☐ No

I consent to my daughter’s artwork, writing or performance from stage 2 going on display
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Participant’s name: ________________________________________________

Participant’s signature: ____________________________________________

Date: ________________________

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator’s name: _______________________________________________

Investigator’s signature: ___________________________________________

Date: ________________________
Appendix D: Participant (girl) information sheet

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

Child Information Sheet

Invitation
Dear _____,
We are two researchers from the University of Tasmania, Angela and Wendy. Angela Thomas is a senior lecturer in English Education, and Wendy Wilson is a lecturer in Curriculum and Pedagogy. We would like to invite you to be part of our research project which explores ideas about being a girl.

What is the purpose of this study?
Many new fiction books are being published that tell stories of what it is like to be a girl, to be concerned with body image, and to experience bullying and teasing by other girls that can be hurtful. We want to share one book with you that does this – it is an award-winning picturebook called Jane, the fox & me. We want to know what girls your age think about the ideas raised in this book, and ask them to share with us the kinds of body image issues or examples of bullying you have witnessed or experienced. It is important to us to understand how girls growing up in Tasmania feel about these issues and to know what influences these feelings.

Why have I been invited to participate?
You have been randomly selected to participate in this project as you are a girl in the age group we want to work with. Your participation is completely voluntary, and if at any time you wish to leave the research project you may do so and it will not in any way affect your other school work, your results, your relationship with your teacher, your school, or the University.

What will I be asked to do?
There are three things we will ask you to do for this research project. These are:

4) As part of a group of 10 girls you will read Jane the fox & me and will be asked to discuss the themes and issues raised in the picturebook together with the researchers.

5) You will be asked to create an artistic response to share your own thoughts about the issues we have discussed together as a group, using the picturebook as a starting
point. The choices will include: writing (poetry, story, picturebook), art (painting, drawing, mixed media, visual diary), digital media (animation, photography) or performance (dance, dramatic interpretation).

6) You will be invited to be interviewed by the researchers about your own thoughts and experiences about the issues from the book, based on the piece of writing or art you have created.

During stage 1, we will record your group discussion about the book using a digital audio recording device. We expect that stage 1 will take approximately 1.5 hours.

Stage 2: If you opt to do a written response, we will take copies of the writing. If you opt to create art, we will take photographs of the artwork. If you opt to use digital media, we will take digital copies of that work. If you opt to create a performance, we will video your performance. We expect that stage 2 will take two sessions of approximately 1.5 hours each. In stage 3 we will record your interview using a digital audio recording device. We expect the interview to take 15-30 minutes.

The research will take part in two locations. The locations for the talking and interviews will be held in the school library. The location for your writing or artwork will either be in the library or a school classroom (art area), depending on your choice of art or writing. The research will take place in school time, at a time we work out with your teacher to ensure that it does not impact on your other school work.

**Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

We think it may be very helpful to you to talk about the issues you are experiencing about either your body image or about bullying. Talking about problems or concerns you have can help you think about strategies to overcome or avoid these problems. We also think you will enjoy creating your own piece of writing or art based on the ideas in the *Jane, the fox & me*. We value what you have to say about being a girl, and we think that the school would also like to know what problems you have seen or experienced, especially about bullying. Your ideas could help teachers and the principal learn about the issues you face, and this in turn may help future groups of girls.

**Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

Sometimes talking about problems you have witnessed or experienced might make you upset or distressed.

If you feel any stress at all, you have the option to withdraw from the project immediately. If, during the interviews, you are stressed in any way, we will stop the interview and talk with you about why you are stressed. We may refer you to the principal and/or the school psychologist to support you. If you disclose any information that concerns the researchers about your health or safety, or the health and safety of other students in your school, we will be obliged to refer this to your principal. The principal may then take action such as referral to the school psychologist, or investigation and possible discipline of a bully in accordance with the school bullying policy.
If, during the interviews, you disclose any information about psychological or physical abuse that you have experienced, the researchers and the school principal will be required under mandatory reporting laws to report this to child protection. If you feel any stress either during or after the research, you may talk about this with your teacher or principal, or the school psychologist, the school chaplain or your parents about your feelings. Additionally, a list of support services are listed at the bottom of this information sheet.

**What if I change my mind during or after the study?**
If you change your mind about participating in the research you may withdraw at any time up until the end of October, 2014, after viewing and checking the accuracy of the interview transcripts, without explaining why. What will happen to the information when this study is over? We will keep the audio recordings of your interviews and the copies or photographs of your writing or art for a period of 5 years. It will be kept in a private and secure place (i.e. a locked filing cabinet and/or a password protected computer server) and will be treated confidentially. After 5 years we will destroy any data not used in publications.

**How will the results of the study be published?**
When the research has finished Angela and Wendy would be sharing what we learned from you and your work with other teachers and researchers who are interested in what it is like to be a girl and the kinds of issues girls are facing in Tasmania. We plan to share what we find at conferences, in articles and in book chapters. We will send a list of our publications to your principal and if any of them interest you, you may email Angela and ask for a copy. When we talk about you and your work, we would never use your real name, but use an invented name (called a pseudonym). When we show copies of writing or art that you have created, this may include photographs of your work, but we will not use your real names at any time. However, if you want to have your real name included with your art work you may ask us to do so, but when we write about your work we will not use your real name. If you choose to create a performance instead of doing a piece of art or writing, then we would like to video your performance. Images of your performance would then be included in our writing, but we would not use your real name in any of our publications. You will also have the final say on which images we are permitted to use in our publications. Your teacher or principal may also ask your permission to display any artwork or writing you have created for the project, or if you create a performance, to share your performance with other students. You will have the choice whether to consent to this or not.

**What if I have questions about this study?**
If you have any questions about this research you may contact the researchers by email or phone. Our details are:

Angela Thomas
Email: angela.thomas@utas.edu.au
Phone: 6324 3719
Wendy Wilson
Email: wendy.wilson@utas.edu.au
Phone: 6324 3719

“This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number [Hxxxxx].”

Finally, this information sheet is for you to keep, but you will also be given a consent form to sign and return to the researchers to show that you consent to participating in the project.

Thank you for considering this information.

Kind Regards,

Angela Thomas

Wendy Wilson

Support Services
If at any time you feel upset at any time during this research project and need help or counseling, you could contact any of the following:

At school:
- Your teacher
- The principal
- Your school guidance officer
- Your school chaplain

At home:
- Your parents

Anonymous support services:
- Kids Helpline on 1800551800,
- Lifeline on 131114,
- the StandBy Response Service 24-hour number on 0408133884, or beyondblue on 1300224636.
- For more information, or advice on how to help a friend:
  o www.headspace.org.au
  o reachout.com.au
  o www.youthbeyondblue.com
Appendix E: Participant (girl) consent form

Girls and Embodiment: Investigating girls’ responses to issues of femininity as constructed in children’s literature and as related to lived experience.

Child Consent Form

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.

2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.

3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.

4. I understand that the study involves three stages: 1) talking in a group about a picturebook and its central character who experiences problems with self-esteem, body image and bullying; 2) creating a piece of art, writing or performance to show some of my ideas about body image; and 3) being interviewed about my own experiences of bullying and body image and discussing the response that I created.

5. I understand that participation involves the risk(s) that I might feel upset if I have experienced bullying or am worried about my body and appearance.

6. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed.

7. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

8. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research. The only limit to confidentiality will be the thoughts that I share in stage 1, the group discussion about the novel, as other girls in my group will hear what I share. The only exception to confidentiality will be in the instance that I ask the researchers to attribute my name to my artwork or performance.

9. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.

10. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time up until the end of October, 2014, after viewing and checking the accuracy of my interview transcripts, without any effect.
Special options for Stage 2: creating a piece of art, writing or performance to show some of my ideas about body image

Please tick which applies to you:

I consent to have my real name used for my artwork, writing or performance
☐ Yes  ☐ No

I consent to my artwork, writing or performance from stage 2 going on display
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Participant’s name: _______________________________________________________

Participant’s signature: ___________________________________________________

Date: ______________________

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator’s name: ___________________________________________________

Investigator’s signature: _________________________________________________

Date: ______________________