

Carleton University
Winter 2018
Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies

WGST 3810A: *Feminist Methods*

Friday 2:35 -5:25 pm
Location: Southam Hall 316

Instructor: Anuppiriya Sriskandarajah
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Office Hours: Friday 12:30 pm-1:30 pm

*Preliminary course outline-subject to change

*Prerequisite: WGST 3809 AND Third-year Standing in WOMN Major or Minor

Course Description

This course will focus on feminist approaches to research design, knowledge production (gathering and analyzing data), and disseminating knowledge. The course urges students to acknowledge the value commitments that inform research methods and the research process. Students will learn how research methods inform research outcomes. Some of the key questions that will be addressed in this course includes: what counts as a feminist method? Is there a feminist type of analysis and research? Are there different feminist methods? This course will examine how gender and feminist theories and politics influence the research questions we ask, the materials we use, and how we define our relationships with study participants.

Learning Objectives:

Through this course:

- Students will evaluate different research methods and their usage.
- Understand the ethical standards for conducting research with human participants
- Students will design and conduct a research project
- Students will learn how to analyze and interpret qualitative data
- Students will learn how to write an effective research report

Required Texts:

Available on CuLearn through library e-reserves.

Learning Assessments:

Research proposal: 10%- February 2
 Interview activity report: 5%- February 16
 Participant observation activity: 5%-February 16
 Coding activity: 5%-March 2
 Participant observation assignment: 25%-March 9
 Discourse analysis report: 5%-March 16
 Photo-narrative report: 5%- March 23
 Final report presentation: 5%-April 11
 Final report: 35%-April 11

Course Requirements:

This class will be organized around lectures. However, it will have a large practical component. Students will be required to read the readings before class. Class will include both discussions and in class projects that will be marked. All written work should be in a 12-point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, with page numbers and appropriate citations for all sources. Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day, this includes weekends. Students must hand in a hard-copy of the assignment. Students should keep a hard-copy for their records. No video or audio-recording of lectures. Emails will be answered within 48 hours (not counting weekends).

Research Proposal (10%): Your research proposal will outline your chosen topic for your final research paper. The proposal will be a 3-5 page writing plan that lays out your research question. You need to clearly demonstrate why this research question is important (as situated in the literature). You will discuss your chosen method (interviews) and elaborate on why this method is appropriate for your research question. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your method. Discuss your theoretical orientation and how this works with your chosen method. For your proposal you are expected to include a brief literature review (which you will build upon in your final paper) to showcase that you are on the right track for your final report. For your proposal you must review a minimum of 5 academic sources.

Participant observation report (25%): You will choose a public place to conduct participant observation. You must commit minimum an hour at this place. You will write field notes and a report on your observations and your positionality. Based on these observations you will write a short ethnography. I highly encourage you to stay in the field for longer or go back for a few days if you do not think there is enough data in your fieldnotes. Places could include, malls, museums, campus, parks, buses, public events, etc. From your observation you will write a paper, make sure you have a thesis statement and a theoretical framework. You should also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your method and what other methods could have contributed to your report.

Final Report (35%): This assignment will help train students to engage with the interview method. Students will learn how to prepare an ethics form using the University's Research Ethics Board's (REB) review procedures as well as learn how to analyze qualitative interviews for research. The assignment requires completing the REB certification, conducting an interview, transcribing the interview, preparing field notes on the interview process, and participating in the data coding and analysis of the interview, and finally writing a final research report. The assignment will be mostly independent, with a group component. Students will be required to audio record the interview. Students will attach the field notes and transcript as an appendix to the final research report. The final report will be 8 to 10 pages.

Guidelines for the report:

1. Articulate a clear research question
2. Describe the rationale for the research question (literature review, theoretical orientation)
3. Reflexively situate yourself in the research process
4. Discuss research process and method
5. Discuss what you learned about the method
6. Discuss findings (integrate quotes from transcripts)
7. Contributions of the study
8. Strengths and weaknesses
9. Implications for future research

Further details will be provided in class.

For the group portion of the project, in small teams you will decide on a research topic (more details in class). Each student will conduct one interview. They will transcribe the interview and share with their group. Students will write the research report individually.

In Class Exercises (30%): This class will be composed of a large practical component. You will be required to be in class and attend these days to receive full marks. Make-up will only be allowed with official documentation.

- **Interview practice day (5%):** Before conducting your interview with your participant for your final report you will be required to practice with a classmate. You will be expected to identify a research question, create an interview guide, record the interview and you will be expected to make notes on the interview process and then write a 2-4 page report on your findings.
- **Participant Observation Activity (5%):** In pairs you will go do a short observation on campus. You will not talk to each other during the observations but will be observing the same space. You will return and discuss with each

other what you observed and will present in class your findings and experience and compare and contrast your experiences and findings.

- **Discourse analysis activity (5%):** Bring a full-length magazine feature article or policy paper/brief related to a feminist issue. In class, using key tenants of discourse analysis you will critically analyze the document. You will be required to write a 2-4 page analysis.
- **Photo-voice activity (5%):** In pairs you will discuss with your partner a research topic. You will both go out on campus and take a photo that represents your research theme. You will return and each partner will interview each other about the picture, why they took the picture? What does the photo represent? What does it say about the author? You will then write a 2-4 page report on your photo-voice project.
- **Coding Activity (5%):** Please bring your completed transcript to class. With your research group you will begin to code your transcripts. You will be expected to show your progress by the end of class.
- **Final presentations of your research report (5%):** You will provide a 20-minute presentation of your research process and share with your class your findings. This should be treated as a professional presentation similar to one that would be delivered at an academic conference.

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC,

contact your PMC coordinator to send me your *Letter of Accommodation* at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

The university’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

January 12: Introduction to the course

Part 1: Theory

January 19: Introduction to Feminist Methods

What is feminist about methods? Can methods be feminist? What are the feminist critiques of knowledge production?

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Introduction: The Project of Feminist Methodology." Pp. vii-xiv in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Chapter 7: Feminist Naturalism: Do Women have Distinct Ways of Knowing? Pp. 229-267 in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

January 26: Feminist Research, Objectivity, and Representation

Can feminist methods be objective? Can representation truly be authentic? Who has the power to represent?

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Chapter 11: Objectivity and Validation." Pp. 374-413 in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Sprague, Joey. 2016. "Chapter 3: Authority and Power." Pp. 63-79 in *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences, 2nd edition*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Roof, Judith. 2012. "Chapter 25-Authority and Representation and Feminist Research." Pp. 520- 543 in *The Handbook of Feminist Research Theory and Praxis, 2nd edition*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [Library Reserve]

February 2: Research Ethics

What is ethical research? Can research truly be ethical? How is research ethics regulated?

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Chapter 13: Feminist Ethics in Research." Pp. 457-495 in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Interagency Secretariat on Research Ethics. 2005. *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada. [Available on CuLearn]

Research Proposal Due

Part 2: Praxis

February 9: Feminist Interviewing

What is 'feminist interviewing'? How does 'feminist interviewing' differ from other types of interviewing? Why is 'feminist interviewing' important?

Sprague, Joey. 2016. "Chapter 5: Qualitative Shifts: Feminist Strategies in Field Research and Interviewing." Pp. 145-194 in *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences, 2nd edition*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene. 2014. "Chapter 7: Feminist Approaches to In-Depth Interviewing." Pp. 182-232 in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer, 2nd edition*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [On Library Reserve]

Grant, J. 2014. Reflexivity: Interviewing women and men formerly addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(38): 1-15.

Interview activity day

February 16: Feminist Ethnography and Auto-ethnography

What is ethnography? What is the difference between ethnography and auto-ethnography? How makes an ethnographic work feminist?

Buch, Elana D. and Staller, Karen M. 2014. "Chapter 5: What is Feminist Ethnography?" Pp. 107-144 in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer, 2nd edition*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [On Library Reserve]

Khasnabish, Alex. 2013. "Chapter 2: Tracing the Zapatista Rhizome, or, the Ethnography of a Transnationalized Political Imagination." Pp. 66-88 in *Insurgent Encounters: Transnational Activism, Ethnography and the Political*, edited by Jeffrey S. Juris and Alex Khasnabish. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ettorre, Elizabeth. 2017. "Introduction." Pp. 1-23 in *Autoethnography as Feminist Method: Sensitising the feminist 'I'*. New York: Routledge. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Interview activity report due

Participant observation activity

February 23: Reading week [no class]

March 2: Analyzing

How can we analyze research data? What is coding? What is grounded theory? What is thematic analyzes?

Bring interview transcript to class

Babbie, Earl and Benaquisto, Lucia. 2010. "Chapter 14: Qualitative Data Analysis." Pp. 386-407 in *Fundamentals of Social Research, 2nd Canadian edition*. Toronto: Nelson Education Ltd.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2006. "Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 77-101.

Gibson, William J. and Brown, Andrew. 2009. "Chapter 8: Identifying themes, codes and hypotheses." Pp. 127-144. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Tracy, Sarah J. 2012. "Chapter 9: Data analysis basics: a pragmatic iterative approach" in *Qualitative Research Methods - Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Coding activity

March 9: Discourse Analysis

What is discourse analysis? Why is discourse analysis important? Can discourse analysis be feminist?

Paltridge, Brian. 2012. "Chapter 1: What is Discourse Analysis." Pp. in *Discourse Analysis, 2nd edition*. New York: Bloomsbury

Paltridge, Brian. 2012. "Chapter 9: Critical Discourse Analysis" in *Discourse Analysis, 2nd edition*. New York: Bloomsbury

Paltridge, Brian. 2012. "Chapter 10: Doing Discourse Analysis" in *Discourse Analysis, 2nd edition*. New York: Bloomsbury

Conradie, M. (2011). Constructing femininity: A critical discourse analysis of Cosmo. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 29(4), 401-417.

Participant observation paper due

Discourse analysis activity

March 16: Visual Methodologies

What is visual methodologies? What are the emancipatory potentials of visual methodologies?

Butler-Kisber, Lynn. 2010. "Chapter 8: Photographic Inquiry." Pp. 123-134 in *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-Informed Perspectives*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Gillian, Rose. 2016. "Chapter 12: Making Images as Research Data: Photo-Documentation and Photo-Elicitation." Pp. 307-329 in *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*, 4th edition. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Rice, K., Primak, S., & Girvin, H. (2013). "Through their eyes: Using photography with youth who experienced trauma." *The Qualitative Report*, 18(26): 1-14.

Discourse analysis report due

Photo-narrative activity

March 23: Standpoint Theory and Institutional Ethnography

What is standpoint theory? What is institutional ethnography? How does institutional ethnography differ from traditional ethnography?

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Chapter 9: Feminist Standpoint Theory: Social Location and Epistemic Privilege." Pp. 303-341 in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Rankin, Janet M. and Campbell, Marie. 2009. "Institutional Ethnography (IE), Nursing Work and Hospital Reform IE's Cautionary Analysis." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 10 (2): Article 8.

Photo-narrative report due

March 30: Good Friday [No class]

April 6: Participatory Action Research [+class time to work on final group presentation]

What is participatory action research? Why is participatory action research important for feminist research?

Jaggar, Alison M. 2014. "Chapter 12: Democratizing Research." Pp. 414-456 in *Just Methods: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*, Taylor and Francis. [E-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Gouin, Rachel R. 2011. "Feminist participatory research in a social justice organization." *Action Research*, 9 (3): 261-281.

April 11: *Final report presentation day*

Final research paper due