GSWS 800-5: METHODOLOGY

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Office hours: TBA  
Lecture: Mondays 10:30 - 15:20; AQ 5118

Course Description:  
This course is an exploration into the theories, purpose, scope, and strategies for feminist research methods. It is an interdisciplinary seminar that provides examples of research and criticism from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. The substantive focus in this course is on feminist research in the social sciences: geography, feminist economics and demography, anthropology, policy, with additional focus on historical methods and law.

We begin by addressing the distinction between methodology and method, and our focus over the semester will often return to questions of knowledge production: what forms of knowledge are perceived to be valid and valuable? Whose voices “count”? Is it possible to shift unequal power relations by incorporating the knowledge and experience from those who have been historically marginalized? Or does the working definition of collaborative research need to be radically rethought?

We will read about and evaluate research design, examining the use of quantitative, qualitative, and historical methods. We will discuss how these methods are employed in different research contexts, by focusing on the methodological and ethical considerations that emerge from the research question. Students will gain hands-on experience conducting interviews and exploring oral history methodologies, from project conception to research output. Students will also read and evaluate graduate-level research methodologies.

Educational Goals:  
The goal of this course is to engage students in an examination of, and conversation about, feminist research methods. Likewise, this course provides students with hands-on experience in designing research methodology and practicing participatory methods.

Course Texts and Courseware:  
Readings on reserve or electronically accessed through the SFU Library.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:  
Attendance and participation  25%  
Engagements with texts  25%  
Analysis of research methodology  50%