

Feminist Research Methods
WS 615

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Welcome to feminist research methods. We are going to ask very practical and at the same time richly theoretical questions about *how* we do our intellectual work. Method (following Sandra Harding) basically refers to your data – whatever you interpret is your data. Methodology refers to how you analyze the data, what you do with it. And epistemology is the context of assumptions, values, desires, criteria, etc., about what counts as true – how do we know what we think we know?

We will focus on four ways of doing our work: discourse analysis, ethnography, archival research, and interviewing. We'll look at each on the interconnected levels of method, methodology, and epistemology. We'll read contemporary feminists talking about how they go about each of these research practices (“how to do it”) and others actually putting the practice into operation within a site of inquiry (“how it’s done”).

Required reading

Dana-Ain Davis and Christa Craven, *Feminist Ethnography: Thinking Through Methodologies, Challenges, and Possibilities* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2016)

Anna L. Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton University Press, 2015).

Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain* (Princeton University Press, 2010).
9780691146362. Paperback. required.

Lisa Lowe, *Intimacies on Four Continents* (Duke University Press, 2015).
978-0-8223-5875-6. paperback. Required

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark* (Vintage, 1993). Paperback. Required.
978-0679745426

Plus chapters and articles on Laulima

Requirements:

1. Participation.

Please complete the reading on time, attend class each week, and come to class prepared to discuss the assignments. Class discussions entail active and thoughtful interactions with the material you have read and with others in the class. You are expected to use class discussions, email and other venues to listen respectfully, to show that you have read and thought about the material, and to develop your ideas.

Please bring the reading assignment to class each day. These readings are often quite challenging and you will need to read them more than once. It is important to have your own printed copies of the reading so that you can underline, write questions in the margins, and make notes that can help you write your papers and contribute to class discussion.

2. Papers:

Everyone is ask to write 4 papers, one on each of the research practices we examine. Three of them should be about 3-4 pages, while the remaining one paper should be about 10 pages. So, for your long paper, I hope you will pick the research practice that you want to invest the most in learning.

Please turn in *electronic copies of your essays* to me as Word documents in our Laulima drop box.

On Re-writing: After you receive a grade and feedback, you are welcome to re-write your papers if you are dissatisfied with your grade or wish to respond to comments. All final papers must be turned in by the last day of class.

If I feel that your paper is not appropriate for the class, I will return it to you with suggestions for improvement. In my grading universe, an "A" means excellent work. A "B" means good but not yet excellent work. Anything else is not graduate level work.

Introduction: Sandra Harding, "Method, Methodology, Epistemology" (1 week)

Ethnography (4 weeks)

Interviews (2 weeks)

Archives (4 weeks)

Discourse Analysis (4 weeks)