

**Studies in Policy and Practice**  
**Faculty of Human and social Development, University of Victoria**

**SPP/SW 516: Research Methodologies**  
**Spring 2009**

Instructor     Susan Boyd, PhD  
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                    Office Hours: Wednesday 4:30 pm or by appointment

Class time and place: Wednesday 13:30-16:30, Clearihue C116

**Course Description:**

This course critically reviews a wide range of research methodologies commonly practiced in the human services. The course considers the kinds of opportunities and challenges presented by each methodology. The course emphasizes the link between the development of a research question and the selection of methodological approaches.

**Required Readings:**

1. Course Package available in the bookstore. If all of the course packages are sold, please ask at the bookstore for a copy to be made within 24 hours (which is their policy).
2. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. New York: Zed Books & University of Otaga Press.
4. Reserve articles (Second floor, HSD building, see Daisy Williams).

**Course Evaluation and Assignments:**

- |                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Participation/<br>Attendance | 20% |
| 1. Thesis Review                | 20% |
| 2. Paper #1                     | 20% |
| 3. Final Paper                  | 40% |

## **Assignments:**

### **1. 20% Thesis Review:**

**Due: January 21, 2009 in class**

Select two contrasting master's thesis or PhD dissertations for doctoral students and review their methodologies and methods. Summarize your review in a 2-page handout (single spaced) for professor and classmates and present your review and reflections in 5 minutes to the class.

Identify the question or foci of the thesis and outline the contrasting methodologies, methods, and ethical considerations. Include questions that you have about the methods and methodologies used in the thesis or dissertations. Students will be graded on their handout, seminar preparation and participation in class.

### **2. 20% Paper I: Framing your methodology, method and research topic:**

**Due: February 25, 2009 in class**

The paper will explore the background, purpose and relevance of your methodological perspective, and your research subject. It may be formulated as a problem to be investigated or a specific question to be examined, or a puzzle to be analyzed. Use course content, course readings, and outside readings about methodology and method in the paper. Papers should be 4 pages (excluding title page and references). Papers should be typed, and double spaced. Font size should be 12.

### **3. 40% Paper II: Exploring Research Designs:**

**Due: April 1, 2009 in class**

The paper will briefly restate or clarify the focus of your research design based on your first paper. A research design includes your methodology, method, and any other concerns related to your project such as ethics, limitations, benefits, insider/outsider status, consent, and confidentiality.

Include *at least* 10 references. Your essay is an academic paper. You must demonstrate that you are familiar with the course material and outside material. Papers should be 12 pages, typed, and double spaced. Font size should be 12. Follow the outline below, *The Methodology Chapter*, for your paper.

## **Marking:**

All class assignments will be evaluated on structure/format, analysis, and familiarity/integration of the materials in the course and outside material, ability to understand and critically analyze the material on methodology, and ability to address the individual components of the assignment with intellectual honesty.

See the Graduate Marking Grid in the University of Victoria Graduate Studies Calendar.

Late papers are not acceptable except for documented medical reasons. All other late papers will be penalized by half a grade each day.

Intellectual dishonesty will result in failure in the course. Academic integrity and violations of academic integrity intellectual dishonesty are defined (plagiarism, multiple submissions, cheating, etc.) in the University of Victoria Graduate Studies Calendar.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Participation and attendance are required in the course. The University of Victoria Graduate Studies Calendar states that: “Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.” Students who attend less than 80% of their classes will not qualify for the final assignment and will not receive a passing grade for the course. All assignments and presentations must be completed and handed in on their due date. Late papers will be penalized half a grade each day. All students are expected to read the weekly course material and to come to class prepared to discuss the articles and chapters.

**Other methodology books:**

Brown, L. & Strega, S. (2005) *Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

Creswell, J.W. (2003) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kirby, S., Greaves, L., & Reid, C. (2006) *Experience, research, social change: Methods beyond the mainstream*. Aurora, ON: Garamond Press.

Kirby, S., & McKenna, K. (1989) *Experience, research, social change: Methods from the margins*. Aurora, ON: Garamond Press.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ramazanoglu, C., & Holland, J. (2002). *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and choices*. London: Sage.

## Some thoughts about methodology:

**methodology:** the research process, how will the research proceed? What theory, values, cultural protocols, and ethics inform your methodology?

**research method:** tools we use for gathering data or evidence (survey, interview, participant observation)

**epistemology:** theory of knowledge. What knowledge do you privilege?

Epistemology, method, methodology, and theory intersect. Methodology is often viewed as the place epistemology, method, and theory converge. For example, methodology informs how we view and chose to investigate the social world we live in and our choice of methodology shapes the method we choose. Our choice of methodology is also a political action. It shapes the research process (including questions asked and answers received), and it privileges specific ways of knowing. Reminder: Knowledge is power.

Envision the methodology chapter as a place to clarify how you will conduct your research. It is also the framework for your research. Similar to the construction of a house, if the frame is faulty, the house may not stand. Some practical hints: Your methodology paper should be divided into sections (however, do not limit yourself to the sections below).

### The Methodology Chapter (paper)

1. **Methodology** (What is it?) What knowledges (theory and practice) inform it (don't confine yourself, look outside conventional ways of knowing)? Are you drawing from one methodological perspective or many? For example: Critical feminist methodology, Community based methodology, indigenous methodology, decolonizing methodologies, anti-oppressive methodology?

Research Aims: create social change, social justice goals, race, class, and gender analysis  
-recognize relations that underlie everyday experience, give voice to oppression  
-critical, feminist (define), social structural, decolonizing, anti-oppressive, oppositional, resistance, and aboriginal methodologies  
-impact of policy and practice  
-dig beneath the surface  
-nonexploitive  
-value subjective experience; critique value free, objective stance  
-active participation by those researched  
-value nonhierarchal relations and democratic consultation  
-liberatory

2. **Method** (Why did you chose it? What theory, values, ethics, or knowledge informs the choice?)

-interview (open, closed)  
-survey  
-ethnography  
-content analysis

- story telling
- case study
- combination of methods
- limits and benefits of method
- 3. Ethics Approval**
- 4. Research design**
  - your background
  - planned field work
  - journal notes
  - definition of topic of inquiry (mental illness, disability, risk, addiction)
  - how did you conduct the research?
  - place, time, sample (definition, reasons for choice), sample size
  - participants (age, gender, etc.),
  - survey design, questions,
  - pilot project
- 5. Ethical considerations and Access**
  - anonymity; insider/outsider considerations
  - confidentiality
  - Whose side are you on?
  - do no harm?
  - give back to community
  - colonial appropriation
  - liberatory, social justice goals?
  - protecting participants and self
  - examine own values and suitability for proposed project
  - consent form
  - what do other researchers say about access?
    - health and legal issues?
    - risks?
    - honorariums?
    - captured participants
- 6. Analysis** (How will you proceed? Who is your audience? Collaborate? Own?)
  - what will you do with the data? How will you analyze it?
  - themes (draw on grounded theory?)
  - let data speak to you
  - note consistencies and inconsistencies
  - underlying assumptions
  - myths and ideologies
  - economic imperatives
  - value subjects knowledge
  - recognize social relations that shape phenomena
- 7. Significance of research:** give voice, uncover assumptions, new theory of knowledge
- 8. Limitations of research:** limited time, resources, sample
- 9. In the field** (skip this for now!)
  - What happened?
    - joys, risks, concerns, dilemmas, surprises, omissions, mistakes, lessons?

## **SPP 516 Class and Readings Schedule:**

- Jan 7**            **Introduction:**  
**Research, methodology, and methods: how they apply to policy**  
  
L. Smith text, *Decolonizing methodologies*, Introduction & Chapter 1
- Jan 14**           **Engaging in research**  
  
Coursepack, W. Lawrence Neuman, “The meaning of methodology”  
  
C. Ramazanoglu, “Choices and decisions” (on reserve)  
  
L. Smith, Chapter 2
- Jan 21**           **Ethics and Methodology: Student seminar on review of methodologies in completed thesis/dissertation**  
  
Coursepack, b. hooks, “Feminist scholarship: ethical issues”  
  
L. Smith, Chapter 3  
  
Protocols & Principles for Conducting Research in an Indigenous Context (on reserve and on-line HSD website)  
  
University of Victoria and TriCouncil guidelines on ethics, and the “Application for Ethical Review of Human Research.” Look for forms and ethics under review in [www.uvic.ca/](http://www.uvic.ca/)
- Thesis review paper due**
- Jan 28**           **I. Qualitative traditions of inquiry**  
  
**Guest Speaker**  
  
Coursebook, J. Creswell, “Five Qualitative Traditions of Inquiry”  
  
Coursepack, H. Becker, “Who’s side are you on?”  
  
L. Smith, Chapter 8

**Feb 4**      **Library seminar & Formulating a methodological and research focus**  
**Library seminar with Katy Nelson**, meet at the Library, Room 130 at 1:30 pm.

Coursebook, M. Johnson Young, “Exploring the WPA narratives”

Coursebook, H. Wolcott, “Getting Going” pp. 13-32

**Feb 11**      **II. Traditions of Inquiry: Critical discourse analysis**

S. Reinharz, Chapter 8: Feminist Content Analysis (on reserve)

Coursebook, A. Browne & V. Smye, “A post-colonial analysis of healthcare discourses addressing aboriginal women”

Coursebook, X. Chen, “Constituting ‘dangerous parents’ through the spectre of child death”

**Feb 18**      **III. Traditions of inquiry: Interviews**

**Reading Break**

L. Smith text, Chapter 6.

Coursebook, A. Oakley, “Interviewing women: A contradiction”

**Feb 25**      **III. Concepts, Definitions and Visual Culture**

**Presentation on film analysis**

R. Dyer,” White (on reserve)

Coursebook, M. Oliver, “Disability definitions”

Coursebook, H. Becker, “Concepts” pp. 109-128

**Paper #1 due in class**

**Mar 4**                    **IV. Policy analysis and Institutional Ethnography**

**Guest Speaker: Carolyn Schellenberg**

Coursebook, M. Prince, “Holes in the safety net”

Coursepack, A. Majchrzak, “Technical Analysis”

Coursebook, D. Smith, “Institutional Ethnography”

Recommended: Coursebook, M. Campbell & F. Gregor, “Theory in everyday life”

**Mar 11**                    **Statistical analysis, surveys and evaluating research and policy**

**Guest Speaker: Lyn Davis**

Coursebook, S. Reinharz, “Feminist Survey Research”

D. Mertens, “Transformative paradigm: Mixed methods and social justice” (on reserve)

J. Roth, “Hired hand research” (on reserve)

Recommended: Sir C. Moser and G. Kalton, “Questionnaires” (on reserve)

Recommended E. Babbie, “operationalization” (on reserve)

**Mar 18**                    **Community, state, practices and research:**

**Guest Speaker: Tamara Herman, VIPIRG**

Coursebook, R. Ng, “State funding to a community employment centre

Coursebook, M. Reitsma-Street, “Processes of Community Action Research”

Coursebook, F. Poland, “The history of a ‘failed’ research topic

B. Wallace, “Participatory Action Research can be complicated” (on reserve and on-line VIPIRG)

**Mar 25      The role of the researcher: Insider/outsider**

Movie: *Kitchen Stories*

K. Narayan, “How Native is a ‘Native’ Anthropologist?” (on reserve)

L. Smith, Chapter 4 and Chapter 7.

**April 1      Paper II due in class**

Coursebook, A. Liazos, “The poverty of the sociology of deviance: Nuts, sluts, and preverts”

Boyd, 2009