



Module Outline for Course Participants

Critical Sexuality Studies and
Research Methodologies

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This module was developed as part of 'Introduction to Advancing Sexuality Studies: a short course on sexuality theory and research methodologies'. The short course was developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, *and* the International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society.

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Abstract

This module is designed to provide participants with an overview of the key issues associated with conducting research in Critical Sexuality Studies, including the ethical, social, and political complexities of studying sexuality, and the relationship between epistemology, methodology and method.

In addition, the module will provide students with the opportunity to undertake a research design case study, starting from identification of the key issue to be researched through to development of a dissemination plan. Throughout, students will have the opportunity to reflect upon and share their own experiences of research, while learning more specific detail about the relationship between Critical Sexuality Studies and research methodology.

Module aims

- To introduce participants to key terms and approaches within research methodologies
- To consider the intersections between ways of understanding the world, methodology and field method, and the implications for Critical Sexuality Studies research
- To examine the research design process, from a Critical Sexuality Studies' perspective

Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of issues specific to conducting research on sexuality, including the ethical, political, cultural and social implications of sexuality as a field of inquiry
- Obtain basic familiarity with how to design a research project
- Be able to apply the principles of Critical Sexuality Studies methodologies to the development of a research project in co-operation with other members of the group

Pre-reading

Kavanagh, A. Daly, J. and D. Jolley (2002), Research methods, evidence and public health, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 26(4), 337-342.

May, T. (2001), Perspectives on social scientific research. In: *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. Third Edition. Open University Press; Buckingham, C1, p. 7-27.

Overview of module

Introduction

The module schedule, aims and anticipated participant outcomes will be described.

Session 1. What *is* research? Key terms and concepts

This session will provide the grounding for the rest of the module. A Critical Sexuality Studies understanding of methodology will be provided, objective and subjective understandings of knowledge explored and key differences between quantitative and qualitative research will be described. The session will also provide an opportunity for participants to share their own experiences of research, and the module pre-readings will be examined.

Session 2. The importance (and difficulty) of CSS research

Participants will be given an overview of issues related to research within Critical Sexuality Studies. The challenges of CSS research will be explored, along with consideration of why Critical Sexuality Studies research is important. This session also introduces consideration of the many ethical issues related to Critical Sexuality Studies research, along with a guided reading of a key text.

Session 3. Conceptualising and designing CSS research

This session—which can be run at a later date, after Sessions 1 and 2 have been delivered together—takes participants through the main steps in research design. Guidance will be provided on each of these main steps, from identifying the larger context in which a research will ‘sit’ through to designing a dissemination plan. During the session, participants will be given the opportunity to apply design principles to practice through use of a research design case study.

Conclusion

The module’s key ‘take home’ points will be reviewed.

Further reading

(includes lecture bibliography)

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- Wengraf, T. (2001) *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-structured Methods*. London, Sage.
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