

# SWDTC PGR One Day Workshop

WED MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>

University of Bristol, Room TBC

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**Is My Research Feminist? *Gender, knowledge, and feminist activism in postgraduate research and beyond***

Gender Research Centre: Sarah Childs AND Maud Perrier, University of Bristol

*This workshop explores the gendered identity of the researcher, the role of feminism within gendered research/ing (theory and practice), and the nature of gendered and/or feminist research and writing.*

**10:30AM Welcome, tea, coffee and croissants**

**11:00-1 PM**

**Session 1 ‘Gendered Research and the (Feminist) Gendered Researcher’: Facilitated by Sarah Childs and Maud Perrier**

This session addresses the identity of the researcher in gendered research, exploring why we research what we do, and how we seek to do it, whilst recognizing the constraints of the academy. It asks, inter alia:

- Who is a (feminist) gendered researcher?
- What is gendered and/or feminist research?
  - What is it about our gendered and/or feminist identity that informs our research projects, processes, and outcomes?
    - Motivation? Activism?
    - Research design – goals, methods, dissemination and impact?

The session Involves discussion of:

- Our own research trajectories: personal recollections from the genesis of a project – via implementation – to the ‘product’, exploring:
  - The nature of research, questions of objectivity and politics, gender and feminism – normative positioning; the role of political advocacy; feminist research design and gender; and relationships between the researcher and the researched;
  - Issues:
    - The valorization of the individual in academic research; of the importance of being ‘original’ and a producing ‘world class’ contributions;
    - The exclusion and inclusion of gendered and other networks - intersectionality and the white academy; issues of marginalization and isolation
    - Safe spaces for women, gender scholars, and feminists (& combinations thereof)
    - Being a feminist scholar (male and female) in a non feminist academy; being a woman and a gendered/feminist researcher in a male dominated

academy/field; being a man doing gendered/feminist research where the research sub-field is dominated mostly by women

**Activities:**

- Pre workshop reading of 2-3 readings on gender, knowledge and feminism; in workshop small group discussion of this reading; readings
- 11:00 Ice-breaker: is your thesis feminist? If so, what makes it feminist? What stops it from being 'feminist'?
- Small group then plenary discussion of personal accounts of research trajectories – amongst PGRs and staff – gendering their research histories
- 12:00 Heather Savigny (Bournemouth) Cultural Sexism in the Academy

**1PM Lunch**

**2:00-4PM**

**Session 2 Feminist Writing and Feminist Objects: Facilitated by Maud Perrier and Alison Bartlett**

In this session we reconsider what, if anything, makes our writing feminist. Is it about the processes of writing, the form it takes, and/or its content? What does 'writing like a feminist' mean/consist of? We also consider the 'costs' of writing 'writing like a feminist' in a masculinized academy. We will explore questions of:

- Individual and collaborative writing; its benefits and costs, as individual researchers and as a 'team'; the role of friendship in feminist (and other gendered?) writing; questions of sex and other hierarchies in research collaboration.
- Form and style: does feminist politics demand writing of a specific type – one that is accessible to all women? And what are the implications of such claims for certain types of research – the highly abstract, conceptual, theoretical? Is there a place for 'strategic' academese in our writing? How might we counter the 'Ivory tower'? What strategies can we use to challenge the marginalization of feminist research?

**Activities:**

- Pre-workshop activity: (i) reading of an article on feminist research/writing; (ii) identifying and bringing with you a piece of feminist writing that has inspired you/been influential on your own research; (iii) participants to take a piece of their own work and consider what makes it an example of feminist writing, or not.
- 2-3:30pm: Feminist 'writing': led by Maud Perrier. Paired discussion and plenary discussion of participants' inspiring feminist research and their own example of their feminist writing.
- 3:15-4:30pm: led by Alison Bartlett. Students to bring in an object through which they can talk about their research, followed by a presentation of how we can use objects to research the material culture of feminism.

**4:30 PLENARY ROUND UP, Cakes and Drinks**

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