University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 615 S01 Research Methods

FALL 2020

September 8 to Dec. 9 (excluding Nov. 8 -- 14)

Seminar: Tuesdays, 1:30 – 4:15PM MST, synchronous on Zoom

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY FOR FALL 2020:

This Fall 2020 course will be offered entirely online as part of the University's plan to ensure everyone's safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please read the outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous course sessions will be hosted on Zoom, a video-conferencing program. To access scheduled Zoom course sessions, go to D2L, click on the COMMUNICATION tab, and select Zoom 5 or 10 minutes before class is scheduled to begin.

If you will not be able to participate in scheduled synchronous class sessions owing to time differences, then you should arrange to take this course when it is offered in person in the future.

Note that the time indicated on course outlines for all timed quizzes and exams in CMCL, COMS, and FILM courses includes 50% extra time to allow for technical difficulties.

Instructor:	Dr. Jessalynn Keller
Phone:	403-220-8728
Email:	Jessalynn.keller@gmail.com
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 10am-12pm – you must book an appointment through keller-jessalynn.youcanbook.me

Course Description
This course serves as a foundational survey of qualitative research methods used for the study of media and communication. Throughout the course students will learn various approaches to research media texts, audiences, industries, and platforms, in addition to learning the intellectual history of such approaches. Attention to ethics, care, and power will undergird the course, as we interrogate the ways in which research can produce knowledge with emancipatory possibilities for communities.

Additional Information
1. All sessions of this course will be held synchronously via Zoom at the time specified above. As such, in order to complete this course you must be able to attend these sessions and participate via video conference.

2. The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L.

3. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the historical and intellectual trajectory of major media and communication studies research methods, including ethical considerations
- Generate and apply research questions to various media contexts
- Articulate a research plan with a detailed methodological framework
- Conduct independent media studies research using a variety of methods

Textbooks and Readings

Required:
Kackman, Micheal and Mary Celeste Kearney. 2018. *The Craft of Criticism: Critical Media Studies in Practice*. New York: Routledge. [available at U of C bookstore or Amazon, $78]

All other readings will be available on D2L.

Learning Technologies and Requirements
& Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

This is an online course. In order to complete online (or blended) courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:
- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;
- A webcam (built-in or external);
- A microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone. If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact the university's IT department. For more information, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html

Instructors may arrange to record synchronous zoom class sessions for lesson capture; however, students are not to share recordings with others. Please carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
5%	**Completion of U of C TCPS2 CORE Tutorial (online)** In preparation for our discussion about research ethics, you'll be responsible for completing the U of C research ethics training, which is an online tutorial created in accordance with the Canadian Tri-Council Research Agencies. The tutorial has eight modules and will take between two and three hours to complete. Please email a screen shot of your completion certificate to Jessalynn in order to receive credit.	**Sept. 22**
15%	**Participation**	**Ongoing**

	The success of a graduate seminar is determined by the active participation of students. Therefore, I ask that you arrive at class having read the required reading and prepared with ideas to contribute to discussion of the materials. I expect quality contributions that advance the discussion and encourage you to bring questions to pose to your classmates.	
15%	**Methods Toolbox (on Padlet)** You will be asked to contribute regularly throughout the term to a class Padlet that will be your digital "toolbox" for research methods. The goal of this project is for students to leave the course with an easy-to-access online guide to research methods that will be useful when conducting thesis/dissertation work. Further information about this assignment will be provided in class.	**Nov. 27**
15%	**Seminar leadership** Students will work in pairs to "lead" 75-90 minutes (approximately half) of one seminar period. Students should limit summarizing the readings and instead focus on presenting a critical response and provocative discussion questions. Further information about this assignment will be provided in class.	**As assigned**
50%	**Methods Proposal Assignment (3 components)** **Submission 1:** You will choose a media artifact that you're interested in studying and write three research questions that may be used to analyze this artifact. Then, in a 4-5 page paper, you'll briefly survey three research methods (corresponding to each research question) that may be used to study your chosen media artifact. This is an exploratory paper that will set you up for the second submission, in which you will choose to expand upon one of the three surveyed methods. Professor feedback on this assignment should inform how you move forward with submission #2. **(15% of final grade)**	**Oct. 30**
	Presentation: In a 10 minute presentation, you'll discuss your methods proposal to the class, highlighting your research question, methods, and any ethical considerations of the research. **(10% of final grade)**	**Dec. 1 or 8**
	Submission 2: In a 10-15 page paper, you'll outline a methodological framework for a proposed research project. Your topic and approach will be generated out of submission #1. **(25% of final grade)** **Further information about this assignment (including each component) will be provided in class.**	**Dec. 11**

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: You must complete all assignments and exams or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If you miss a required course component, please contact the professor as soon as possible.

Submission of Assignments
Please submit all assignments electronically by uploading them to the designated D2L dropbox (unless instructed otherwise in the assignment guidelines). Include your name and ID number on all assignments. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act***. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late – this includes weekend days.

Student Accommodations
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html. Also see FAQs for Students: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq

Expectations for Writing
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale
The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, all course components will be graded with letter grades.

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
A	4.00	Excellent performance
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass
C+	2.30	Failure. All grades below B- are indicative of failure and will not count toward graduate program requirements.

Plagiarism
Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin**. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation
Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of

textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct
For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Research Ethics
Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal
For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar:* https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html

Student Support Services and Resources
Please visit https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

Recommended Texts

There are many fantastic resources for doing media studies research. Here are some suggestions beyond the required readings from top scholars in the field. Special thanks to the following people for their suggestions: Dr. Alex Cho (University of California – Santa Barbara), Dr. Alison Harvey (Glendon College), and Dr. Annie Rudd (University of Calgary).

Acker, Joan, Barry, Kate, & Esseveld, Johanna. 1991. "Objectivity and Truth: Problems in Doing Feminist Research," in *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research*, ed. Mary Margaret Fonow. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Artz, Lillian, Meer, Talia, Galgut, Hayley & Müller, Alex. 2017. "Participation in Practice: A Case Study of a Collaborative Project on Sexual Offences in South Africa." *Feminist Review* 115 (1): 79-96.

Arvin, Maile, Tuck, Eve & Morrill, Angie. 2013. "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy." *Feminist Formations* 25(1): 8-34.

Cahill, Caitlin. 2007. "Repositioning Ethical Commitments: Participatory Action Research as a Relational Praxis of Social Change." *ACME: An International E-journal for Critical Geographies* 6(3): 360-373.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2005. "Grounded Theory in the 21st Century: Applications for Advancing Social Justice Studies." In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna E. Lincoln, Eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research 3rd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 507-535.

Cho, A., Herrera, R. G., Chaidez, L., & Uriostegui, A. 2019. The "Comadre" Project: An Asset-Based Design Approach to Connecting Low-Income Latinx Families to Out-of-School Learning Opportunities. *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 607:1–607:14. https://doi.org/10.1145/3290605.3300837

Dever, Maryanne. 2017. "Archives and New Modes of Feminist Research." *Australian Feminist Studies* 32 (91-92): 1-4. [other great papers in this special issue]

Gillies, Val & Alldred, Pam. 2012. "The Ethics of Intention: Research as a Political Tool." In *Ethics in Qualitative Research, Second edition*, edited by Tina Miller, Maxine Birch, Melanie, Mauthner & Julie Jessop. SAGE: 43-60.

Gunaratnam, Yasmin & Hamilton, Carrie. 2017. "The Wherewithal of Feminist Methods." *Feminist Review* 115(1): 1-12.

Hannell, Briony. 2020. Fan studies and/as feminist methodology. *Transformative Works and Culture* 33. https://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/1689.

Jeppesen, Sandra., Hounslow, Toni., Khan, Sharmeen. & Petrick, Kamilla. 2017. "Media Action Research Group: toward an antiauthoritarian profeminist media research methodology." *Feminist Media Studies* 17(6): 1056-1072.

Keller, Jessalynn, Morgan Blue, Mary Celeste Kearney, Kirsten Pike and Sarah Projansky. 2015. Mapping New Methodological Approaches to Girls' Media Studies. *Journal of Children and Media* 9 (4): 528-535.

Lassiter, L. E. 2005. *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography*. University Of Chicago Press.

Leurs, Koen. 2017. "Feminist Data Studies: Using Digital Methods for Ethical, Reflexive, and Situated Socio-Cultural Research." *Feminist Review*, 115, pp. 130-154.

Levitas, Ruth. 2013. *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Mayer, Vicky. 2001. When the Camera Won't Focus: Tensions in Media Ethnography. *Feminist Media Studies*, *1* (3): 307- 322.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books and University of Otago Press.

Wilkinson, Sue. 1999. "Focus Groups: A Feminist Method." *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 23(2): 221-244.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Week 1   Tuesday, September 8: Introduction to course

No reading – come prepared to discuss your research interests

Week 2   Tuesday, September 15: What is Research?

Read:
Mary Celeste Kearney – Introduction, or How to Cook an Artichoke

Jane Agee – Developing Qualitative Research Questions: A Reflective Process

Eve Tuck – Decolonizing Methodologies 15 Years Later

How-to resources (please skim):
http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/questions.htm

Week 3   Tuesday, September 22: The Politics of Knowledge Production

Read:
Donna Haraway – Situated Knowledges

Patricia Hill Collins – Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology

Sara Ahmed – Feminist Shelters

Week 4   Tuesday, September 29: Research Ethics: Care & Community

Read:
Kim TallBear – Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry

Mary Elizabeth Luka and Mélanie Millette – (Re)framing Big Data: Activating Situated Knowledges and a Feminist Ethics of Care in Social Media Research

Annette Markham – Fabrication as Ethical Practice

Week 5   Tuesday, October 6: Studying Texts

Read:
Rosalind Gill – Discourse

Jason Mittell – Narrative

Amanda Ann Klein -- Genre

Megan Henesy – "Leaving my Girlhood Behind:" Woke Witches and Feminist Liminality in *Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*

Week 6   Tuesday, October 13: Studying Audiences

Read:
Matt Hills -- Audiences

Janice Radway – Women Read the Romance

Vicki Mayer – Research Beyond the Pale: Whiteness in Audience Studies and Media Ethnography

Kristen Warner – ABC's *Scandal* and Black Women's Fandom

Week 7   Tuesday, October 20: Ethnography and Participatory Methods

Read:
Jessa Lingel and Mary Gray – Ethnography

Rachel O'Neill – Pursing "Wellness": Considerations for Media Studies

S. Craig Watkins et al – Appendix: Design of the Study and The Mobile Paradox

Virginia Eubanks – Double-Bound: Putting the Power Back into Participatory Research

Recommended:
Alex Cho -- https://ethnographymatters.net/blog/2013/07/25/geography-of-learning/

Week 8   Tuesday, October 27: Studying Media Industries

Read:
Timothy Havens -- Production

Timothy Havens, Amanda Lotz, and Serra Tinic – Critical Media Industry Studies: A Research Approach

Natalie Wreyford and Shelley Cobb – Data and Responsibility: Toward a Feminist Methodology for Producing Historical Data on Women in the Contemporary UK Film Industry

Week 9   Tuesday, November 3: Historiography and the Archive

Read:
Michael Kackman – History and Historiography

Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook – Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory

Catherine Martin – Archival Research as Feminist Practice

How-to resources (please skim):
https://stuartschrader.com/advice-graduate-students-embarking-archival-research
https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/professional-life/resources-for-graduate-students/graduate-school-from-start-to-finish/aha-guide-to-archival-research
http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm

Week 10   Tuesday, November 10: NO CLASS – READING BREAK

No reading.

Week 11   Tuesday, November 17: Emergent Media Trends: Culture, Apps, Design, Power

Read:
Andre Brock Jr – Critical Technoculture Discourse Analysis

Ben Light, Jean Burgess and Stefanie Duguay – The Walkthrough Method: An Approach to the Study of Apps

Rena Bivens – The Gender Binary Will Not Be Deprogrammed

Sasha Costanza-Chock – Design Justice: Towards an Intersectional Feminist Framework for Design Theory and Practice

Week 12   Tuesday, November 24: New (Activist) Directions in Research

Read:
Rena Bivens and Ummni Khan – Torn: A Social Media Drama over the Aziz Ansari Scandal

Emma Renold – 'Feel What I feel:' Making Da(r)ta With Teen Girls for Creative Activisms on How Sexual Violence Matters

Kate Galloway – Listening to Indigenous Knowledge of the Land in Two Contemporary Sound Art Installations

Week 13   Tuesday, December 1: Research Proposal Presentations

No reading.

Week 14   Tuesday, December 8: Research Proposal Presentations con'd/Course Wrap-Up

No reading.

FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020 AT 12 NOON