U4 Gender Summer School in Uppsala July 30 – August 3 2018:

**Methods, Methodologies and Ethics:**

**Complexities and Responsibilities in Doing Gender Research**

The role of research in the process by which knowledge is generated as socially constructed in relations of power is never neutral, since it cannot take place in a social and political vacuum. The ethical dimension of generating knowledge equally well entails a political dimension, requiring reflexivity to think about the complex, contentious and contradictory nature of research. Ethical issues should thus not be reduced to the procedural matters, but should pervade each stage of the research process. This requires a reflexive rather than a procedural approach that enables us to develop reflexive potential in uncovering the choices that are made during the research process and our paradigmatic worldview that contains the researcher’s epistemological, ontological and methodological premises combining assumptions about (1) ontology (what kind of being is the human being? what is the nature of reality?), (2) epistemology (what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?), and (3) methodology (how do we know the world, or gain knowledge of it?). Feminist researchers should be aware of the fact that they are guided and bound within a set of epistemological and ontological assumptions while attempting to acquire in-depth knowledge of their research topics and subjects.

This year’s Summer School, hosted by the Centre for Gender Research at Uppsala University and with PhD students from Uppsala, Gent, Goettingen and Groeningen, will throw light on different definitions and dimensions of research ethics. Crucially inspired by feminist perspectives, we aim to go beyond a merely procedural ethics—the kind of ethics mandated by institutional review board committees to thinking about how to establish a *relational research ethics* that embraces values of mutual respect in non-exploitative ways and allows a recognition of the asymmetrical power relationships and humane interpersonal bonds between researcher and researched, including the communities in which they immerse themselves, live and work. This relational ethics is closely interrelated with *situational ethics*, which is deemed important with reference to how researchers can deal with ethical issues in process-oriented ways when unpredictable, often subtle, yet ethically important moments surprisingly come up in the field. Above all it is important to acknowledge that research evolves as an activity that cannot distance itself from social, political and historical processes, evolutions and contexts that determine what we call *socio-political research ethics*.

Teachers and topics:

Professor Jacqui Gabb, Chair of Sociology and Intimacy, Open University UK: “Researching Intimacy and Sexuality: methods, methodology, and epistemology”

Professor Gabriele Griffin, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala: “Theory as Method – Method as Theory”

Sally Chambers, Ghent Centre for Digital Humanities, Ghent University: “Gender, diversity and the digital humanities: a critical exploration”

Professor Sabine Grenz, University of Vienna: "Power in Feminist Research revisited: intersectional perspectives"

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