

## **A Feminist Companion to Research Methods in Psychology**

Authors: Hannah Frith & Rose Capdevila

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*Reviewed by Jennifer Garcia*

At first glance, *A Feminist Companion to Research Methods in Psychology* appears to be a supplement for undergraduate students studying psychology, however, it is much more than that. It is an inspiration of critical thinking and reaches beyond undergraduates. The book could be an introduction for advanced sixth form/college students, MSc conversion courses, and anyone interested in unpacking the complexities of psychological research. Its overarching purpose is to encourage readers to contemplate historical inequalities and the pressing need for critical interrogation within psychological research. It urges readers to question the origins of knowledge and the inherent biases within the psychological field, suggesting that readers take a pluralistic approach to both research methods and feminism. By encouraging readers to adopt a feminist lens, the book claims that such an approach would not only enrich the quality and rigor of research but also challenge its inequalities.

With a clear structure, each chapter of the book begins with defined learning objectives, laying out a roadmap for readers' engagement. This design helps readers with their comprehension and fosters a sense of direction throughout the exploration of chapter topics, such as, "Cognitive Psychology: False Memories, Sexual Abuse, and Memory Experiments", "Personality and Individual Differences: Tests and Scales", and "Developmental Psychology: Observing Human Development". The core content of each chapter is sprinkled with real-life examples and external resources, easily integrating theoretical concepts with practical applications. These examples help to clarify key points and resonate with readers, therefore enhancing understanding. Each section and chapter conclude with a summary, consolidating the main ideas and promoting reflection on what was discussed. Such a structured approach makes it an ideal companion for psychology modules, offering a comprehensive yet accessible resource for students at various levels of academic study.

As an academic who considers herself a feminist, I found great value in the book's exploration of research methodologies through a feminist lens. However, what sets this book apart is its ability to go beyond academic and feminist boundaries and resonate with readers from different backgrounds and perspectives. I came to this conclusion as I explained the book to my partner and they asked if they

would be able to read it, having zero background in psychology or research - I answered yes. It easily navigates complex theoretical frameworks, making them accessible to a broader audience irrespective of their familiarity with feminist or research theory. The book emphasises the significance of adopting a feminist perspective without requiring devotion to feminist ideology, thereby appealing to readers across diverse ideological spectrums.

Personally, I found the book not only intellectually refreshing but strongly insightful. Its emphasis on encouraging a critical mindset towards research and social inequalities resonated deeply with my academic pursuits and feminist convictions. Moreover, I believe the book's potential to broaden perspectives and foster critical engagement extends far beyond academic circles. It has the capacity to instigate a shift in how individuals perceive and approach research; the authors urge the reader to become a "scholar-activist", and this might be my favourite aspect about the book. One suggestion for future editions is to include more examples and references from outside the UK, enhancing its global relevance.

In conclusion, *A Feminist Companion to Research Methods in Psychology* stands as a testament to the transformative power of feminist analysis within the field of psychological research. The simple explanation of complex ideas coupled with its firm commitment to social justice makes it an essential resource for students and a great option for anyone interested in psychological research methods. I enthusiastically endorse the inclusion of this book in various psychological courses, hopeful that it will inspire readers to think differently and promote positive change.

### **The author**

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