

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Workshop: Innovative Research Methods in Gender, Marriage and Family Studies
Co-organized by the Department of Sociology and the Gender Studies Programme

Venue:

Room 422, 4/F, Sino Building

Date and Time:

21 February 2025 (Fri), 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Speakers:

Professor Xiaoling SHU, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of California, Davis

Professor Ling HAN, Assistant Professor, Gender Studies Programme, CUHK

Moderator:

Professor Sara ZHONG, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, CUHK

Rundown:

Time	Item	Remarks
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Talk on “Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining in the Social Sciences: Incorporating Machine Learning with Classical Statistical Methods” Q&A	By Prof. Xiaoling SHU
11:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.	Short break	
11:40 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.	Talk on “AI, Big Data, and the Death of Fieldwork? Navigating the Tensions and Possibilities of Digital Methods in Qualitative Research” Q&A	By Prof. Ling HAN
12:40 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Moderator’s Concluding Remarks	By Prof. Sara ZHONG
12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch Break	
2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	RPG Students Project Sharing, followed by Comments from Speakers and Moderators	Moderated by Prof. Jing SONG

Abstracts:

The Evolution of China's Development Model

Xiaoling SHU

Knowledge discovery and data mining (KDD) encompasses a dialectic research process that is deductive and inductive. KDD automatically or semi-automatically considers joint, interactive, and independent predictors to address causal heterogeneity and improve prediction. It plays an important complementary role in revealing valid and significant hidden patterns in data, providing insights into data and theory development, and enriching scientific discovery. The most recent development is to incorporate this new paradigm of predictive modeling with the classical approach of parameter estimation regressions to produce improved models that combine explanation and prediction. I use examples from my research to demonstrate ways to incorporate machine learning with classical statistical approaches to shed light on hidden patterns in data to aid knowledge discovery.

AI, Big Data, and the Death of Fieldwork? Navigating the Tensions and Possibilities of Digital Methods in Qualitative Research

Ling HAN

The rise of digital platforms and new analytical tools has provided qualitative researchers with access to a rich trove of data, prompting them to integrate digital methods into data collection and adapt to the growing reliance on digital technologies. As qualitative scholars in the humanities and social sciences increasingly claim to engage with machine learning and AI, how does digital platformization reshape qualitative inquiry? While core qualitative methods—observing, listening, and interacting—may seem more accessible in digital spaces through digital ethnography, new ethical challenges and digital precarity emerge in studying and publishing research that incorporates digital data. From a feminist reflexive standpoint, I examine recent reviews on digital ethnography, tools that bridge the digital-analog divide, and the ethical dilemmas associated with digitalization. Finally, while digital advancements facilitate data collection and analysis, non-digital fieldwork remains indispensable.

RPG students sharing and titles (each sharing: 15 minutes)

Name	Programme	Title
Yidan BI	MPhil Student in Gender Studies Programme	Workplace Experiences of Transgender Men in China: Reciprocity, Positionality, and Community-Based Knowledge Production
Lingxi CHEN	PhD Student in Sociology	When public sector jobs become not mother-friendly: How do state and market render jobs at State-Owned Enterprises not accommodate mothering in Post-Reform China?
Yawei DUAN	MPhil Student in Gender Studies Programme	Doing Digital Ethnography in subculture communities: Anonymity, Research Ethics, and Online Abuse

Jiying HUANG	MPhil Student in Gender Studies Programme	They do video calls, but so what?" A Methodological Reflection on Practices in Transnational Care
Zhensheng LIN	MPhil Student in Gender Studies Programme	Reflection on Question Design of Semi-Structured and Life-History Interviews in Framing Queer Migrant Integration Narratives
Lingyan TU	PhD Student in Gender Studies Programme	Gender Dynamics of Workplace Culture: Insights from China's High-Tech Sector
Chi Fung WONG	MPhil Student in Sociology	Rethinking the Sociology of Body: The Exploratory Research on the Sexualized Body of Sexfluencer/Wanghuang in Hong Kong