

## Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian Studies: Issues in Multidisciplinary Studies and Methodology

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### Abstrak

The paper brings together several strands of debate and deliberation in which I have been involved since the early 2000s on the definition of Southeast Asia and the rationale of Southeast Asian Studies. I refer to the relationship between area studies and methodologies as a conundrum (or puzzle), though I should state from the outset that I think it is much more of a conundrum for others than for me. I have not felt the need to pose the question of whether or not area studies generates a distinctive method or set of methods and research practices, because I operate from a disciplinary perspective; though that it is not to say that the question should not be posed. Indeed, as I have earned a reputation for “revisionism” and championing disciplinary approaches rather than regional ones, it might be anticipated already the position that I take in an examination of the relationships between methodologies and the practice of “area studies” (and in this case Southeast Asian [or Asian] Studies). Nevertheless, given the recent resurgence of interest in the possibilities provided by the adoption of regional perspectives and the grounding of data gathering and analysis within specified locations in the context of globalization, the issues raised for researchers working in Southeast Asia and within the field of Southeast Asian Studies require revisiting.