VISUAL METHODS: PRACTICE, PRACTICALITIES AND PUBLICATION

Creative Research Methods Symposium
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Dawn Mannay
mannaydi@cardiff.ac.uk
@dawnmannay
OVERVIEW

Reflections on visual journeys
Fighting familiarity
Negotiating closed doors and constraining deadlines
Media messages
Temporality
Different ways of asking
What happens next?
Re-visualisation
THE PROBLEM OF FAMILIARITY

‘I was bored by the thought of studying undergraduates … I had memories of my own college days in which I appeared as a child’ (Greer 1964)

‘seeing only the things that are conventionally “there” to be seen’ (Becker 1971)

Desire to make the familiar strange has ‘almost the status of a mantra among ethnographers’ (Sikes 2006)

Fighting familiarity (Delamont and Atkinson 1995)
Introducing a visual element to the process of data collection can potentially provide different ways of knowing and understanding (Gauntlett 2007)

Defamiliarisation - over time our perceptions of familiar, everyday situations become veiled by a web of taken for granted meanings - art can address this automization by forcing us to slowdown our perception, to linger and to notice

Art, therefore, may be an element that can overcome the confines of language, open up experience and make the familiar strange

*Mothers and daughters on the margins*

‘overshadowed by the enclosed, self-contained world of common understanding’
MAKING THE FAMILIAR STRANGE
‘the technique acted to counter the tacit and normalizing effect of knowledge, which operates by taking ones group experiences and assuming these to be paradigmatic of all. Employing these methods, then, gave me a new insight into my participant’s worlds; thus, the application of self-directed visual data production provided a gateway to destinations that lay beyond my repertoire of preconceived understandings of place and space; unravelling the diversity of urban experience and making the familiar strange and interesting again’ (Mannay 2010)

Participants lifeworlds and spaces (Richardson 2013)
NEGOTIATING CLOSED DOORS AND CONSTRAINING DEADLINES

Artefacts can tell how a particular aspect of material culture is entangled in our everyday lives (Chapman 2000)

‘Narratives and objects inhabit the intersection of the personal and the social’ (Hurdley 2006, p. 717)

Visual Artefacts (Grant, Mannay and Marzella 2017)

Unseen elements - introduced to mundane (but important artefacts) located in areas beyond the space selected for the interview
MEDIA MESSAGES
STIGMA, CLASS AND MOTHERHOOD

Moral maze motherhood – experienced by many BUT...

Figure of chav mum circulates within a wide range of media…Through the figure of chav a new publicly sanctioned wave of middle-class contempt for the lower classes is bodied forth (Tyler 2008)

Class not a protected characteristic - impacts on public perceptions and social policy – ‘otherhood’ (Mannay et al 2018)

Photoelicitation

Analysis of 167 online images

Failed maternal subject - photographs that attempted to classify mothers ‘like them’
TEMPORALITY – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Possible selves

*Mothets and daughters* (Mannay 2014)

Timelines (Adriansen 2012; Berends 2011; Mannay and Creaghan 2016)

Emotion stickers (Gabb and Fink 2015)

Bubble activity

Collage (Awan 2007; Mannay 2010)

Sandboxing

*Motherhood* (Mannay et al 2017)
DIFFERENT WAYS OF ASKING

‘Effective ways to address increasingly complex questions in social science’ (Kara 2015, p. 3)

Moving away from the ‘social work interview’

Embedded event days and activities - choice

Empowering young people to lead and direct the conversations (Lomax et al. 2011)

Peer led (Lushey and Monroe 2014)

Care experienced children and young people (Mannay et al. 2017)
ENABLING ETHICAL ENGAGEMENT, IMPACT AND CHANGE?

Reports, books, journal articles
Informing policy
Academic conferences
How much impact do they have? Can they negotiate change?
What other options do we have?
What are the issues of ethics, representation, time immemorial (Brady and Brown 2013), voice and visibility?
What opportunities can be gained from the impact agenda?

Useful to consider the ways in which creative narrative forms can replace visual images and detailed, identifying, biographical accounts, yet still retain impact; and ethically, yet powerfully, communicate the stories that participants have shared in the research process (Mannay 2016)
REVISUALISATION - ANONYMISING, REFRAMING AND RE-REPRESENTING ACCOUNTS

http://www.exchangewales.org/laceproject

Thank you for listening!
REFERENCES


Grant, A., Mannay, D. and Marzella, R. 2017. ‘People try and police your behaviour’: The impact of surveillance on mothers’ and grandmothers’ perceptions and experiences of infant feeding. Families, Relationships and Societies - http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/tpp/frs/preprints/content-ppfrsd1600032r3


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