

Annual Report (2016)

BSA Visual Methods Study Group

Conveners: Professor Janet Fink, Professor Helen Lomax, Dr Dawn Mannay and Dr Terence Heng

Members: 296 (JISC Mail Subscribers¹)

Professor Helen Lomax²

E-mail Address: Helen.lomax@northampton.ac.uk

Postal Address: Department for Education and Community Studies
School of Education and Professional Development
Queensgate
University of Huddersfield
Huddersfield

Postal Code: HD1 3DH

Professor Janet Fink

E-mail Address: j.fink@hud.ac.uk

Postal Address: Department for Education and Community Studies
School of Education and Professional Development
Queensgate
University of Huddersfield
Huddersfield

Postal Code: HD1 3DH

Dr Dawn Mannay

E-mail Address: mannaydi@cardiff.ac.uk

Postal Address: School of Social Sciences
Glamorgan Building
King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff University
Cardiff

Postal Code: CF5 4QU

Dr Terence Heng³

E-mail Address: Terence.Heng@SingaporeTech.edu.sg

Postal Address: Singapore Institute of Technology
10 Dover Drive
Singapore

Postal Code: 138683

Date Reporting – 3rd February 2017

¹ There is no historic record of BSA / non BSA members

² Helen Lomax has taken a new academic positions since the 2015 Annual Report

³ Terrance Heng was not a convener in the previous 2015 reporting year.

Date Group Passed to new conveners – October 2014

Account Balance on transference - £49.15

Aims of Study Group

- To provide an organizational context in which to bring together academics and researchers from a number of areas within sociology who have an interest in the visual;
- To provide a forum to allow for the critical development, building and elaboration of visual sociological theorizing and related discourses;
- To develop new and refine existing visual sociological methodologies;
- To develop professional practice protocols for the ethics of visual sociological research;
- To create a context in which professional networking and constructive interdisciplinary communication can take place;
- To seek a professional interaction with the International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA); its intellectual explorations and its established hub for visual sociologists.

Relevant Current Events

Helen Lomax is Co-I for 'Advancing Image-Elicitation Methods in the Social Sciences' (ESRC grant no. ES/M005941/1) <http://www.open.ac.uk/students/research/aiem>. The project is funded for a period of 3 years (2014-17), funding commenced in October 2014. The funding is for the training of doctoral and early career researchers through the development and delivery of three online methods training modules on advanced aspects of visual research methods: image-elicitation. The overall objective is to advance the quality of the use of IEMs among UK researchers. It will achieve this by focusing in-depth on three areas currently underdeveloped in the provision of research training about IEMs. It will produce and deliver three online modules, each of which addresses one of those areas. Each module will develop advanced understanding by bringing those methods into dialogue with other literatures and practices, in a structured online environment facilitated by an expert tutor. The three modules are:

1. Using image-elicitation methods when working with vulnerable participants
2. 'You will participate': complicating the rhetoric of participation
3. The future of image-elicitation methods

Each of these modules has their own, specific objectives and learning outcomes. Each module also delivers skills in online, synchronous and asynchronous, collaborative learning. Modules 1

and 2 and 3 were fully subscribed and were delivered by Helen Lomax (Feb-March 2015; January 2016; January 2017) to 56 international postgraduate and early career researchers working within sociology and the social sciences.

Relevant Events Held in 2016

HUDCRES (Huddersfield Centre for Research in Education and Society, University of Huddersfield, 4 - 10th February 2016

Title: ***Portraits of School Life exhibition***

Organiser: Janet Fink

Abstract: This exhibition was the result of a collaboration between Janet Fink (HUDCRES) and Savile Park Primary School, Halifax and Meltham Moor Junior School, Holmfirth. In their classrooms and during visits to the University, Year 3 children portrayed different aspects of school life – from how they get to school to their favourite areas of the playground.

Photographs, emotion maps and drawings give some unexpected insights into what school is like for seven to eight year olds – and these are contrasted with the children's experiences of being a school child in the Tolson Museum's Victorian classroom and images from the 1930s. <http://heritagequay.org/events/portraits-of-school-life-an-exhibition/>

Childhood and Youth Research Group, Cardiff University, 10th February 2016

Title: ***Understanding the educational experiences and opinions, attainment, achievement and aspirations of looked after children in Wales***

Presenters – Dawn Mannay and Sophie Hallett

Abstract: The low educational attainment and future prospects of looked-after children and young people (LACYP) has become an issue of widespread international concern. However, despite the development of policies and guidance, which aim to tackle the issue of the 'underachievement' for LACYP, their overall educational attainment has yet to be noticeably raised. The lack of marked progress in this area, despite policy interventions, highlights the challenges in addressing LACYPs educational achievement and the complexity of the problem. This paper draws on an in-depth qualitative research study with LACYP, commissioned by the Welsh Government, to offer an insight into LACYPs' lived experience of education and their opinions on what could be done to improve their educational journeys. The paper discusses the creative methodologies adopted in the study, reflects on the key recommendations and explores the multimodal tools that were created to disseminate the findings. The full report and links to the associated films, artwork and music can be found at <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/cascade/looked-after-children-and-education/>

Salons: Opera for the Unknown Woman, Millennium Centre, Cardiff, UK, 9 March 2016 and Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield, UK, 6 April 2016

1. Title: ***Reflections on the Opera for the Unknown Woman***

Presenter – Dawn Mannay

2. Title: ***The Unknown Woman: Past and Present Themes***

Presenter - Janet Fink

Abstract: In the lead up to the performances of Opera for the Unknown Woman this May and June, Fuel and Melanie Wilson will host salons in Cardiff, Coventry, Huddersfield and London. Salons, made popular in 17th and 18th century Europe, were informal spaces for social, literary and political discussion, often populated by women open to an exchange of ideas. We invite women and men to join a salon to gain insight into this special creative process, contribute to the conversation that will influence the production and meet new people over a free drink. Each salon will consider a different theme from climate change, contemporary opera and digital art to the fight for gender equality. We will hear from members of the creative team, scientists, academics, and you, as we explore how this science fiction, multi-media opera will create a call to action. <http://www.fueltheatre.com/projects/opera-for-the-unknown-woman-salons-a-series-of-con>

Learning and Work Institute Conference - Supporting Looked After Young People and Care Leavers, University of South Wales, 17th March 2016

Title: ***Aspirations, Inspirations and Expectations: Exploring the Educational Experiences and Transitions of Looked After Young People and Care Leavers in Wales***

Presenter – Dawn Mannay

Abstract: The low educational attainment and future prospects of looked-after children and young people (LACYP) has become an issue of widespread international concern. However, despite the development of policies and guidance, which aim to tackle the issue of the 'underachievement' for LACYP, their overall educational attainment has yet to be noticeably raised. The lack of marked progress in this area, despite policy interventions, highlights the challenges in addressing LACYPs educational achievement and the complexity of the problem. This paper draws on an in-depth qualitative research study with LACYP, commissioned by the Welsh Government, to offer an insight into LACYPs' lived experience of education and their opinions on what could be done to improve their educational journeys. The paper discusses the creative methodologies adopted in the study, reflects on the key recommendations and explores the multimodal tools that were created to disseminate the findings. The full report and links to the associated films, artwork and music can be found at <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/cascade/looked-after-children-and-education/>

Qualitative Methodology Forum: Two Faces of Qualitative Inquiry: Theoretical and Applied Approaches, University of Bath, 23rd March 2016

Title: ***Lights, camera, action: translating research findings into policy and practice impacts with music, film and artwork***

Presenters - Dawn Mannay and Sophie Hallett

Abstract: It is important to consider processes of ethical, yet impactful, dissemination that can communicate the depth of qualitative research findings to diverse audiences in ways that engender impact and have the opportunity to influence policy and practice. This paper reflects on a project commissioned by the Welsh Government titled Understanding the educational experiences and opinions, attainment, achievement and aspirations of looked after children in Wales. The study explored the current educational landscape for looked after children and young people and included innovative visual workshops and qualitative interviews to gain an insight into participant's everyday lives and experiences. The report offered a series of recommendations for policy makers and practitioners to enable best practice and improve educational outcomes. However, the style and length of the report format can limit the potential for impact and the paper argues that visual and aural mediums can be effective vehicles for accessing emotion and disseminating the power of participants' accounts; and ultimately engendering more impact. The project findings were translated into films, music and artwork and importantly these creative outputs were not simply a reflection of the content of the report, rather, the young people involved with some of these outputs took the central themes and came back with their interpretations and representations of these issues. In producing a set of powerful visual and musical accounts, the venture has offered an opportunity to express and communicate the accounts and ideas of children and young people; and, in doing so, it suggests an agenda for disseminating future academic research findings to policy makers, practitioners; and for raising public awareness around issues of social justice. The video of the presentation can be found at;
<https://uniofbath.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=4abd6267-c73c-4e7d-a13a-0282ea82042c>

BSA Annual Conference, Aston University, 6th – 8th April 2016

Title: ***Surveillance and stigma during pregnancy and early motherhood: the changing experiences of mothers and grandmothers***

Presenters – Aimee Grant and Dawn Mannay

Abstract: Pregnancy and motherhood have come to be increasingly subjected to surveillance, by medical professionals, kin and also strangers. Rates of breastfeeding in developed countries vary significantly but research with mothers in countries with low breastfeeding rates has highlighted that public breastfeeding is difficult to navigate within existing constructs of acceptable femininity, due to the sexualisation of the breast in contemporary society. This paper draws on in-depth qualitative research with six mother/grandmother pairs, where the mothers' infants were aged under 25 months. Data production involved elicitation interviews around the everyday artefacts that participants presented to symbolise their experiences of motherhood and infant care. Participants who were new mothers described the ways in which their behaviours were monitored by those around them, including service-sector employees, friends, family and, to a lesser extent, health professionals. The intergenerational nature of the study allowed a focus on the ways in which surveillance of infant feeding, and mothering more generally, has changed over time, and grandmothers reported considerably lower levels of scrutiny. Drawing on Foucauldian concepts of surveillance, the paper examines the negotiation of acceptable motherhood in relation to the intrusive policing of lifestyle choices, consumption and infant feeding. The paper argues that the moral maze of surveyed motherhood acts to close down mothers' agency and situate them in a psychological impasse where ideas of choice and ownership become restricted.

Title: ***Child poverty in the cultural imaginary: digital photographs, dominant stereotypes and the media?***

Presenters – Helen Lomax and Janet Fink

Abstract: This paper will examine the nature and currency of digital images of child poverty in contemporary Britain and explore how particular stereotypes of, for example, blighted urban landscapes and ‘broken families’ have come to dominate depictions of disadvantage in online media reportage. Our argument is situated in a context of rising social inequality across Europe and increasingly punitive and derogatory discourses around poorer people’s lives in the media. The aim of the paper, however, is to consider not only the significance of context for reading images of child poverty but also the value of different theoretical approaches for interrogating processes of interpretation and meaning making. In this we suggest how the language and method of social semiotics (Jewitt and Oyama, 2001) offer useful tools through which to articulate how images of child poverty might provoke particular readings. At the same time, we identify how images are always in internal dialogue with the texts in which they are embedded and in external dialogue with their times (Trachtenberg, 1989). By illustrating the insights to be gained by holding these two approaches in tension within analyses of ‘found’ images, the paper acts to extend an often neglected theoretical field in the sociology of childhood literature and to encourage more critical reflection on practices of image based research with children and young people. <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/events/bsa-annual-conference.aspx>

Creative Cardiff Research Network and the School of Social Sciences, Research Seminar & Book Launch, Cardiff University April 13th 2016

Title: ***Visual Research Methods – Working with Creatives***

Presenters: Dawn Mannay and Helen Lomax (and Professor Emma Renold; Dr Edward Gomez, Laura Sorvala, Dr Lisa El Refaie and Alida Payson)

Abstract: This interdisciplinary research seminar will include 10 minute presentations on three different projects, before offering the opportunity for questions and some discussion. The seminar will be followed by the launch of Dawn Mannay’s book: *Visual, Narrative and Creative Research Methods* (Routledge, 2016), and wine and refreshments.

<http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/events/view/visual-research-methods-working-with-creatives/>

BISR Methods Lunch, Birkbeck, University of London, 19th April 2016

Title: ***Spaces Between Visibility and Invisibility: Employing Creative Methods of Re-Visualisation to Enable Ethical yet Influential Impacts***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: Contemporary social science research is often concerned to engage with and promote particular forms of innovative data production, such as photo-elicitation, collaging, film or drawing. These visual artefacts can elicit new conversations, fight familiarity and enable a more nuanced account of participants’ lives. Participants can also reclaim acceptable identities, and tell new stories, through creative methodologies and visual participatory productions. However, there are ethical tensions between ‘giving voice’ and maintaining confidentiality in relation to digital landscapes, occularcentric cultures, open access and time immemorial. Centralising the space between visibility and invisibility, the paper discusses how visual exposure can be both a

tool of empowerment and a vehicle of disempowerment. Presenting examples of graphic art, poetry, film and music videos the paper considers how re-visualising research findings can contribute to ethical and impactful forms of dissemination. <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/bisr/events/bbk-local?uid=931dea8764464aeebbf783da6285dc1f>

Innovative Research Methods with Children and Young People, Cardiff University, 25th April 2016

Title: ***The Emotional Landscapes of School: Children's Journeys through Time and Space*** (Keynote Address)

Presenter - Janet Fink

Title: ***Sandboxing Workshop***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay <http://innovativeresearchmethods.eventbrite.co.uk>

Abstract: - This workshop focuses on a visual data production approach developed drawing on 'the world technique' in which participants create three-dimensional scenes, pictures or abstract designs in a tray filled with sand and a range of miniature, realistic and fantasy, figures and everyday objects as part of a psychoanalytical therapy session. The workshop explores whether psychoanalytically informed techniques can be applied ethically and effectively as a research tool in qualitative inquiry with children and young people. The workshop will offer an opportunity for participants to create sandscapes with sandboxes and figures using 'the world technique'. In the workshop we will discuss experiences of sandboxing and the potentialities and difficulties of applying the technique in participatory forms of visual data production within the framework of qualitative research studies.

Qualitative Analysis Conference: Visual Research Methods and Visual Ethnographies. Brock University. St.Catharines, Ontario, Canada. May 11th to 13th, 2016

Title: ***Landscapes of invisibility, visibility and re-visualisation: employing creative methods of data production and dissemination to generate ethical impacts with marginalised communities***

Presenters - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This paper explores the ways in which marginalised communities become embodied as both different and lacking in contemporary media representations. Drawing on four research studies based in Wales, UK, with participants in low-income areas and looked after children and young people, the paper considers how participants can reclaim acceptable identities, and tell new stories, through creative methodologies and visual participatory productions. The paper examines the ethical tensions between 'giving voice' and maintaining confidentiality in relation to digital landscapes, occularcentric cultures, open access and time immemorial. Centralising the space between visibility and invisibility, the paper discusses how visual exposure can be both a tool of empowerment and a vehicle of disempowerment. Presenting examples of graphic art, poetry, film and music videos the paper considers how re-visualising research findings can contribute to ethical and impactful forms of dissemination. <http://www.qualitatives.ca/>

VII Conference on Childhood Studies, Turku, Finland, 6th – 8th June 2016

Title: ***Through a gendered lens***

Presenters – Janet Fink and Helen Lomax

Abstract: Introduction and aims: Our paper considers the analytical challenges engendered by participatory research with children. Drawing on images created by and of children as part of research undertaken with them, the paper reflects on the dual challenges in making sense of children's everyday experiences as captured in children's visual research and the ethical and representational challenges that emerge in making these experiences visible.

Methods: The visual material considered in this paper originates from a series of creative participatory research projects undertaken in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in England during 2010-2013 involving 24 children as co-researchers. These studies, which produced over 1,000 digital photographs and two participatory films, capture the young peoples' experiences about what constitutes a good place to live (friendship and belonging, parks and green spaces) and what threatens this.

Findings: A key objective of each project was to enable young people to give voice to their everyday experiences whilst recognising, and being transparent about the challenges that this presents. This paper focuses on these challenges as we experienced them in the interpretation and dissemination of the visual outputs from the research and, more particularly, how we reconciled the different 'voices' which seek to give voice to images. As we explore, images of children generate strong reactions in audiences which may obscure the children's intentions. Here we suggest that an analytic approach which recognises, and makes visible, children as both agentic in creating a visual landscape of childhood and "knowing" in their engagement with the research and its audiences can help resolve these tensions.

Conclusions: In reading children's images as performative and their engagement as agentic it is possible to navigate the different interpretations on offer and, in so doing ensure that their voices remain at the heart of the research process and make visible their everyday lives, friendships and relationships. <http://agricola.utu.fi/ajankohtaista/cfp/index.php?ilmoitus=959>

2nd International Summer Workshop on Alternative Methods in Social Research, San Sebastian, 12th June, 2016

Paper title: 'Creative visual research: Methods, analytics and ethics' (key note)

Presenter: Helen Lomax

International Symposium: Childhood Studies. School of Education and Professional Development, University of Huddersfield, 20th -21st June 2016

Organiser - Janet Fink

Title: ***Engaging Children and Young People: Creative Methods and Research Ethics***

The aim of this Symposium is to encourage critical dialogue about the issues and questions posed by research that seeks to engage with the voices of children and young people and understand their everyday experiences. It brings together speakers from a range of disciplinary

and professional backgrounds who will draw upon their own work to consider the insights to be gained from different creative research methods and the ethical dilemmas these can generate.

Keynote speakers: Peter Kraftl (University of Birmingham, UK) and Anna Sparrman (Linköping University, Sweden)

Presenters: Dr Ruth Barley (Sheffield Hallam University, UK); Judith Hunter (University of Huddersfield, UK); Helen Lomax (University of Northampton, UK); April Mandrona (McGill University, Canada); Sarah Parsons (University of Southampton, UK); Barry Percy-Smith (University of Huddersfield; UK); Jim Reid (University of Huddersfield, UK); Dr Lisa Russell (University of Huddersfield, UK)

Paper title: ***Being seen or remaining out of view? Considering creative re-visualisation as an ethical practice in disseminating research***

Presenter: Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This paper explores the ways in which marginalised communities become embodied as both different and lacking in contemporary media representations. Drawing on four research studies based in Wales, UK, with mothers and daughters in low-income areas and looked after children and young people, the paper considers how participants can reclaim acceptable identities, and tell new stories, through creative methodologies and visual participatory productions. The paper examines the ethical tensions between 'giving voice' and maintaining confidentiality in relation to digital landscapes, occularcentric cultures, open access and time immemorial. Centralising the space between visibility and invisibility, the paper discusses how visual exposure can be both a tool of empowerment and a vehicle of disempowerment. Presenting examples of graphic art, poetry, film and music videos the paper considers how re-visualising research findings can contribute to ethical and impactful forms of dissemination.

Workshop Title: ***Sandboxing Workshop***

Presenter – Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This workshop focuses on a visual data production approach developed drawing on 'the world technique' in which participants create three-dimensional scenes, pictures or abstract designs in a tray filled with sand and a range of miniature, realistic and fantasy, figures and everyday objects as part of a psychoanalytical therapy session. The workshop explores whether psychoanalytically informed techniques can be applied ethically and effectively as a research tool in qualitative inquiry with children and young people. The workshop will offer an opportunity for participants to create sandscapes with sandboxes and figures using 'the world technique'. In the workshop we will discuss experiences of sandboxing and the potentialities and difficulties of applying the technique in participatory forms of visual data production within the framework of qualitative research studies.

Festival of Social Science, Bath, 6th July 2016.

Panel Title: ***'Participatory visual methods: Ethical challenges in a digital age' 'Research for social justice: Moving ethics forward'***

Presenters - Helen Kara, Helen Lomax and Martin Tolich,

Abstract: Ethical regulation of research has traditionally focused on participant wellbeing, data management, and reducing institutional risk. Also, most ethical review processes are only available to a sub-set of researchers based in some organisations. This session argues that research governance needs a more comprehensive and equitable approach, and that researchers need better education to help us act ethically throughout. We begin with an overview of research for social justice, consider work in New Zealand to make ethical review available for community-based researchers, and look at the wider ethical issues raised by participatory visual research. <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/RMF2016/prog.php>

Annual Research Student Conference, The Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care, University of Hertfordshire, 15th July, 2016

Paper title: ***Transforming health and wellbeing through methodological innovation*** (Key note)

Presenter: Helen Lomax

BERA Annual Conference: University of Leeds, 13th - 15th September, 2016

Symposium Title: Researching the lives of children and young people: challenges, insights and dynamics

Paper title: ***'My favourite place': mapping children's emotional interactions across the temporal and spatial landscapes of school***

Presenter - Janet Fink

Symposium abstract: This symposium is focused on the potential and challenges of different qualitative research methods for capturing the everyday experiences of children and young people alongside the views and interests of significant others in their lives, including friends, parents/carers and teachers. Drawing on four studies situated in different formal and informal educational contexts and undertaken with different constituencies of participants, the papers explore research scenarios in which issues of power, agency and respect coalesce around the question of 'voice' in the research process.

Childhood studies and the sociology of childhood literatures have firmly established that children are competent social actors with informed perspectives on their daily lives, at home, in school and across their wider social networks (Mayall, 2002). More particularly, work in the field of participatory research has often been framed by claims of empowerment, giving marginalised or silenced children a 'voice' in the research process and in the production of knowledge about their lived experiences. At the same time, there are growing calls within the childhood literature for further debate about whether participatory research can deliver all that it promises as well as for more discussion of the social dynamics that shape child-led data collection and analysis (Hunleth, 2011). Running across these strands of work, however, are also critical reflections about the possibilities of uncovering the 'authentic' voices of children (James, 2007) and the importance of understanding voice as a process. As Komulainen (2007) argues, voice is not an individual property but rather reflects the ambiguity and socialness of human communication and is imbued with the discourses, practices and contexts in which it is located.

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/event/bera-conference-2016-2>

Enhanced Learning Together, across Higher Education Centre', Accrington, 16th September 2016

Paper title: **Representations of Child Poverty in the Media**

Presenter – Janet Fink

Abstract: Images are regularly drawn upon in the 'fast and furious' style of reporting that is now such a feature of British online news media but an extremely small number of very particular photographs have come to dominate the portrayal of child poverty issues. This presentation considers what these images 'stand for' in media reports and how they are used to both reinforce and challenge understandings of disadvantage and deprivation.

Evaluating the Outdoor Learning Experiences, Bute Park, Cardiff, 23rd September 2016

Professor Helen Lomax and Dr Dawn Mannay were keynote speakers at this was one-day event held at Bute Park Education Centre open to people from outdoor learning organisations, including those involved in environmental management. Participants were encouraged to consider theories behind evaluation methods and share their experiences of putting them into practice.

A link to the evaluation toolkit, which has been developed for practitioners by the Sustainable Places Research Institute and the School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University can be found [here](#).

Paper Title: ***Visual methods for researching the outdoors***

Presenter - Helen Lomax

Abstract: Helen's presentation explored the value of creative participatory methods and drew on her research with children and families, in which participants used video, photography and drawing to explore their relationships with outdoor space. The paper considered what these methods add to understandings of children's (and adults) relationships with outdoor space (including community gardens and pocket parks) and how these spaces can enhance wellbeing.

Paper Title: ***Visual Methods and the Everyday Use of Space***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This presentation focuses on the value of visual methods for gaining an understanding of children and young people's use of space within the home and in their immediate locality. Reflecting on a project using collage, mapping and photoelicitation, the presentation explores what we can learn by applying visual techniques, and their limitations. There is also a consideration of what it means to live in a marginalised locale and how conceptions of particular places impact on how children and young people are seen, how they see themselves and how they negotiate space.

Visual Innovation: A Methods Workshop #Visual16, Staffordshire University, Tuesday 22 November 2016

BSA Postgraduate Forum & Visual Methods Study Group

This event was co-hosted by the **BSA Postgraduate Forum and the BSA Visual Methods Study Group**. It offered a practical and exciting opportunity to see the generation, communication and dissemination of participatory and visual methods.

Sessions included:

Using Space & Place: Dr. Alastair Roy; Dr. Geraldine Brown;

Creative Methods & Practice: Prof. Rachel Thomson; Dr. Nicola Ingram; Dr. Melissa Butcher

Innovative Communication & Dissemination: Dan Silver; Assoc. Prof. Katy Vigurs;

Workshop by Prof. Helen Lomax; Dr. Dawn Mannay and Prof. Janet Fink

Workshop title: ***Participation in practice: Ethics, analysis and voice in creative visual research***

Presenters - Helen Lomax, Janet Fink and Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This workshop is informed by the emerging critique within the social sciences that some of what passes for participant involvement in participatory visual and creative research is limited to data collection and that research participants are much less likely to be involved in the generation of research questions, analysis and dissemination. Practical constraints are understood to include: lack of time and financial resources to fully involve participants in the research process as well as the demands of the academy for particular forms of REF-able output which may also limit the time and scope to engage participants in more creative methods of analysis and dissemination. There are, in addition, ethical, as well as theoretical and methodological challenges for including participant voice in the various stages of research. This workshop offers the opportunity to consider these participatory challenges and the implications for individual research practice. Delegates are encouraged to bring an item (e.g. text, photograph or object) that illustrates one or more of these challenges. Small group activity will focus on personal experiences of 'participation in practice' and will be followed by facilitated discussion in which we share our own insights, drawn from multiple research projects with diverse research participants. This will include our reflections on what worked, what didn't and what we can learn from this. There will also be opportunities to share resources and invite responses and commentary from the other speakers. We suggest the need for attentiveness and planning from the earliest stages of the research as well as the importance of being vigilant to the challenges of working ethically and participatively as these emerge during the course of the research.

The Family in Visual Culture Seminar: Centre for the Study of the Body and Material Culture, Royal Holloway, University of London, 30th November, 2016

Paper title: ***Reflections from the Silver Screen: Family lives and family problems in postwar British cinema***

Presenter - Janet Fink

Abstract: This paper takes as its focus the representation of family lives in post-war British feature films and, in particular, examines how the female body was used as a signifier of 'problems' facing the 'modern' family. It is organised around questions about the portrayal of women and their relationships with the home and wider society and how their bodies became saturated, in contradictory and shifting ways, with cultural referents to female sexuality and an idealized maternal womanhood. Situating the films in the demographic, economic and political contexts of their production and viewing, the paper argues that their narratives offer valuable insights into the articulation of concerns about changes in family formations and gender relations during the 1950s and 1960s and the extent to which these concerns were so frequently displaced onto women.

The Australian Sociological Association Annual Conference 2016

Paper Title: ***Currencies of Cultural Capital: Visualising Working-Class Chinese Religion in Urban Singapore***

Presenter – Terence Heng

Abstract: In recent years, the number of individuals professing to be "Taoist", or adhering to Chinese Religious beliefs in Singapore has fallen significantly. Some research has shown that many aspirational middle-class Chinese Singaporeans have been attracted to megachurches that promise social and economic mobility. The result is that those who wish to be seen as "successful" also see religion, and in particular Christianity, as an aesthetic marker of high cultural capital.

As such, those that continue to adhere to Chinese Religion disproportionately belong to the marginalised working-class. However, within these groups there continues to be an internal sense of hierarchy and cultural capital, particularly amongst tang-ki (spirit mediums) and their inner-circle of assistants.

This presentation takes a visual sociology approach to examining the ways in which cultural capital is established and maintained both within a circle of adherents, as well as with their wider group of casual devotees. Using visual case studies of various temple groups in Singapore, known as sintua, or spirit altars, I will look at how material arrangements and processes create a certain kind of currency amongst devotees that may not translate beyond their social boundaries, but nonetheless provide a sense of success within their religious social groups.

TASA Urban Sociology Thematic Group Launch Symposium: Relationality in the Metropolis, 2nd December 2016

Keynote Title: ***Seeing Diaspora in the City: Visual Studies of Spiritualised Urban Spaces***

Terence Heng was the keynote speaker at the inaugural symposium to launch the Urban Sociology thematic group in The Australian Sociological Association. Held at the University of Melbourne, Terence spoke about his work in using visual methods to interrogate the lived spiritual spaces in urban Singapore, particularly social housing, industrial estates and forgotten cemeteries.

Relevant Events Held in 2017

Exploring health and wellbeing in pregnancy and motherhood: Cardiff Story, The Old Library, 17th January 2017

Paper title: ***Pregnancy and Creativity: Employing Multimodal Methods to Explore Maternal Experiences***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This paper explored the use of timelines, sandboxing, collage and artefacts drawing on four studies that worked with mothers in marginalised areas in south Wales to chart their everyday experiences of motherhood, infant feeding and public surveillance.

Qualitative Methods Forum, University of Bath, From the Established to the Novel: The Possibilities of Qualitative Research, 1st February 2017

Paper title: ***Public Peer Review: What happens when you ask young people to become the critics?***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This paper reflects on a novel approach to the review process where the traditional peer review was married with the perspectives, suggestions and corrections of young people. The project was a book 'Our Changing Land: Revisiting Gender, Class and Identity in Contemporary Wales', which presented research on education, politics and culture. It was important to move beyond the academic voice and open up the collection to young people, and funding was sought to develop a creative form of review and revision. Young people looked at the chapters and themes of the book and responded with their agreement, their challenges and their additions. Working with an artist, a photographer, songwriters and musicians, these critiques were represented with a visual image for each chapter, a music video for each theme, and a concluding section of the book that reflected on these contributions. Importantly, the young people involved were not research participants but critics and collaborators. Each song dealt with topics that they felt were missing from the collection, and brought to life the issues of ethnicity and hybrid identities, body image and bullying, and political (dis)engagement. The photographs created and selected either supported the arguments of each chapter or challenged their findings and brought new perspectives. The paper argues that traditional peer review is useful but that if we work creatively it is possible to move outside of the ivory tower and to engage with communities in creative ways to refine, relocate and redress the focus of our qualitative inquiries; and consider whose voice is being spoken and whose voice is heard. The intersections of novel and established methods does not make the traditional obsolete, however, arguably it helps to reframe our work and take us in new directions.

Relevant Publications

Fink, J. and Lomax, H. 2016. Sharing images, spoiling meanings? Class, gender and ethics in visual research with girls (Special Issue: 'Ethical Practice and the Study of Girlhood') [*Girlhood Studies*, 9 \(3\): 20-36.](#)

Fink, J. and Tinkler, P. 2017. Teetering on the edge: portraits of innocence, risk and young female sexualities in 1950s' and 1960s' British cinema. Special Issue: Revisioning the History of

Girls and Women in Britain in the Long 1950s. *Women's History Review*.
DOI:10.1080/09612025.2015.1123021

Grant, A., Mannay, D. and Marzella, R. (2017 - in press) 'People try and police your behaviour': the impact of surveillance on mothers' and grandmothers' perceptions and experiences of infant feeding. *Families, Relationships and Societies*.

Lomax, H (in press) *Participatory visual methods for understanding children's lives in marginalized neighbourhoods*. Sage Case Studies (Sociology).

Lomax, H. 2015. Seen and heard? Ethics and agency in participatory visual research with children, young people and families, *Families, Relationships and Societies* 4 (3), pp. 493-502.

Gabb, J. and Fink, J. Telling moments and everyday experience: mixed methods research on couple relationships and everyday lives. *Sociology* 49 (5), pp. 970-987.

Heng, T. 2016. *Visual methods in the field: Photography for the social sciences*. Routledge: London

Heng, T. 2016 Making "unofficial" sacred space: Spirit mediums and house temples in Singapore. *Geographical Review* 106 (2), pp. 215-234

Heng, T. and Hui, Y.F. 2015. Diaspora after death: A visual essay of Bukit Brown Cemetery in Singapore, *ISA E-Symposium*, 5 (3)

Heng, T. 2015. An Appropriation of Ashes: Transient Aesthetic Markers and Temporal Place-Making as Acts of Ethnic Identity Subversion, *The Sociological Review*, 63 (1), 57-78

Heng, T. 2015. New forms of colonial gazing in Singaporean Chinese Wedding Photography, in Koh, Adeline and Balasingamchow, Yu-Mei (eds), *Women and the Politics of Representation in Southeast Asia: Engendering discourse in Singapore and Malaysia*. Routledge: London

Mannay, D. 2016. *Visual, narrative and creative research methods: application, reflection and ethics*. Abingdon: Routledge.

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Mannay, D. 2016. To understand what young people think, speak their language. *The Conversation*. 6th September 2016. <https://theconversation.com/to-understand-what-young-people-think-speak-their-language-63556>

Mannay, D. 2016. Challenging perceptions: Reimagining the lives of marginalised communities and being seen and heard. *BSA Postgraduate Forum*.
<https://bsapgforum.wordpress.com/2016/11/21/dr-dawn-mannay-challenging-perceptions-reimagining-the-lives-of-marginalised-communities-and-being-seen-and-heard/>

Mannay, D. and Creaghan, J. 2016. Similarity and familiarity: reflections on indigenous ethnography with mothers, daughters and school teachers on the margins of contemporary Wales. In: Ward, M. ed. *Gender, Power and Subjectivity: Reflections on Research Relationships in the Field*. *Studies in Qualitative Methods* Bingley: Emerald, pp. 85-103

Mannay, D. 2015. Making the visual invisible: exploring creative forms of dissemination that respect anonymity but retain impact. *Visual Methodologies* 3(2), pp. 68-76.

Mannay, D., Staples, E., Hallett, S., Roberts, L., Rees, A., Evans, R. and Andrews, D. 2015. *Understanding the educational experiences and opinions, attainment, achievement and aspirations of looked after children in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Mannay, D. and Morgan, D. 2015. [Guest Editorial] Introduction: Employing visual methods in exploring family, community and personal relationships. *Families, Relationships and Societies* 4 (3), pp. 481-482.

Mannay, D. 2015. Myths, monsters and legends: negotiating an acceptable working class femininity in a marginalised and demonised Welsh locale. In: Cree, V. E., Clapton, G. and Smith, M. eds. *Revisiting Moral Panics. Moral Panics in Theory and Practice* Bristol: Policy Press, pp. 19-29.

Mannay, D. and Morgan, M. 2015. Doing ethnography or applying a qualitative technique?: Reflections from the 'waiting field'. *Qualitative Research* 15(2), pp. 166-182.

Mannay, D. and Edwards, V. 2015. Visual methods and the World Technique: the importance of the elicitation interview in understanding non-traditional students' journeys through university [SAGE Research Methods online]. SAGE Publications. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781473938076>

Relevant Forthcoming Events – Confirmed

'Creative visual methods in the field' 'Researching Inclusively', School of Education, University of Girona, Spain. February 20th

Presenter – Helen Lomax

BSA Annual Conference, Recovering the Social: Personal Troubles and Public Issues, University of Manchester, 4th – 6th April 2017

BSA Panel event- Anna Tarrant and Michael R.M Ward - Families and Relationships Stream

Marginalised masculinities and the possibilities of care across the life course

Paper Title: **Researching marginalised femininities: Why is it important to listen to men's voices?**

Presenter – Dawn Mannay

Abstract: This paper draws on a range of studies, mainly conducted with women and girls in marginalised locales in south Wales. However, shifting the focus from femininities, the paper reflects on instances where men have directly contributed to the research, critiqued the findings or created a voice for themselves in other ways - and considers what they said. There is an exploration of how men position themselves as fathers and carers, their thoughts on the domestic sphere and their interaction or lack of engagement with local services. Within these discussions, masculinities are considered in relation to age, social class and the stigma of place. The paper thinks through representations of working class life, how these position men and how they both view and reposition themselves in relation to these competing discourses.

Although, gaining an understanding of women's everyday lives does not necessitate a focus on the men in their communities, the paper argues that these new directions of focus allowed new insights, complicated the data and challenged my interpretations and academic outputs.

Methodological Innovations Stream

Paper Title: ***Qualitative interviews as a collaborative space: lessons from visual research methods to encourage a more participatory approach***

Presenters – Aimee Grant and Dawn Mannay

The use of visual methods in qualitative research has been of considerable interest in recent years. One factor involved in the move towards the wider use of the visual is an attempt to reduce researcher power and control in the interview context. However, introducing visual techniques does not necessarily facilitate more equal power relations. In this paper we describe our experiences of undertaking research with pregnant women and new mothers using a range of visual and creative approaches, including timelines, emotion stickers, collage and sandboxing. The use of visual methods enabled participants to lead in interview conversations and changed the power relations in these studies; but the individual preferences of participants and the role of the researcher altered the dynamics of each encounter. In particular, the presentation focuses on activities that were undertaken collaboratively, with both researchers and participants using creative techniques to illustrate and share their maternal experiences. Through our reflexive account, we discuss the practicalities of these creative and collaborative processes and the ways in which they shaped the data produced and enabled differential relationships in the fieldwork.

Methodological Innovations Stream

Paper title: ***In the public eye: Children's images, experiences and identities in visual culture***

Presenters – Janet Fink and Helen Lomax

Abstract: This paper takes as its starting point the proliferation of images of children on social media, focusing on growing concerns in Britain about contemporary practices of posting family photographs on sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and the implications of a child's life being visually recorded in this way. It is estimated that, for example, some parents will have posted over 1,000 photographs online by a child's 5th birthday but, at the same time, little is known about how children experience having a visual online identity created and curated for them (Ammari et al, 2015). However to interrogate notions that children are passive recipients of such visual identities, we reflect on two forms of visual data. The first are press photographs of us as children, through which we illustrate how they were created by adults to visually frame our respective childhoods in and for 'the public eye' but also how we can use them to read our own identities as working-class girls. We then examine a selection of iconic images from The Guardian's 'That's Me in the Picture' series to consider how these images are understood by the children featured as records of exceptional or mundane aspects of their childhood and as opportunities to celebrate or commemorate their sense of self, then and now. The paper thus seeks to trace how, when the child's voice is brought into the analytical frame, images of childhood in the public domain can be understood as more than presentations of children by adults.

Paper Title: ***Creative Photography and Social Research: Visualising the Senses***

Presenters – Terence Heng

Photographs presented in social science research are overwhelmingly mundane – they purport to expose emotions, interactions and values that even thick description cannot do, but when presented in journals and books, are often relegated to being descriptive illustrations. Those that do express a deeper ethnographic value are still treated as addendums to text. How do we deliberately move away from these descriptive archetypes? This paper explores the methodological possibilities of the intersection of creative practice paired with a sociological imagination, and how abstract photography, defined here as photographs whose primary purpose is not to describe or illustrate, but to surprise and evoke the sensorial experiences of the photographer to the reader, can be used to transmit and communicate the sensual textures of participant observation.

35th Annual Meeting of the International Visual Sociology Association 2017, Montreal, Canada, June 19 - 22, 2017

Paper title: ***Reframing the stigma of the 'looked after' label: working with care experienced young people to re-represent their everyday experiences through art, music and film***

Presenter - Dawn Mannay

Abstract: Regardless of advancement in the theorization and empirical substantiation of the reasons for marginalised young people's poorer educational outcomes, it remains apparent that these explanations often omit the lived experiences of young people themselves. Drawing on a study commissioned by the Welsh Government, this paper reflects on how the assignment of the 'looked-after' subject position impacts on the everyday lives of young people in care. These experiential accounts were facilitated by creative visual activities, including sandboxing and emotion mapping, which allowed participants to reflect in detail on the micro interactions of their schooled lives. This allowed space for thinking through their subjective, mundane, but important, experiences that operate alongside, and interact with, more structural changes. Focusing on the common place, ordinary and routine aspects of school life, centralised the ways in which subject positions are made and remade, and their educational impacts. In attempting to challenge the stigma of the 'looked after' label the findings of the project were translated into graphic art, music and film to reframe and represent young people's perspectives. The paper discusses the associated techniques of data production, reflects on the key findings, and shares some of the creative outputs.

Fifth International Visual Methods Conference, Singapore, 16-18 August 2017

Convener – Terence Heng

The International Visual Methods Conference (IVMC) is an interdisciplinary conference bringing visual scholars and practitioners together. Held every two years and for the first time in Asia in 2017, the IVMC seeks to foster greater dialogue in the area of visual methods, in both theoretical and practical aspects. This 5th instalment of the International Visual Methods Conference, we seek papers, presentations and performances that critically examine the city through visual methods. However, we also welcome proposals for topics not directly related to urban life, but nonetheless encompass visual methods.

<http://www.visualmethods.info>

Relevant Forthcoming Events – Planned

Seminar: University of Huddersfield [date to be confirmed - 2017]

Working Title: ***Children and young people at the intersections of visual methods, visual culture and the sexualisation of social media***

This event will be co-hosted by the ***BSA Visual Sociology Study Group*** and the ***BSA Families and Relationships Study Group***.

Organisers - Janet Fink, Helen Lomax and Dawn Mannay (BSA Visual Sociology Study Group) and Jo Woodiwiss and Kathryn Almack (BSA Families and Relationships Study Group)

BERA Annual Conference: University of Sussex, 5– 7 September, 2016

Symposium Title: **Working with and from images: Photography and its potential for understanding childhoods and transforming pedagogy**

Presenters - Janet Fink, University of Huddersfield; Helen Lomax, University of Huddersfield; Michelle Pyer, University of Northampton; Sarah Williamson, University of Huddersfield;
Discussant: Jane Murray, University of Northampton