What’s a Cellphilm? Using Everyday Technologies to Engage in Participatory Visual Research

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What’s Participatory Visual Research?

- Researching with vs. researching on.
- Participants are involved in generating data, analyzing data (sometimes) and disseminating data (sometimes).
- Generates lots of data: planning materials (brainstorm & storyboards), visual products/texts, process documentation (photos, video, sound recordings).
- Role of the facilitator: should be participant-directed. Finding balance between finishing process and allowing process to evolve.
Why visual data?

- Visual offers multiple meanings. It is constructed.
- Fun, engaging way to answer Research Questions.
- Offers an alternative form of expression. Can be unexpected.
- Means different things at different moments in the research process.
- About raising questions and exploring ideas vs. finding definitive answers.
What’s a Cellphilm?

- Cellphilming is a participatory visual method.
- Theorizing the cellphilm came from Jonathan Dockney and Keyan Tomaselli’s (2009) work in South Africa.

What do we know about cellphones in society? How have you used cellphones?
Cellphilming as an Everyday Practice

- Community cellphilming practices
- Project sustainability
- Responding to criticisms of participatory video & reframing the role of the researcher/facilitator
- Community-owned technologies
Cellphilming Screening

- What do you see?
- Any reactions?

Raumina Rezai’s (2014) *Home*
To App or Not to App?

**Pros**
- in-phone editing capacity
- links automatically to social media
- ???

**Cons**
- time limits / aesthetic constraints
- ownership / advertising
- ???
Cellphilming Screening

- What do you see?
- What aesthetic decisions contribute to the development of the story?

Patrick Richard’s (2015) *The Mountain*
Building an Ethics of Cellphilming

- Upfront, ongoing, culturally safe consent (Flicker, O’Campo, Monchalin, et al., 2015; Schwab-Cartas, 2012;)
- Role of the facilitator (Freire & Macedo, 1995; Milne, Mitchell & De Lange, 2012)
- Anonymity (Gubrium, Hill & Flicker, 2014)
- Ownership (Burkholder, in press)
- Audiences / archiving (MacEntee & Mandrona, 2015; Burkholder & MacEntee, in press)
How to cellphilm?

Step 1: Brainstorm
Step 2: Storyboard
Step 3: Film, (Edit & Upload)
Step 4: Audiencing & Dialogue
Step 5: Archiving & Action
How does sustainability affect your communities?

Step 1. Brainstorm the Prompt
Step 2: Storyboard

Using the paper that I have provided, create a plan for your cellphilm shoot.

**Keep in mind:**
Time limit: Under 5 minutes

What stories would you like to tell?

Which images will you use? Still? Moving? Fictional representations?

Which words/sounds/dialogue will fit with the images you choose?
Step 3: Film

Take the next 30 minutes to film your one-shot-shoot cellphilm.

I will be here to provide any tech-support / assistance that you might want/need.

Good luck!

When you finish, please return to this room. We will share our reflections and screen each others’ cellphilms. Upload to ? Email to ?
Step 4: Audiencing and Dialogue

- What do we understand sustainability to be from watching your cellphilms?
- Would you like to share your cellphilms with other audiences?
- How might your experiences inform your use of cellphilms going forward?
Step 5: Archiving & Action

- Sustained engagement?
- Participant control?
- What could an archive of our cellphilms do?
- Opportunities? Networks?
How will we document the cellphilm process?

What other documents will be produced and what will they ‘show’?

What different documentation methods might we use?
Thank you.


