



Università di Genova
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Dipartimento Scienze della
Formazione



Sezione Metodologia
Sezione Sociologia dell'Educazione

The slanting gaze

Visual studies and ethnographic activism

International Conference : Genoa, Italy : May 28th and 29th, 2015

...Call for Submissions...



Our society has been already defined as “the society of the spectacle”: our existence is plunged in visual media and it is surrounded by images, created to catch our attention. From the Frankfurt School to McLuhan, Levy, Baudrillard, Debord and de Kerckhove theories, critical thinking moved towards a reflection about the possible effects triggered by a highly visual context, deeply affected by the media, and its influence on the social construction of reality.

During the Seventies, visual methods in social sciences were strongly criticized and considered partial and non-objective. During the Eighties, they started to gain a positive consideration in the academy, although as a mere complement to social research. Since the 2000s, the interest for the visual dimension of reality keeps growing. Nowadays, visual methods are considered fundamental research tools in order to investigate contemporary socio-cultural transformations and their reflexive relationship with the visual dimension. The present recognition of visual methods is linked to a general redefinition of knowledge. On the one hand, postmodernism and postmodern anthropology reconfigured the epistemological perspective of ‘*grand narratives*’ to advantage interpretative and phenomenological approaches, with a special attention to social practices (*practice turn*) and to spatial dimensions of social life (*spatial turn*). On the other hand, a progressive success of the multi-sensorial dimensions of knowledge is taking place (*sensorial turn*). In this context, visual methods are a prolific resource for the collection, the interpretation and the circulation of this kind of knowledge.

In the last ten years, the development of experiments in this field has produced its first results, in terms of theory and method, in the academic arena as well as in independent research. The aim of this conference is to define the state of art of visual practices in social research, through the reflection on the most recent and original international developments, gathering scholars, researchers, students and video makers. The conference will explore and try to find a

convergence of such ethnographic and activist experiences, using visual methods and formats to describe, interpret and transform social worlds. We invite participants to try to answer to some of these questions:

What does it mean to realize visual ethnographies? How can we generate participative dynamics through visual methods? What kind of effects visual methods produce in social fields that we study and transform? Where, when and how visual methods and visual studies may be effective? What kind of relation can we improve amongst film, photography and social sciences? Are visual methods and strategies actually providing new skills to social researchers? Which are the main advantages of audio-visual techniques for the exploration and the collaborative construction of the fieldwork? What are the limits and the constraints of visual studies and visual research?

Individuals, collectives and research groups willing to participate to the conference are invited to submit a short abstract (**one page**) presenting their research experience or action-research through the perspective and the methods of visual studies. We invite the candidates to attach to the abstract a link to one of their visual works and to point out some keywords for their presentation. During the workshops, participants will be invited to share their experience showing pictures and/or short videos.

The conference will host presentations covering a plurality of fields. By now, contributes will be discussed into six parallel thematic panels:

1) Gender and body. 2) Cultures and juvenile movements. 3) Migration and mobilities. 4) Urban space, borders and conflicts. 5) Education and alternative methods. 6) Informal economies and subaltern worlds.



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Evaluation of submissions will be realized by: Emanuela Abbatecola, Maddalena Bartolini, Sebastiano Benasso, Isabel Fanlo Cortés, Annalisa Frisina, Erik Gandini, Francesca Lagomarsino, Pino Losacco, José González Morandi, Lorenzo Navone, Andrea Mubi Brighenti, Cristina Oddone, Luca Queirolo Palmas, Federico Rahola, Pietro Saitta, Joyce Sebag, Andrea Segre, Luisa Stagi.

Languages: Italian, English, Spanish, French

Deadline for the submissions: March 30th 2015

Notification of the outcome: April 15th 2015

Send your abstract to:

laboratoriosociologiavisuale@gmail.com

Please specify the chosen panel.

For further information:

<http://www.laboratoriosociologiavisuale.it/>

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