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The image in sociology : histories and issues

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1   It is challenging to write about photography and sociology for a French journal of anthropology from the vantage point of the United States. It is to be remembered that one crosses rue Auguste Comte after exiting the Jardin du Luxembourg in Paris, to encounter, only a few streets later, rue Daguerre. These streets remind us that both sociology and photography were inventions of the French, and it was Félix-Louis Regnault, a French physician, who, in 1888, is credited with making the first ethnographic film. He was using a photo roll camera, perhaps the first movie camera, invented by Jules-Etienne Marey, a French inventor. Subsequently, Regnault and his associates studied cross-cultural phenomenon through film, and argued for the formation of anthropological film archives as early as 1912. Thus not only does the technology of photography and film emerge from the French, but also do the formative attempts to bring them together[1].

2   The purpose of this paper is to outline the development of photography and sociology, in the context of the larger question of the relationship between photographic imagery (still photography, film and video) and the social sciences. The topic is general and my focus is very specialized, remaining the intersection between photography and sociology in the context of current cultural criticism, primarily postmodernism.

3   These intersections include certain intellectual tensions. For example, photography, film and video are different versions of the same activity, that is, making visual records of the material world. While they are similar, however, they are sufficiently different to justify separate discussion. For example, methods based on photo interviewing have parallels in films such as Jean Rouch and sociologist Edgar Morin's *Chronique d'un été* (1960). But when Rouch and Morin filmed reactions of participants in the film to their film roles, it was more a visual footnote to blur the line between filmmaker and subject. Such technological issues regarding, for example, the number of minutes a film typically runs, and the

amount of spoken information that may be practically included influences the ability of the photo interview on film to explore issues in depth. In photo interviewing, which will be discussed later, a researcher may elicit several minutes or even more discussion of a particular image. This commentary is raw data that may be coded or otherwise analyzed; little of the actual interview may actually appear in the final research publication. While this seems obvious, it is exactly the kind of issue faced by researchers seeking the practical solution to a visual research project.

4   It is also necessary to acknowledge the differences between anthropology and sociology in their use of images. The most important distinction is that anthropology has utilized both still photography and moving images (film, and now video and electronic visual recording) since the first cameras were available and the first anthropologists went to the field, while doing sociological research through films or videos, at least in the USA., is exceedingly rare[2]. Secondly, for reasons beyond the scope of this paper, visual anthropology has largely evolved to film and video recording, at the exclusion of still photography, while visual sociology has developed more generally in the area of still photography. Thus my focus is not on the mainstream of visual anthropology, but rather on the common activity of using still photography in anthropology and sociology, which is similar in both disciplines, but with differences.

5   Sociology and photography both came into existence at the end of 1830s. The first sociologist who used methods and logic that resemble modern sociology, however, was Emile Durkheim who completed most of his research around of the turn of the twentieth century. Already the natural connection between visual investigation of the world and sociological analysis had been lost. Had Durkheim considered the utility of photographic evidence in addition to the social statistics that were then just becoming available, his analyses of divisions of labor, religious ritual, or social solidarity might well have taken on a different character, and sociology today might find visual information as the most natural source of evidence. But this did not take place. Except for a handful of unsophisticated photo studies in early issues of the *American Journal of Sociology* (STASZ, 1979), it was not until the 1970s that there was an effort, at least in the States, to systematically include photography as a sociological method. Thus much of what I will say in this paper concerns a brief 25 years of limited connection between photography and sociology.

Visual Anthropology

6   In the discipline of anthropology, the situation was much different. Anthropology's early incarnation, in the final decades of the 19th century, resembled biology, at that time a science of classification. Photography provided visual information used to categorize human races and these data supported theories of social evolution, the main preoccupation of early anthropology. Photography's role in this early history is well told by Elizabeth Edwards, who notes that photography was first thought of « as a simple... truth-revealing mechanism » (EDWARDS, 1992 : 4). It is important to acknowledge that social evolutionary theory for which photography supplied data was eventually discarded as racist and non-scientific. Photography, as well as anthropology was also implicated in 19th century European colonialism, as is well described *in* RYAN (1997) and others.

7   By the early 1900s however, photography declined in importance in anthropology, primarily because the emerging emphasis in anthropology on social organization was

considered less amenable to visual analysis than had been racial classification. During this era, photography itself had had come to be regarded more of a hobby and a peripheral art movement than a scientific instrument, which undoubtedly influenced its role in anthropology.

8   Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead largely reinvigorated the use of the visual methods in anthropology in the 1930s, through the preparation of several short films and the ethnographic masterpiece *Balinese Character* (BATESON & MEAD, 1942 : XII).

9   Bateson and Mead had each studied and written about Balinese culture for nearly a decade when they turned to photographic methods. The authors made more than 25 000 photographs over a two years field experience from which they selected 759 photographs that were published in *Balinese Character*. The photographs are sorted into cultural topics specific to the Balinese, and more general anthropological topics which could be applied to any ethnographic study. The photographs were presented in sequences of as many as eighteen on a page, showing sequences of social actions, or inventories of material culture. Bateson and Mead write: « … We are attempting a new method of stating the intangible relationships among different types of culturally standardized behavior by placing side by side mutually relevant photographs... By the use of photographs, the wholeness of each piece of behavior can be preserved, while the special cross-referencing desired can be obtained by placing the series of photographs on the same page » (BATESON & MEAD,1942 : XII).

10 The project uses images in tandem with written analysis. In many instances, a viewer senses that they are able to understand a concept (such as « awayness ») only through the combination of photographic and textual evidence. The book's remarkable success, one reasons, should have spawned a vigorous tradition of image-based ethnography. Yet this did not occur. John Collier, a photographer with the Farm Security Administration project in its final years, became an adjunct to the anthropology department at Cornell University in the early 1950s and there contributed photography to several research projects. Timothy Asch, who was to become a central figure in filmic anthropology, contributed photographic essays to some editions of Elizabeth Marshall Thomas' African ethnographies. But other than these and a few other examples, visual ethnography (speaking of still photography) remained moribund. Only recently has the tradition established by Bateson and Mead been revitalized in studies on a smaller scale, including Danforth and Tsiaras' study of death rituals of rural Greece (DANFORTH & TSIARAS, 1982), Cancian's visual ethnography of Mexican peasants (CANCIAN, 1974), and Gardner and Heider's visual ethnography of ritualistic war among the Dani of New Guinea (GARDNER & HEIDER, 1968).

11 These visual ethnographies are examples of what John van Maanen has termed « realist tales ». The conventions of the realist tale derive from science. Expertise is expressed in technical language rather than personal reporting or subjective reflections. The ethnographer is assumed to report « objectively » and retains control of authorship, as the voices of natives and ethnographers remain distinct[3].

12 The capability of photography to record more efficiently than human observation makes it a valuable tool for the realist tale. Thus it is not surprising that Collier's seminal textbook on still photography and anthropology (1967 ; new edition COLLIER & COLLIER, 1986) presents photography as an efficient means to inventory material culture or social interaction; to study bodies in space, as expressed as « proxemics »[4], « choreometrics »[5] and « kinesics »[6].

13   But as the scientific basis of ethnography has been questioned inside and out of anthropology, photography's place in traditional anthropological methods has correspondingly declined. The small number of visual ethnographies in the mode of the realist tale published in either *Visual Anthropology* or the *Visual Anthropology Review* (the two English language journals of visual anthropology) most typically use images to restatement unambiguous themes rather than to explore abstract concepts and phenomena.

14   Despite the fact that few anthropologists have used photography to record and study culture in the model offered by Bateson, Mead and others, I suggest that it continues to offer a model for field work research, reasonably able to address the mandates of anthropology to record and analyze cultures, as aptly and famously described by Margaret Mead near the end of her career (MEAD, 1975).

Visual sociology: origins

15   In the US, we speak of the recognition of visual sociology as a subfield of sociology only by the mid-1970s. I am not suggesting that sociologists had not long before found visual data interesting or useful, but it was only in this era in the US that articles, books and a journal were published on the subject; that courses were taught in visual sociology, and that an international scholarly organization (the International Visual Sociology Association) had came into existence. Of course, there had been studies in several countries on aspects of photography and sociology, or more broadly, photography and society[7]. But, speaking of the institutionalization of the still fragile sub-discipline of visual sociology leads one to the late 1960s and 70s.

16   Political and cultural events influenced the emergence of visual sociology. In the US, the war in Vietnam, the sense of the failure of scientific social science, and enduring social problems such as racism, poverty and sexism led younger social scientists to seek alternative research agendas and new ways of knowing about society. Many of these younger social sciences found in documentary photography an immediate and compelling (if non-theoretical) model for research and investigation. For example, in the work of Jacob Riis, who had studied the squalor of industrializing cities, there were visual representations that could easily have found a way into Marx's Capital or Engels' study of the condition of the working class in England during the 1840s[8]. Lewis Hine's photographic study of child labor in the early 20th century documented the extraction of surplus value from a working class of children. These were but two of many documentarians working on social issues just as sociology was establishing itself as a discipline.

17   Again speaking of the U.S., the documentary movement reached a zenith of power and influence with the Farm Security Administration photographs made during the 1930s. Sociologists noted not only the capacity of the images to portray the material and social conditions of the Depression, but several collaborations, including those between Agee and Evans[9], and Caldwell and Bourke-White[10] suggested that photographers could profitably team with documentary writers and economists to express sociological ideas.

18   Perhaps the most important documentary project for sociologists seeking a visual practice was the Swiss photographer Robert Frank's photographic portrait of an alienated, materialistic American culture in the 1950s[11]. Frank's portrait, rejected by the

American photographic community and ignored by the intellectual elite when published, was, ten years later, recognized by disaffected sociologists as an elaboration of common sociological interpretations of American society.

19   Photo documentary studies contemporary to the beginning of visual sociology in the United States offered models for an invigorated field work tradition focussed on social problems. The most important of these studies portrayed drug culture[12]; African-American urban life[13]; small-town southern poverty and racism[14]; the southern Civil Rights movement[15]; American prisons[16]; social classes[17]; the unionization of migrant farm workers[18]; the counter-cultural life[19]; the anti-war movement[20]; the free speech movement[21], and the social irresponsibility of corporate capitalism[22].

20   In Europe, some of the most influential examples of this tradition were English social theorist John Berger and Swiss photographer Jean Mohr exploration of the « guest worker » phenomena during the 1960s[23] and the life and work of an English county doctor [24].

21   While documentary photographers did not work from, nor develop specific sociological theories, they inspired sociologists seeking a critical understanding of society. Documentary photographers often had an insider's knowledge of their subjects, much as would a sociological field worker. Adelman's study of southern poverty and racism, for example, emerged from several years of experience as a social worker; Eugene and Aileen Smith, while writing *Minamata*, lived for several years in the Japanese village poisoned by corporate mercury dumping. Some of these studies were done by cultural insiders, such as Estrin's project on her upper class family and friends, and Owens photo study of his own California suburban community.

22   In the documentary movement, there was very little, if any discussion of the issues of representation, ideology, or how the relationships with subjects influenced these photographic studies. These studies were characterized by the now considered naïve idea that photographers should expose social problems in order to change society. This sentiment traces to the beginning of photography and social reform, and lies behind many studies, for example by Hine and Riis, listed above.

23   Thus young sociologists inspired by great documentary projects had scant corners to explore, or models to emulate. Into this void, Howard S. Becker published the seminal article on « photography and sociology » in Volume 1 (1974) of *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* (reprinted *in* BECKER, 1986 : 221-271). Becker noted that photography and sociology had about the same birth date, and that they had both been concerned with the exploration of society, but that in ensuing decades, for many reasons, they had drifted apart. Becker saw sociology's efforts to mimic science, and photography's struggle to be taken seriously as art as the core of the problem. His article was intended to begin dialogue between the two.

24   Perhaps the most important theme in Becker's article addressed the role of theory in visual sociology. While photographs are « packed » with information, Becker suggests that photographers « tend to restrict themselves to a few reiterated simple statements. Rhetorically important as a strategy of proof, the repetition leads to work that is intellectually and analytically thin » (*ibidem* : 11).

25   To make the photographs « intellectually denser », photographers must become conscious of the theory that guides their photography. That theory may be « lay theory » – taken-for-granted assumptions about how the world is organized – or it may be « deep,

differentiated and sophisticated knowledge of the people and activities they investigate. (...) For photographic projects concerned with exploring society it means learning to understand society better » (*ibidem).*

26 Becker reminded us that photographs, often thought of as truth, are better understood as reflections of the photographer's point of view, biases, and knowledge (or lack thereof). It is here that issues of validity, reliability and sampling come into play. These can be addressed with the questions: « Has the ethnographer reported accurately what she or he has seen? Is the event reported on repeated enough times so that the single event can be understood to stand for a regularly repeating class of events? Do the events reported characterize the behavior of the group? » (*ibidem).*

27 Becker suggests a pragmatic response to these questions: the more we know about how the photograph came into existence the more we can judge its validity. Thus to the question of whether the photograph represents the truth of a moment, the answer lies in « distinguishing between the statement that X is true about something and the statement that X is all that is true about something » (1974: 15).

28 Howard Becker's interest and work in visual sociology (in this article and several others published subsequently) encouraged the beginning of an sub-discipline. Jon Wagner's *Images of Information* (WAGNER, 1979) offered the first visual case studies to the sociological community. Within a few years, the International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA) and the journal *Visual Sociology* had come into existence, and with frequent meetings in Europe, the IVSA has helped encourage the development of visual sociology in the US and abroad. IVSA conferences in Europe subsequently led to the publication of three edited collections (BOONZAJER FLAES, 1989 ; BOONZAJER FLAES & HARPER, 1993 ; FACCIOLI & HARPER, 1999) that demonstrate commonalties in visual thinking in several countries and academic traditions.

29 That being said, visual sociology, both in the sense of field studies using imagery (the primary focus of this article) and studies of the visual texts of society, retain only a precarious institutional foothold in the US This remains due to the methodological conservatism of American sociology generally, and the subsuming of much of the subject of visual sociology (the study of visual texts) under the rubric of cultural studies, especially in Great Britain.

30 In addition to the conservatism of sociology, the use of imagery in social analysis has been attacked from outside the discipline. It has been said that the camera is a symbol of modernism; a machine which advances the interests of empirical science, of which sociology is a part. But the assumptions which underlie sociology, documentary photography and ethnography have been questioned since Becker wrote what was a clarion call for sociologists to take up cameras. The mandate of science has been challenged, as has sociology's status as a science. The political potency of liberalism[25] has faded and postmodernism has characterized all representations as tentative statements rather than reflections of truth. Thus while visual sociology must recognize its roots in the traditions of ethnography and documentary, it must acknowledge and integrate the insights of the new critical comment in these areas as well.

The postmodern critique

31 The postmodern critique of documentary photography begins with the idea that the meaning of the photograph is constructed by the maker and the viewer, both of whom carry their social positions and interests to the photographic act (TAGG, 1988).

32 From this perspective, the history of photography becomes a history of the uses of photographs, rather than a history of the photographs themselves. Examples are found in Edwards' above cited history of anthropological photography and Ryan's analysis of colonialism and photography.

33 A second theme in the postmodern critique is the assertion that even if documentary was once a part of liberal humanism, liberal humanism is now a failed program, based on naive assumptions that have not stood the test of time. In Martha Rosler's words, « in the liberal documentary, poverty and oppression are almost invariably equated with misfortunes caused by natural disasters: causality is vague, blame is not assigned, fate cannot be overcome... Like photos of children in pleas for donations to international charity organizations, liberal documentary implores us to look in the face of deprivation and to weep (and maybe to send money ...) »[26].

34 Documentary typically focusses on the specific, and thus hides or mutes large-scale critiques of the system; documentary photography portrays social problems as personal stories, and documentarians present social ugliness (such as poverty) as beautiful or provocative. All of these characteristics of documentary photography, say the postmodern critic, obscure the social realities the documentarian wishes to portray.

35 Taken at its extreme, the postmodern critique of documentary is perhaps the greatest challenge to visual sociology. This critique calls for the end of photography, linking the photographic gaze to politically reactionary voyeurism. This critique asserts that documentary practice is linked to the prevailing structure of social power, thus it reinforces existing social arrangements even when it attempts to criticize them. Part of this is due to the fact that photography typically portrays individuals or events but the power arrangements of the society are visually abstract; perhaps invisible.

Responses to the postmodern criticism

36 While the postmodern critique has meant that visual sociology cannot treat business as usual, there are many elements in traditional ways of doing things, many outlined in Becker's first outline of visual sociology, that remain useful.

37 The first step to a successful visual ethnography is the commitment to think theoretically, necessary for all field research. Diane Hagaman's study of religious institutions is titled *How I learned not to be a photojournalist* precisely because it was her experience that to develop complex theories of her setting required involvement that could not emerge in the typical photojournalist's role (HAGAMAN, 1996).

38 Other examples that demonstrate the vitality of empirical visual sociology include Jon Rieger's « repeat-photography » study of social change in a rural county in the American mid-west (RIEGER, 1996); Margolis' analysis of ideology in the portrayal of Colorado Coal Camps (MARGOLIS, 1994), and Luc Pauwels' study of the organization of corporate office space in an European firm (PAUWELS, 1996).

39 Other sociologists have drawn on the model offered by Becker in the 1970s to utilize the documentary movement in order to build a visual practice from synthetic parts. Sylvain Maresca examines how photographers as diverse as August Sander and Richard Avedon represent the world sociologically (MARESCA, 1996). His admonition to « think also with your eyes » is a poetic paraphrase of Becker's program to introduce theory to documentary practice.

40 The postmodern critique can also lead to more creative uses of images in research. Three modest examples may be visual narratives, photo elicitation, and innovations with subject matter and presentation. More radical experiments are to be found in electronic hyperlogic.

41 Speaking first of narrative, we recognize that still images can be organized in sequences which explore sociological ideas; these visual narratives might explore cycles in a cultural life (HARPER, 1982 et 1987b). Emmet uses a photo narrative to describe nearly ten years in the lives of a family of migrant farmworkers (EMMET, 1985). While these and other visual narrative forms are hardly revolutionary (narrative photo sequences were, in fact, used by Bateson and Mead), they offer an alternative to the notion of photographs as « pieces of the world » wrenched out of observation and presented as pieces of data.

42 A postmodern integration may call upon the concept of collaboration rather than a one-way flow of information from subject to researcher. The visual method that has come to be known as « photo-elicitation » is a practical answer to how this collaboration can take place.

43 Photo elicitation has been used, in one form or another, since the beginning of photography and anthropology. It is common sense to show informants photographs in order to elicit their responses. But it was first described as a developed method by Collier, who used images of housing to study social identities among Canadians in the midst of migration (COLLIER, 1957). In Collier's later texts (COLLIER, 1967, 1986), guidelines were offered to develop and refine the method.

44 The photo interview is under-utilized in sociology but offers great promise for a range of studies. These include studies from historical archives used to recreate « ethnographic memory » (MARGOLIS, 1999). Or, the method may extend the collaborative bond, so that the subjects make or direct the photography before interpreting them in interviews, a method used by five Dutch students in a study of a Dutch neighborhood (VAN DER DOES & *al.*, 1992). Most commonly, sociologists will continue to use their own research photographs to study work, biography and other topics intimate to their subject's world (HARPER, 1987a).

45 Finally, visual sociology can expand sociological subject matter and offer experiments in presentation while asking sociological questions. Jacob Holdt's decades-long voyage through the American underclass, for example, takes on the practice of making social problems beautiful or artful (HOLDT, 1985). Holdt's images seem to be ripped out of experience at the low fringe of society; his images are made with a cheap camera and his film developed at fast film outlets. Nick Waplington takes us to the mundane events of British working class weekends (WAPLINGTON, 1991); his photographs document the energetic, chaotic, person-filled « back stages » of life-people laying around, bodies askew on rough and serviceable furniture; kids playing a hundred games of their own invention; families drinking beer and pinching each other; men fixing old cars on the streets in front of their flats; women shopping, laden with their kids. Waplington's emphasis on the

mundane vitalizes a documentary practice which has tended to emphasize the spectacular. Jo Spence's « political, personal and photographic » autobiography shows that narrative self-reflection can draw upon images from one's past and those made in self-study (SPENCE, 1988). Quinney captions his fine art images with personal and philosophical reflection: «... A visual sociology not of direct formulation, not for the testing of hypotheses, nor for the collection of data, but a practice in the living of a life » (QUINNEY, 1995: 61). Bruno Latour and Emilie Hermant present Paris, an « invisible city » of infrastructure, unseen organization and unrecognized social actors (LATOUR & HERMANT, 1998). Their spectacular book is a chaos of images and texts squeezed together to suggest the haphazard material organization of a great city.

46   But the most extreme response to the postmodern criticism may lie in utilization of the electronic revolution. What is now referred to as « hyperlogic » offers an alternative to linear or narrative form of visual presentation. Hyperlogic, which is the basis of the World Wide Web, is organized so that viewers can create their own paths through text, images or even film or video clips. This presents a model for visual analysis which takes form to its most experimental form. The most successful current example is Peter Biella, Napoleon Chagnon and Gary Seaman's interactive CD (1997) of the anthropological film, *The Ax Fight*, by Timothy Asch, and additional hyperlinked materials. The interactive CD allows a viewer to view the actual film in any of several possible ways (in real time, backward as well as forward, frame by frame, in slow motion, or keyed to significant moments as identified by the anthropologists). The viewer can also link to scene-by-scene descriptions of the film, and may link to any individual shown in the film, which indicates their age, sex, spouses, children, birthplace, lineage, residence, year of death, place in the kin systems (presented in kin charts) and other anthropological information. The CD contains complete footage and edited versions of the film, hundreds of photographs, and several full length essays. The viewer can assess any part of the film and digress to any of several analyses. Constructing a visual CD based on hyperlogic presents for a social scientist the first full opportunity to work both empirically and lyrically on the same material.

Conclusion

47   I take a practical attitude toward the future of visual sociology. Rather than build and defend intellectual boundaries, I hope that visual sociology will draw on several traditions and practices to organize an approach based on the commonality of the visual world. Images allow us to make statements which cannot be made by words, and the world we see is saturated with sociological meaning. Thus it does not seem peculiar to suggest that images enlarge our consciousness and the possibilities for our sociology. Oddly, we remain revolutionaries in an enormously conservative discipline. But while our colleagues continue to resist such an attractive, useful, interesting and engaging proposition, visual sociologists have continued to forge a research practice and method. In the spirit of Dziga Vertov, we must continue to spin.

NOTES

1. I would like to express my appreciation to K. Molyneaux for help with French texts in the preparation of this paper.

2. I am speaking here of exactly the kind of collaboration between Rouch and Morin, mentioned earlier. In the USA, the intellectual scene in which I am most familiar, only a handful of sociologists have worked through or with filmmakers. The sociologist John Grady's films *Home Care* (1990) and *Just a Fight* (1995) are notable exceptions. Sociologists in the States, however, often use films such as by the documentarian Frederick Wiseman, for pedagogical purposes.

3. Van Maanen J., 1988. *Tales of the Field.* Chicago, University of Chicago Press : 46-49.

4. Hall E.T., 1974. *Handbook for Proxemic Research.* Washington, Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication.

5. Lomax A., Bartenieff I. & Paulay F., 1969. « Choreometrics: a method for the study of cross-cultural patterns in film », *Research Film/Le Film de Recherche/Forschungsfilm*, 6 : 505-517.

6. Birdwhistell R.L., 1970. *Kinesics and Context.* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

7. For example, Gisèle Freund published a sociological study of the role of photography in society from its inception to the modern era (FREUND, 1974). The book's first section, dealing with photography in the 19th century, had been Freund's doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne forty years prior to the publication of the book. And Pierre Bourdieu published the first analysis of the role of photography in the family lives of peasants, small-town and urban dwellers based on surveys done in contemporary France (BOURDIEU, 1965).

8. Riis J.A., 1971 [1890]. *How the Other Half Lives.* New York, Dover.

9. Agee J. & Evans W., 1939. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* Cambridge (Ma), The Riverside Press (traduction française : *Louons maintenant les grands hommes.* Paris, Plon, collection Terre Humaine, 1972).

10. Caldwell E. & Bourke-White M., 1937. *Have You Seen Their Faces.* New York, Modern Age Books.

11. Frank R., 1969 [1959]. *The Americans.* New York, Aperture.

12. Clark L., 1971. *Tulsa.* New York, Lunstrum Press.

13. Davidson B., 1970. *E100 Street.* Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

14. Adelman B., 1972. *Down Home.* New York, McGraw-Hill.

15. Hansberry L., 1964. *The Movement.* New York, Simon and Schuster.

16. Lyon D., 1971. *Conversations with the Dead.* New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston; Jackson B., 1977. *Killing Time.* Ithaca, Cornell University Press.

17. Owens B., 1973. *Suburbia.* San Francisco, Straight Arrow Books; Estrin M.L., 1979. *To The Manor Born.* Boston, Little Brown.

18. Fusco P. & Horowitz G.D., 1970. *La Causa.* New York, Collier.

19. Simon P. & Mungo R., 1972. *Moving On Standing Still.* New York, Grossman.

20. Kerry J., 1971. *The New Soldier.* New York, Macmillan.

21. Copeland A. (ed.), 1969. *People's Park.* New York, Ballantine Books.

22. Smith W.E. & A., 1974. *Minamata.* New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

23. Berger J. & Mohr J., 1975. *A Seventh Man.Migrant Workers in Europe.* New York, Viking (traduction française : *Le septième homme. Un livre d'images et de textes sur les travailleurs.* Paris, Maspéro, 1976).

24. Berger J. & Mohr J., 1967. *A Fortunate Man.* New York, Pantheon. Ajoutons Berger J. & Mohr J., 1981. *Une autre façon de raconter*, Paris, Maspéro (NDLR).

25. Pour prévenir toute confusion, précisons que le terme « *liberalism* », employé ici, évoque les engagements progressistes dans les questions sociales (comme plus bas l'épithète « *liberal* » appliquée au documentaire), aux antipodes par conséquent du « libéralisme » actuel qui sert d'idéologie à la mondialisation et à la dérégulation économique (NDLR).

26. Rosler M., 1989. « In, around and afterthoughts (on documentary photography) », *in* BOLTON (1989) : 307.

RÉSUMÉS

Alors que la photographie était présente à une petite échelle dans la sociologie américaine des débuts, il fallut attendre les années 1970 pour que la pratique de la « sociologie visuelle » gagne une reconnaissance en tant que sous-champ de la sociologie. En anthropologie la photographie avait servi à rassembler des données pour appuyer les théories de l'évolution sociale, courantes au début du XXe siècle. Son usage tomba en désuétude avec le changement d'orientation théorique de la discipline. Dans les années 1940, le travail pionnier de Bateson et Mead relança l'utilisation de la photographie dans l'analyse de la culture. Néanmoins, et jusqu'à aujourd'hui, l'image fixe demeure sous-utilisée en anthropologie visuelle, comparativement au film et à la vidéo.

Je suggère que, pour atteindre son plein développement, la sociologie visuelle continue à embrasser une dimension théorique. En outre, elle doit reprendre les critiques post-modernistes formulées à l'encontre du documentaire photographique (dont elle a repris largement la forme) et des comptes rendus scientifiques de terrain. Enfin, il me semble que la sociologie visuelle offre une nouvelle manière de récolter et de présenter les données des sciences sociales. Ces formes expérimentales comprennent l'entretien à partir de photographies, la narration en images et l'organisation non-linéaire des informations visuelles au moyen de l'hypertexte.

While photography had established a minor presence in early American sociology, it was not until the 1970s that a practice of « visual sociology » became recognized as a subfield of the parent discipline. In anthropology, photography was used to gather data to support theories of social evolution popular in the early 20th century, but photography as a data gathering device fell into disuse as the theoretical focus of anthropology changed. In the 1940s, the pioneering work of Bateson and Mead reinvigorated the use of still photography in the analysis of culture. To this day, however, still photography remains underutilized in relation to film and video in visual anthropology.

I suggest that for visual sociology to fully develop, it must continue to embrace a theoretical dimension. Furthermore, visual sociology must address postmodernism criticisms of documentary photography (from which much visual sociology takes its form) and scientific field reporting. Finally, I suggest that visual sociology offers a new means of gathering and presenting social science data. These experimental forms include photo elicitation, visual narrative, and the non-linear organization of visual information in hyperlogic texts.

INDEX

Keywords : documentary photography, photography, postmodern critiques, sociology and anthropology
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