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TITLE: **SLOW SCHOLARSHIP, THE SLOW CITY AND COUNTER-VISUAL PRACTICES**

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ABSTRACT:
Slow scholarship offers an alternative way to do research, yet its implications for visual practice and production remain implicit. In this paper, I translate and apply key notions of slow scholarship to visual practice and production, in particular that slower can be a better and more care-full way of doing research. This gap is filled by re-purposing existing methods (time-series, inconvenience sampling, replicable) in order to capture what I deem the 'slow city', that is the everyday fabrics of urban areas that tend to be ignored and vulnerable to slow violence. My own counter-visualization applies these insights through three case studies which map onto longitudinal methods (slow violence, care-full research) and translocal, replicable methods (the untagged city).

KEYWORDS: visual methods; slow scholarship; time-series photography; replicable photography; untagged city; slow city

INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s and 2000s, visual methods were subjected to a flurry of radical and feminist critiques centered on issues of representation, appropriation, the masculinist gaze, spectacle, and panopticism, ultimately questioning the very enterprise itself (e.g. Rose, 1993; Sui, 2000). Rose (1993) argued that geographic knowledge conflated seeing and knowing, and that vision suggested a cold, distant, superior, and dominating position. These critiques have become more measured of late, however, and there has been a shift from critique towards production, of seeing the visual as a means of research and as a practice (Pink, 2013). Following Tolia-Kelly and Rose (2016), visual practice involves at least three specific aspects: how things are made visible (espistemology and documentation), which things are made visible (practices in the field), and the ethics of looking (vision). This suggests that visual practice is much more than just technique and methodology, although it is also about those things. It involves an entire craft, including "the ethical and political commitments of researchers in the field; their (inter)relations with research subjects, interlocutors, collaborators, and audiences; the choices made between different styles and codes of (re)presentation, narrative, analysis, and theory making; and the communities of scholars and social action upon and to which research programs and projects are predicated and dedicated" (Leitner et al, 2019: 45-46). Current geographers of visuality always need to scrutinize the power relations inherent in taking images, particularly in terms of representing (other) people and (other) places.

While much current visual practice has heeded these important cautions, epistemological trends have not stood still. New ways of thinking about research have emerged in the past ten years that could now be applied to visual practice and production. In this paper, I translate and apply the emergence of *slow scholarship* (Mountz et al, 2015), as one mode of new thinking about research and writing, to visual practice and production. Slow

scholarship is based in the idea that it takes time to "think, write, read, research, analyze, edit, organize, and resist the growing administrative and professional demands that disrupt these crucial processes of intellectual growth and personal freedom" (Mountz et al, 2015: 1236). Slow scholarship has emerged in response to the growing dominance of 'fast research' via the neoliberalizing university that produces incomplete, rushed research (Bergland, 2018; Carr & Gibson, 2017). My translation and application of slow scholarship to visual practice and production fills an important gap: a Google Scholar search in May 2022 revealed that of the 510 articles that had cited the Mountz et al work (and had generated at least one citation each), only six articles even mentioned the terms 'slow scholarship' and 'visual methods' in tandem, but did not necessarily connect them save for two rather indirect works (Pink, 2013; Asselin, 2017).

To fill this gap, I propose and illustrate a (counter-) visual practice that translates and adapts slow scholarship to specific visual practices and production in order to capture what I call the *slow city*, the slow-moving, inertial and sometimes ignored everyday materiality of cities. I argue for a slower and broader visual practice, re-purposing several existing visual techniques (time-series, replicable, inconvenience sampling), and illustrating them using material from a 30-year solo project of documenting urban inequality. This allows me to make several contributions. First, I join slow scholarship with specific methods that subsume larger epistemological and ethical issues around duration (short to long), pace (fast to slow) and coverage (narrow to broad).There is something valuable about slow and care-full (visual) research that takes decades to hone, immune to the vagaries of external pressure to produce quick research outputs. Second, I re-purpose time-series photography, replicable photography and inconvenience sampling as a way to capture the everyday fabrics and materialities of the city that change slowly, sometimes from the ground up but also suffering from slow violence imposed from above. This constitutes my distinctive contribution to methodology, drawing

on insights from real-world photographers and ethnography. Third, this paper takes methods seriously. The bar seems to be set very high when it comes to theory, but set rather low for the quantity and quality of empirical data. As Latham (2021: 666) argued, thinking about methods remains mostly in the "realm of tacit or folk knowledge". As such, there is an urgent need for more explicit 'methods talk' in human geography (Leitner et al, 2019). Fourth and more empirically, my counter-visualization is illustrated by three case studies that present a different view of the city – as untagged yet replicable, and above all slow (to change). This fills an important gap by effectively putting into practice the more abstract ideas around slow scholarship, of how going slow yields better and more care-full results that complement other existing approaches to visualizing the city, especially the embedded and participatory models.

SLOW SCHOLARSHIP AND THE SLOW CITY

Slow scholarship may be seen as a way to resist the unsustainably fast timelines imposed by a neoliberalizing university sector, as well as the myriad quantifications of academic outputs (Bergland, 2018). Kuus (2015) stated that the university environment is increasingly premised on the quantification of research outputs, which leads to hasty and superficial results, while Leitner et al (2019: 238) talked about endemic "short-termism and instrumentalism" to the research enterprise. Slow scholarship rejects this atomization of the academic and values the un-quantifiable, including "collective authorship, mentorship, collaboration, activist work, sharing of ideas" (Bergland, 2018: 1031). Slow scholarship creates a research model that is not just slow, giving the time to think and reflect, but also embodied and incremental (Carr & Gibson, 2017; McMorran, 2012). Slow scholarship thus gives the chance for ideas to marinate, and applies an ethics of care to oneself that run against overzealous production and tight timelines. Fast research will inevitably miss the slow-moving and the persistently obscure, thereby narrowing research to those phenomena that are

easily seen and readily researched, an expediency that avoids any pretense to creating patient, deep-seated knowledge.

Returning to Mountz et al (2015), the authors make two important points about the advantages of slow scholarship that will be specifically adapted to this paper. First, slowing down can produce good, if not better, scholarship. It allows ideas and writing to develop over long periods of time, thereby enabling a greater thoughtfulness and thereby better quality. Within a UK context, Jazeel (2019: 16) noted that the "normalization of the mega-project in the corporate university today necessarily mitigates against the patient work and effort that the ethic of sticking with, tarrying over, and abiding by over the *longue durée* demands". The freedom to think requires time above all, and slow scholarship espouses this very ethos. Second, slowing down equals more careful, if not more care-full, scholarship. Slow scholarship thereby allows an ethics of care and solidarity to be built up among scholars and the communities they research (see also Lawson, 2007). In this paper, I apply this ethics of care to the research of particular places, partly incorporating what I deem the embedded model of visual practice, whereby the photographer spends months, if not years, ensconced in a particular community that they only gradually come to photograph, allowing in-depth access and enabling a deeper sense of people and place (e.g. Vergara, 2013; Strasser, 2020).

The next step is to conceptually frame what I mean by the slow city, its slow-moving materialities and how they lend themselves to certain visual approaches. The first contention is that while cities are indeed relational and unbounded, they still exist as tangible *objects*. There is an unavoidable 'chunkiness' to cities. Walker (2016) usefully notes that the urban and urbanization are empirical objects, not just a theoretical category or a process. Further, Walker insists on a focus on the built environment as another key element of an expressly urban ontology, of valuing the "built environment as the physical foundations of cities and a key force in the making of cities" (2016: 164). These intransigent materialities of the city lead

to the sense that cities are marked by inertia in the built environment; the city slow to change given the large-scale investments needed to build the materiality in the first place, as well as to dismantle it.

This second contention adds up to a larger insight – if the city's materiality is slow to change, then there are parts of the city that are *especially* slow to change, a sort of slow urbanism (Jordan & Lindner, 2016). These less dynamic areas could be deemed *everyday fabrics* that capture "…the social and material world that lives and landscapes are made from" (Knowles and Harper, 2009: 10). Everyday fabrics are shaped by and arrayed against, beyond, or alongside powerful city fabrics. The characteristics embodied in everyday fabrics include informality, the mundane and banal, low-lying, unexceptional, peopled, marginal, peripheral, provisional and precarious. They capture the quiet moments of the city, the vernacular spaces that seem downright parochial and place-bound when compared to the cosmopolitan airs of the powerful. They are spaces of use value, social reproduction, introverted and even an optimistic, hard-won urbanism. As Kim (2015: 8) related in a powerful rebuke of the dystopian, "critical theory might disparage the relative optimism of everyday urbanism and its focus on what might alternatively be interpreted as coping mechanisms by those disenfranchised by the global circuits of capital". Interstitial, pending as much as permanent, everyday city fabrics once constituted the majority of city space but are now threatened by encroaching power.

Everyday fabrics are part of the *untagged city* that lie beyond the gaze of power, or beyond new ways to represent the city such as via Instagram. Boy and Uitermarck (2017: 615) outlined their understanding of the untagged in detail, using Amsterdam as a case study:

> the contemporary city is beset with inequalities, not only in terms of the material distribution of resources and amenities, but also in terms of recognition and visibility. Areas and groups considered undesirable – the *banlieue*, the disabled, the elderly,

> immigrants, the homeless – are frequently degraded or rendered invisible, while spaces of upscale consumption and sanitised tourist havens are elevated….When Instagrammers in Amsterdam tag places in their posts to advertise their presence there, they favour certain kinds of locations. The urban imagination promoted by Instagram sees the city as a collection of 'hot spots', and what is in between these hot spots gets the cold shoulder.

Thieme et al (2017: 131) further understood that social scientists need to make certain conditions visible, to "render visible urban practices and subjectivities that may be ignored by mainstream political and institutional structures". This rendering becomes an integral part of a critical urban studies, to acknowledge and document the rogue, difficult and 'no-go' spaces and practices of the city that cross-cut, repeat and recur as much as the sterile, powerful new-build fabrics.

When change does arrive to everyday fabrics, it is frequently in the form of what Nixon (2011: 2) called slow violence, a "violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all". It is the elusive violence of "delayed effects" (2011: 3) that require a long attention span; Nixon himself asked how to convert slow violence into image. But slow violence also includes the overlooking of certain people and places, to their detriment (Davies, 2018). The next step is to translate slow scholarship into a visual practice and production of the slow city. In the subsequent two sections, I propose a parallel model of visual practice that values slow scholarship and the existence of the slow city. I argue for a slowing down and broadening of visual practice, which requires re-purposing existing photographic techniques – time-series photography and the recurring from visual practice, and inconvenience sampling and solo production from ethnography - but also relates some conceptual ideas around slowness and

slow violence. I argue that slowing down and broadening the visual apprehension of the (slow) city ultimately produces better and more care-full visual practice and production.

SLOW VISUAL PRACTICE VIA TIME-SERIES PHOTOGRAPHY

Part of this paper's contribution is to re-purpose existing methods (and archives) as part of slow visual scholarship of the slow city. This re-purposing builds on an existing literature that specifies the value of visualizing the city. In this regard, Rose (2016: 308) argued persuasively that

> images such as photographs are seen as especially valuable in urban research because they can convey something of the feel of urban places, spaces and landscapes, specifically of course those qualities that are in some way visible: they can suggest the layout, colour, texture, form, volume, size and pattern of the built environment, for example, and can picture people too. Photographs can thus capture something of the sensory richness and human inhabitation of urban environments (though not all, of course: they cannot convey sound and can only suggest touch).

Although not everything is embodied or material in the city, and as such not everything can be visualized, a first way to capture the slow city is through time-series photography. This photographic approach apprehends how city fabrics can improve, decline or stay the same over long durations. Photographing the same place at two different times – sometimes decades apart – can show the temporal dynamism of cities that is entirely missed with tighter timelines and research agendas. The baseline image is always prospective, since there is little way to know what the future of a particular site might be, and so sampling must be done almost randomly, such that every photograph could become a time-series if enough time has passed – a sort of time capsule? Or if one is slightly more expedient, it can pay dividends to photograph highly dynamic zones in transition where change is perhaps more likely. This is

certainly the aim of repeat photography in hazard analysis, where areas damaged by disasters offer a very clear basis for baseline. However, for everyday urban photography, the baseline is subject to flukes, of missing change in the interim between photos. In these cases, no longer is photography just a "neat slice of time" (Sontag, 1977: 17) but more of a flow, a way to relate materiality to social processes over the long haul.

Time-series photography is essentially a longitudinal method, suited to showing inertia, emergence, entropy, erasure. It can detect slow change, dispossession, death and decay, rebirth as well as reconfiguration and re-insertion in the urban landscape. But when to return to the site of the original image? This is a more difficult question to answer than the 'how' of duplicating the original. It is akin to Stuart's (2016: 82) "ethnographic revisit", the focused returning of a former ethnographic study to the same site, seeking to "discover variation between the present and a former time period". In effect, a time-series approach imposes a compulsive discipline upon the photographer, of *pairing* successive images of the same place to the original in order to assess change, if any. An example of archives that display decades of time-series images is Camilo Vergara's online Library of Congress collection under the aegis of 'Invincible Cities' (LOC, 2022) as well as the University of Washington's Urban Archives (2022).

Indeed, Vergara's sustained approach merits further discussion, particularly his 1995 work *The New American Ghetto*. To him, time-series offered a way to "capture a monumental urban transformation underway" as ghettos became increasingly threadbare in the 1980s and 1990s (1995: x). Using over 9000 slides taken between 1977 and 1995, he undertook this approach as an "uninterrupted dialogue with poor communities" (1995: xi), and as a way to document lost landscapes of the American ghetto. This reconstruction became an unbroken visual record of decline, focused on the waning materiality of the American ghetto rather than a people-centered street photography. While the 1995 book was centered on terminal decline

and flimsy futures, Vergara's subsequent work on Harlem (2013) and Detroit (2016) presented a more nuanced present and future, using biographies of specific buildings and corners to show different trajectories, including upgrading or no change at all (see also Gassner, 2020). Of course the latter is not as visually interesting, but still tells an important story of stagnation – or sometimes of protected stability. Brian Doucet (2019) offered a methodological bookending to Vergara, using time-series as part of the larger conversation around urban change or the lack thereof. This conversation is built into the wider contextual history of a place, which is why time-series requires such a long-term case study approach. Finally, other photographers such as Heng (2016) and Suchar (1997) have used a similar time-series approach but without the focus on materiality in the city.

What kind of (slow) city do we see when we use a time-series approach? One that is prone to slow violence and decline, but also prone to 'no change' and increasingly subject to upgrading. Being open to all these possibilities is preferable to only focusing on terminal decline, which is one of the pitfalls of so-called ruin porn, which only exploits and aestheticizes the economic downfall of places like Detroit, ignoring the racial and class-based inequalities behind the downfall. Being open to multiple possibilities is also preferable to the delirious upgrading so commonly captured nowadays, a point to which I will return in the conclusions.

SLOW VISUAL PRACTICE VIA INCONVENIENCE SAMPLING AND THE REPLICABLE

Visually capturing the slow city via slow scholarship can also be articulated through a broader spatial sample that apprehends overlooked everyday fabrics of the slow city. Here I take inspiration from ethnographers and real-world photographers. My re-purposing of inconvenience sampling stems from Duneier's particular approach to (urban) ethnography, as

interpreted by Forrest Stuart (2016): the goal is to "broaden…observations to include those people and perspectives that are the *least* convenient for the impressions developed in the initial phases of fieldwork. Typically, these are the actors most difficult for the ethnographer to get to know given her entry point into the field and relationships with primary contacts". I have translated this inconvenience sampling to mean sampling as extensively as possible, to get at as many different sides of the slow city as possible rather than only visualizing the most accessible and the most visited, which in turn produces an empirically flimsy representation of the city (and theories of the city). In effect, I use inconvenience sampling to better capture the untagged parts of cities.

Inconvenience sampling can involve an intensive reading of one city, or it can involve a one-off reading of as many cities as possible. The second sampling approach is tied to a comparative approach, of thinking simultaneously about similar city fabrics across many different cities. Juggling a large number of cities always makes one aware of the elsewhere. The inconvenience sampling thereby guards against narrowness by using a travelling method that brings many different cities into a common vision and style. This of course could be accused of re-enacting colonialism, but not traveling does not guarantee the opposite: see for instance Davis' (2006) desktop-bound dystopia of the Global South city. A need for going out into the field remains, not because it guarantees getting everything right but that never going out in the field means every chance of getting it completely wrong. A traveling method also ensures a constant relationality and testing of theory across multiple fields. Traveling also means bearing personal witness, of seeing things for oneself in a way that imparts a single, coherent vision. Yet in the conclusions, I will also address some of the obvious drawbacks to a traveling method in this era of climate change.

What kind of (slow) city do we see with an inconvenience sample? A wider set of everyday fabrics to be sure, but also certain similar fabrics cross-cutting many different cities

in the Global North, Global South and Global East, something that a one-off, locally-embedded study is unlikely to uncover. A replicable technique can be used to convey the repetitive nature of the slow city, with the caveat that they are similar but not exactly the same (Merrifield & Swyngedouw, 1996). As Jennie Robinson (2011: 2, emphasis mine) argued,

> there are many aspects of cities that are *reproduced serially* across the world of cities or influenced by the same processes and actors — governance regimes are one aspect, but also phenomena such as architecture and design, detailed technologies of management, policies and political programmes. Such phenomena could be considered comparable in their own right across very different urban contexts and thus be the units of comparison.

All cities are understandably unique and incomparable (Jazeel, 2019), but to find cross-cutting similarities is crucial in terms of conceptual abstraction (Peck, 2015). I suggest that the best technique to document the emergence of similar fabrics is to photograph them relentlessly, taking a radically flat approach, and being open to new permutations of everyday fabrics. This is akin to the approach taken in Edensor's (2005) *Industrial Ruins* and his purposeful lack of contextual detail. By stripping all detail, including location, the message around serial replication becomes more direct. In a wider sense, the Global North, Global South and Global East can be blurred together, effectively de-territorialized in a way that "flattens the world but alert to local contingency" (Lees et al, 2016: 22).

As with the time-series approach, I also wish to acknowledge the various real-world photographers who have used this replicable approach. Most prominent are German photographers the Bechers, who always feature the same composition of the same kind of thing but across different cities (Redstone, 2014). This builds on the idea of archetypical photography, of photographing what seems essentially the same across various contexts, such as the profusion of globally-standardized urban fabrics like hotels and malls. Similarly,

Michael Wolf's single-minded focus on density follows the same idea – shoot the same thing in different places, and remove the context: "by shooting from a raised vantage point and cropping out the sky and the horizon, Wolf frees the architecture from its context and the distortion of perspective, and transforms it into a pattern of abstract geometric shapes and colour. The almost endless repetition of uniform facades examines the meaning of individuality and identity in the modern city" (Redstone, 2014: 66). There is also something in Vergara's (1995) mind-numbing repetition of certain themes across multiple American ghettos – fortification, murals, obsolete commerce and industry, vacant land, memorials, churches, public housing, and especially ruins – that adopt this kind of photography, but in this case of everyday fabrics. Even earlier, Eugène Atget documented over 29 years the everyday city fabrics of 19th-century Paris in an obsessive way, "with unprecedented intensity and attentiveness" (Redstone, 2014: 9). He always used the same frontal style to make visible "a small-scale, time-worn Paris that was vanishing" (Sontag, 1977: 133). Over a similar lengthy period of time, David Goldblatt explored how the South African built environment came to embody the apartheid project, between 1964 and 1993, entirely through "the country's structures – from the stone, bricks and mortar to the mud and corrugated iron" (Redstone, 2014: 11). All of these undertakings were without pre-conceived deadlines, and therefore both slow *and* broad.

COUNTER-VISUAL PRODUCTION AND DOCUMENTATION

I frame my own (slow) visual production as a counter-visual production. This builds on the rich literature concerned with using images to reject the dominant visual tropes of, for instance, mass incarceration (e.g. Brown, 2014), urban youth behavior (Delgado, 2015), the contested value of everyday inner-city neighborhoods (e.g. Masuda et al, 2012; Strasser, 2020) or everyday survival (e.g. Spiegel, 2020). Yet in contrast to some of these counter-

visual enterprises, my own model is strictly solo and wide-ranging rather than participatory and locally-embedded. This singular vision taps into a rich legacy of single-authored ethnographic work on street cultures in the city, mostly from sociology (e.g. Duneier, 1999; Fairbanks, 2009; Stuart, 2016) but also the single-authored overviews of entire cities, mostly from history and anthropology (e.g. Caldeira, 2000; Kim, 2015). From the world of photography, Josef Koudelka, during his lengthy visual documentation of the walls between Israel and Palestine, preferred to see the lay of the land in his own terms, rather than meeting with locals and experts: "When they offered me to meet a rabbi, some historians, and others, I told them, 'Thank you, but no. I have this experience from Czechoslovakia. First of all I want to see by myself, and get to my knowledge through my eyes'" (Smyth, 2019). And while a long-term, deeply embedded model of visual production is salutary – and will be used in the third aspect of the counter-visualization - it will by definition struggle with the issue of coverage and repetition, of capturing recurring incidences in city fabrics.

My counter-visual model is based on 30 years of visual production in over 100 cities across the world. The slowness and breadth of the production stretches our understandings of urban materiality, and directly counters the fastness and narrowness of current research models in academia, as well platforms such as Instagram (a platform to which I return in the conclusions). Yet this project began inadvertently, as a way to visualize and document the material inequalities of the city in the early 1990s. Of course cities have always been unequal, but part of what originally motivated my project was conceptually grasping new forms of inequality, of increasing inequalities to the point of being lopsided in favor of the rich and powerful. As time went on, I began incorporating what I deem *archival intent*, of filtering images according to what they can show with regards to well-worn issues in inequality (e.g. divided cities, jarring juxtapositions), but also open to new and emerging issues. The extensive nature of my archive – including over 25,000 images - is not just a case of overkill.

Rather, I insisted on a rich archiving that thickens our empirical knowledge of the urban world and underlines the slow nature of the research, but also how the lengthy time period allowed me to see changes in and to the slow city. This acts as a reminder that much of the urban is unpredictable, un-anticipated, perhaps unacceptable, and certainly untagged. It is also an approach that captures but also moves beyond the impressionistic. After all, it is unavoidable that some of the many images I took were merely first impressions of everyday fabrics in particular cities. However, by placing the images into the larger project of visualizing inequality, I was able to see recurring patterns. In effect, I could underline the slow violence operating on certain everyday fabrics, the untagged nature of many everyday fabrics, and the utility in occasionally adopting a long-term, care-full approach to such fabrics. Upon outlining the ethics of such a project, I will illustrate each of these aspects in turn.

Ethically speaking, I see visual production as a space of encounter, which Valentine (2008: 323) understood as "the role of shared space in providing the opportunity for encounter between 'strangers'". Just like slow scholarship itself, the experience of picture-taking is embodied and experiential (Hunt, 2014), underpinning a relational view of the visualizer and the visualized, of the "close engagement…between researcher and the researched in the urban everyday" (Leitner et al, 2019: 23; see also DeVerteuil et al, 2019). Yet photography as a space of encounter only begins the conversation around ethics and the politics of seeing, of the relations between myself, the places and people that are researched, and the images (Rose, 2016). As Valentine underlined (2008: 333), "encounters never take place in a space free from history, material conditions and power. The danger is that contemporary discourses about cosmopolitanism and new urban citizenship, by celebrating the potential of everyday encounters to produce social transformations, potentially allow the

knotty issue of inequalities to slip out of the debate". As such, visualizing inequality must equally attend to the inequalities of representation.

Since I was an outsider in most of what I documented, I want to state the limitations imposed by my own identity: male, White, able-bodied, heterosexual, young to middle-aged, middle-class, English-speaking, Christian. I also have a cosmopolitan disposition (DeVerteuil et al, 2019) that tends towards the 'worldly', but my view is always partial and accented, never entirely fluent. I also do not make, in Sontag's words (1977: 77), "a claim to be invisible" – I never fully blend in, and I do not want to pretend otherwise. This is an issue even better understood by female and racialized photographers that have inspired me, such as Vergara (Latinx), Carter (Black), Samoilova (female), Heng (Asian) and Kim (Asian and female). Moreover, I had the privilege of moving between powerful and everyday city fabrics with relative ease, and I could name the materiality in ways I saw fit. I enjoyed job security that afforded me the luxury of slow time, having the material and financial resources to travel and think, thereby avoiding the incessant pressure that comes with unstable and short-term (academic) employment.

Gender is another obvious privilege when traveling and photographing. As male, I was privileged to access the public spaces of the city with relative impunity. Further, being able-bodied was particularly crucial in navigating a city that is not made, and has never been made, for the sight-impaired, the Deaf, the immobile, those with untreated mental health issues, the very old and the very young (Lix et al, 2007). So I should never underestimate my own access and privilege, but nor should I overestimate it either – the city is always partially veiled. I have frequently been accused of knowing everything and understanding nothing, of mis-representation or worse. But I always strove to be sensitive to the messiness of the real world, even at the risk of occasional misrepresentation. As Elvin Wyly (2010: 508), who holds the same position as I do in the field, noted, one should "trust the city" over the

privileged, White male academic. This again connects to the value of an embedded approach to the third aspect of my counter-visualization, which involved long-term dedication and place-base solidarity.

The first aspect of the counter-visualization illustrates the specific use of the *time-series* technique as a concrete form of slow research. My research project is the absolute epitome of slow scholarship and slow research, with an eye to detecting the slow city rather than capturing catastrophic and fast change (DeVerteuil et al, 2021). The 30-year period represents a lengthy gestation period, designed at least in part to capture an entire academic career's worth of thoughts and insights. Here I also want to underline the re-sampling approach, which began rather haphazardly. In effect, very few of the 'before' images were expressly captured in the hope of subsequent retaking. Rather, using a very large base of original images built up in the 1990s and early 2000s, I revisited places where I thought change had likely occurred. This included dynamic centers of cities, particularly those which were rapidly revitalizing (Downtown Los Angeles, Downtown DC, Hollywood) or those areas once at the margins of revitalization efforts, such as Harlem, Williamsburg, the edges of Chicago's CBD, Southwest Montréal, SoMa in San Francisco, Brick Lane and Elephant & Castle in London. But I was also interested in cities where power had lost out to everyday fabrics, in the form of 'faded grandeur' in Detroit, Atlantic City and Buenos Aires. Unlike the globally replicable approach that follows in the second aspect, my time-series focused mostly in the Global North, limited to the ability to repetitively travel to major urban centers.
All of the visual evidence I present in this first aspect illustrates slow decline as a form of slow violence, whether in areas of (dwindling) African-American presence or directly threatened by more powerful urban fabrics (LAX airport). Decline and absence convey a sense of abandonment and erasure, as well as inevitable entropy in the materiality of the city (Heng, 2021; Edensor, 2005). In this regard, Figure 1 is from a series of images of the

neighborhoods along the SEPTA train tracks in North Philadelphia, between Temple University and Spring Garden Street. This area was visited in 2004, 2007 and 2020. While the area immediately by Temple University has been reclaimed from abandonment, much remains derelict, and some row-houses have only worsened in appearance:

Insert Figure 1 here (Philadelphia, March 2004; Philadelphia, March 2020)

On Chicago's South Side once stood the massive Robert Taylor Homes, the most visible stretch of urban poverty in the United States (according to Vergara, 1995). Like many of Chicago's prominent public housing projects, the Robert Taylor Homes suffered decline, abandonment, dispossession and eventual demolition, a geography of racism and disavowal. Figure 2 directly below captures these changes in 2002 and 2006 that ends in an empty sky, looking north-east from the 47th Street Red Line station:

Insert Figure 2 here
(Chicago, May 2002; Chicago, March 2006)

Once demolished, the vacant lots have yet to see redevelopment, a testament to the area's persistent lack of investment as a form of slow violence. This is captured at the corner of 51st and Federal:

Insert Figure 3 here
(Chicago, January 2008; Chicago, July 2018)

Without a dedicated time-series approach, it would have been impossible to see the slow erasure of these places or their persistent stagnation. This is the essence of slow violence captured visually.
A final example of this is 20 years of shooting the so-called 'LAX ghost town', which actually consists of two areas. The first, directly below the runways, was demolished in the 1960s because it was in the way of airport expansion, and has remained empty since:

Insert Figure 4 here (LAX ghost town, July 2001)
Insert Figure 5 here (LAX ghost town, July 2001)
Insert Figure 6 here (LAX ghost town, August 2003)

The second area is to the northeast of the airport, and is targeted for current airport expansion. A victim of enforced disinvestment, the area attracted homeless individuals displaced from gentrifying Venice in 2016 (Figures 7 and 8), but by 2019 had been fenced off, with all buildings completely demolished in 2020.

Insert Figure 7 here (LAX ghost town, March 2016)
Insert Figure 8 here (LAX ghost town, March 2016)
Insert Figure 9 here (LAX ghost town, March 2019)
Insert Figure 10 here (LAX ghost town on Century Boulevard, March 2016 and March 2020)

As a coda, this area is now being rebuilt as the world's largest parking structure. The patient and slow approach to the LAX ghost town shows the insidious nature of slow violence when an otherwise one-off, 'shoot and go' approach could not.

The second aspect of my counter-visualization is the use of the *replicable* technique, with inconvenience sampling and a particular focus on the recurring manifestations of the untagged city as a way to capture the unvarnished aspects of everyday fabrics. Here the sampling is far broader. Wyly (2010: 504) talked about selectivity in that "our choices matter. But we can and must make choices – carefully, critically and thoughtfully. Our choices will never be perfect or infallible. Photographs, therefore, should begin conversations, not end them". One reason for having inconvenience sampling was to expand the points of reference which in turn expand the urban universe of the project. Of course my inconvenience sampling was not indiscriminate. It reflected which cities I could visit (safely and legally), alongside a certain linguistic competence (English, French, alongside basic Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian) and those within an acceptable cost-distance threshold. Some places could not be visited, whether because of violence (e.g. Caracas, Kabul) or bureaucratic barriers (e.g. Pyongyang, Teheran). In the end, and using Rose's (2016: 90) terminology, I chose images that were "representative and significant" to the project of visualizing inequality, with a large 'N' that made it easier to see recurring themes.

Repeatedly delving into the untagged city raises specific ethical issues, including an accusation of voyeurism, as well as the double subjugation of poor and neglected people and places victimized first by the social world, and then by the photographer (Solomon-Godeau, 1991: 176). Here I tried to avoid problematic street photography that focuses on the underbelly of cities by adopting what the photographer Don McCullin called the 'witness for the persecuted'. In this sense, my photography is accusatory, moving beyond just exposing inequality and unfairness to pointing fingers at the powerful forces playing outsized roles in an increasingly lopsided city – the visual as argument rather than statement. This is usually done with the explanatory text that accompanies the images, where I condemn larger power structures by showing their sometimes deleterious effects upon the untagged city. The

ethnographer Bourgois (1995: 12) said that to ignore or minimize social deprivations and the conditions that reproduce them is to be “complicitous with oppression”.

Insert Figure 11 here

(Los Angeles, March 2018; Jerusalem, December 2019; Seoul, August 2008; Kuala Lumpur, September 2007; Tel Aviv, December 2019; Addis Ababa, April 2018; London, August 2014; Jerusalem, December 2019)

Everyday commercial streets are the lifeblood of the untagged city. Modest and basic, they serve local needs and are frequently colonized by fast-food chains – in the composite above, McDonald’s comes is in Hebrew, Korean and Malay. Beyond fast-food chains, however, these places are relatively resistant to the encroachment of power, even co-opting the allure of the chain, as in the case of ‘Arab Fried Chicken’ in East Jerusalem, or the ‘Fried and Fabulous’ in East London. Zukin’s (1991) concept of the ‘vernacular’ proves useful here – the low-lying, indigenous materialities that are found in the shadows of power.

Sometimes certain elements of the untagged city only reveal themselves through sustained, long-term inconvenience sampling of everyday fabrics – a case where slowness helps to capture more breadth. This is the case for what I deem ‘analog neighborhoods’ that emerged only after years in the field. These are low-tech, excluded (or self-excluded) fabrics that go about their daily activities with minimum connection to the Internet, or from the Internet-based tourist gaze via Instagram. These areas are steadfast in the old ways of communicating, of socializing, of collective survival.

Insert Figure 12 here

(Jerusalem, December 2019 (x2); New York, April 2019; New York, March 2020)

In tight-knit and overcrowded places like Mea Shearum in Jerusalem, or South Williamsburg in Brooklyn, ultra-Orthodox Jews live apart from the rest of secular society, as well as avoiding the corrupting Internet. Instead, communication is still done by posters, in-person meetings and word-of-mouth. Of course these modes shifted somewhat with COVID-19, but at least when these photos were taken these communities remained very much as analog holdouts in an increasingly digital world.

Pico-Union in Central Los Angeles presents a somewhat different version of an analog neighbourhood – more of an everyday city fabric that is excluded rather than self-excluding. Here my accusatory tone becomes more pronounced. Pico-Union is part of a different Los Angeles, one that is intimately street-oriented rather than automobile-oriented. This distinctly immigrant and transnational, Latinx space can be found in other American cities such as Miami, San Francisco and New York, and whose imposed insularity act as barriers to upgrading and gentrification (DeVerteuil, 2018; Evans & DeVerteuil, 2018). These examples "indigenize the 'global", providing case studies of urbanism from below (MP Smith, 2001: 4), but also are increasingly marooned by nearby upgrading and isolated by the general hostility pointed towards immigrant communities of low-skill labor.

Insert Figure 13 here

(Los Angeles, November 2004; Los Angeles, May 2009; Los Angeles, October 2000; Los Angeles, June 1998; Los Angles, July 1999; September 2007)

There are substantial parts of the city across the Global North, South and East that are essentially untagged in nature, and whose main focus is to enable bare-bones survival, which includes using public space for recycling and vending:

Insert Figure 14 here
(Lima, December 2016; Johannesburg, February 2016; Shanghai, September 2017; Buenos Aires, September 2015; Los Angeles, May 2016; Osaka, September 2018; Jakarta, March 2011)

I acknowledge that these replicable images of the untagged city can be accused of being impressionistic and superficial; after all, I did not (or could not) speak to most of the people in the images about their activities, or how they felt excluded from more powerful city fabrics. One way to transcend this shortcoming, both empirically but also ethically, is through a complementary care-full and embedded approach to particular places, the subject of the third aspect directly below.

The third aspect of my counter-visualization is a return to the time-series technique but allied to an *embedded model* that illustrates the ethically care-full nature of slow scholarship. By this I mean a dedicated, long-term approach to the visualization of everyday fabrics in very specific neighborhoods. Although this runs against the far-ranging nature of inconvenience sampling, it does connect to the ethical demands of slow scholarship in terms of showing care and loyalty to particular places (rather than colleagues as Mountz et al. suggested). Here I needed to re-territorialize, to acknowledge the incomparable singularities of particular places. This was inspired by the embedded model and place-bound knowledge claims by African-American, feminist and post-colonial academics (Jazeel, 2019; Richardson, 2020). While this approach rejects the flattened ontology of the replicable

technique, it can still work alongside it, providing an important methodological counterpoint. Such embededness relates to slow scholarship by shifting the focus from ‘caring about’ to ‘caring for’ places, enough to return year after year for three decades to look for change (or lack of change) using well-honed time-series techniques, thereby producing rounded and sustained conversations. It is more akin to the longer-term interventions by Vergara to places like Harlem (1995; 2013) than to the shorter-lived yet intense connections made by Strasser (2020) in Deptford, or Blatchford and Zuev’s (2020) work on verticality and density in certain Asian cities.

Here I want to use my 30 years of connection to Southwest Montréal, where I began taking pictures for my Master’s degree in 1992 (DeVerteuil, 2004) and have been returning ever since, sometimes in concert with academic visitors, tour groups, local activists and non-profits. Specifically, this in-depth, longitudinal case study features 30 years of change in former working-class neighborhoods along the Lachine Canal – St-Henri, Petite-Bourgogne, Griffintown, Pointe-St-Charles, and Côte-St-Paul. Beginning in May 1992, I began photographing mostly industrial buildings along the Lachine Canal. By 1999, it became clear that the Lachine Canal shoreline would be the most dynamic area, and so I further concentrated there, with biannual revisits well into the 2010s, but also moving farther afield to streets such as St-Ambroise and St-Patrick, which ran parallel to the canal. The images below shows extensive redevelopment in Griffintown, on Mountain Street between 1992 and 2017:

Insert Figure 15 here

(Montréal, May 1992; Montréal, May 2017)

Insert Figure 16 here

(Montréal, January 1993; Montréal, August 2021)

On one of the oldest streets in the Southwest, the once-abandoned row homes built in the 1850s

(on Sebastopol Street, dating from the Crimean War) and pictured in early 1993 had been refurbished by 2021.

While there has been substantial upgrading along the Canal itself, certain sites have resisted change. The Canadian Malting Company factory in St-Henri is one such site – it is a talisman of stasis. Its sullen presence is a stark reminder of the industrial heritage along the canal and its incomplete replacement:

Insert Figure 17 here

(Montréal, July 2002; Montréal, August 2021)

I want to use my personal relationship to the site in Figure 17 to illustrate the specific connections to slow scholarship through my own epistemological trajectory. In other words, developing the long-term biography of the site in relation to the personal narrative of the photographer. Since 1992, when I began photographing Southwest Montreal, I had seen the factory in a state of desuetude. At first, the unchanging nature of the site dissuaded any efforts at visualization – what was the point, the factory would stay forever in the same state perhaps? Yet with every new trip I made over many years, it increasingly dawned on me that the site was worth photographing to capture its historical posterity, especially as other fabrics around it were demolished and revamped. The holdout nature of the site made it all the more important to capture every so often, in anticipation of a change that, up to 2022, had never come. Moreover, repeated visits improve the photography itself, as I devised new ways to connect the site's dereliction with wider processes.

Only a long-term, disciplined, humble and above all caring approach to Southwest Montréal could yield such an array of long-term perspectives, ranging from upgrading to stagnation. The 30 years

I have dedicated to photographing Southwest Montréal is an expression of solidarity with the place, akin to a long-term version of Bunge's (1979) 'expedition' geography. Returning to the idea of the care-full, this third aspect illustrated how extended solidarity to particular places can complement the more 'shoot and go' approach of the replicable.

CONCLUSIONS: THE PROMISES AND PERILS OF THE SLOW AND THE INCONVENIENT

In this paper, I applied slow scholarship to visual techniques of time-series photography and inconvenient sampling via replicable photography. Moving beyond tacit knowledge, these techniques explicitly visualized a different kind of city, a slow and untagged one, and articulated a different ethical stance around the care-full. My counter-visualization was illustrated by three aspects that *reclaim* the visibility of things that move too slow, or too off the beaten track. This counter-visualization, in the words of Thieme et al (2017: 10), "means taking seriously concerns about power, situated knowledge, the gaze, objectification, Cartesian governance, the God's eye trick, and much more, while remaining open to the possibility that the visual might also produce a different politics". My methods were an innovative re-purposing and synthesis of time-series, replicable techniques and inconvenience sampling, emanating from real-world photography (e.g Vergara, Bechers, Wolf, Atget, Koudelka) and ethnography. These longitudinal and translocal methods can improve empirical research when applied to the everyday and untagged fabrics of the slow city, providing better, more care-full ways to capture what is not always seen.

Of course, the shelf life of images is always unpredictable, but this paper makes the argument that the longer the sampling time the better. The demonstrable benefits of slow visual scholarship now become clearer, in terms of capturing the patina of cities, of bearing witness via the traveling method, of slowing down to enable more breadth. With enough time, images can become arguments rather than just statements of fact, pointing an accusatory finger at slow violence, whether in Pico-Union or Southwest Montreal. Like a *noir* novel, slow visual scholarship reveals how the biography of the protagonist (as photographer) and the city become entwined. More specifically with regards to the slow city, my counter-visualization showed the following: that the untagged city is as much replicable as it is unique; that slow violence works against everyday fabrics but that sometimes only a slow approach can detect these effects; inconvenience sampling can inadvertently reveal emerging aspects of everyday fabrics such as analog neighborhoods; that an in-depth and dedicated approach can show a diversity of trajectories within the slow city, not just upgrading but also no change at all; and that depending on the optic, de-territorialized and re-territorialized approaches can exist alongside each other to maximize visual production of the slow city.

Does an extravagantly inconvenient sample promote an extravagantly wasteful amount of traveling? Possibly, although there are logistical ways around the extensive traveling method. First, it is always possible to 'stack' a variety of trips into one – such as using a conference as a way to photograph a particular city, or as a base to make short day trips nearby. Second, inconvenience sampling can focus on just one (large) city, an intensive approach used by Arnold (2018, 2019, 2021) in terms of Oslo, or my own (care-full) work in terms of Montréal, London and Los Angeles, which combined the inconvenient with the slow, allied to a dedication to particular places. Moreover, it might be a lot to expect academics to engage in 30-year (visual) projects – it might be more realistic to expect 10- or

15-year cycles, much like those long-term research projects that produce in-depth knowledge and specialization. Examples in human geography abound of those who have resisted the urge to 'move on', including Neil Wrigley's sustained focus on commercial geographies of the city, Dominique Moran's steadfast investigation into the carceral, or Loretta Lees' multi-decade research agenda around the city and gentrification. My counter-visualization also underlines the banal and mundane nature of what is visible and material in the city. As such, the untagged city need not constitute what Garrett (2013) captured in his 'place hacking' expeditions, from abandoned tunnels to forbidden vantage points. So much of the untagged city is hiding in plain sight. The same goes for capturing the slow city, with enough patience and time. These insights constitute the final contribution: a revamped visualization of the slow and untagged city that better values the comparative and the recurring as a way to complement the in-depth, care-full and unique.

To visualize material inequalities of the city is to enact social justice, in terms of exposing it and accusing the power structures of neglect (or worse). The profile of photo-activism was significantly raised by the Black Lives Matter marches in Summer 2020, and how they underlined a key motivation behind my 30-year project: to visualize inequalities of the city is also to *bear witness* to events and places that fall outside of the powerful fabrics of cities, and accuse the powers behind those inequalities. Photography becomes a form of witnessing and accusing, firsthand experience and long-term engagement (Garrett, 2013), so that despite the ubiquity of the visual, there is still "a magic to photography, the uncanny, of making the familiar strange" (Hunt, 2014: 161). As Vergara (2016: 3) saw it, "I see my role as an informed, stubborn witness. The humble ways in which people in inner-city neighborhoods shape their surroundings deserve to be recorded and understood – even if this may appear insignificant".

My counter-visualization also connects to broader contexts and trends in visualization across the social sciences and beyond. Within geography, at least two models seem to dominate: geo-visualization and the participatory. While the former does have some qualitative aspects to it (see Muenchow et al, 2019), the second most clearly complements my own approach. There is much to commend in participatory research, whether photo elicitation (having others comment on photos) or the more in-depth auto-photography and Photovoice (self-created images by the researched, as part of participatory methods) (e.g. Castelden & Garvin, 2008; Johnsen et al, 2008; Lombard, 2013). Participatory models are thus based in co-production, which gives voice to those who are usually 'spoken for' by researchers. Particularly apt for capturing the everyday places and marginalized populations, co-production enables a more diverse picture of excluded groups but also their resistance to imposed representations. Spiegel (2020) underlined how Photovoice realigns, transfers and ultimately reverses the usual power relations and "semiotic responsibility" between (powerful) researcher and (subordinated) researched, recovering missed knowledge of people and places. Although my own approach was solo, some of it was still done in solidarity with particular places and people, especially through the case of Southwest Montréal.

As a final thought, slow visual practice and production should also to create a space independent of the various challenges from the digital world itself. Here I return to Instagram and the idea of the 'Instagram city' – that despite a glut of visual production using digital platforms, popular urban imagery remains remarkably narrow in its representations of city fabrics in favor of the powerful. Although academic visual research is not usually framed by Instagram (but see Boy & Uitermark, 2017; Davies et al, 2019), its very existence acts as a cautionary tale about how a more democratic visual production does not necessarily yield better representations of the city, albeit with potential for raising larger issues of social justice (see Richardson, 2020). The question therefore remains, if academics do not critique and

counter the Instagram city, who else will? For as Wyly (2010: 508) warned in terms of urban photography, “if critical, thoughtful urbanists withdraw, we will be left with a world portrayed only by individuals and institutions that regard cities as spaces of accumulation, consumption and elite privilege”.

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