



to view and discuss final projects (the 5<sup>th</sup> is the last day of class, but depending on the number and length of projects we could also meet the 12<sup>th</sup> which is reading day.) FYI 10 students from last year's class presented at the IVSA meeting in Brooklyn and next year's conference will be at Goldsmiths College, London. The only university to offer Ph.D's in Visual Anthropology and Visual Sociology.

A word about the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human subjects. The last time I taught this course everyone did the same kind of assignment – to make a 4 minute video on some topic related to education using still photos and voice over narration. I will show some examples. We all applied to the IRB and the project was judged to be “stories” and *did not fit the definition of research that produces generalizable results*. So the class was excused from the IRB. HOWEVER, if you intend your project to be part of a MA thesis or Ph.D. Dissertation you should absolutely apply to the IRB. Similarly if it involves under-age persons, or anyone at risk (sex, drugs, protected populations) you must apply. Your Chair will have to agree to be the PI (principal investigator). The main website is <http://researchadmin.asu.edu/>

The website for research on humans is:

<http://researchintegrity.asu.edu/humans>

The forms are at:

<http://researchintegrity.asu.edu/humans/forms>

You will need to do an online course and take some quizzes at

<https://www.citiprogram.org/Default.asp?>

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## WHAT IS VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY?

There are three main techniques in visual ethnography: 1) the use of cameras to record elements of the social or material world, 2) the study of images produced as part of culture, 3) the production of images to communicate research findings. Any approach can be used for seminar projects. There are both positivist and interpretivist (quantitative and qualitative) methods in use.

Using cameras as a research device can include still or motion pictures made by the researcher. Film and video cameras are particularly well suited as data gathering technologies for experiments and small group interactions, classroom studies, participant observation, oral history, life history, etc. Researcher produced visual data can be used in large scale cultural ethnographies, or in the close work of micro-ethnography or ethnomethodology. It can include giving cameras to participants and having them do the recording in projects sometimes called photovoice. There is another technique of data gathering, photo elicitation. Photo elicitation techniques involve using photographs or film as part of an interview -- in essence asking research subjects to discuss the

meaning of photographs, films or videos. In this case the images can be taken specially by the researcher with the idea of using them to elicit information, they can belong to the subject, for example family photographs or movies, or they can be gathered from other sources including archives, newspaper and television morgues, or corporate collections. Typically the interviewee's comments or analysis of the visual material is itself recorded, either on audio tape or video, etc. One might also explore techniques like providing visual technology to our "subjects" to make their own documents is what has come to be known variously as photo-voice (picturevoice, paint voice), "shooting-back", photo novella, or visual autoethnography

Visual ethnography studies visual images produced as part of culture. Art, photographs, film, video, fonts, advertisements, computer icons, landscape, architecture, machines, fashion, makeup, hair style, facial expressions, tattoos, and so on are parts of the complex visual communication system produced by members of societies. Their use and understanding is governed by socially established symbolic codes. Visual images are constructed and may be deconstructed. They can be analysed with techniques developed in diverse fields of literary criticism, art theory and criticism, content analysis, semiotics, iconography/iconology, deconstructionism, or the more mundane tools of ethnography. We can count them. We can ask people about them. We can study their use and the social settings in which they are produced and consumed. For the past several years I have been working with historic photographs, first of coal mines, later of schools and schooling.

In the context of visual communication of research findings, visual ethnography should also mean studying the work of Edward Tufte, whose remarkable books: Envisioning Information and The Visual Display of Quantitative Information should be required "reading" for every educator -- especially the most positivist and quantitative among us. Similarly, we should consider the logics of presentation of sociological and anthropological documentarians and Ethnographers like Flaherty, Lorentz, Mead and Bateson, and Wiseman. Visual ethnography also requires the development of new forms -- cartoony things and data driven computer graphics to represent complex relationships e.g., changing social networks over time, the primitive accumulation of capital, the flow of labor, relations between theory and practice.

Some excellent examples of statistical graphics can be found in the *New York Times*. Check out:  
*How Class Works*

[http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/national/20050515\\_CLASS\\_GRAPHIC/index\\_03.html?scp=3&sq=interactive%20graphics&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/national/20050515_CLASS_GRAPHIC/index_03.html?scp=3&sq=interactive%20graphics&st=cse)

*Murder in New York City*

<http://projects.nytimes.com/crime/homicides/map>

*How Different Groups Spend their day*

<http://www.nytimes.com//interactive/2009/07/31/business/20080801-metrics-graphic.html?hp>

There are exciting new developments using geographic mapping systems (GIS) where not only numeric data is used but geographic locations are pinned to photographs, drawings, stories and so on. PGIS is participatory GIS and allows people – not just researchers -- to build information systems. See Dan Collins and the McKinnon article under required readings.