
From Visual Sociology to Participatory Research: Urban Photographic Experiences

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Abstract

In this movement, which is mutating to incorporate new techniques, the residents of a low-income district have the possibility of becoming actors in the production of images that show the city and their district, a neighborhood of immigration, in a positive light, by participating in certain forms of staging local alterity. This is a form of participatory research. The evolution of the research since my first photo-sociological studies (the poorly housed population of Paris's 20th arrondissement, the cafés of the working-class Belleville district) and the position I adopt depend on the democratization of the relationship with the image, which is constantly giving rise to new forms of expression. While participatory research exists in France in various forms, it nonetheless remains less developed than in North or South America. The example of a European research project (2016) shows the relevance of using photography in close collaboration with people living in the field.

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