



Image reproduced from *Changing Works*, 2001, by Douglas Harper. Photo by Sol Libsolm

Visual Ethnography: Looking Up, Down, and Within

A PUBLIC LECTURE BY PROFESSOR DOUG HARPER
(Duquesne University, USA)

SEPTEMBER 12TH 2017 - 17:30-19:00

Ethnography assumes we can cross cultural boundaries, explaining one reality in the words of another. When we look closely at ethnography, however, we find that assumption easy to question. Word-based ethnography has, however, found an ally in visual ways of knowing. It is not that the visual dimension solves the challenge of knowing across cultural boundaries, but it establishes new possibilities, while adding new problems.

I will explore these questions by looking at visual ethnographies that study "up," "down," and "inward," pointing out how the visual dimension, in enlarging ethnography, adds to the question of what it is and how it works.

The lecture is free to attend but is ticketed; booking - via any of the following - is required:
<https://uk.patronbase.com/Bluecoat/Productions/5H2/Performances>; 0151 702 5324 or
info@thebluecoat.org.uk

Speaker Biogs:

Professor Doug Harper is an American sociologist and photographer. He holds a Chair at Duquesne University.

After his graduation, Harper wrote *Good Company*, a book about railroad tramps (1982). Harper made extensive use of photo elicitation interviews in his 1987 book, *Working Knowledge*, a sociological treatment of the rural bricoleur in America. His 2001 publication, *Changing Works*, applied the same method to the historical reconstruction of cultural memory. Harper later co-authored books on post-colonial culture in Hong Kong, Italian food culture, and the semiotics of Italian fascism, in which he researched images as method of cross-cultural communication. In 2014, he studied the sociology of public space in the Italian piazza and in the de-industrialized regions of the American Rust Belt. Professor Harper edited the *Visual Studies* during its first thirteen years and publishes extensively on visual ethnography published; his *Visual Sociology* (Routledge 2012) is a comprehensive treatment of the topic. Harper was co-founder of the International Visual Sociology Association with Leonard M. Henny and others; in 2013 he was elected its president. He has had many photographic exhibitions the world over.

Discussant: Dr Terence Heng (Singapore Institute of Technology) A photographer and sociologist, Terence graduated from the University of Oxford with an MSc in Management Research and a PhD in Visual Sociology from Goldsmiths, University of London.

Terence studies the making of ethnic identities amongst Chinese individuals through everyday rituals. In 2015, he was the inaugural winner of the International Visual Sociology Association's Prosser Award for outstanding work by beginning scholars in visual methodologies. His artistic practice seeks to combine different genres into multi-textured performances and pieces. He has published two books of poetry and/or photography, *Live a Manic Existence with a Cup of Sanity in Your Hand* (1997) and *From Where I'm Standing* (2004). His poetry/photography has been exhibited internationally. His book *Visual Methods in the Field: Photography for the Social Sciences* was published by Routledge (2017).

Chair: Professor Jude Robinson (University of Liverpool) is a social anthropologist researching in the field of critical public health. My research centres on developing understandings of how people can develop and sustain their health and wellbeing outside conventional health care settings. Current research includes an NIHR funded study of depression (PANDA); an international four city ethnography exploring perceptions of plain/graphic cigarette packaging (with colleagues from Canada, US and Australia); an NIHR funded project on visual hallucinations (SHAPE); and working with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra on their *In Harmony* project with children and families in West Everton, Liverpool.

This lecture is supported by the Publics & Practices research cluster (Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Liverpool). For more on their research and forthcoming events see <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/sociology-social-policy-and-criminology/research/publics-practices/>