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### **Title**

New Directions in Participatory Visual Ethnography: Possibilities for Public Anthropology

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### **Abstract**

New visual technologies are changing the ways that anthropologists do research and opening up new possibilities for participatory approaches appealing to diverse audiences. Participatory digital methodologies include digital storytelling, PhotoVoice, and participatory geographic information systems (GIS), as well as community-based filmmaking, and participatory digital archival research. Over twenty years ago, feminist and postmodern anthropologists led a discipline-wide discussion of the ways that we produce and represent culture through ethnographic fieldwork and writing. Few of these critics, however, challenged the notion of the written text as the central medium of anthropological knowledge. More recently, public anthropology has reinvigorated discussion of the relevance of ethnographic knowledge. In public health and other applied fields, as well as much of contemporary feminist studies, community-based participatory research (CBPR) has gained prominence, and visual anthropologists have begun to embrace participatory approaches. These methodologies produce rich visual and narrative data guided by participant interests and priorities, putting the methods literally in the hands of the participants themselves. They appeal to wide audiences, allowing for access to and production of anthropological knowledge beyond the academy. This presentation gives an overview of public anthropologists' use of new media and discusses the implications of these approaches for scholarly production and advocacy.

This downloadable chart, "The Participatory Digital/Visual Research Process," provides a schematic overview of themes discussed in the presentation.

This presentation is part of the panel, "Public Anthropology/Public Culture: Image, Voice, and Participation in Public Visual Culture," organized by Sam Beck and Carl Maida and sponsored by the Society for Visual Anthropology.

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