

Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research 10

Claudia Mitchell  
S. M. Hani Sadati  
Lisa J. Starr  
Shannon Roy *Editors*

# Re-visioning Cellfilming Methodology



Springer

# **Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research**

Volume 10

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Arts-Based Educational Research continues to garner increased interest and debate among artists, arts writers, researchers, scholars and educators internationally. Further, the methodologies and theoretical articulations associated with Arts-Based Educational Research are increasingly employed across the disciplines of social science, education, humanities, health, media, communications, the creative arts, design, and trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

This book series offers edited collections and monographs that survey and exemplify Arts-Based Educational Research. The series will take up questions relevant to the diverse range of Arts-Based Educational Research. These questions might include: What can Arts-Based methodologies (such as Arts-Based Research, Arts-Informed Research, a/r/tography, Poetic Inquiry, Performative Inquiry, Arts Practice-Based Research etc.) do as a form of critical qualitative inquiry? How do the Arts (such as literary, visual and performing arts) enable research? What is the purpose of Arts-Based Educational Research? What counts as Arts-Based? What counts as Educational? What counts as Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research be responsibly performed in communities and institutions, individually or collaboratively? Must Arts-Based Educational Research be public? What ways of knowing and being can be explored with Arts-Based Educational Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research build upon diverse philosophical, theoretical, historical, political, aesthetic and spiritual approaches to living? What is not Arts-Based Educational Research?

The hinge connecting the arts and research in this Arts-Based Educational Research book series is education. Education is understood in its broadest sense as learning/transformation/change that takes place in diverse formal and informal spaces, places and moments. As such, books in this series might take up questions such as: How do perspectives on education, curriculum and pedagogy (such as critical, participatory, liberatory, intercultural and historical) inform Arts-Based inquiries? How do teachers become artists, and how do artists become teachers? How can one be both? What does this look like, in and beyond school environments?

The book series also addresses critical questions at the intersections across the arts and education. The possible expressions of this intersection is broadly defined with particular interest in works that attend to and otherwise center constructions of Indigeneity, race, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, nationality, movement and migration, neurodiversity, and the like. The volumes in the series takes on in multiple ways including: pushing at false boundaries between disciplinary silos; theoretical foundations from questions including those regarding might be considered arts and education; and modes of expression and method/ologies that press at current constructions. In keeping with these commitments, the series continues to explicitly broaden the diversity of its editorial board in both identity and focus of research.

Arts-Based Educational Research will be deeply and broadly explored, represented, questioned and developed in this vital and digitally augmented international publication series. The aesthetic reach of this series will be expanded by a digital online repository where all media pertaining to publications will be held. Queries can be sent via email to Mindy Carter [editor.aber.springer@gmail.com](mailto:editor.aber.springer@gmail.com).

Claudia Mitchell · S. M. Hani Sadati · Lisa J. Starr ·  
Shannon Roy  
Editors

# Re-visioning Cellfilming Methodology

 Springer

*Editors*

Claudia Mitchell  
Department of Integrated Studies  
in Education  
McGill University  
Montreal, QC, Canada

Lisa J. Starr  
University of Lethbridge  
Lethbridge, AB, Canada

S. M. Hani Sadati  
Centre for Community Based Research  
Waterloo, ON, Canada

Shannon Roy  
Department of Integrated Studies  
in Education  
McGill University  
Montreal, QC, Canada

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*To the memory of Khalid Omer, who passed away on January 7, 2024, in Bauchi, Nigeria. Khalid was a passionate researcher dedicated to improving health for all in poor communities. His commitment and contributions were invaluable, and his absence will be profoundly felt. As we remember Khalid, we honor his legacy and the significant impact he made through his work. His spirit will continue to inspire us all.*

## Series Editor's Foreword

In the development of research methodologies, a definitional work is often followed by an edited volume that further documents its possibilities and a scholarly monograph that more deeply explicates its possibilities. More often than not, there follows a moment in its development where methodology then takes on additional dimensions through practice. This moment of proliferation is often where scholarship in a postdigital age, irrespective of its presence online or algorithmic push, nevertheless falls into old academic habits that tend to produce siloes of attention. As a result, works that document its proliferation, and do so across nations, academic disciplines, and perspectives, are far less common.

Part of what makes the *Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology* special is how co-editors Claudia Mitchell, S. M. Hani Sadati, Lisa Starr, and Shannon Roy have worked to document this important moment in a methodology's growth. Situating their argument within cellphilming, they speak to all such situations, first noting a lack of "sustained international dialogue on how the methodology is evolving," then hosting a two-day symposium designed to address such questions from which this edited volume arises.

This work can be therefore understood as an edited collection not only about how cellphilming is evolving, but also the depth and breadth of what the methodology makes possible. It is also as an important iteration of helpful pathways for performative documenting methodologies and how they might center questions of justice. This is to say that the *Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology* is a project that enacts what it claims to do and does so without resolving contributions into a more singular set of best practices or any other sort of false reductive posture. As a result, this book can be understood as what I call multipolyphonic, an understanding that contributions offer multiple perspectives within each work that, in turn, combine to create a collective sensible whole without the need for them to agree or be resolved.

It is also of no small significance that the evolution of the cellphone has morphed into what is often understood as the de facto device for research, something that records video with audio where all aspects of recordings are highly manipulable. Given its ubiquitous nature in daily life and research, contributions to this edited volume join scholarship that helps researchers more strategically and systematically attend to ethical questions about recording across academic disciplines, national and more local sociocultural norms and values, and populations.

Dancing through connections, possibilities, and challenges, *Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology* is divided into three overarching sections comprising 16 total chapters. Intentionally starting with its use with children, each section brings to bear three key aspects of any methodology: how it functions and what it does when used across contexts, age groups, and nuances; how a methodology can bolster justice-oriented actions and engagements; and the experiences of how a methodology might be taught to others. Here too the co-editors' construction of this volume might serve as a potential trajectory for others who wish to document similar moments in the life of a methodology, regardless of its newness or recognition.

Then there is the content of this edited volume. Centering acts of reflexivity as initial steps towards more just methodological actions, this collection presents the deep value of iteratively recursive methodological decisions across contexts and content. How the methodology operates across ages and sociocultural understandings, working so that participants retain their dignity in often difficult conversations that are, at the heart of the cellphilming, recorded. Key to these processes, and essential to this volume, are the ways that contributors document how to deepen their possibilities towards attention regarding indigeneity, race, class, gender, sexuality, and the like.

These three overarching aspects, its polyphonic nature, reflexively just processes, and critical expressions, are present in each chapter. In *Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology*, editors Mitchell, Sadati, Starr, and Roy have assembled a thoughtfully constructed, thought-provoking volume that allows contributors' work to shine in ways that provide readers a rare opportunity to observe a methodology blossom.

*Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology* is not only truly diverse in its conceptualization, expression, identities, and positionalities, but it also expands trajectories for cellphilming, more firmly situating the method in both educational research and ABER. We at the ABER series are always excited to receive work of this nature, scholarship that expands the contours of what might count as Arts-Based Research in education and does so in ways that center justice, care, and access.

On a more personal note, it has been a pleasure to serve as handling editor for this book and to have the honor of writing its forward. Part of the difficulty in articulating the shape of a performative, polyphonic edited volume is that the work is already at least triply expressed through the introduction, in each chapter, and that contributions are iteratively performative. With this in mind, rather than keep rolling, I leave you to this special, significant edited collection. *Re-visioning Cellphilming Methodology*,



in its individual chapter and its collective whole, documents how we can make a community through research and the possibilities and challenges of working justly with others.

Walter S. Gershon  
Associate Professor  
Critical Foundations of Education  
Department of Early Childhood  
Elementary Education and Critical  
Foundations  
College of Education  
Rowan University  
Glassboro, USA

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We would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for its support for our Connection grant “Re-visioning Cell-philming Methodology” which led to the virtual symposium “Re-visioning Cell-philming Methodology: An International Dialogue” hosted by the Participatory Cultures Lab, McGill University, in June 2022 and to the production of this edited book. A particularly significant feature of the conference was the participation of several international NGOs including Plan Canada, Oxfam Canada, Code and Equitas. Many of the papers presented at that symposium became chapters, and the symposium inspired several others to contribute to this book. We are very grateful to all the contributors for their chapters. We also note that much of the work at this conference led to a SSHRC funded Partnership Grant TRANSFORM: Engaging with young people for social change. We are very grateful to SSHRC and all the contributors for their chapters.

There are several people to thank for their help at the various stages of the project. Ramy Gorgis formerly of the Institute for Human Development and Well-being and Biljana Vasilevska of the Office of Sponsored Research at McGill University supported us in the development of the Connections grant proposal. Angela MacDonald of the Participatory Cultures Lab provided administrative support in relation to compiling the chapters.

We are especially grateful to Dr. Ann Smith for her insightful comments and meticulous editing of the chapters. Ann coached, mentored, and helped to polish this international collection of chapters representing fieldwork from across Canada, and from India, Nigeria, Australia, South Africa, Mali, and Sierra Leone.

Finally, we want to thank Sajneet Mangat for technical assistance in the production of the manuscript. We fully appreciate the helpful guidance of the team at Springer.

Claudia Mitchell  
S. M. Hani Sadati  
Lisa J. Starr  
Shannon Roy

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# Editors and Contributors

## About the Editors

**Claudia Mitchell** is a Distinguished James McGill Professor, McGill University, Canada where she is the founder and director of the Participatory Cultures Lab, and an Honorary Professor, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Her research focuses on participatory visual and arts-based research in addressing issues of gender equity and social justice.

**S. M. Hani Sadati** is a senior researcher at the Centre for Community-Based Research, located on the University of Waterloo campus, Canada. He completed his Ph.D. in Educational Studies at McGill University, where his research focused on game-based learning. Hani specializes in community-based research and evaluation. He has used the cellphilm technique across various projects and has led multiple training sessions on it. Furthermore, he holds a Master's degree in Women's Studies and a Bachelor's degree in Social Science Research.

**Lisa J. Starr** is a full professor and Dean in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge. She is the principal investigator for Designing and Implementing Pedagogical Strategies for addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Teacher Training Colleges. Cellphilm has played a central role in facilitating understandings of how to address SRHR as well as SGBV.

**Shannon Roy** has over 12 years of experience as a professional educator and photographer. In her doctoral program at McGill University, Shannon is interested in how art-based research, particularly cellphilm and photography, can be used as a catalyst to access educators' and students' stories. Additionally, Shannon is a research assistant in the Participatory Culture's Lab and is working on the Canadian Youth Talking about Pandemic Experiences project, helping to explore how cellfilms communicate Youth's experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Contributors

**Sarah Amodeo** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Umaira Ansari** Centro de Investigación de Enfermedades Tropicales (CIET),  
Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, Acapulco, Mexico

**Casey Burkholder** University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada

**Prudence Caldairou-Bessette** Art Education, Division of Art History &  
Contemporary Culture, NSCAD (Nova Scotia College of Design), Halifax, Canada;  
Departement of psychoeducation and psychologie, UQO (University of Quebec in  
Outaouais), Gatineau, Canada

**Anne Cockcroft** CIET-PRAM, Department of Family Medicine, McGill  
University, Montreal, Canada

**Naydene de Lange** Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, South Africa

**Sarah Flicker** Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University,  
Toronto, Canada

**Yagana Gidado** Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria  
(FOMWAN), Bauchi, Nigeria

**Felix Amofa Gyebi** Swinburne University Technology, Melbourne, Australia

**Cassandra Jones** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Fatoumata Keita** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Megan Lowthers** Dalla Lama School of Public Health, University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Canada

**Kattie Lussier** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Katie MacEntee** Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University,  
Toronto, Canada;  
Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

**Claudia Mitchell** McGill University, Montreal, Canada;  
Dalla Lama School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

**Relebohile Moletsane** University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa

**Khalid Omer** CIET-PRAM, Department of Family Medicine, McGill University,  
Montreal, Canada

**Maureen Owino** Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University,  
Toronto, Canada

**Rukmini Panda** Dalla Lama School of Public Health, University of Toronto,  
Toronto, Canada

**Nesa Bandarchian Rashti** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Aron Lee Rosenberg** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Shannon Roy** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**S. M. Hani Sadati** Centre for Community Based Research, Waterloo, Canada

**Max Schleser** Swinburne University Technology, Melbourne, Australia

**Joshua Schwab Cartas** Art Education, Division of Art History & Contemporary Culture, NSCAD (Nova Scotia College of Design), Halifax, Canada

**Grace Skahan** McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Lisa Starr** University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Canada

**Jennifer Thompson** University of Montreal, Montreal, Canada

**Lisa Wiebesiek** University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa

**Ntomboxolo Yamile** Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, South Africa

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# Re-visioning Cellphilmng Methodology: An Introduction



S. M. Hani Sadati, Claudia Mitchell, Shannon Roy, and Lisa Starr

**Abstract** This introductory chapter to *Re-visioning Cellphilmng Methodology* serves to orient the reader to the book as a whole. It starts by situating the book within the emerging body of literature on cellphilmng, dating back to the work of two South African researchers, Jonathan Dockney and Keyan Tomaselli. It then goes on to offer what is termed ‘origin stories’ in which the four co-editors each write autoethnographically about how they came to be involved in cellphilmng and how their cellphilm practices have changed over time. The third section maps out the three parts of the book, *Storying Change Through Cellphilmng*; *Technology in Change*; and *Cellphilm Pedagogies*.

**Keywords** Autoethnography · Participants · Covid-19 · Mapping

## 1 Introduction

When two South African researchers, Jonathan Dockney and Keyan Tomaselli, published their article “Fit for the small(er) screen: Films, mobile TV and the new individual television” (2009), they were speaking very broadly about how widespread access to mobile technology was revolutionizing the ways in which citizens were engaging with (and re-visioning) media, including being able to use the cellphone itself not just as a tool for communication that would replace landlines, but as a tool for both consuming and producing images. In a later article, Dockney and Tomaselli (2010) recognized the role of cellphones as components of the film and television

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S. M. H. Sadati (✉)  
Centre for Community Based Research, Waterloo, Canada  
e-mail: [hani.sadati@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:hani.sadati@mail.mcgill.ca)

C. Mitchell · S. Roy  
McGill University, Montreal, Canada

L. Starr  
University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Canada

industries and discussed the concept of the cellphilm, focusing on its cultural meanings and social value and impacts. In this context, they explained that for them the term “invention of ‘philm’” is based on the neologism cellphilms (cellphones + films)—a shorthand of sorts of films” (p. 98). This recognition highlights the fusion of mobile technology and filmmaking, emphasizing the unique nature of cellphilms as a particular form of visual and often sound expression.

Since this foundational work, the widespread access to mobile technology has become central to a social change agenda among researchers, communities, and local and international NGOs, something highlighted in many of the chapters of *What’s a cellphilm? Integrating mobile phone technology into participatory visual research and activism* co-edited by MacEntee et al. (2016). More recently, MacEntee and Flicker’s (2023) book *Cellphilm as a participatory visual method: Mobilizing opportunities for research, teaching, and social change* offers a comprehensive view of the method and its versatility in community-based settings. Notwithstanding the successes in the doing of cellphilm, to date, there have been few opportunities to develop a sustained international dialogue on how the methodology is evolving, or how critique and reflections on fieldwork can be woven into a changing environment as a result of Covid-19. The need for this type of critical engagement was highlighted in a half-day symposium, “Why Participatory Video/Cellphilm and Why Now?” convened by the Participatory Cultures Lab (PCL), McGill University, in 2021 in conjunction with the 9th McGill International Cellphilm Festival. Later, this work was extended in 2022 at an international virtual symposium, “Re-visioning Cellphilm-ing”, hosted by the PCL on advancing dialogue about the co-production of knowledge through participatory visual approaches, particularly cellphilm (and related work in participatory video) by exploring some of the ways in which researchers and community-based practitioners have engaged in re-visioning the process. Funded by a Connections grant (Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada), the conference brought together authors working in a variety of (inter)disciplinary areas (education, health, social work, technology, and environmental issues) and in a variety of settings including work with indigenous groups in Canada, girls and women with disabilities in Vietnam, youth in conflict and refugee contexts in Mali and Canada, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in Canada, Nigeria, South Africa, and India.

Many of the chapters in *Re-visioning Cellphilm* come out of this conference. Focusing on re-visioning in participatory visual research, this book comes at a time when there is increased attention being paid to the critical role of seeing through the eyes of participants in social action and policy dialogue, particularly in the context of decolonizing. The urgent situation, for example, of older adults often isolated in long-term care homes and communities as a result of lockdown restrictions or in end-of-life contexts in hospitals and palliative care units has drawn our attention to the *why* of authentic participation in documenting everyday life in relation to preventing or mitigating cognitive deterioration (Capstick et al., 2021). Sawchuk’s (2013) extensive work with older adults and digital technology and communication reminds us of the rich possibilities for communicating across generations. Similarly, at the height of the first wave of Covid-19 in Montreal, it was clear that mobile technology could

play an important role for refugee families for a variety of reasons, not least of which was the important role of documenting everyday life. In response, the PCL and the “Listening to One Another to Grow Strong” project in the Department of Transcultural Psychiatry, produced a toolkit *Cellphones, Connections, and Community: Harnessing Technologies to Foster Community Communications and Connections*. Some of the re-visioning addressed in the collection takes place as we work in new contexts and situations as we are seeing with ethnographies at a distance (Mitchell et al., 2022; Thompson et al., 2020) and in relation to Covid-19. The genres, the place of reflexivity, and even the timing of participatory engagement might vary as a result of using virtual platforms necessitated by distancing (Mitchell & Sadati, 2022). The main goal of the book is to advance critical perspectives and re-visioning in relation to the co-production of knowledge through cellphilm. The book contributes to further decolonizing cellphilm methodology to support participatory work in new ways (especially in relation to Covid-19 and beyond) and with underrepresented groups in relation to such areas as age, race, and sexuality. A special feature of the book is that many chapters build on partnerships between NGOs and researchers, supporting a much greater reach in relation to community-led research. Overall, we hope to extend, challenge, and influence debates and research within visual methodologies (cellphilm) to develop an understanding of community-based research and education. We also hope that this book will reach a burgeoning body of researchers, practitioners, and NGOs interested in participatory visual methods in social research.

## 2 Our Cellphilm Origin Stories: Reflexive Accounts

An enduring question in social research and especially participatory visual research is this: “How did you come to be doing this work?” Most researchers in the area will know something of the story of Caroline Wang’s ground-breaking photovoice work with Chinese women farmers, but there are stories that abound in relation to why and how. Another question that should be asked in relation to those who have been doing this kind of work over time is: “How has your practice changed?” We use the word “should” because we are concerned that sometimes this work can seem to be fixed as some sort of orthodoxy. We publish an article, or a book based on what that has already been done but typically a new project, a new setting, or a new set of circumstances offer new possibilities and we do not often get a chance to talk about the changes and adaptations. This is precisely what Raissadat (2021) explored in a doctoral thesis based on interviews with six participatory visual researchers, and it is a theme touched on in the book *In My Life* (Walsh et al., 2022).

Given the context of this book and its focus on re-visioning, we thought that it would be fitting for each of us to offer a short reflexive piece on some aspects of re-visioning in our cellphilm practice. Even though we have worked together and, for that reason, have experiences in common, we do not have a single story,

and so our shared interest in autoethnography<sup>1</sup> allowed us to reflect on some of our cellphilm-making origin stories.

## 2.1 *Where Am I in This Picture?—Claudia Mitchell*

For me cellphilm-making as a participatory visual methodology started with my conducting participatory video workshops in several rural communities in South Africa dating back to 2006 and primarily in relation to HIV and AIDS and gender-based violence. In these workshops, typically organized around open-ended prompts such as “in my life” and “challenges and solutions to addressing HIV and AIDS” I was inspired by the grassroots film making work of two Canadian film makers, Shannon Walsh and Monica Mak who were both deeply involved in providing community-based training in film making. Through our workshops in Vulindlela district, we arrived at a straight-forward No-Editing Required (NER) approach to community video as part of a set of steps that continue to frame most of my work with cellphilm-making (brainstorming, storyboarding, the film shoot, group screening and reflection). Early on, this process also came to encompass the creation of what I termed the “composite video” (Mitchell, 2011, p. 161), a video-based approach to compiling the visual data into production for engaging participants, communities, stakeholders, and other researchers in meaning-making. As further explored in *Participatory Visual Research* (Mitchell et al., 2017), in some cases these composite videos included both photovoice data and participatory video (see *Our Photos, Our Videos, Our Stories*), and others were entirely a video of videos (see, for example, *Youth-led Community-based Approaches to Addressing Gender Violence*). This is something that I now see as a precursor to participatory data analysis. The widespread access to cellphones even in rural South Africa in 2011 meant that there could be a democratizing of the process and it was no longer the research team transporting in and out of the community expensive inaccessible video-making equipment. And critically, it meant that participants themselves could begin to own the data in ways that they could not with participatory video. This has, of course, been an evolving process. Working with Super 8 film with ninth grade students in a rural school in a fishing village in South-Western Nova Scotia years earlier had prepared me for the excitement of the collaborative process and served as a foundation for the workshops I would be part of in 2006. Had I not heard of Dockney and Tomaselli’s term cellphilm-making would I have gotten to this point? I am not sure. The naming of cellphilm-making and the recognition of the significance of transmedia production brought in such a new element to film making. And had I not had a wonderful group of colleagues at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and graduate students at the PCL, McGill University right there in 2010–2011, would we have ever gone into this work so deeply? What has never changed is the *seeing eye* of film making and video

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Mitchell and Sadati (2022), Mitchell (2016), Starr and Mitchell (2024), Roy (2021).

production and the recognition that in spite of a set of steps (with some important adaptations over time on visual ethics) no two workshops are ever the same. But what has changed over time is a greater appreciation for the facilitation process and where I am (along with other facilitators) in the picture and the enormous responsibility and accountability that is part of the process and also that sense of constant theorizing-in-practice.

## ***2.2 Social Engagement—Lisa Starr***

In my first year as an Assistant Professor at McGill, I had the good fortune of being presented with an opportunity to travel to South Africa to work with Gender Focal Persons from four Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) colleges in Ethiopia. I had no idea of the power of cellphilming as a participatory visual methodology for social change. Nor did I ever expect to be welcomed into a global community of engaged researchers committed to supporting girls and young women using their voices and experiences to positively impact the school and community contexts in which they found themselves. Over the past nine years, I have found that many people unfamiliar with Participatory Visual Methods, begin with similar questions that I did.

Cell Filming?

No, cellphilming.

Like, making a video with a cellphone?

Yes, that's part of it but not really.

Often my colleagues, drawing on their own depth of experience doing cellphilming, have responded patiently explaining that a cellphil is much more than a visual production. I have listened to and read their explanations as they passionately contextualize the power of cellphilming. I have listened to deeply thoughtful conversations about the social impact cellphilming has had in an array of communities of young people who have been historically disempowered given society's norms and values.

At one of the most recent cellphilming workshops I participated in as a co-facilitator with my amazing colleagues, Claudia Mitchell and Jennifer Thompson, we were asked once again about the purpose and value of cellphilming. The person asking compared cellphilming to videos like those that have exploded through apps like TikTok. This was a key moment for me in the evolution of my understanding and belief in the value of cellphilming. After working with these accomplished cellphilming partners, I feel grounded in my ability to do socially engaged, participatory research that can make a positive impact in the world. When I completed my Ph.D., I hoped that being an academic would be more than lectures and a list of academic publications. I had no idea that cellphilming would also profoundly impact my own belief in and approach to research. So, this time when the question about cellphilming



was asked, I responded. After several years of learning alongside educators, students, and other researchers, introducing new cellphilm techniques and genres, illuminating the cultural and social challenges people face, engaging in deeply reflexive and relational conversations about the purpose of research, and drawing on all of the interactions of which I have been honoured to be a part, I was the one passionately explaining the power and value of cellphilm.

### ***2.3 Cellphilm as an Art Form—Shannon Roy***

I was first introduced to cellphilm during the first year of my Ph.D., working on “Canadian Youth Talking about Pandemic Experiences”,<sup>2</sup> This provided an opportunity for youth to write their messages, stories, and views regarding the pandemic through cellphilms. The films immediately captivated me as I witnessed the diverse ways each person chose to convey their thoughts through this medium. Being an artist, a former art student, and a long-time art teacher, the philosophical question, “What is art?” has always intrigued me. This project reignited my contemplation of this long-debated topic. As I immersed myself further in the project, I began to perceive each cellphilm as a unique artwork. The range of films varied from simple vlogs to raw or lightly edited dramatic storytelling, polished and professional-looking mini-documentaries, and everything in between. Each film possessed its own distinct spirit and expressive qualities.

Initially, I viewed cellphilm simply as a visual method—an efficient, participatory, and compelling way to collect data. However, I now firmly believe that cellphilm is an art form. It goes beyond being merely visual; these creations are intended to convey a message to the viewer. The incorporation of visual and auditory elements, along with other film components (music, cinematography, animation, etc.), further solidified my belief in cellphilms as works of art. Hearing participants talk about their cellphilm creations also contributed to my understanding of cellphilms as art. Participants were dedicated to their pieces and could speak about them with depth and often passion, commenting on the art elements, their creative process, and what their films conveyed.

Moreover, I came to recognize cellphilm as an effective means of expression and communication for many different types of individuals. The efficiency of the medium, coupled with its wide range of approaches, techniques, and possibilities, provides many entry points for both skilled filmmakers and those with no prior filmmaking experience. With the wide range of opportunities for creation, participants are not burdened by troublesome production issues. The only expectation for participants is to address the question(s) we put forth, alleviating much of the pressure that sometimes intimidates art makers.

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<sup>2</sup> Young People, Well-being, and Connectedness in the Time of Distancing was a two-year project (Mitchell, Sadati, Andersson, Starr and Low) funded by Quebec’s Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

My encounters with cellphilming since the “Canadian Youth Talking about Pandemic Experiences” project have deepened my appreciation for the medium as an art form. The diverse range of film styles and the medium’s creative freedom make it a powerful tool for self-expression and communication, transcending my initial expectations for the method in many ways. I look forward to how I will see cellphilming used in education, research, and policy change in the future, as well as how I will use cellphilming myself in upcoming projects.

## ***2.4 Cellphilming and Digital Futures?—Hani Sadati***

In 2013, while working as a Coordinator of the Persian Online Puberty and Health project, initiated by Heeva Foundation<sup>3</sup> that focused on puberty education in Iran, I came across the participatory visual work of Claudia Mitchell, an advisor on that project. Intrigued by these approaches, I tried to familiarize myself more with the subject matter by reviewing various publications. Coming from a social science background, I found it fascinating to explore methods that incorporate diverse forms of visual productions with social research. This newfound knowledge and my enthusiasm to learn more eventually led me to pursue a Ph.D. at McGill University, where I engaged actively in projects conducted by the PCL led by Claudia Mitchell. My initial encounter with cellphilming occurred during an internship at Agriculture Colleges in Ethiopia.<sup>4</sup> I learned about the method and as part of my responsibilities, I organized cellphilming workshops in four colleges, collaborating with students to produce cellphilms in which they could address gender issues in their institutions. Since then, I have had numerous opportunities to expand my understanding and involvement with cellphilming through various projects, such as co-organizing the McGill International Cellphilming Festival, and conducting my Ph.D. research on the participatory development of a serious game aimed at addressing sexual and gender-based violence in Ethiopian Agriculture colleges (Sadati, 2021).

Through the Re-Visioning Cellphilming Methodologies Virtual Symposium,<sup>5</sup> and the insightful chapters in this book, my understanding of the cellphilming technique has significantly deepened and expanded. I have come to realize that cellphilms, as artistic and visual products, are shaped by cultural texts that could vary across diverse socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, analyzing these cellphilms may yield more relevant outcomes if carried out by the workshop participants themselves or by individuals already familiar with the cultural texts used in the films. When we are conducting

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<sup>3</sup> Heeva Foundation is a Canadian charity focusing on education projects for Farsi speaking children.

<sup>4</sup> Agricultural Transformation Through Stronger Vocational Education (ATTSVE) project, funded by Global Affairs Canada, aimed to promote a market-focused agricultural system in Ethiopia while fostering gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness in the agriculture colleges (see [www.attsvsve.org](http://www.attsvsve.org)).

<sup>5</sup> Hosted by the Participatory Cultures Lab and Institute for Human Development and Wellbeing aimed at fostering critical dialogue and reimagining the collaborative production of knowledge through the medium of cellphilming.

research that involves researchers and participants from different regions characterized by cultural disparities, we need to employ a decolonial approach in analyzing the cellphilm in their respective cultural contexts of production.

Also, while the cellphilm itself holds significance as the final product of a participatory process, it is crucial to recognize the importance of every phase of the production journey. Each step possesses the potential to create a profound impact. For instance, the pre-screening dialogue between the girls and their parents (see chapter [““There Is No Connection Between Us and Our Children at All”: Pre-screening Dialogue as a Way to Establish Intergenerational Relationships”](#)) can serve as a platform for meaningful conversations among various stakeholders. Similarly, the questioning and discussion that follow the screening can unveil the stories behind the cellphilm, shedding light on deeper narratives (as seen, for example, in chapter [“The Story Behind the Story: Accounts of Youth Cellphilm-Makers on Their Experiences of the Pandemic”](#)). Thus, every phase of cellphilm production has the capacity to foster dialogue and engagement among stakeholders, enriching the overall experience of participants and researchers and potentially leading to more accurate data collection and community empowerment.

Finally, as technology progresses, the cellphilm process has the potential to experience further evolution that needs to be explored. One pertinent question is whether it is possible to determine an end period for a cellphilm in its lifespan. Additionally, it is worth examining how emerging technologies like Virtual or Augmented Reality and Artificial Intelligence may impact the future of cellphilm as a digital medium. Exploring these aspects will contribute to a deeper understanding of the ongoing development and possibilities in cellphilm.

### **3 Overview of the Book**

We have organized the book into three main sections. The chapters in each section offer a unique take on what re-visioning might mean for cellphilm as a participatory visual methodology. We call the first section *Storying Change Through Cellphilm*. The chapters in this section highlight the new and diverse ways in which cellphilm is being used either because of the participants themselves or because of a particular angle or focus. The second section, *Technology in Change*, draws together a set of chapters that remind us, in different ways, of the technology of cellphilm through the use of cellphones and other devices in an ever-evolving area. The chapters in the third section, *Cellphilm Pedagogies*, are all related to what is an emerging area of participatory visual research more broadly through curriculum, facilitation, and professional learning.