

## Resources and Links:

Barone, T., & Eisner, E.W. (2011). *Arts Based Research*. SAGE publications.

Centre for Arts-informed Research Website: [www.utoronto.ca/CAIR/](http://www.utoronto.ca/CAIR/)

Clover, D.E. (2011). Successes and challenges of feminist arts-based participatory methodologies with homeless/street-involved women in Victoria. *Action Research*, 9 (1), 12-26.

Clover, D.E., & Stalker, J. (Eds.). (2007). *The arts and social justice: Re-crafting adult education and community cultural leadership*. Leicester: NIACE.

Etmanski, C. (2007). *UNSETTLED: Embodying transformative learning and intersectionality in higher education: Popular theatre as research with international graduate students*. PhD Dissertation, University of Victoria.

Finley, S. (2005). *Arts-based inquiry: Performing revolutionary pedagogy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; Mullen.

*International Journal of the Creative Arts in Interdisciplinary Practice (IJCAIP)*. Website: [ijcaip.com](http://ijcaip.com)

Knowles, J.G., & Cole, A.L. (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Norris, J. (2009). *Playbuilding as qualitative research: A participatory arts-based approach*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Photovoice Canada Website: [photovoice.ca](http://photovoice.ca)

Quinlan, E. (2010). New action research techniques: Using participatory theatre with health care workers. *Action Research*, 8 (2), 117-133.

Special Issue on Arts and Action Research (2011). *Action Research*, 9 (1).



Community Mapping in Havana, Cuba. UVic researchers and community members distribute the research map by painting it on a building, as paper for copies is limited.

## Creative Methods in Community-Based Research (CBR)

Creative methods in community-based research:

- Are based on an understanding of knowledge creation and sharing that views the creative methods as valid, important ways of doing community-based research.
- Consider creative practices as having the potential to access and stimulate thoughts in diverse ways.
- Can be used individually, and in combination with other methods, to enrich and increase understanding.



[uvic.ca/ocbr](http://uvic.ca/ocbr)

### For more information:

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UVic Campus Wayfinding Banner Tree. Created by UNI 101 students with instructors Brenda Beckwith (Environmental Studies) and Ken Josephson (Geography).



University of Victoria

Office of Community-Based Research

# Introduction

Community based research (CBR) is an approach that recognizes the strengths of the community as a core aspect of the research process and promotes the equitable involvement of all partners including community members, academic researchers, and community agencies. Because the approach already acknowledges different ways of knowing, creative methods can be a natural fit. Creative methods, which include arts based research, operate on the assumption that traditional research methods are not the only means for gathering and creating knowledge and understanding. Researchers who use creative methods see them as not only different ways of accessing and creating understanding but also as processes for sharing

knowledge without depending on an empirical scientific method. Creative methodologies can create new spaces and ways for researchers to understand and learn from each other.

A myriad of creative participatory methods are available for use in CBR initiatives, including, but not limited to: film-making & digital story creation; community mapping; photography; painting; popular theatre; collaborative written narratives; poetry; quilting; singing; murals; carving; storytelling and social media processes—the creative possibilities are endless. In choosing a method, the research team needs to consider such things as:

## Community applicability

Are the creative methods ones with which the community is familiar? Are they part of their culture, identity and heritage? In considering what methods to use, the researchers must take into account historical relationships between communities and different creative approaches.

## Ethics

Unique ethical questions arise when working with creative methods. How anonymous can the creators be? Who owns the piece created? Who gets to say how it is distributed? All of these are dependent on the creative methods chosen, and invoke issues of consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and protection from harm that differ from within traditional research methods.

## Community abilities

The researchers must also consider what skills are available in the community, as well as the cost involved in using the approach. For example, it might be interesting to see what community members would film if they had hand-held cameras, but cameras and video-editing software may be financially inaccessible, and video-editing may not be something that community members know how to do or want to learn. Researchers must strike a balance between teaching the conventions of a particular art form, and allowing participants to explore the approach for themselves.



Research participants, Jill and Shylene, work on a mosaic in the *Street Women's Art Project* initiated by UVic Faculty of Education.

## Examples:

### Participatory video and homelessness research

This project is part of an ongoing Community-Based Research Laboratory research initiative using participatory video. In this project, ten informal recyclers (“binners”) have been trained in the use of cameras and video-editing technology to share their opinions and experiences. The intention of this project is to empower the binners to speak about issues that are important to them.

*The MOTHERS Pilot Project – Social Enterprise and Participatory Video with Bidders in Victoria, B.C.* For more information: [cbri.uvic.ca/en/Projects/mothersproject.html](http://cbri.uvic.ca/en/Projects/mothersproject.html)

### Participatory theatre and sexual education

The *Are We There Yet CURA* aims to produce and mobilize knowledge that is jointly useful to university researchers and community organizations in the fields of teen sexuality, education programming, and participatory theatre. The strength and uniqueness of this project lies in the diversity of its inter-organizational, interdisciplinary, and national membership. See: [www.ualberta.ca/AWTY/research.html](http://www.ualberta.ca/AWTY/research.html)  
Munro, B.E., Selman, J., Esmail, S. and Ponzetti, Jr., J.J. (2007). Are we there yet?: Using Theatre in Sexual Education. *The International Journal of Diversity in Organisations Communities, and Nations*, 7 (3): 131-138 . [brenda.munro@ualberta.ca](mailto:brenda.munro@ualberta.ca)

### Photovoice in Toronto homelessness project

This research project represents the joint efforts of researchers and community members to empower homeless people in Toronto to be able to tell their own stories through the use of photovoice.

Halifax, N.V.D., Yurichuk, F., Meeks, J., & Khandor, E. (2008). Photovoice in a Toronto Community Partnership: Exploring the social determinants of health with homeless people. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships: Research, Education and Action*, 2 (2), 129-136.

### Creative methods and interdisciplinary research

Lutz and Neis describe the issues, challenges, and opportunities for respectful community based research, and dissemination of knowledge in several coastal communities of Canada and document, in a critical and reflexive fashion, what an interdisciplinary team of researchers engaged in Coasts Under Stress learned about moving and integrating knowledge from community to university and back. The volume includes chapters on research that used a variety of creative approaches including participatory filmmaking, community science, and collaboration with indigenous elders among others.

Lutz J. & Neis B. (Eds.) (2008). *Making and Moving Knowledge: Interdisciplinary And Community-Based Research in a World on the Edge*. Montreal QB: McGill-Queen's University Press.



Robin Hood (PhD) and Brionny Penn (PhD) interview Liana Bidout-Cisneras (Cuba) and Beth Ferguson (USA) about their CBR projects.