**UNIT 2—*Latina/o Photography in the Social Sciences (Blog)***

Researchers have traditionally considered photography and social sciences-related disciplines as distinct “exploration[s] of society” (Becker 3). However, recent consideration of photography has shifted from a discrete form of social commentary to a form of visual evidence used in the social sciences. This transition marks photography not so much as a visual complement to social science research, but—as Carlos Miguel Ferreira and Sandro Serpa write—both a “process” and “product” that may be used to construct and represent a certain reality in social science research (63). Photography’s use in the discipline of social sciences has also been considered relative to its innate potential to evoke “social change and human behaviour” (Ferguson n.p.).

As a social science-based researcher, you are interested in exploring the use of photographs as forms of evidence in the field, particularly images focused on representations of the Latina/o culture. To this end, you decide to create a blog analyzing a selected photograph used in a social science-related publication.

This unit will be designed to encourage you to think not only about photography as a form of scientific evidence, but to consider how photography engages us and creates a narrative in and of itself.

**References**

Becker, Howard S. “Photography and Sociology.” *Studies in Visual Communication*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1974.

Ferguson, Tristan S. “Using Visual Methods in Social Science Research.” *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

Ferreira, Carlos Miguel, and Sandro Serpa. “Photography in Social Science Research.” *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2020.

**Rhetorical Chart**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Purpose** | **Audience** | **Role** | **Rhetorical Situation** |
| Blog post | Dynamically engage and inform non-expert readers about visual representations (photographs) of the Latina/o culture in the social sciences, particularly considering such photographs as “evidence” and narrative tools. | Non-expert public with an interest in social science and/or visual media, particularly photography. | Social science researcher interested in exploring how photography may be used as “evidence” in the field, and what such “evidence” may tell us about representations of the Latina/o culture. | In your role as a researcher, you are driven to publicly share knowledge and thoughts about photography as evidence in the social sciences via analyses of Latina/o representations, thereby contributing to the ongoing discussion of the use and implications of photography in the field. |

**2.1: Topic Choice and Reflection**

**(Draft due 9/30/21 by 5 p.m.; revision due 10/4/21 by 8 p.m.)**

Using the UNC Library e-research by discipline database, select a social sciences-related publication (e.g., journal article, book chapter, news article, etc.) that both discusses the Latina/o culture and includes photographs. After you read the primary text, please write two paragraphs addressing the following questions:

1) What attracted you to the publication?

2) What does the publication say about Latina/o culture; what is the topic discussed?

3) What is your initial impression of the photograph included in the publication?

4) What research questions/reflections does this story and the photograph spark?

We will talk more in class about how to search databases for relevant publications and photographs. We will also develop rubrics together in class for this assignment.

Please submit this assignment to Sakai.

**Feeder 2.2: Image Annotation**

**(Draft due 10/7/21 by 5 p.m.; revision due 10/13/21 by 8 p.m.)**

For this assignment, you will focus on the photograph selected in Feeder 2.1, this time paying closer attention—doing a “closer reading”—of the image. Using Google Slides or Microsoft PowerPoint (or any similar software), create an annotation of the photograph that addresses the following aspects:

1) In what publication does the photograph appear, and what type of publication is this?

2) Where does this photograph fit in terms of the publication’s narrative? That is, how is it used and framed as “evidence” in the publication?

3) Who was the photographer/to whom is the photograph credited? What type of background information is available about the photographer? (Take note if a person or a business is credited.)

4) What does the photograph show/how would you “read” this photograph?

5) What story is this photograph attempting to construct? That is, why was this photograph included?

We will talk more in class about what this image annotation could look like and how to “read” photographs. We will also develop rubrics together in class for this assignment.

Please submit this assignment to Sakai.

**Unit Project: Blog Post**

**(Draft due 10/19/21 by 5 p.m.; revision due 10/29/21 by 8 p.m.)**

Create a blog that is both visual in nature (i.e., a blog that highlights the photograph you are analyzing) and provides a textual analysis of the image. Your analysis of and response to the photograph should consider such questions as:

* What type of social science research incorporates visual representations of the Latina/o culture?
* How is the photograph presented as evidence?
* How may we “read” such photographs, both analytically and from an emotional standpoint (e.g., what is the photograph trying to tell us? what reality does it construct?)?
* How should we approach photographic evidence of the Latina/o culture in the social sciences?
* What type of reaction does the image evoke? Does it evoke “social change and human behaviour” (Ferguson n.p.)?

Ultimately, you want to encourage your readers to think about how photography plays a role in “proving” what is written in a social science publication related to the Latina/o culture and to think beyond “naïve realism”—that is, just seeing the photograph as it is, or as an object only—to consider what reality the photograph may construct and what it may say about representations of the Latina/o culture.

We will develop rubrics together in class for this assignment and discuss potential platforms for blog posts.