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Empowering young people through participatory film: a postmethodological approach

Antonia Canosa  
Southern Cross University

Erica Wilson  
Southern Cross University

Anne Graham  
Southern Cross University

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Empowering young people through participatory film: A postmethodological approach

Children and young people’s voices have often been neglected in tourism research, and this is particularly the case when exploring tourism from the host community’s perspective. The lack of children and young people in tourism research has been attributed to the slow engagement and adoption of alternative and critical methodologies which open up new and fresh ways of interpreting reality. The paper aims to explore the potential for participatory film to uncover the perspectives of marginalised members of the community such as children and young people. We also discuss the use of participatory film as an epistemic philosophy, and as a post-disciplinary form of methodology (or ‘postmethodology’) which is ideologically grounded. The findings suggest that children and young people feel strongly about their community and display feelings of anger and frustration towards tourists who are perceived to not respect the community and the environment. The methodological contribution of this paper lies in the use of an innovative and voice-generative participatory visual method to empower young people to actively participate in tourism research.

**Keywords:** participatory visual methods; children; tourism; post-disciplinary; empowerment; voice.

Introduction

Participatory approaches to research ‘with’ and not merely ‘on’ communities or peoples are ideologically grounded and underpinned by theoretical interests linked to social justice and democratic principles (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). Some have argued that the critical or transformative worldview is the only viable paradigmatic stance for researchers who make use of qualitative participatory approaches (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). Critical and participatory approaches to research aim to deconstruct power and privilege so that “an emancipatory praxis can be co-developed with communities and
peoples suffering oppression”, and also marginalisation (Higgins-Desbiolles & Whyte, 2013, p. 249). In participatory research, power is decentralised, and through collaboration, the ‘researched’ becomes the ‘researcher’ and is given the opportunity to actively participate in the research process (McCartan, Schubotz, & Murphy, 2012). Because of its emancipatory values, participatory research is particularly suited to uncovering the ‘voices’ and perspectives of marginalised members of the community and to initiating some form of social action to change and positively enhance the conditions in which they find themselves (Creswell, 2014).

This paper draws on a broader research project which explores how young people between the ages of 10 and 24 construct and experience childhood in a tourist destination. There is a particular focus on how young people negotiate a sense of identity and belonging amidst the continuous flow of visitors through their community. The ethnographic site of this research is the destination region of Byron Shire. Byron Bay is an important attraction situated on the far north coast of New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Tourism has been a major catalyst for the region’s economic growth and development since the 1980s (Lawrence, 2005). Byron Bay in particular has a very favourable geographic location being one of the few destinations on the east coast of Australia with north-facing beaches which provide safe bathing and excellent surfing conditions (M. Lawrence, 2005). Coupled with the alternative lifestyle and cultural diversity of the communities the region has developed into a popular domestic as well as international tourist destination.

However, the growth in residential population and the increased tourism visitation numbers have resulted over the years in a number of social pressures which are referred to by Essex and Brown (1997) as ‘tourism urbanisation’, a widespread phenomenon in coastal areas of Australia. In addition the Byron Shire Council Youth Strategy and Action
Plan identifies a number of significant issues and challenges faced by youth in Byron Shire including: high unemployment rates, discrimination, homelessness and juvenile crime associated with alcohol and substance use (Byron Shire Council, 2011). The challenges faced by children and young people growing up in tourist destinations are seldom explored in tourism research and the broader social sciences (Canosa, Moyle, & Wray, in press).

Children and young people have often been defined as a ‘muted’ or even ‘silent’ social group in society compared to research with/about other social categories. This is evident in tourism studies where children and young people’s experiences have been marginalised (Khoo-Lattimore, 2015; Poria & Timothy, 2014; Small, 2008). In particular, there is a lack of research informed by young people about their experiences of growing up in a tourist destination and their perceptions and attitudes towards tourism (Canosa et al., in press). This paper draws broadly on Childhood Studies, Tourism Studies and the sociology and anthropology of youth, to fill a significant gap in knowledge around young people’s development, socialisation and adaptation to tourism in the community in which they are raised.

Here, we focus on the participatory film component of the project, illustrating how a more nuanced and deeper interpretation of the experiences of childhood in a tourist destination can be achieved. The aim of the paper is to illustrate how participatory film offers significant potential for uncovering the perspectives of marginalised members of the community such as children and young people. A related goal, central to the thrust of this methodological section of Current Issues in Tourism, is to demonstrate how this method may be able to empower children and young people to actively participate in tourism research. In discussing these findings, we ultimately argue for more participatory and collaborative approaches to tourism research; such approaches are not only a way to
collect meaningful and insightful data, but are also a way of creating opportunities for empowerment in the lives of the people we study (Higgins-Desbiolles & Whyte, 2013).

In drawing on and integrating perspectives from Childhood Studies, Tourism Studies, and the sociology and anthropology of youth, this study is interdisciplinary in many ways. Yet we also recognise and embrace a post-disciplinary approach that moves beyond disciplinary silos and boundaries to explore young people’s experiences of childhood in a tourist destination. As Coles, Hall, and Duval (2006, p. 293) argue: “tourism studies would benefit greatly from a post-disciplinary outlook, i.e. a direction ‘beyond disciplines’ which is more problem-focused, based on more flexible modes of knowledge production, plurality, synthesis and synergy”.

Thus, we posit here the idea of participatory film as an epistemic philosophy, and as a post-disciplinary form of methodology (or ‘postmethodology’) which is ideologically grounded and most suited to exploring the views and voices of marginalised members in the community such as those of young people. While post-disciplinary thinking has emerged in recent tourism studies (Coles et al., 2006; Hollinshead, 2010), what has not yet been explored is how such thinking applies to methodology. For this reason, and in light of the discussion on participatory film and its emancipatory qualities below, we tentatively offer the concept of ‘postmethodology’. Postmethodology, or a postmethodological approach, combines and draws upon multiple methods (or bricolage) to explore ‘wicked problems’ (R.J. Lawrence, 2010), such as children’s development and socialisation in a tourist destination. We will return to the concept of postmethodology in the Discussion. The paper begins with a review of current tourism literature on participatory visual methods and, specifically, filmmaking. We then introduce the tailored approach employed in this study and discuss the findings in light of existing literature.
Participatory Approaches and Filmmaking

In the last decade there has been a substantial increase in the number of tourism studies which have taken a more critical, theoretical and reflexively oriented approach (Ateljevic, Harris, Wilson, & Collins, 2005; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011; Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015; Wilson, Small, & Harris, 2012). Matthews (2012, p. 1) argues that tourism scholarship should be “less preoccupied with the practicalities of managerialism and more concerned – or at least equally concerned – with the broader social, cultural and political processes that the management, conduct, experience, research and teaching of tourism occurs within”. The ‘critical turn’ in tourism (Ateljevic et al., 2005) has opened up fresh and unconventional ways of conceptualising the lived experiences of the participants in tourism research and has facilitated the emergence of many “missing stories of the diverse, minority and marginalized populations” (Jamal, Taillon, & Dredge, 2011, p. 145).

Nevertheless, according to Rakić and Chambers (2010) innovative research methods are still marginal rather than mainstream in tourism research. Wilson and Hollinshead (2015, p. 30) agree, demonstrating the power and potential of different forms of qualitative research in taking Tourism Studies further: “While qualitative inquiry has made significant advances within tourism studies, scholars can gain richly by continuing to cultivate forms of critical multilogicality, and by embracing some of the methods and approaches on offer elsewhere across the broader (soft) social sciences”. While qualitative approaches in tourism have indeed gained ground and are increasingly employed, studies which make use of visual methods and filmmaking are still few and far between (Rakić & Chambers, 2010).

Nevertheless, a growing body of literature is now filling this void and addressing previous omissions of the ‘visual’ (Canosa, 2014; Rakić & Chambers, 2010; Rydzik,
Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2013; Scarles, 2010). Researchers such as Rakić and Chambers (2010) and Scarles (2010) have called for more innovative methods such as photography, drawings and film in the collection and interpretation of tourism experiences. Still missing, however, are opportunities to actively involve research participants as collaborators and co-creators in the research process (see also Rydzik et al., 2013). Participatory visual research has the potential to generate new forms of knowledge/s which cannot be developed any other way (Packard, 2008).

Film and video making have a long history in disciplines such as sociology and anthropology, where they have been employed to record and document different cultures and ways of life (Parr, 2007; Pink, 2013). Participatory filmmaking, however, differs from traditional documentary filmmaking as “control over, and responsibility for, the process and product stays with participants rather than with filmmakers from outside the community” (Blazek & Hraňová, 2012, p. 153). Participatory film is grounded in a unique epistemological stance which can be traced back to the work of critical theorists including Lewin, Marx and in particular the writings of Paulo Freire (1970). The key theoretical underpinning of critical and participatory research is the “convergence of two perspectives – that of science and of practice” (Bergold & Thomas, 2012, p. 1). The concept of praxis (critical reflection and action) is, according to Freire (1970), fundamental to any claim to transformation or any agenda for change. Although reflection (or theory) and action (or practice) are subtly bound together, they have often been conceptualised as distinct and separate entities in the social sciences.

Participatory film is uniquely suited to bridging this gap between theory and practice. Through collaboration, participatory filmmaking seeks to challenge and unsettle existing structures of power and privileges in the research process (Blazek & Hraňová,
2012). In tourism research many different approaches come under the banner of participatory research, including community-based participatory research (Koster, Baccar, & Lemelin, 2012); participatory rural appraisal (PRA) (Chambers, 2008); and participatory action research (Blangy, Lemelin, & McGinley, 2010). Yet not all action research emphasises collaboration (Bergold & Thomas, 2012); to be considered ‘participatory’, the research has to be designed to foster the active collaboration of participants in the research process. Participatory research should also aim to produce co-created knowledge, ultimately directed towards empowering participants and enhancing their lives (Creswell, 2014). This is rarely seen in tourism research (see also Rydzik et al., 2013). As Higgins-Desbiolles and Whyte (2013, p. 432) contend “how often does critical tourism research lead to meaningful change in the lives of people who are disadvantaged, marginalized, dispossessed and even disappeared by a rampaging tourism force?”

In the Childhood Studies scholarship, participatory approaches to research ‘with’ and not merely ‘on’ young people are emerging as important tools of empowerment and pedagogical development among youth (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010; Kellett, 2005; Skelton, 2008). Alongside the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989), which has drawn international attention to children’s rights, a wealth of child-centred scholarship has emerged over the past 25 years across a wide range of disciplinary fields including education, social sciences and family law.

The interdisciplinary field of Childhood Studies, which has both influenced and been shaped by these developments, has as its core paradigmatic stance the need to challenge entrenched assumptions about the ways in which children and childhood are
constructed, advocating quite explicitly for a competent-child paradigm (James & James, 2008; Prout & James, 1997). Consequently, these studies offer unique insights into children’s lives, experiences and their personal interpretations of events – an opportunity to hear from ‘natives’ within the culture of childhood (Canosa & Graham, 2015). As a result, discourse has moved well beyond whether and how to involve children in research, to establish well-documented methods for research undertaken with, and even by, children (Kellett, 2005). In the current Childhood Studies paradigm, participatory methods have acquired substantial significance and popularity. These methods are often described as ‘democratised’ as the power relations in the research process are challenged and the academic researcher reinvents “definitions and practices of authority” (Dentith, Measor, & O'Malley, 2012, p. 16). Hence, the shift to more participatory approaches has also been accompanied by a call for closer attention to key ethical considerations and the important nexus between method and ethics (Graham, Powell, Taylor, Anderson, & Fitzgerald, 2013).

The impact of participatory approaches to research with children is evident in pioneering methods such as Kellett’s (2010) ‘child-led’ research approach. According to Kellett (2010) children have a unique ‘insiders’ perspective that makes them experts in their own lives, and thus they are uniquely placed to carry out research with the support and encouragement of adult researchers. Actively involving children in research becomes an empowering process which leads to “a virtuous circle of increased confidence and raised self-esteem, resulting in more active participation by children in other aspects affecting their lives” (Kellett, 2010, p. 197). In summary, participatory filmmaking is employed here to bring to the fore the voices and experiences of young people growing up in a tourist destination and to empower them to actively participate in the research process.
Methods

This paper draws on a broader research project which aims to explore the lived experiences of young people growing up in the Byron Shire. Fieldwork was carried out over 12 months and included a variety of methods such as secondary data analysis, ethnographic fieldwork including in-depth interviews and focus groups, and a participatory film project. This paper focuses specifically on data generated through the use of a participatory filmmaking activity. A group of 14 young people (briefly introduced in the findings section) participated in the film project as ‘co-researchers’, meeting once a week for a period of six weeks to discuss their views and perceptions of tourism, their experiences of growing up in a tourism community, what they liked, what they disliked and what they would like to change in their community. The discussions were taped and transcribed, and content/thematic analysis was used to identify the emerging themes.

On the basis of these discussions, the group of young co-researchers created three short animation movies to express their views and voice their concerns about tourism development in their community. The young people employed a technique known as ‘clay-motion’ whereby they created plasticine figures and moved them in small increments which were individually photographed and created an illusion of movement when played in a sequence. In collaboration with a local film maker and the Byron Youth Services (a not-for-profit youth organisation) the young people actively led the production of the films, created the stories, sets and scenes. The young people also produced their own music.

Young people thus became co-researchers in the process of analysing their social worlds, as well as co-creators of knowledge. They were supported or ‘scaffolded’ (Smith
& Bjerke, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978) by adults in this project and encouraged to think creatively about how to portray their experiences, in this case through the creation of stop-motion animation films. Ansell, Robson, Hajdu, and van Blerk (2012) suggest that non-verbal techniques provide a stimulus for discussion as well as rich data in participatory research.

The ontological basis of this study lies in the view that reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender considerations, to which we would like to add age specific values, all of which are shaped by power dynamics (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The critical and transformative worldview is thus the main paradigmatic stance of this research which is inspired by seminal authors such as Paulo Freire (1970) and bell hooks (1994); the critical turn in tourism research (Higgins-Desbiolles & Whyte, 2013; Pritchard et al., 2011) and the field of critical youth studies (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). According to this worldview, reality can and must be shaped by purposive and transformative action and should result in positive change (Pritchard et al., 2011).

Due to its inherent pedagogic nature, filmmaking is particularly suited to initiating processes of change. Rakić and Chambers (2010, p. 387) argue that visual outputs such as films can, in fact, reach wider audiences as well as “convey research findings which might not be as adequately represented through a sole reliance on words, numbers, graphs and tables”. In this case the stop-motion animations (or the final product of the filmmaking activity) were not as important as the process of filmmaking, which initiated children’s critical analysis of their worlds and facilitated the emergence of their voices (Blazek & Hraňová, 2012; Parr, 2007).

Nevertheless involving children in research, including as co-researchers, requires close attention to a number of ethical considerations including informed consent, confidentiality, risk of harm, and identified benefits. While the child-centred reflexive
approach to these has been detailed elsewhere (Canosa, Graham & Wilson, 2016), it is important to note here that this was closely informed by guidance generated through the international Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) project (Graham et al., 2013) with its emphasis on reflexivity, rights and relationship as the cornerstone of respectful, ethical research with children.

**Experiencing Childhood in a Tourist Destination**

In this study we explore how children and young people actively and creatively construct their own experiences of childhood in the iconic seaside tourist destination of Byron Bay in Australia. The young people involved in this study actively drove the production of three short animation movies which represent their views on tourism and their concerns about living in a tourist destination. Through collaboration, the young people were able to go from being ‘researched’ to being ‘researchers’ and produce creative representations of their views and attitudes towards tourism. The co-production of knowledge represents a way of acknowledging and profiling the ‘voices’ of a previously marginalised group in the community, with the ultimate goal of alerting policy makers about the needs of children and young people growing up in a tourist destination.

The creation of the films was facilitated and funded by the Byron Youth Services (BYS) a local not-for-profit community association which works collaboratively with young people to create opportunities for development and empowerment. Byron Youth Services is the primary provider of youth services in Byron Shire and has been working with young people since 1987. The youth workers at BYS have been instrumental in this research, facilitating access to the young people and working collaboratively to support the young co-researchers in the creation of the films. The young co-researchers were also mentored by a local artist and film maker who shared his passion for film with them. The films can be viewed online¹ and are explained in more detail below.
The five young co-researchers involved in the creation of the film ‘Rubbish Run’ were aged between 10 and 13 and were all boys. In the initial brainstorming session they expressed concern particularly for the natural environment in their community. Subsequent discussions revealed they felt particularly connected to the natural environment such as the beaches and the ocean. Their memories of growing up in the Byron Shire focus on their experiences of surfing, walking and exploring the beaches and parklands. When they were asked to think about what it meant to grow up in a tourist destination, they all expressed concern for the rubbish that is often left carelessly on the beaches and in the parks. One young boy argues that when visitors litter in Byron Bay it makes him feel ‘like a barbeque, sizzling angry’ (Crumb, 10). They also felt that growing up in a famous tourist destination like Byron Bay was both ‘awesome and annoying’ (Crumb, 10) as they had to deal with the crowds, the traffic and the overcrowded surf. Their sense of belonging and connection to the community is thus often challenged by tourists who often show little respect for the town and locals.

Although the young boys acknowledged that tourism is good for the economy, they still seemed to be annoyed by the invasiveness of tourists. One young boy explains ‘I got hit in the surf today, by a board...this weird body surfer knocked me’ (Sexy Rexy, 10). Sharing spaces with nonlocals is an issue that came up in many conversations with the young people growing up in the Byron Shire. As the animation ‘Rubbish Run’ reveals, young people feel strongly about their community, particularly the natural environment for which they feel a special connection. The young co-researchers decided to focus in the film on the issue of visitors not respecting their community. They created a story board (see Figure 1) for the animation titled ‘Rubbish Run’. They set the scene in Byron Bay 20 years in the future where rising numbers of tourists are littering on the beaches.
and streets of the town. The boys came up with a solution to this problem by creating imaginary laws which will see ‘litterers’ facing up to two weeks in jail for throwing rubbish on the beautiful beaches and streets of Byron Bay. The young co-researchers also wrote a newsflash headline which warns visitors of the sanctions that have been put in place in order to keep Byron Bay clean.

**Just One Piece**

The ‘Just One Piece’ movie was created and produced by a group of young girls. The brainstorming session and group discussions were held with three young girls aged 10-12 but three younger girls aged 7 helped with the production of the film including presenting the newsflash and performing a song. In this animation, we again see the young co-researchers express their concerns about the environment and particularly the wildlife in their community. They are very aware of the beauty of the natural environment surrounding them, however they also see the potential for it to be spoilt particularly in the busy tourist season when littering seems to increase. One young girl explains that *(tourists and locals need to look after Byron…small actions can make a big difference)* (Eden, 12).

The story of their animation ‘Just One Piece’ opens with a tourist throwing rubbish on the beach and thinking ‘it’s just one piece’ (see Figure 2). The effect of everyone thinking in the same way is then seen on the marine wildlife with turtles dying as a consequence. The central theme of this film is the need to respect the environment and that simple actions such as placing litter in the rubbish bins do make a difference. In a similar fashion young girls’ sense of belonging to their community is expressed in terms of their concern for the natural environment and wildlife of the area. Their views of tourists are associated with people who are *(lazy*, *(drunk*) and *(don’t really care)* (Lilly,
They expressed a particular concern about the type of tourism that comes to Byron such as young backpackers and ‘Schoolies’ (school leavers on their end of year party holiday). Lilly says there is a ‘partying and then leaving mentality in this community’. The young co-researchers expressed their feelings through the creative medium of a stop-motion animation for which they also presented a newsflash and performed a theme song.

**INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE**

**Alpacas versus Bus**

This movie was created by a group of four co-researchers aged between 14 and 16 (three girls and one boy). The theme seems to shift in this animation from a concern for the environment and wildlife to a concern about the lack of transport in the area. The co-researchers argue that buses are really expensive and getting around is hard for young people particularly on the weekend when there are fewer buses. One young girl says that ‘buses are expensive and I don’t have any money….my parents refuse to drive me places’ (Lisa, 14). Although these young people go to the local High School, they live in the surrounding areas and are thus often precluded from accessing the Central Business District in Byron Bay due to the expensive bus fares. Traffic was another issue which came up in conversation with these young locals and particularly the unwillingness of parents to drive them to Byron Bay because of the traffic conditions in the busy tourist season. Lisa argues that ‘if you miss the bus in the morning you’ve basically screwed up your whole day!’ Evelyn (14) seems to think ‘you have to be rich to live here’.

The animation ‘Alpaca vs Bus’ is according to Evelyn a ‘creative alternative for transportation that is both cheap and adorable’. In their animation the young co-researchers narrate the story of Bob who gets off a bus and is broke after paying for the bus fare. He does however have $2 in his pocket so he decides to buy an Alpaca and
creates his own Alpaca riding business (see Figure 3). This animation also portrays a theme which has come up in conversation with other young people in the area, namely the creative and entrepreneurial nature of local youth. Although tourism creates opportunity for employment, often local young people have to compete for jobs with migrant and temporary workers such as backpackers. In order to secure sustainable and viable employment, young locals have to think creatively to develop their own business ideas. Employment and lack of transport are the main issues presented in this film.

**Discussion and Concluding Reflections**

This paper has discussed findings from a participatory film project with young people who live in a popular, seaside Australian tourism destination. Findings show that the pressures exerted by tourism on small host communities such as Byron Bay may have a number of implications for young residents. However, these implications cannot be studied in isolation from the individual lived experiences and perceptions of these young people. Very few studies have explored the implications of tourism development in host communities from a child-centred perspective (Anglin, 2014; Buzinde & Manuel-Navarrete, 2013; Canosa, Brown, & Bassan, 2001; Gamradt, 1995). Previous studies show that it is not sufficient to include children and young people in tourism studies as an age cohort to predict attitudes and perceptions towards tourism (Canosa et al., in press).

In order to uncover the deeply embedded issues concerning tourism development for host communities, children and young people must be actively included and engaged in the research process. Anglin (2014), for example, employs creative media such as photography to stimulate in-depth and critical discussion among participants. Likewise,
by employing child-centred techniques such as drawing and writing based worksheet exercises, Buzinde and Manuel-Navarrete (2013) have managed to achieve a much richer picture of children’s perceptions of their socio-spatial surroundings and the boundaries created by enclave tourism development in Mexico.

Similarly this study shows the value of starting from a particular ‘critical reading of reality’ (Freire, 1970), in this case from the perspectives and views of young residents. The aim of the paper was to explore the potential for participatory film to uncover the perspectives of marginalised members of the community such as children and young people. This innovative and voice-generative method proved to be useful in extending, fostering and nurturing the agentive role of a largely silenced group in tourism studies. The filmmaking process can, in fact, be viewed as a text (Parr, 2007) which holds valuable data about the lived experiences of children and young people. Findings show that children and young people are able to make an important contribution to tourism research. Their distinctive contribution to the overall study enabled some of the nuance and complexity of growing up in a tourist destination to be explicitly identified and hence more readily understood. Engaging children and young people as co-researchers in the filmmaking process has contributed to addressing the power imbalances inherent in the research process as well as enhancing the depth and quality of the data and the insights generated. In addition, their inclusion has functioned to avoid the ‘idolatries of control’ discussed by Wilson and Hollinshead (2015) and has created opportunities for the democratisation of the research process (Brosnan, Filep, & Rock, 2015).

Based on the accounts of the children and young people involved, the experience of participating as active researchers in the creation of the films was an empowering process (Kellett, 2010). The young co-researchers perceived they contributed in an active way to the research process, which they felt increased their skills and confidence. They
also perceived their roles with the project enhanced their status in the community since they featured in the local press and received positive media attention. There was a public screening of the films in the local community, which created a space for their ‘voices’ to be heard, as well as being a way of acknowledging and celebrating their creativity, commitment and dedication to the project.

In addition to the methodological contribution of this study, we would like to add some concluding reflections that may be able to guide future research. We suggest that working with “universally applicable methodologies” (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168), within confined disciplinary boundaries may not be sufficient when exploring complex or “wicked” problems (R.J. Lawrence, 2010) such as children’s experiences of tourism. In this study we wanted to avoid simply ‘mixing’ theories from different disciplinary backgrounds (Tourism Studies, Childhood Studies, Sociology and Anthropology) but rather attempt to transgress those boundaries and disciplinary silos to explore new ways of thinking about how young people view and experience tourism. According to Coles et al. (2006, p. 295) “in comparison with inter-disciplinarity, post-disciplinarity develops (even) more flexible and creative approaches to investigating and defining objects through its insistence on overcoming the intellectual inhibitions associated with disciplinary parochialism”.

Since Coles et al.’s (2006) initial call for a post-disciplinary outlook in tourism research, there have been several attempts to conceptualise and extend its application within tourism studies (Bosman & Dredge, 2014; Hollinshead, 2010; Laing, Lee, Moore, Wegner, & Weiler, 2009; Stone, 2011), including the establishment of a network of scholars (Munar, Pernecky, & Vahr, 2015). However, little attention has been given to imagining how methodologies can capture the post-disciplinary ethos, and hence we offer here the concept of ‘postmethodology’ as an interesting area for future research. Building
on Kincheloe et al.’s (2011, p. 168) concept of ‘bricolage’, a postmethodological approach would see researchers actively constructing research methods or even co-constructing these methods with research participants/collaborators “rather than passively receiving the ‘correct’, universally applicable methodologies”, defined by the purview of one’s discipline. In doing so, the postmethodologist sees that there is no ‘one’ right way, ontologically, epistemologically or methodologically. If multidisciplinarity is placing disciplines ‘side by side’ and multi- or mixed methods is (similarly) placing methods side by side, then a postmethodological intent would transgress methodological as well as disciplinary boundaries. A postmethodologist would attempt to integrate, question, challenge and change methodological approaches, embracing playfulness and messiness, such as that offered by visual approaches like participatory film.

If the contribution of post-disciplinary thinkers is to encourage us to move beyond disciplinary shackles (Coles et al., 2006), should we not also shift beyond our methodological ones, too? In other words, as we move within, across and beyond disciplinary boundaries, should we not also move within, across and beyond methodologies? Such postmethodological efforts may, in turn, help to address the gap that is evident methodologically in tourism studies, where “there is still a strong proliferation of traditional research methods and an apparent apprehension by many to explore more innovative approaches” (Rakić, & Chambers, 2010, p. 379).

The contribution of this paper is twofold: on the one hand we have explored how participatory film offers significant potential to uncover the perspectives of marginalised members of the community; and on the other we have discussed how participatory visual methods such as filmmaking are able to simultaneously enable and empower children and young people to actively participate in research. In addition we suggest that future tourism research with children and young people should increasingly be child-centred and even
where possible youth-driven (Canosa et al., in press). The way knowledge is produced in a collaborative and dialogical way, make participatory visual methods particularly useful when working with marginalised, silenced and unrecognised members of the community such as children and young people. These methods embody the post-disciplinary ethos described by Hollinshead (2010) that is sensitive to multiple worlds/multiple truth; privileges local/host/emic knowledges; collaborative/participatory research (co-created knowledge); and a voice-generating approach. Without this collaboration or “these bonds of solidarity”, ultimately we cannot fulfil, as critical tourism researchers, the important goal of making a difference in the lives of the people we study (Higgins-Desbiolles & Whyte, 2013, p. 432).

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Note
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