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VIDEO, ANALYSIS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Contents

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this textbook is quite simple, the subject matter is rather more complex. We wish to provide an introduction to using video for social research, particularly the use of audio-visual recordings, to support the analysis of everyday social activities. The book addresses and provides guidance on the range of practical, methodological and conceptual issues that arise in using video at different stages of undertaking a study, from preliminary planning through data collection to the presentation of findings. Unlike many introductory monographs to qualitative research, we place particular emphasis on the analysis of data, including matters of transcription, observation, evidence, conception and the like. Analysis of audio-visual materials is particularly difficult given the extraordinary detail found even within a few moments of a video of everyday action. Like many other forms of data analysis, our own approach draws on a specific methodological framework, a framework that prioritises the situated and interactional accomplishment of practical action. Throughout the book however, we provide guidance, advice and recommendations that are of relevance to various types of video-based research drawing from other methodological and theoretical standpoints.

While audio-visual recordings provide unique access to the details of social action, they are relatively under-utilised in the social sciences despite their potential

for informing social research being recognised almost as soon as technologies emerged for recording visible behaviour. In this chapter we provide a little background to the uses of audio-visual recordings within the social sciences and review some of their distinctive qualities. We note how it is only in recent years that we have begun to find significant and widespread interest in using video, especially digital video, as an analytic resource. We summarise the problems and challenges that arise at every stage of the research process when using video to analyse social action.

1.2 Background: revealing elusive phenomena

It has long been recognised that visual media, including photography, film, and more recently video, provide unprecedented opportunities for social science research. Consider video, for example: Here is a cheap and reliable technology that enables us to record naturally-occurring activities as they arise in ordinary habitats, such as the home, the workplace or the classroom. These records can be subject to detailed scrutiny. They can be repeatedly analysed and they enable access to the fine details of conduct and interaction that are unavailable to more traditional social science methods. These records can be shown and shared with others, not only fellow researchers, but participants themselves, or those with a more practical or applied interest in the activities and their organisation. Unlike many forms of qualitative data, video can form an archive, a corpus of data that can be subject to a range of analytic interests and theoretical commitments, providing flexible resources for future research and collaboration. Video can also enable us to reconsider the ways in which we present the findings of social science research, not only to academic colleagues but more generally to the wider public.

Despite the enormous potential of video, even greater than one suspects of film and photography, the social sciences have been slow in responding to the opportunities it affords. Some decades ago, for example, Margaret Mead who with Gregory Bateson helped pioneer the use of visual media in the social sciences, bemoaned 'the criminal neglect of film':

> … research project after research project fail to include filming and insist on continuing the hopelessly inadequate note-taking of an earlier age, while the behaviour that film could have caught and preserved for centuries … (… for illumination of future generations of human scientists) disappears – disappears right in front of everybody's eyes. Why? What has gone wrong? (1995 (1974): 4–5)

Some 30 years later, we have witnessed the flourishing of documentary film in social anthropology and the emergence of more self-conscious, subjective and reflective approaches to the use of visual media more generally within the social sciences. However the use of video as an 'investigative tool', to inform the analysis of human activity, remains neglected within qualitative research. This may seem all the more surprising when one considers not simply the widespread availability of the technology, but the long-standing commitment to prioritising the participants' perspective(s) in naturalistic research. If the key principle of qualitative research is taking the participant's perspective seriously and prioritising the resources on which people rely

in accomplishing their everyday actions and activities, then a technology that enables the repeated, fine-grained scrutiny of moments of social life and sociability, would seem to provide at worst, a complement to the more conventional techniques for gathering 'scientific' information, at best, a profound realignment in the ways in which we analyse human activity; a realignment akin to the effect of the microscope on biology.

The seeming neglect of video and the moving image in the social sciences is particularly curious when we consider that soon after the development of instantaneous photography in the 1830s, significant implications for the human and behavioural sciences were recognised. The neurologist Guillaume-Benjamin Duchenne de Boulogne (1862), for example, used photographs to analyse facial expression and the 'méchanisme de la physionomie humaine'. These photographs provided Charles Darwin (1872) with a critical resource for his treatise on the expression of emotions in man and animals. In the 1870s Eadweard Muybridge, with support and encouragement from Leland Stanford (the founder of the University), first developed the possibility of combining a series of images to capture a sequence of action, developing the technology initially to resolve debates concerning how horses galloped (Prodger, 2003). Muybridge recognised the scientific potential of the technology, a technology that could reveal and enable scrutiny of 'elusive phenomena'. His publications, *Attitudes of Animals in Motion* (1881) and *Animal Locomotion* (1887), uniquely revealed aspects of the structure of movement and activity, both for certain species of animal as well as human beings. The discovery of the structure of a galloping horse by virtue of the use of photography is well known, but Muybridge also opened up for scrutiny such diverse human activities as standing, leaping, lifting a ball, fencing, and a woman with multiple sclerosis walking (see Figure 1.1).

In turn, these initiatives led to Etienne-Jules Marey's (1895) laboratory studies of a range of human activities such as walking, and Braune and Fisher's (1895) research on the bio-physical attributes of human movement. These early initiatives proved less influential on the emerging social sciences than might be imagined, but within social anthropology it was soon recognised that instantaneous photography, and the emergence of film, might be a distinctive and important resource for research.

Felix-Louis Regnault (Lajard and Regnault, 1985) produced an ethnographic film in the 1890s of a Wolof woman making pottery, but it is Alfred C. Haddon who is most frequently credited with first using film in fieldwork as part of the Torres Straight expedition in 1898. Haddon's initiatives had an important influence
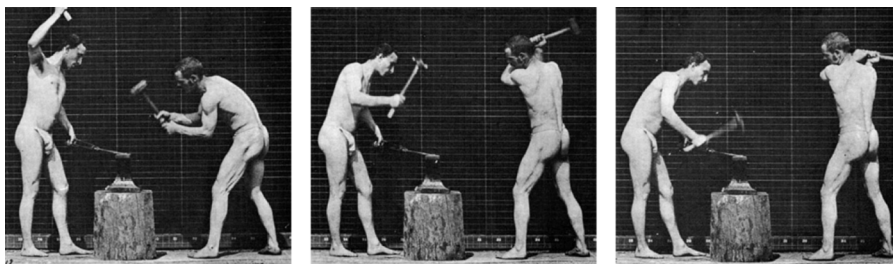

FIGURE 1.1   *Still pictures from Eadwaerd Muybridge's The Body in Motion*

on the use of film in anthropological fieldwork. They led, for example, to the substantial body of photographs and film recorded by Baldwin Spencer and Francis Gillen during their many years studying the Australian Aborigines (1899) and to Rudolf Pöch's (1907) use of film on his field trips to New Guinea.

Haddon recognised the analytic potential of moving images to capture everyday life and as a resource for the analysis and presentation of cultural practices. As Howard Morphy and Marcus Banks (1997) suggest however, this early enthusiasm for the role of film in fieldwork was not sustained, at least within Europe, during the first few decades of the twentieth century. They argue that film became tainted by its association with evolutionary anthropology and with the rise of structural functionalism, 'photography and film, as tools for the anthropological method, suffered the same fate as did art and material culture, tarred by the evolutionary brush they were left out of fieldwork revolution' (1997: 9). In North America it was rather different, film remained of some significance in anthropology, though largely it has to be said as a method of illustration, sometimes entertainment, rather than a resource to enrich analysis.

However, there were important exceptions. For example, in the 1930s, Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead used sequences of photographs to illustrate children's play and Mead, in particular, recognised the importance of a medium that enabled human behaviour and practice to be re-analysable by others. Indeed, Bateson and Mead were keen to differentiate their use of film from the documentary:

> We tried to use the still and the moving picture cameras to get a record of Balinese behaviour, and this is a very different matter from the preparations of a 'documentary' film or photographs. We tried to shoot what happened normally and spontaneously, rather than to decide upon the norms and then get the Balinese to go through these behaviours in suitable lighting. (Bateson and Mead, 1942: 49)

In rather a different vein, David Efron (1941), a student of Franz Boas, used frame by frame analysis to compare and contrast the gestures of immigrant groups in New York City and to delineate the communicative and cultural significance of these bodily movements in contrast to the idea that they are genetically determined.

Since these early beginnings, photography, film and now video, have become key elements of social anthropology (see Hockings, 1995 (1974)). They form an important subsection of the American Anthropological Association and there is a significant commitment to using film and video as data to support various forms analysis, augmented, for example, by fieldwork. There have been some highly original initiatives to use images to reveal complex sequences of action and interaction (consider, for example, Asch, 1975). Nevertheless, as Morphy and Banks (1997: 4) point out, 'the ethnographic film has tended to dominate the sub-discipline' which, they continue, 'encourages a view of visual anthropology as an "optional extra" – an entertaining introduction to the real business in hand'. One suspects that with the widespread commitment to a 'reflexive' anthropology that challenges conventional distinctions between subject and observer (exemplified in the work of Jay Ruby, 1982) and more generally the so called 'crisis of representation' in the social sciences, the analytic contribution of film and video has become overshadowed by a more self-conscious, dialogical form of film-making.

In comparison, sociology has shown less interest in exploring the opportunities afforded by photography, film and video. This was not always the case. Douglas Harper (1988) notes, for example, that between 1896 and 1916 there were 31 articles that used visual images published in the *American Journal of Sociology*, but by 1920 the use of such materials had all but disappeared. This may come as some surprise when one considers the long-standing and growing ethnographic tradition within sociology, and the commitment, at least within qualitative research, to take meaning, interpretation and practice seriously. There are important exceptions, though these are not necessarily associated with the forms of research that one would expect. For example, Jack H. Prost (1974) argues that the much-maligned Frederick W. Taylor 'laid the groundwork' to the detailed film-based study of the skills involved in performing various work tasks undertaken by Frank Gilbreth (1911).

In rather a different vein, and now more associated with psychology than sociology, Lewin (1932) used film to reveal the life of a child in an urban setting, a film that is said to have had a profound impact on theories of intelligence and learning (cf. Marrow, 1969). To a large extent, however, these latter experiments with the use of film for research, like the material gathered for Mass Observation, were largely used as documentary record and illustration rather than as a resource for the analysis of human conduct and interaction.

Notwithstanding these slow beginnings, and a post-war period in which sociology largely neglected film and the emergence of video, over the last decade or two we have witnessed a burgeoning body of research that has begun to take visual media seriously, and to use the technology as part of studies of situated practical action and interaction. It is important at this stage, as Hubert Knoblauch and colleagues (2006) suggest, to differentiate the wide-ranging interest in 'the visual' in sociology and cognate disciplines, which has formed the subject of many texts (see, for example, Banks, 2001; Pink, 2006; Rose, 2004), from research that uses video to analyse conduct and interaction in 'naturally occurring' day-to-day settings. It is the latter with which we are primarily concerned.

There is now a growing corpus of qualitative research – research which has emerged within various disciplines in the social and human sciences – that uses audio-visual recordings as an analytic resource with which to explore, discover and explicate the practices and reasoning, the cultures and competencies, the social organisations on which people rely to accomplish their ordinary, daily activities. This textbook is concerned with introducing the ways of working, the assumptions and the methodological resources that underpin these studies. These studies are first and foremost concerned with using video, in many cases augmented by fieldwork, to examine the social and interactional organisation of everyday actions and activities, the familiar and in some cases the unusual, wherever they may arise, to help reveal and enable us to analyse, the 'elusive phenomena' of everyday life.

1.3 Qualities of video

Video captures a version of an event as it happens. It provides opportunities to record aspects of social practices in real-time: talk, visible conduct, the material environment,

FIGURE 1.2   *Work in a hospital anaesthestic room*

tool use and so forth. It also resists, at least in the first instance, reduction to categories or codes and thus preserves the original record for repeated scrutiny. Unlike other forms of social scientific data, there are opportunities for 'time-out', to play back in order to re-frame, re-focus and re-evaluate the analytic gaze. These are very powerful opportunities for the researcher. They allow for multiple takes on the data – to explore different issues on different occasions, or to consider the same issue from multiple perspectives.

To illustrate, consider Figure 1.2 which features a sequence of images taken from a recording of everyday work in a hospital anaesthestic room – a space where patients are anaesthetised immediately prior to surgery. There are three participants in view – an anaesthetist, an 'operating department assistant' (ODA) and lying prone on the bed, a patient. The anaesthetist is on the left as we look at it, at the head of the patient, and the ODA is to the right. The monitor displaying various patient readings is visible in the top right hand corner of the images, underneath that there is an anaesthetic ventilator (essentially a machine to inflate the patient's lungs at regular intervals). There is a trolley with a set of medical instruments just visible in the bottom right hand corner of the images.

Within this short sequence, lasting 15 seconds or so, the activities of the anaesthetist, the ODA or both, include: checking the readings on the monitor; removing the gas mask from the patient's face; picking up a 'laryngoscope' (a tool for looking at the patient's windpipe, or 'trachea') from the trolley; handing over the laryngoscope; re-positioning the patient's head using the laryngoscope; picking up a 'tracheal tube' from the trolley; handing over the tracheal tube; inserting the tracheal tube in the patient's trachea; attaching an extension to the tracheal tube; disconnecting the anaesthetic ventilator from the mask; connecting the anaesthetic ventilator to the extension of the tracheal tube; and securing the position of the tracheal tube in the patient's mouth. Aside from a quiet 'okay' from the anaesthetist, this is all completed

without talk. Therefore the resources that the participants have to coordinate this range of actions are related to each other's embodied conduct coupled with their experience of work in anaesthetic rooms.

Not all of these actions are retrievable from the stills, but the original video recording allows for repeated viewing of these moments to enable an analyst to unpack the detailed production of the activities of the participants. In this regard the video record allows the analyst to consider the resources that participants bring to bear in making sense of, and participating in, the conduct of others, to take a particular interest in the real-time production of social order. Video can also enable the analyst to consider the ways in which different aspects of the setting feature in the sequential organisation of conduct. These aspects include not only the talk of participants, but also their visible conduct, whether in terms of gaze, gesture, facial expression, bodily comportment or other forms. Furthermore, video data enable the analyst to consider how the local ecology of objects, artefacts, texts, tools and technologies feature in and impact on the action and activity under scrutiny.

The permanence of video also allows data to be shared with colleagues and peers in different ways. Digital video, in particular, provides flexible ways of manipulating, presenting and distributing social scientific data. Even relatively basic computer software packages enable straightforward and speedy access to fairly complex ways of reproducing, enhancing and juxtaposing images. Indeed, commercially available video-editing software, even simple applications provided free for domestic use, can allow researchers to digitally 'zoom in' on interesting phenomena, 'spotlight' relevant conduct or create picture-in-picture videos to assist with analysis or presentation. Furthermore, Internet-based technologies provide a range of ways of sharing, distributing and disseminating video data and increasingly, through electronic journals, allowing digital video to be incorporated within scholarly articles.

The value of showing and sharing data with colleagues and peers should not be underestimated. A long-standing criticism of ethnography concerns the lack of its 'transparency'; critics highlight the difficulties of recovering what the researcher saw and experienced which undermines the ability of fellow scholars to form an independent judgment of the quality of the analysis. With video there is the potential for the data on which analysis is based to be made available and examined during a presentation or within a published account of the research. Furthermore, video enables colleagues, students and supervisors to work on the materials together. It can support close collaborative analytic work as well as providing others with the opportunity to scrutinise tentative observations and discuss findings with respect to the data on which they are based.

1.4 Emerging fields of video-based research

To give a sense of the potential of using video in social research, it may be worthwhile providing a brief overview of one of two contemporary fields that have benefited from it. As an example, consider the study of work and occupations, which has been informed by qualitative research since the inception of the social sciences in

the nineteenth century. Most notable in this regard is the corpus of ethnographic studies that emerged from the 1940s onwards concerned with culture, practice and the organisation of workplace activities (see, for example, Barley and Kunda, 2001; E.C. Hughes, 1958; Silverman, 1970). However, in recent years we have witnessed video-based research that has developed and re-specified some of the key concerns and concepts that informed these more traditional ethnographies. They have come to be known as 'workplace studies' and include the analysis of organisational activities in a diverse range of settings, such as surgical operations, control centres, surveillance rooms, medical consultations and financial trading rooms (see, for example, Engeström and Middleton, 1996; Luff et al., 2000b).

Video recordings of work and interaction in these settings, augmented by field-work, enable researchers to address a range of phenomena, topics and issues that previously remained largely unexplicated. So, for example, studies address how tools and technologies ranging from highly complex computer systems through to conventional artefacts such as paper documents, feature in the moment-by-moment accomplishment of workplace activities. These studies delineate, in fine detail, how participants constitute the occasioned, organisational sense and significance of particular displays, information sources and the like (see, for example, Goodwin and Goodwin, 1996; Mondada, 2007; Suchman, 1996). These studies also enable close examination of more traditional issues in organisation analysis, such as how teams work. They reveal how, for example in command and control centres or surgical operations, collaboration relies upon the ability of personnel with differing responsibilities and skills to selectively monitor each other's conduct and to render particular features of activities momentarily 'visible' or available (e.g. Heath and Luff, 2000a).

Workplace studies also enable us to recast our understanding of familiar kinds of organisational interaction, such as the service encounter and the professional–client consultation. For example, studies of call centres reveal the ways in which communication between callers and clients is systematically and contingently shaped with regard to various organisational requirements, in particular the need to complete documents, both paper and electronic (Greatbatch et al., 2005; Whalen, 1995a; Whalen and Vinkhuyzen, 2000). Such video-based, workplace studies address many of the key themes that underpin more traditional ethnographies, and yet provide a powerful and distinctive body of insights that enable us to reconsider key concepts concerning the social organisation of work.

Audio-visual recordings are increasingly used to support research that examines the situated activities and interactional organisation through which knowledge, skills and practice are shared and disseminated. These initiatives draw upon the corpus of research concerned with talk and interaction in the classroom that arose two or three decades ago (McDermott, 1976; Mehan, 1979). Video can help reveal how it is also critical to understand visible conduct, material artefacts and features of the local environment within more formal educational environments (see, for example, Erickson and Schultz, 1982; Hester and Francis, 2000; Rendle-Short, 2006).

In part driven by the turn towards situated and peripheral learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), there has been burgeoning interest in using video to also examine the ways in which knowledge is revealed, shared and embodied in non-institutional

or informal settings. This rich body of work is highly varied and it is not possible to do it justice within a few sentences. However, some examples may give a flavour of the topics considered. Barbara Rogoff (2003) considers the cultural variations in problem-solving by mothers and toddlers. In rather a different vein, Marjorie Goodwin (1990; 2006) develops a highly sophisticated analysis of children playing games. There is also a growing corpus of video-based research concerned with the interactional and contingent organisation of learning in settings such as museums, galleries and science centres (Ash, 2007; Callanan et al., 2007; Meisner et al., 2007b), and in more complex organisational environments, including studies of how surgical training is accomplished in operating theatres (Koschmann et al., 2007; Mondada, 2007).

Film, and more recently video, have also been used in the analysis of interpersonal communication, in particular the non-verbal or visible aspects of human behaviour. Although within the fields of psychology and social psychology such research typically took place in experimental settings and laboratories, the emergence of robust and portable video equipment made it possible to undertake more naturalistic studies. An important interdisciplinary project in this regard emerged in the early 1950s at the Institute of Advanced Study at Stanford University and is known as 'Natural History of the Interview' (see Leeds-Hurwitz, 1987). This project, initiated by Frieda Fromm-Reichmann (and also involved Gregory Bateson, Henry Brosin, Charles Hockett, Norman McQuown and Ray Birdwhistell), gave rise to a highly distinctive approach to the study of human interaction, an approach that has come to be known as 'Context Analysis'. This formed the background to a range of extraordinary studies, including those by Birdwhistell (1970) of bodily motion and conduct (see, for example, his wonderful descriptions of smoking a cigarette or hitching a lift), Albert Scheflen's (1973) analysis of psychotherapy sessions, and directly influenced a range of fine grained studies of human behaviour including the analysis of mother–infant interaction (e.g. Condon and Ogston, 1966).

Developing from these foundations, Adam Kendon (1990) has developed a wide-ranging body of film and video-based naturalistic studies of social interaction that has had a profound influence on the analysis of visual communication and gesture. His studies demonstrate how visible behaviours, such as facial expressions, gaze orientation, and bodily comportment, are not simply manifestations of inner cognitive states or emotional dispositions, but serve in the complex coordination of human behaviour. From these insights, research has emerged that systematically delineates the social and interactional accomplishment and foundations of gesture (see, in rather different ways, Haviland, 1993; McNeill, 1992; Streeck, 1993). Such studies have led to a reconsideration of the relationship between talk and bodily conduct. They suggest breaking away from the idea that communication consists of distinctive channels for the verbal and the non-verbal, to demonstrate the ways in which social action and interaction involves the interplay of talk, visible and material conduct.

Alongside these academic contributions, there is also growing interest in using video-based research to address more practical problems and to contribute to policy and practice in a broad range of domains, both in the public and private sector. For

example, video and video-based studies are used in communications skills training, to inform the design of advanced technologies and to unpack consumer behaviour in shops, supermarkets and even in the home. The distinctive access that video provides to human activities as they are accomplished in everyday settings, and the ability of video to reveal to others the complexity and character of the mundane, can prove highly insightful and persuasive for practitioners, and help to address a range of distinctive problems that people face in the performance of their everyday activities.

1.5 The challenges of using video for social research

The burgeoning body of video-based qualitative research within various disciplines reflects the growing recognition that the medium offers important analytic opportunities and ways of (re)addressing long-standing topics and issues within social science and the humanities. Despite the growing interest in using video for research, it remains, as Margaret Mead might suggest, 'criminally neglected', perhaps most curiously in qualitative research and, in particular, ethnography. This may not be as surprising as it first seems. Video-based, qualitative research does pose a number of important practical, ethical, methodological and analytic problems and yet, as Knoblauch and colleagues (2006) suggest, despite a significant corpus of studies that use video as data there are few guides or guidelines on how to undertake video-based research.

Even before any research is undertaken difficulties may arise. Ethics committees can become concerned at simply the suggestion that cameras and microphones will be used to record naturally-occurring activities. There are also common practical problems that arise when trying to record using video equipment. But perhaps the most significant problem is that audio-visual recordings of everyday activities, as data, do not necessarily resonate with the theories, concepts and themes that inform dominant approaches to research in the social sciences. In consequence, and unlike field observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups, it proves difficult to link video-based research into more conventional approaches within the social sciences.

This textbook is concerned with providing guidance to those who are planning, hoping to start or are beginning to use video to support their research. This advice is intended not only to be practical but also help address academic concerns. As some readers might be intending to use video for the first time it may be helpful to review some of the main issues and problems that can emerge. They are best summarised firstly in terms of issues that arise in undertaking data collection, secondly, in terms of problems that arise in undertaking the analysis of materials, and thirdly, in terms of challenges associated with the presentation of insights, observations and findings deriving from the analysis of video.

Collecting data

High-quality equipment is now readily available at a reasonable cost and many leading researchers gather useable data using high-end domestic video cameras

coupled in some cases with separate microphones. There are, however, long-standing debates as to how best to access and record scenes, activities and events. Some of the questions and queries that arise include the following:

- How can you gain access and permission to record in a setting? (See Chapter 2)
- How do you address the moral and ethical issues that arise when planning to video record naturally-occurring events? In particular how to obtain consent from the participants you will be recording? (See Chapter 2)
- Is it best to gather materials in one intense period of data collection or undertake this in successive phases? (See Chapters 2 and 3)
- Where should the camera be placed and what focus and framing should be used to capture key events? How much recorded data should be collected? (See Chapter 3)
- Should you focus on collecting video or try to make field observations at the same time? If you do both, what sorts of observations are useful? (See Chapter 3)
- Is it possible to assess the 'influence' of the camera on the participants in the scene? Are there ways in which the presence of the camera and the researcher can be made less obtrusive? (See Chapter 3)

These questions and queries are by no means new. Similar problems and issues arose when film was originally used in the human and behavioural sciences, and they have served to generate discussion and debate over the last century or so. More importantly perhaps, these are not simply practical problems to be over-come, but rather derive from important methodological debates. For example, how one determines the field of view of the camera during data collection. Even the duration of recording during a single session will depend upon a decision concerning what constitutes the context of action and the analytic framework that will be brought to bear on the data. If, for instance, one is interested in addressing the role of facial expressions during interpersonal communication then it will be important to capture close-up images of the face. If, on the other hand, the guiding methodological focus is with the collaborative and contingent accom-plishment of activity, then it will be critical to encompass the contributions – visible, material and spoken – of the all participants who contribute to its production. Methodological assumptions and presuppositions about such matters as context, agency, participation, action and the like have a profound influence on how we resolve the problems and issues that arise in data collection. These methodological commitments also underpin how we resolve some of the analytic problems and issues that arise in using video as data.

Analysing audio-visual recordings

The analysis of audio-visual recordings of naturally-occurring activities and events has proved a significant challenge to the social sciences. Indeed it may not be surprising that there is a trend in social anthropology and elsewhere, to use video and film for illustrative and documentary purposes rather than as a form of data. The following covers some of the practical and methodological questions that arise when undertaking video analysis.

- Where do you begin? Is it necessary to review the whole data corpus? If so, how do you identify, select and categorise actions and events? (See Chapter 4)
- How can you begin to identify particular phenomena, understand the organisation of an activity and analyse particular actions and activites? (See Chapter 4)
- How do you build a case – an argument – for an analysis? Is it helpful to build collections of extracts to enable more detailed comparison? (See Chapter 4)
- What role does transcription have in analytic work? Should all data be transcribed? How can you transcribe the visible as well as the vocal aspects of conduct? (See Chapters 4 & 5)
- How do you consider and address the 'context in analysing social action and inter-action? (See Chapter 5)
- What is the relationship between different forms of data that are gathered? For instance, how should field observations be used to inform the analysis of the video recordings? (See Chapter 5)

Presenting and disseminating findings

Aside from questions that arise in data collection and data analysis, there are a range of issues and problems associated with presenting and publishing video-based studies. It is interesting to note that in other areas of qualitative research that are based on the analysis of recorded data, such as in discourse and conversation analysis, it is relatively rare for scholars to play the actual recorded material – they largely rely on presenting transcripts of the original data. The publication and presentation of video-based studies are constrained by the conventions and conventional media through which academic research is disseminated. Notwithstanding the recent emergence of innovative technologies for dissemination, it is likely that we will have to continue to work, at least in part, within the limitations of text-based media.

Issues that emerge when presenting and publishing data include the following:

- Given the fleeting nature of many of the 'elusive phenomena' that are addressed in video-based studies, how is it best to guide a live audience through an analysis? (See Chapter 6)
- How can you present fragments of action drawn from an audio-visual recording in publications and reports where, to a large extent, it is not possible to accompany text with CDs, DVDs or other ways of displaying moving images? (See Chapter 6)
- How have video-based studies contributed to the core issues and debates in the fields of sociology, psychology, education and cognate disciplines? (See Chapter 7)
- How can video-based studies of everyday action and interaction be shown to be relevant for those in the world of business, social policy or for the participants in the studies? (See Chapter 7)

1.6 Appreciating everyday life

This textbook addresses the key issues and challenges in working with video recorded data in social research. While many of the issues we discuss are common

to many, if not all, social scientists working with such data, we will inevitably be emphasising our particular methodological orientations and interests. This will be most evident when we discuss analysis (Chapters 4 and 5) and reflects our own interest in exploring and revealing how everyday conduct and interaction is accomplished. A secondary aim of the book, therefore, is to foster an aesthetic of the everyday (see Silverman, 1997), an analytic appreciation of the taken-for-granted elements of social interaction. These aspects of conduct are subtle, fleeting and readily overlooked and yet they underpin the organisation of social and institutional life. We aim to show the fundamental significance of these minutiae of human conduct for those with an interest in understanding sociability, interaction and social organisation.

Key points

- There is a long and diverse history in using film and video for research in the social and behavioural sciences.
- Video can be subject to a diverse range of methodological and analytic interests and provides new and distinctive ways of presenting culture, practice and social organisation.
- Video creates unique opportunities for the analysis of social action and interaction in everyday settings and can help provide distinctive contributions to observation, method and theory.
- Video-based research of everyday life poses significant challenges to more traditional approaches to gaining access, data collection, analysis and the presentation and publication of materials.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Paul Hockings's edited collection (2003) first published in the 1970s. It features papers that exemplify a broad range of approaches to using film and video in anthropology. It draws out some of the principle methodological and theoretical problems and issues of using these media.
- Hubert Knoblauch et al. (2006) provides a wide-ranging exposition of qualitative video analysis built around a series of empirical studies adopting different approaches and techniques.
- Goodwin (1981) is an exemplary and highly detailed video-based study of social interaction.

EXERCISE

Chose a particular event or activity – for example, a medical consultation, political debate, or dinner party – and discuss three different approaches to using video to explore and examine its social organisation.