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# Photo-Interviewing to Explore Everyday Occupation: Benefits and Issues

This article sheds light on the potential and the limitations of photo-interviewing for the study of human occupation and, in so doing, reflects the rapid growth in the use of participatory visual methods in a number of other disciplines. Drawing from a study that explored first person perspectives of participation in everyday occupations by people with osteoarthritis of the hand, the paper considers methodological issues related to using participatory visual methods. Participants were asked to generate photographs depicting aspects of their lived experiences, which were then used for photo-interviewing. Empirical data are presented that emphasize the productiveness of participants' verbal interpretation of photographs. Photo-interviewing was found to engage participants in reflections on everyday life to a greater extent than conventional interviews and proved to be particularly well suited to generating knowledge of embodied everyday life experiences. Despite the fact that there were a number of methodological issues that require close consideration, when used appropriately visual research methodologies may help researchers to access rich information about everyday living that may otherwise be lost in conventional interviewing.

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Visual research methods have been employed in a variety of fields such as anthropology, cultural studies, sociology, organizational studies, psychology, education and public health (Drew, Duncan, & Sawyer, 2010; Harper, 2002; Lorenz, 2011; Pink, 2011; Warren, 2005). The case for their potential contribution to occupational science research has recently been argued (Hartman, Mandich, Magalhães, & Orchard, 2011; Wright-St Clair, 2012). Visual research is a broad category comprising a variety of practices. Some approaches follow a realist tradition recognizing images as data in their own right, while others emphasize the constructiveness of images and their

interpretation (Warren, 2005). Participatory visual methods, which include photo-elicitation, photovoice, informant-directed photography and participatory video (Pink, 2011), are a sub-category featuring research participants' involvement. Participatory methods can be regarded as a postmodern dialogue based on the authority of the researched rather than the researcher (Warren, 2005).

The aim of this paper is to highlight photo-interviewing as a possible visual method for occupational science research. Data from a study of participation in everyday occupations among persons with hand osteoarthritis is here used to shed light on

the potential and the methodological issues involved in using photo-interviewing. The intent of the paper is to explore the usefulness of the approach to increase understanding of human occupation.

## Methodology

This study followed guidelines governing the ethics of qualitative studies in social science research conducted in Denmark, and was approved by the Danish Data Protection Agency (ref. 2010-41-5423). It complied with the Helsinki Declaration. The primary ethical issues with regard to visual research methods concern the subjects' informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity (Harper, 2005; Hartman et al., 2011; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). Extra effort is required to protect participants and any other people photographed from harm. In the study reported here attention was paid to providing thorough information about ethics concerning photography in the private sphere, and about the intended use and ownership of the photographs. It was acknowledged that "questions of ownership of research materials can become complex but should be negotiated and agreed before they are produced" (Pink, 2009, p. 18). Signed permission was obtained from the participants to use their photographs for research dissemination purposes.

The study was based upon the theoretical framework of social practice theory and critical

psychology (Dreier, 2008; Lave, 2011; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Mørck & Huniche, 2006). According to this framework, people are seen as actively engaging in and interacting with the environment on the basis of the conditions under which they are living. The conduct of everyday life, for example, is viewed as actively arranged and carried out and experiences are investigated from the standpoint of people concerned. The framework is guided by a focus on life *conditions* of importance to the participants' conduct of everyday life, the *meaning* of these conditions and their subjective *reasons* for acting in specific ways (Dreier, 2008; Højholt, 2008, 2011).

## Recruitment

The study population comprised 31 participants - 26 females and 5 males. Participants were recruited through gatekeepers at an outpatient clinic and from volunteers who responded to an article about the study in a magazine published by a rheumatism association. Participants were purposively selected based on having a diagnosis of hand osteoarthritis,<sup>1</sup> disease duration, sex, profession, relationship and employment status. The paper focuses on 11 participants (9 females and 2 males, between 57 and 74 years of age) who agreed to make<sup>2</sup> photographs and to participate in subsequent photo-interviews. All participants consented to being interviewed at home. An overview of participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of Participants

Participant	Age	Relationship status	Profession	Photographs
Barbara	62	Married	Occupational therapist	59
Betty	65	Married	Psychologist	4
Carla	61	Married	Nursing assistant	19
David	64	Married	Policeman	26
Doris	67	Married	Pedagogical assistant	89
Frederick	65	Married	IT consultant	28
Greta	57	Divorced/ single	Senior lecturer	25
Henrietta	62	Married	Medical secretary	2
Olina	63	Married	Prosthetist & orthotist	8
Pia	73	Widow/single	Nurse	6
Winnie	74	Married	Secretary	11

### **Data collection and analysis**

As experiences of everyday life are taken for granted and therefore often go unspoken in interviews, we looked for research methods that could facilitate participants' articulation of the tacit meanings behind their everyday occupations. Visual methods were chosen as they seemed to prevail over other approaches with regard to their potential to a) advance communication in ways that go beyond the verbal, b) enhance collaborative modes of investigation, c) be manageable for both participants and researcher, and d) involve low costs after an initial outlay (Warren, 2005). Further the approach provides flexibility and is adaptable for use with different populations in different settings and can be combined in multiple ways, for example with individual interviews, focus group interviews, and so on.

In the present study, digital cameras were chosen for technical and ethical reasons. They are technically superior to disposable cameras as "digital photography is immediate, requires no chemical processing and images can be readily converted into a variety of file formats for storage and display" (Warren, 2005, p. 865). Furthermore, digital cameras are easy to operate for people, such as this target group, with impaired hand function and they produce high quality images requiring almost no prior skills or training. They also speed up the process when used in conjunction with interviews, as there is no need to print photos prior to interviewing. The ethical reasons were related to technical features. Participants had easy access to viewing their photographs on the camera's display screen, they could delete any photographs that they did not want to share with the researcher or make a copy for themselves, and, most important, they retained control of their photographs. Viewing the photographs together during the follow-up interview offered a second opportunity for participants to delete any unwanted photographs.

The present study went through the following four stages. First, an initial interview was conducted with all participants (31) focusing on the research topic. At the end of the interview, they were asked if they wished to take part in the visual photographic

part of the study, which would be followed up by an interview. Second, the 11 participants who volunteered were given a digital camera with technical instructions, and guidance about ethical issues. They were asked to take photographs of situations reflecting what it was like living with hand osteoarthritis, focusing on occupations and experiences that represented possibilities or limitations in their everyday life. In order not to limit their imagination and creativity, participants were told that any photographs they found relevant to the way they live were welcome. Photographs were taken over a period of 2-4 weeks. A date for a follow-up interview was agreed upon.

Third, individual follow-up interviews lasting 1-3 hours were conducted. Focus group interviews were not possible due to geographical distance between participants. Their photographs were used to guide the interview and were not seen by the researcher prior to the interview. The agenda for the interview was thus set by the participant and his or her photographs, which were shown on a computer's wide screen by inserting the SD card from the camera into the SD slot of the computer. Questions posed during the interview allowed for participants' reflections and perspectives. They were asked to explain what each photograph was about, what the motivation had been for making it, how it related to their everyday living and so on. The photographs became reference points for the discussion, which opened up for wider discussions about how hand osteoarthritis affects everyday life. The participants' accounts formed an initial analysis of the photographs.

Fourth, interview material from initial and follow-up interviews was analysed by the researchers using conventional techniques for interview analyses and based on the study's theoretical frameworks. Analysis of photographs was undertaken within their interview framing and with respect for the participants' integrity. Occasionally an entire conversation about other contexts was deemed extraneous. Packard (2008) made the point that "photographing is an act which renders some things visible, and therefore important, and other things invisible and less important. Furthermore, the act of seeing is

inherently subjective” (p. 69). Pink (2007) also noted that researchers should be interested in “how informants use the content of the images as vessels in which to invest meanings and through which to produce and represent their knowledge, self-identities, experiences and emotions” (p. 82). It is very important, therefore, to get the photographer’s explanation about his or her motivation for making the picture and about what ‘to see’. The researchers aimed to conduct the photo-interviews along those lines.

The 11 participants produced 177 photographs in total, the majority of which were of good quality. Some participants had put a great effort into arranging images, sometimes with the help of others, whereas other participants made do with taking snap-shots. Others had been asked for help to operate the camera when, for example, the aim was to photograph a participant’s hands doing something like opening a jar, lacing shoes, and so on. Some photographs exemplified or nuanced issues that had been brought up in the first interview. Two participants declined to participate in a follow-up interview but wanted to e-mail photographs later, which they did. They said that they did not expect to have more to add than had already been addressed, but they would like to contribute some photographs that could amplify some of the issues already articulated. In general participants were positive towards the idea of taking photographs.

All interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim and then analyzed in conjunction with photographs. Warren (2005) suggested an analytical strategy in which photographs are used as data, not as illustrations or even simply as objects for analysis. The strength of visual methods is not simply cumulative because when researchers are “able to examine both the content of the photographs and the motivations behind making a particular image, the result is a sum greater than its constituent parts” (Packard, 2008, p. 69). In the present study, the analysis of photographs was embedded and included in the analysis of the interview material and carried out thematically. All interview

transcripts were analysed within the theoretical framework of critical psychology and social practice theory and with regard to the overall aim of the study. The analysis was directed, therefore, by the researchers’ attention to *life conditions* significant to the participants’ conduct of everyday life, to the *meaning* of these conditions and to the *subjective reasons* for participants acting in specific ways (Dreier, 2008; Højholt, 2008; Mørck & Huniche, 2006). Data were gathered from 2010 to 2011.

### Photographs as Significant Data

Three themes arose from the analysis: photographs promoting reflections, photographs as outcomes of multisensory contexts, and their self-revelatory potential.

#### *Photographs promoting reflections*

In conjunction with interviews, photographs have the potential to contribute significant data by evoking a different kind of information. The combination of photographs and interviews provides unique access to detailed information about how participants understand their social world (Harper, 2002). This is exemplified below by a few cases.

Doris was a participant who eagerly took on the photo assignment and involved her husband and friends in making photographs of events and occupations of her everyday life. In the follow-up interview she spoke about it sometimes being a “*joint venture*” to arrange and create what she felt would be the best images. Doris was determined to show both the possibilities and limitations that she experienced in living with hand osteoarthritis. Her photo series included photographs of her performing enjoyable occupations like playing tennis, going to fitness training, fishing and gardening alongside household chores and playing with a grandchild. Some photographs were meant to show some of the difficulties she struggled with, such as digging in the garden or wringing out a cloth in the kitchen. This very significant and distinctive information was only revealed when the photographs were verbally described and framed during the interview session.

The tennis photograph, Doris explained, was made to illustrate that she was capable of playing racquet sports despite her hand osteoarthritis. Though tennis was the overall subject, the photograph was meant to address issues beyond tennis as well, being motivated by Doris' wish to display and thereby discuss some of her physical capabilities, the occupations she enjoyed, her social networks and strategies to keep fit. Doris played badminton in winter and tennis in the summer season. The photograph provided an opportunity to talk about Doris' relationships with both her material and social environments and to discuss conditions relevant to sporting activities, differences in sports' networks and so on. The photograph helped to focus the discussion and yet prompted a discussion beyond the immediate subject.



Figure 1: Doris' dahlia

Doris took much pride in growing dahlias in her allotment garden, and she was aiming for the annual prize for the most beautiful garden for the third and last time possible in the garden community, where she and her husband lived the majority of their social life. This picture of a beautiful dahlia was made to illustrate some of the hardships Doris experienced with her hand osteoarthritis and expanded some of the concerns she had addressed in the first interview:

*And that's the worst - having to dig in the garden now in the autumn and to dig out dahlia tubers. It's so cold! So, I just pick 1 or*

*2 days and say 'Now I'll do it'. And I know that I'll be in pain. And then it is over.*  
(Doris, 67)

Digging out dahlia tubers from the cold, clay soils in November had become an almost impossible and daunting occupation as her hand osteoarthritis worsened. It was an annual activity required in caring for the dahlias, and she feared it more and more each year. Doris had tried ways of adapting the activity, like using gloves or garden tools, but without success. After the digging her hands would be painful, swollen and would not function for several days. She would sit in her living room doing almost nothing and wait for it to pass, while feeling sad about her functional limitations. Doris' dahlia photograph evoked information that was shared with much passion and promoted a rich imagery of contexts and comparisons.

Another participant, Frederick, chose to e-mail his photographs without participating in a follow-up interview. Instead he attached a document explaining what the photographs were about. One photograph depicted Frederick tapping the keys of his computer keyboard while sitting at his desk. He had three keyboards, each with different ergonomic design, as well as other computer related equipment on the desk. The quantity and characteristics of the equipment needed for him to work in his home office presented a vivid example of his struggles and his strategies to manage challenges of everyday life with hand osteoarthritis.



Figure 2: Frederick's computer equipment

In the enclosed document, Frederick explained his photograph as follows:

*Over the past 20 years I have upgraded from an ordinary mouse to other tools, like a wireless mouse, which allows for more varied positions. Sometimes I also use wireless keyboards and sometimes even in weird and inappropriate positions but for variation. (Frederick, 65)*

Even when explanations and reflections about the photograph were given in writing rather than orally, they gave rise to richness in their contexts and comparisons when combined with the photograph. Frederick's photographs complemented his verbal accounts about managing the challenges of everyday life that he had addressed in the initial interview. He was concerned about the aggravation of his hand function that he felt, and he feared for his functional capacity in the future. With that in mind and setting these fears alongside his written explanations, it was possible to capture what he was trying to communicate through his photographs. The semi-structured interview provided only just sufficient basis for understanding the life contexts he had framed in the snap-shots. Frederick provided chunks of text as his accounts of the experiences he depicted, and these were invaluable in the analysis process. He was a retired teacher but he had continued working almost full-time as an information technology consultant in his own company. Computer work was therefore an important and meaningful occupation for him, and he had worked hard to find solutions that could relieve some of the pain he endured. Due to his skills and knowledge in IT, he was able to arrange and adapt his computer equipment frequently and to accommodate his needs as best he could to enable him to work on the computer for some hours each day.

In general the photographs gave the participants the opportunity to distance themselves from their ordinary routines and enabled them to articulate some of the knowledge they took for granted. Photographs give considerable room for interpretation and explanation. The photographs and photo-interviews added to the initial conventional interviews by clarifying contexts, relationships and

individual concerns. This conclusion is supported by Harper (1998), who stated that 'images allow us to make statements which cannot be made by words' (p. 38). As demonstrated above, interviewing in conjunction with photographs is the preferred option, but if that is not viable the second-best alternative is to get the photographer's written explanation of the photographs.

#### **Photographs as outcomes of multisensory contexts**

Multisensory contexts comprise experiences of person, body and relations with the world (Pink, 2011). Occupations and contexts of everyday life are often thought to involve knowledge that is regarded as rather mundane and taken for granted. People are actively engaged in doing things every day – performing occupations that are necessary and require planning and orchestrating to permit everyday life to unfold in all its complexity in the best possible way and in relation to individual life circumstances and conditions. This orchestration of everyday life often goes unnoticed, and we may not even have words for it. Photographs are good at facilitating communication about such tacit knowledge. They are visual objects reflecting knowledge and experiences (Pink, 2007).

Photographs hold simultaneous information communicated on different levels and from the various multisensory contexts in which they were produced. The initial semi-structured interviews were well suited to detecting problems in coping with the demands of everyday life, whereas the photo-interviews proved to be effective in identifying related aspects of the embodied and multisensory experiences of everyday living. The photographs were interpreted during the interview, where they constituted a reference point for unfolding the multiple layers of meanings and contexts.

A good example of how photographs can be analyzed as outcomes of multisensory contexts is provided by the photo series made by Barbara. She had illustrated some of the challenges she encountered in managing everyday life by making photographs of sequences of events. Some sequences were about the problems she experienced dealing with daily occupations and some about their

solution. The photograph showing Barbara opening a bread-bag clip with a knife and using the plastic clips to close the bread-bag afterwards is one in a sequence of four.



Figure 3: Barbara's bread-bag and knife

*Here I'm actually showing how I remove these clips and that is a pretty risky business. I usually use a tea spoon or something and lever it under these (she points at the clips). The red ones are incredibly difficult for me to open and I can't put them back on again. I can't tighten them enough. So that's why I have bought these shown on this picture. (Barbara, 62)*

Barbara used visual language to give a vivid explanation and to elaborate on her challenges. Her photographs proved to be effective at conveying her embodied experiences. To illustrate this same point, she had also made a photograph of opening the lid of a jar of mustard with a special device called a jar key:

*It [the jar key] can just get a hold underneath that smooth plastic edge and the lid being soft you can tilt it up and then take hold with your fingers. And you can see on this picture how well it fits in the hand. (Barbara, 62)*

The photograph and her statement supplemented each other effectively and neither would have made sense without the other. The photograph prompted a vivid explanation of the embodied



Figure 4: Barbara's jar key

experiences she depicted. Without the photograph any talk about the use of a jar key would probably have lacked details regarding the embodied experiences of using it.

Some participants made more subtle statements about the embodied experiences expressed in their photographs. Olina made photographs conveying experiences along similar lines to Barbara. She had baskets of all shapes and sizes in her three storey house, as they helped her carry things between the floors without dropping them, for example when she felt her hand grip was unreliable or when she could not use her thumb due to the pain.

*I have plenty of baskets. I use baskets for all kinds of things. And this one is especially good if I am to carry several items and can't use my thumb. Then I can poke my fingers through on each side - just these fingers, right? And then I can handle it. (Olina, 63)*

The photographs easily conjure up an image of what Olina is trying to explain about her embodied experiences on days when her thumbs were painful. Olina's baskets were custom-made for her. Some of them (like the one with her fingers poking through the sides) have special handles for safe carrying without using her thumbs.

Another photograph made by Olina showed her holding hands with her husband. Olina entitled this photograph "A loving but aching handful". She made it to say how much she missed holding hands with





Figure 5: Olina's special basket

her husband and how sorry she was no longer being able to do that as much as she liked.

As exemplified above, the visual nature of photographs allows them to communicate a range of aspects of everyday life, and they can prompt many details that are likely to remain unspoken without them. Aspects that remained implicit during the



Figure 6: A loving but aching handful

initial interview thus became explicit through the dialogue about the photographs, as was noted by Harper (1998) and by Rose (2007). Photographs such as those made by Barbara and Olina, constituted opportunities for researchers to empathize with participants' multisensory experiences of activity and participation in the contexts of everyday life, confirming Pink's (2011) view that the practices of seeing, taking photographs or viewing them include more than merely visual dimensions. Talking about the photographs facilitated the researchers' understanding of the layers of meaning residing under the surface of the objects depicted.

### *The self-revelatory potential of photographs*

Two participants in particular expressed surprising reactions towards their photographs. For these participants, making photographs constituted a new way of accessing their own first person perspectives, which triggered an awareness of particular aspects of everyday living. Betty had decided years before that illness was not to take centre stage at any point in her life. When she agreed to make photographs for the study, she had not anticipated the emotional effect it would have on her. Her husband acted as the photographer when she cut and prepared vegetables for their dinner in the kitchen. What triggered her acute awareness of her limitations was just as much the focus directed towards her adapted way of cutting vegetables with secateurs that others would use for gardening as it was seeing the photographs on the camera display afterwards. But Betty did not delete the photographs nor did she cancel the follow-up interview.

At the interview, Betty elaborated on the negative emotions arising from making the photographs, which had taken her completely by surprise. This corresponds with Harper's (2002) statement that images hold the power of evoking deeper elements of human consciousness than do words. Betty associated the unexpected experience with her decision early on about not to let illness take control of her life. To make photographs was a natural and frequent occurrence in her family life, but it was always related to holidays and occupations with grandchildren. There had never been close-ups of her hands and their actions. She



Figure 7: Betty's secateurs

apologized for not having fulfilled the assignment but willingly shared the four photographs of her kitchen session and her reflections. Betty backed out of the assignment when she experienced it as intrusive, and being a psychologist, she had the ability to explain what had happened.

The process of making a photograph is complex and can possibly evoke unanticipated feelings. As illustrated by Betty, it is not an entirely innocent enterprise. During the follow-up interview, Betty conveyed a different aspect of living with hand osteoarthritis than in the first, entirely verbal, interview. Doris also expressed surprise at seeing her photographs. For her it was startling to watch an image of her hands through the eyes of an observer. At her request, her husband had made a photograph of her hands. She was surprised to see how swollen, old and arthritic they looked. She usually hid her hands when at rest. Doris expressed dislike when looking at the photographs. She could hardly reconcile herself to the fact that those were actually her hands. She remembered them looking differently.

*I was really startled when my husband had taken the picture.... And my children said: 'No, Mum? Your hands almost look like...' and I said: 'Yes! Go ahead say it: witch's hands!' (Doris, 67)*

The importance of angles in photographic research has been addressed by Harper (2002) in his study of the



Figure 8: "Witch's hands"

skills and social existence of a subject working in a mechanic's shop: "When I photographed from unusual angles, or from very close, it lead Willie (the shop owner) to see his activities from a new and interesting perspective" (p. 21). This can be set alongside Doris' reaction when watching her own hands. She was startled and upset to see how age and osteoarthritis had changed the aesthetic expression of her hands, which she reflected upon in the follow-up interview. Other participants had addressed similar things in the conventional interviews with less expressiveness and less emotion. Together these cases exemplify and echo Pink's (2011) warning against employing visual methods as a 'hit-and-run' enterprise. The cases underscore the power of images as a mix of emotionality and evidence. Photographs hold the capacity to evoke emotional or other sensations, which must be acknowledged when visual research methods are employed.

### Methodological Considerations

Compared with conventional interviews, photo interviews were found to have the potential to contribute to knowledge generation by providing a different kind of information and by engaging participants in common reflections. The combination of photographs and interviews provided access both to rich and detailed information about how participants understood their social world and to aspects of embodied and multisensory experiences. This

allowed us, as researchers, to include and reflect upon issues and information conveyed when the participants verbalized their thoughts about the images they captured. The meaningfulness of the photographs was created during their making within a particular context, as well as during the follow-up interview, which allowed for re-creation of meaningfulness in a new context. The photographs were thus more than just mirror images of reality; they contributed to ways of talking about everyday living, becoming reference points for the dialogue and opening up wider discussions about how hand osteoarthritis affected the participants' lives.

In particular, the photographs opened previously unspoken knowledge relating to everyday living by giving access to the rich imagery of contexts and comparison. They prompted many details that would likely have remained unspoken without them, generating insights into embodied everyday life experiences. Aspects that remained implicit during the initial interview with participants become explicit through the dialogue about the photographs. For example, Olina's photographs of her baskets in different shapes and sizes prompted a dialogue that revealed the extent of what she was up against and her active strategies for overcoming obstacles. The significance of her baskets had not been discussed at all in the first interview and without the photographs it could easily have remained unnoticed. Similar examples were found with other participants. The study also revealed the need for critical examination of the potential and the limitations of photo-interviewing. To further explore both the advantages and the potential drawbacks of participatory visual methods in occupational science research more comprehensive studies are needed.

The methodology underlying participatory visual methods and the theoretical framework used are alike in acknowledging the first person perspective and the interaction of subject, occupation and contexts. The theoretical framework presupposes a focus on life conditions, on the meaning of these conditions and on subjective reasons for acting in specific ways. The researchers' awareness of aspects significant for the analysis of such life conditions, meanings and subjective reasons was facilitated by the inherent

capacity of participatory visual methods to encourage first person perspectives. Finally, some issues concerning ethics within the visual research domain remain unsolved, and there is a need to critically evaluate these issues. Participants cannot be rendered anonymous in the same way as in other types of data, and this can constrain the use and development of visual methods. The individual researcher's knowledge and ethical sensitivity is therefore crucial to the guidance of his or her actions.

### ***Strengths and limitations***

Inviting participants to take photographs of their everyday lives followed up by interviews proved to reveal a rich seam of information about how patients with hand osteoarthritis perceive participation in everyday occupations. The approach enabled participants to freely bring up any aspect they wished to share. The participatory visual approach was flexible and proved to be well suited for the purpose of the study. The reliability of the qualitative analysis process was enhanced by in-depth discussion and agreement of themes between the authors. The agreed themes were repeatedly checked against the data by the first author to ensure their empirical grounding. There were also some limitations to the study. For example, self-selection of participants could lead to a sample bias. The large number of participants declining to join in the visual part of the study is also a limitation, as it remains unknown whether their photographic stories would have confirmed the usefulness of these methods.

### **Conclusion**

When used appropriately visual research methodologies may contribute to occupational science research, as they can help researchers to access rich sources of information about everyday living that may otherwise be lost in conventional interviewing. To understand the complexity of daily activities and occupations and the interrelationship to participation calls for multiple methodologies. Photo-interviewing was found to engage participants in common reflections on everyday life. The importance of being actively engaged in everyday occupations despite pain or functional limitation

was a recurring feature in the photo-interviews. There are, however, some ethical issues that require close consideration. Photographs seem to be able to reveal first person perspectives that can trigger an awareness of particular aspects of everyday occupations. It is important to acknowledge the potential and the limitations of participatory visual methods and, as a researcher, to be attentive to possible emotional discomfort or other unintended side effects that might be provoked by employing visual methods. As visual representations are powerful and layered with private meaning, it is imperative that participants are given the opportunity to interpret their own photographs.

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### End Notes

1. Hand osteoarthritis is one of the most common disorders of the joint affecting 55-70% of the adult population over the age of 55 (Dahaghin et al., 2005; Zhang et al., 2007). It is a long-term condition that impacts fine motor skills. Pain is a predominant symptom and is known to limit the individual's functions physically, psychologically and socially in the patients' environments.
2. Prompted by Warren (2005, p. 865) the process of 'taking' a photograph is referred to throughout the paper as 'making' a photograph when referring to the study and when meaningful.

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