

# Podcast Series: Let me just share my screen

**Episode Title:** Sharing our work online: A conversation with Casey Burkholder, Jean Breny, and Sarah Switzer

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**Introduction (0:08-2:56)**

**Teaser**

“I started thinking about what brought us online and why maintain online spaces for modes of sharing participatory visual work, and I think disability justice and accessibility are really key to the decision behind maintaining this practice of sharing work in online spaces.”

- Casey Burkholder

**Podcast narrator**

Welcome to *Let Me Just Share My Screen*, where we dive into conversations with seasoned and up and coming researchers about new directions in online Participatory Visual Methods research. Each episode is packed with fresh ideas, practical tips, and ethical considerations to help you plan, create, and exhibit your visual research projects. This podcast is inspired by a CIHR funded research project that gathered experiences of health researchers conducting photovoice and digital storytelling projects online with diverse communities. It is produced in partnership between the Center for Community Based Research and the Arts Informed Methods team at Trillium Health Partners.

**Sarah Switzer**

Hi everyone. Welcome listeners. We are so excited to have you tune in today for an exciting conversation on sharing and exhibiting photos and videos from online photovoice and digital storytelling projects. My name is Sarah Switzer, and I will be your podcast host for today. I am a senior researcher at the Center for Community Based Research and a Participatory Visual Methods enthusiast, much like our guest today. I'm personally hosting this conversation from my home in Tkaronto, Toronto, as situated within The Dish with One Spoon Territory. We're going to be talking today about sharing visual artifacts or products from our community based and participatory projects, whether it's digital storytelling or photovoice with Dr Casey Burkholder and Dr Jean Breny. Both have so much experience in photovoice, and participatory video and I'm just delighted to be able to engage with them and their work here today, on topics such as considerations for exhibiting video and photos from participatory visual methods projects online to the unique opportunities and challenges of sharing work in online

platforms, to juicy conversations about research ethics, policy change, and more. Listeners will find an outline of the conversation and full bios in show notes. Both of our guests have been doing this work for a long time, both in-person and online, and so have a lot of learning to share with us – so without further ado, let's jump in.

## Considerations for exhibiting online and by distance (2:57-12:53)

### Jean Breny

Hello, Sarah. It's so nice to be here with you and Casey. I have found that we've been working with some local politicians, and we will work with state politicians. It's so much easier to be able to deliver pictures online, if that makes sense, like our results online. Versus having people come together in a group setting, because we've tried that, and we can't get people [because] people seem so busy now. But to be able to display, to exhibit virtually, has been really an opportunity for us to reach more people. You know, since photovoice is done anyway electronically, and we already have the means to do that. I found it to be really a lot easier. And that's what we've been using it for, is to try to get to policy makers.

### Sarah Switzer

That's great, Jean. And I'm curious. I mean, so how do you negotiate these decisions with folks? You know, this is the negotiation of where to share or when, you know, something that kind of predates photovoice or digital storytelling online. But you know, there's some unique particularities when sharing online, specifically. So, how do those conversations come up, and how are they navigated with your groups?

### Jean Breny

So, as we all do, you know, we have those meetings at the end where we sort of do member checking, to make sure we capture the results with our participants, our co-researchers, and then have that conversation of where do you want these to be displayed? How should they be displayed? Which of the photos that you took do you want to be displayed? What words and quotes do you want to be displayed with them? And again, you know, what do we think the goal of all of this is? And so, I think those conversations happen within the boundaries and parameters of the research itself. You can't end it without figuring that out, because part of the research is also exhibiting photos. That's the beauty of this. We don't have to make all those decisions on our own. We have our co-researchers who've been involved, and they're the ones that really know what pictures and words to use. I'd love to know if there's a different way to do that, but that's what I've done.

### Sarah Switzer

Thanks so much. It's so helpful, and I think especially for folks that are new to kind of working with these methods, you know, understanding that it's really kind of baked into that process, it's not an after fact, is so helpful. Casey, what about you? You know, you work a lot with video and other arts mediums, of course, too. But what are the some of the unique particularities of negotiating these conversations when it comes to posting video exhibits or curating video collections online?

## Casey Burkholder

It's so interesting. When Jean was talking, I started thinking about what brought us online and why maintain online spaces for modes of sharing participatory visual work, and I think disability justice and accessibility are really key to the decision behind maintaining this practice of sharing work in online spaces. Like, I'm a parent, it's not always possible for me to go to all the community events that I want to go to, but when you use an online space, you open up that space to folks who may not feel safe to gather for a range of reasons. One of the really interesting things that I was able to do when pandemic restrictions sort of decreased a bit was work with participants to gather and create an exhibit of materials that were developed in response to prompts, that were created at home, that were created in online spaces. We were able to physically gather and make an exhibit in-person, and then later we took that in-person gallery and then put it online, honoring the way that participants put things together, and then in order to share it with larger publics. And that project was all about queer and trans world building, intergenerational knowledge production, solidarity building, and continuing to honor COVID protocols, as all the people around us were sort of giving them up, including, like masking when we're together, or creating spaces that are hybrid and accessible for more people. So those are some things that I was thinking. I mean, Sarah, you have such a beautiful postdoctoral project where you explored all of these like, complexities of what it means to do this work in remote and online spaces. And I think some of the things that you found, I'm not going to speak for you, but some of the things that you found continue to guide my own practice as I think about bringing work in online spaces.

## Sarah Switzer

Just to say, you know, one of the things that you share, that I think is really important for us to kind of think about, is the assumption or conflation that, like, if the project happens online, you're sharing online, right? And you're providing examples of where, like, oh, it may be done online or remotely, you know, by home. I know Casey, you've done a lot of work by mail, in rural or more remote communities, but in some cases it makes sense to then gather in-person, and really think deeply about the modes in which we gather, and you know, why we're gathering and who we're gathering with, you know? And you can also think about equity, and you know, whose voices are often excluded or not at the table?

And so, there is a project called *Beyond the Toolkit*, Casey was involved, alongside many, many others. We had a fabulous team. To learn more about the team and the project, you can check out [beyondthetoolkit.com](http://beyondthetoolkit.com), and it was a project that sought to really grapple with how we were facilitating participatory projects online during the pandemic. There are some really beautiful illustrations there by illustrator Andrea Vela Alarcón who was also on the team. Alongside some resources and videos about online facilitation.

## Jean Breny

I just wrote it down, *Beyond the Toolkit*. I'm looking that up. I'm running a list of homework assignments for myself. What I'm thinking about right now as we're talking, is, I think, because of COVID, because of the photovoice project that I was doing online, the whole time we thought we would have to do the exhibits online. We just, that was just like, sort of, I was like, ready to do that. But now it is 2024. We've been working on this for a few years, so we tried that, and interestingly, we didn't get a lot of response. COVID, for me, changed the feeling that people would want to show up in-person and do this work. But,

you know, Casey, they're doing that, right? They're coming back and they're talking about it and getting really involved in it and wanting to do more of it.

**Casey Burkholder**

Yeah, it's fascinating to hear you say that people wanted the space to gather, and I think that it's really important to consider like, what the communities in which we work desire in order to gather, either in online spaces or together in-person. It makes me think like, how do we create the digital space and or, how do we create the physical space to invite people in? Because ultimately, the goal in participatory visual research is to get that conversation going in order to move toward, you know, some kind of a local change, policy change, you know, whatever. So that's what I was thinking, Jean, as you were speaking there.

**Jean Breny**

You know how I did it, like we'd all do that. This is the first step in CBPR, right partnerships, the relationship. You still haven't talked about your by mail approach yet.

**Casey Burkholder**

I'll talk about myself all day, no problem.

**Jean Breny**

Good.

**Casey Burkholder**

During the beginning, the early days of the pandemic, so March 2020, I too received funding to encourage queer youth to gather together to create art about their identities, their sense of belonging, what motivated their activism, things like that. But of course, we couldn't gather in-person. And so, my team, Dr. Katie McEntee, Dr Abel Mandrona, and at that time, also two graduate researchers, Brody Weaver and Amelia Thorpe. We got together, we're like, how do we do this? How do we take the goal of this project, which is to build solidarities, to get folks connected across larger geographies, within the confines of the pandemic, and one of our motivating factors was resource redistribution. This is always extremely important to me. How do I take government funding and put it in the hands of community members who actually need it, rather than keeping it within the institution? And so we decided to send people monthly packages of art supplies and prompts that were themed. So folks could create art in their own homes, and then they could photograph those art pieces, share them in a digital space, and create these kinds of spaces where we could come together. So we did some conversations and artmaking workshops on Zoom. But then we also had just people share their images with particular words, and then we shared those mostly on Instagram and Facebook, because that's what we were using at that time. Now I'm going forward, it's no longer the same sort of social condition of the pandemic, though I acknowledge that actually the pandemic remains like burning all around us, and so for me, encouraging like masking is still imperative. Having things like HEPA filters when we get together. This is all really important to our in-person work. But going forward, I continued to work through distance-based approaches, so I'm taking this project. The next iteration was working with youth and elders in Atlantic Canada. Specifically, where I was located at the time. Now I have moved to Montreal. I'm going to make the project even more relevant to my life. So we're going to work with

families. It'll be intergenerational, but ages sort of five and up, and I still want to work through the mail, but Sarah told the date right now, we're looking at, you know, like late fall in Canada, and our Canada Post is on strike. I'm not going to be starting this project until that strike is resolved, which is another, like, interesting thing about facilitating, like, community engaged participatory visual research. It's always located in a time, and a context, and a place, and we're always responsive to all kinds of considerations, including, like, labor disputes.

## **This webpage is unavailable: Sharing and maintaining photos and video archives (12:54-19:39)**

### **Sarah Switzer**

That's such a great example, Casey, and in so many ways, one, it kind of like, literally, time stamps our conversation right now. But you know, one of the things that I find interesting around kind of online spaces, and I'm not sure if this is something that you both experienced in your work, or you kind of thought through, is that, like, they're not neutral, right? Like, technology is not neutral, even sending something by mail, it may seem like, oh, this kind of neutral practice, right? But it exists within a sociopolitical context. So, since the mail is on strike, it has to do with labor, labor relations and making sure that folks you know are treated well on the job in terms of workers' rights. Think about online [spaces], you know, there are all these larger questions around, like repositories and where things are stored. For those of us working kind of in the northern half of Turtle Island, in terms of Canada, like a lot of third-party apps, the data storage is actually in the US. It's not here, right? And so what does that mean? And I know Casey, you've done a lot of work in kind of participatory archiving and thinking through the ethical implications, of where work is stored and the implications for sharing that work online. Again, shout out to look up Casey's work. [She has] a chapter called "Reflexively Revisiting Three Participatory Cellphilm Archives" in a new book out called *Re-Visioning Cellphilm Methodology*. You shared this example in the article, which has happened to me before, when materials are stored online, a community agency website, rightly so, because we want the material to stay in the hands of community organizations. Then there is staff turnover. You know, that's a thing that happens. Things don't get renewed. You know, passwords get lost, and then, like, what do you do? I'm curious to hear from you, as well as Jean, you know, it doesn't have to be that example specifically, but what are the unique ethical considerations, or maybe project considerations that are unique to sharing work online, and how can folks navigate around them?

### **Casey Burkholder**

During the pandemic my co-creators, Megan Hill, who's now a PhD student with me at Concordia, but at that time was an undergraduate student at St Thomas University. We did this really cool, community engaged project where we paired ourselves with a local organization, and we asked youth online, what's the sex education you desired? You know what happened? What media did you look to learn about sex and relationships? The community came back. They gave us all these amazing answers, and then we anonymized the participant responses and created these really cute, short videos that we created on cell phones, which are also called cellphilm, and we shared them on this website that we created called SEQUYN, or the Sex Education Queer Youth Need. It was amazing. However, if you today, try to go to this website, you will find, as Sarah mentioned that it does not exist because of staff turnover, because websites were not renewed. No one has the password. And so what happens to the

work, and what do we do with this? And I'm still in the problematic stage here, because it is of a time and a place. We cannot go back to the participants and say, like, do you want us to keep these online? What do they look like? But I will say that the findings from those cellfilms continue to inform my work in sex education work with teachers, for example. And then I also want to redo the project now to find out what's the sex education that queer and trans youth need in particular in this time and place. But what do we do with this problem, which is staff turnover, and I've talked about it elsewhere too, but like, what happens if I'm the PI and participants have put me in charge of checking in on a schedule, for example, like once a year? Do you still want your piece shared online? What happens if something happens to me, then what happens to the archives? And so still, that's a problem that I haven't resolved. It's something that I talk about with participants, but we don't have, like, an answer. And Jean, I don't know about in your work, but what do you do in terms of negotiating ownership or control or whatever, of the data storage of these online archives.

### **Jean Breny**

You just reminded me of a project that I did about 8 years ago, 8 to 10 years ago, and then I'm thinking about our IRB (Institutional Review Board), or human subjects approval with how long you're supposed to store data. So I have a couple of thoughts. They always say, what are you going to do with the data? After three years, you have to destroy it, kind of thing. But all of a sudden I'm realizing art, that doesn't get destroyed, that's still up there from 8-12 years ago, like it's the data. It's not identifiable, really. But hold on to your seats, because, you know, when we published that data, we created a website on Tumblr. It's still there. You can find that website still on Tumblr. I don't know if anybody uses Tumblr. I don't even remember what that was for, but it's like a time capsule. It's a unique research tool, right? If we're doing quantitative research or survey research, or even interviews or focus groups, we're not really putting the results up on some website somewhere. It's not the same. The visual method is intended to be living somewhere when it's over. I'm thinking about that too. And our IRB is going to start asking us about these kinds of things as we go. I mean, they are, but how are we going to answer that question? I think it is really interesting. And we haven't gotten to a space where we're using online, but we don't have a platform yet to put the current food insecurity pictures on, and now I have to think about that. What does that look like? Because, oh my god, I had my own personal website, and it's completely like I can't even keep up with it, like keep with everything else in my life. How am I keeping up with that, let alone a website or whatever for a research project?

### **Sarah Switzer**

Yeah, I mean, it just raises so many questions. Like, I think it can be so easy to fall into the kind of lofty trap of being kind of over celebratory, or kind of, you know, assuming that these methods are emancipatory or liberatory in and of themselves. The internet is like, it's a complicated place, you know, and then when something is online, like you can't always retrieve it, sometimes even when you want to retrieve it. As the example you alluded to Casey, and Tumblr, you know, I forgot about Tumblr, and I'm curious to hear from both of you, like, when it comes to going through kind of Institutional Review Boards or Research Ethics Boards, as we describe them in Canada, like what, what work has to be done?

## Research ethics and accountability to communities (19:40-27:47)

### Casey Burkholder

I think it's two things. One is, yes, you have to teach the Research Ethics Board what you're trying to do. I find because I work primarily with queer and trans youth now, I also have to explain to them that there's nothing risky necessarily or inherently about being queer and trans, like it's actually quite a joyful experience, and to position necessarily a project immediately as higher risk because the participants are queer and trans, it's like a deep like macro-aggression, like, and micro-aggression. One thing that matters to me in my in my research, is if a participant creates an image and they want to claim it under their real name, it is their decision to do that. This concerns the Research Ethics Board when I work primarily with queer and trans youth. They are less concerned when I work with teachers. It's never come up when I work with a participant of teachers, even though some of those teachers may themselves be queer and trans. But to me, it requires a lot of unlearning for the Research Ethics Board, and so that's kind of falling to us as researchers to teach them. But I think that this concern about longevity and the archive over time is maybe not enough of a concern for the Research Ethics Board. So I can give an example. I did my doctoral research in Hong Kong with racialized, ethnic minority youth. They were my former students, but grown up, and we created cellphilms, or cell phone plus film making in response to a prompt about issues of identity. So like, if you grow up and you are always called quote, unquote, non Chinese, how do you see yourself as a person? How does school influence this and what sort of motivates your participation in the larger society? And all of those cellphilms had to do with the Umbrella Revolution, because of when and where they were created. We housed them all on YouTube, so the servers are in the US. Of course, service to the Patriot Act, which is problematic on its own. But, in Hong Kong now there's a new law, a National Security Law. We're not allowed to speak out about the government in any kind of a way. And even though those cellphilms still exist, they're housed in America. Participants did create them in Hong Kong, and I don't know that we could do anything like have a screening of these cellphilms 10 years later because of this new law. So even though we had approval from a Research Ethics Board to create the films with participants. We had the sign off from the schools that the participants went to. 10 years later, the cellphilms are, you know, like they still exist in the world, and yet now they can be read anew were we to show them again. I think there's something to that that maybe a Research Ethics Board might want to think about, not to curb the potential, but something to consider, maybe. I don't know, Jean has anything come up in your practice?

### Jean Breny

Well, that's so interesting. I'm thinking I've only done photovoice with still photos, and we always say to folks, find a way to express what you're trying to say without some identifier, right? You don't have to have someone's face. You can have the back of their head. You can have a book covering their face. If you really need their face, like think of some other way to express it, and of course, the photovoice piece is you bring the photo in and you describe it, so it doesn't have to look like what they're talking about. It's just, it brings that story to them. That's one main thing I've always had to talk to our ethics boards about. And the other thing is recruitment. We did a photovoice project recently with breastfeeding moms on campus to find out what is the whole social, cultural, environmental, physical environment, accessibility. What was it? What's it like to be, you know, in their world, their lived experience of that. And some of those folks were going to be students, and some are staff, and they

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must have come back to us three times to ask us how we were recruiting, making sure they weren't our own students. Now, thinking about these other issues, is that really what we're concerned about? Why are we worrying about that and not where these pictures and stories are going to be when it's going to be about our university? Quite frankly, since you talk about the data and social media being housed in the US, as somebody who's from the US, it's not even something I even think about, because, of course, we're so American central, and, you know, in this world, we don't think about that. That's interesting. And so maybe it's on us, though, now. Right, to make sure we're thinking that stuff through, because we want to make sure that our people are protected and the data is protected.

### **Casey Burkholder**

It's true, but I think maybe the answer is in community. Like yes, we have to give the REB or the IRB a little bit of help, and say you should probably consider this, but let's not give them too much help. And I think the place where this conversation really needs to happen is with participants and your research teams.

### **Jean Breny**

Yeah, you're exactly right. Casey, 100%.

### **Sarah Switzer**

Well, and this is such a fantastic and like, thought-provoking conversation, right, around the kind of role of the IRB or the Research Ethics Board, but also, like, you know, where do our accountabilities lie? And often Research Ethics Board are very concerned with risk, as we identified, which you know, is important, right? Because research has a really nasty history, you know, and we want to be thinking deeply about issues of risk. But at the same time, we also want to be thinking deeply about issues of benefit and community benefit. And as we move our work online, Casey, your comment on, you know, how do we fold these conversations into the work we're already doing with our co-researchers, with the communities that we work with? You know, that's just so important. Especially for many communities who might actually be quite savvy, right? I'm thinking about a lot of young people I work with like I am a luddite. I don't know anything about social media. And some of the young people I've worked with over time, they actually are far more savvy and have a very sophisticated understanding of not just risks of sharing online, because those do exist, and we want to be thoughtful about that, especially if you know, I do a lot of work in harm reduction, in areas where, you know, issues might be kind of stigmatized. So we do want to think about the risk of sharing things online, where they can travel anywhere. But there's also so many benefits to sharing online.

For folks who are newer to photovoice or digital storytelling, you know, thinking about a project from start to finish, I think can be a helpful thing to do, especially when we're thinking about consent. You want two separate consent processes, and that consent is ongoing, right? There's consent to participate, but then there's consent to share, and it's not the same thing. You know, like an ethics review process will help you think through that and how you scaffold that.

### **Jean Breny**

You guys are bringing up really amazing examples of what we need to be doing more of. And I really appreciate what you're saying, both of you, that's really, that's really cool stuff. In our book, that Dr.

Shannon McMorrow and I wrote about photovoice, it's a very small book, but there is an IRB chapter. And I think that, you know, we talk about some of these things, but not all of them. I don't know how we bring that out into the world. But you know, if we're really listening to and responding to and wanting to do the right thing on behalf of the communities that we're working with, that all needs to be there.

### **Sarah Switzer**

Thanks, Jean. And just for our listeners a plug for your book. It's the *Photovoice for Social Justice: Visual Representation in Action*. And who is it published by?

### **Jean Breny**

It's published by Sage Publishing out of California. You know, it came out in 2021, however it was already done the year of COVID. We were just editing it [in 2021], so we didn't have a lot of virtual [content], we didn't reflect on that at all in the book. And so that needs to be out there somewhere. But I see some excellent articles written by both of you on the work you're doing with how do we understand what communities want to do with the data? How do they want to share it?

## **Flexibility and adaptability in participatory visual methods (27:48-29:32)**

### **Sarah Switzer**

I've read some of the chapters in that book. And I think it's a really phenomenal place for both new folks exploring photovoice, and you also touch on digital storytelling a little bit in one of the chapters too. But such a great place to start. And for like, folks that have been doing it for a while, it is incredibly accessible, which is really nice, and offers so many fantastic conceptual questions, things to think about as you're planning for a project or sharing out your project. There's lots of commentary on social media that I'm sure that you could expand on now post COVID, but also things to think about when kind of planning a project. This isn't unique to online spaces, but there's this like section in the book, I can't remember where you talk about expecting and planning that folks won't always come. You know, like, I think that's so important, and it decenters us as the researchers in the process. Folks have other things going on. Then this gets into kind of other podcast topics. But how do you build a project with the expectation that folks are going to, kind of, they might come, they may not come. They're going to do what they want and what they should want, what they desire, you know, and that things won't always go according to plan. And that's such a beautiful thing about these methods, you know, that you have a plan, but you need to really adapt and be responsive to individual and community needs and desires throughout.

### **Jean Breny**

Oh, thank you, Sarah, that was really sweet of you just say all of that about the book; we all can talk about those stories on and on, right? And I think a lot of people don't want to enter the space of doing this work because of that. They want to have a plan, and they're going to do all of the things in the order, in the timeline, and that's it. So yeah, flexibility is key [when] working with participatory methods, for sure, but thanks for that plug.

## Research and policy impacts: Fostering local change through "conversations with your auntie." (29:33-35:12)

### **Sarah Switzer**

You're welcome. So we've touched on this a little bit throughout our conversation, and both of you have spoken to kind of the possibilities in and around policy change in your work in different ways. So one of the kind of claims that often gets made around digital storytelling, and I know Casey you work with lots of participatory video forms, as well as photovoice, is that they are often well suited for projects with policy change goals, right? And, you know, one of the things we heard coming out of this research is that for some folks, that still very much rang true, and for other folks, they question [whether] that is just a trope that we we say, and that we've, you know, written 100 times or said 100 times. But does it actually happen? And so I'm curious to hear both of your perspectives on photovoice or digital storytelling and policy change, and where you sit in relationship to that claim, specifically, also online. So, does it help? Does it hinder?

### **Casey Burkholder**

I've been thinking a lot about this question, Sarah, since you asked us. I am one of the people who is suspicious of claims of policy change. And also, if I think about what I mean when I say policy change, you know, like, what kinds of impacts have I seen with my own work. Now, in my work with queer and trans youth, and elders, and moving into families. What I care about more is hearts and minds kind of work, because in Canada, there's this like horrifying move toward transphobia and homophobia as a way to sort of distract from other issues that are going on in Canada. And I know in the US, there's been a recent election, and we're going to see Donald Trump take over the presidency. And from Canada, some of us are a little bit worried about what that means for our own upcoming federal election that will come up in the next little while. And so I think, like, what is the kind of change that this work can do in online spaces? I think that it can create opportunities for people to have conversations online, but then also to be able to use as evidence in in-person conversations. So if you have family who are transphobic and homophobic, you can say, you know, look auntie, my participant created this video. Would you take a look? What do you think about this? Because I think there's a lot of fear and like, lack of understanding in our communities, maybe, and that is sort of driving this fear mongering and policy making that's anti trans and anti queer in schools and health care. And so the way in which to address it is to sort of use this as evidence in order to facilitate those offline conversations, maybe. Those are the kinds of changes that I think are really urgent in Canada right now, and some of the work that this can do doesn't happen in a report. I'm not going to show that to my auntie. She's not going to read the articles that I write or the books that I publish, but can I show her a couple of cellfilms, a collage or two, and have a conversation about what matters? Yes, I can, and I think that that is something that's really important at this point.

### **Jean Breny**

Yeah, Casey, another podcast just on our election results in this country, it makes me sad. I use the word action a lot, or social action, and I don't necessarily mean policy or legislation all the time. The project I'm doing now happens to be policy, because it's around food insecurity in BIPOC communities in Connecticut. Casey brings up an excellent point. It could just be for the people in the study themselves. The project that I did a few years ago with transgender women of color, who all had had

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experienced HIV, homelessness, incarceration, substance use in some way, shape or form. They were an existing support group. And they were really doing it to kind of feel self-empowered. They were tired of hearing them refer to trans women of color, as, you know, as ex-prisoners, you know, formerly incarcerated women, or, you know, all the issues of being street workers and prostitutes and sex workers. And they were tired of that negative connotation. So they really went into this saying, how has it been for us to become who we are, and what do we want the world to know about our experience? The write up was beautiful, and then the sort of expression of how they felt, I mean, the conversations that they were able to have with each other was actually the powerful part of the research outcome. Did anybody hear it? You know, there were some presentations and a publication, but it was really for their own change, their own internal sort of empowerment. And it was, it was really powerful to see that happen. So maybe it isn't all about policy change, but it is for some action or some awareness raising or something. I think that's why we do it.

### **Sarah Switzer**

I think Jean you were saying this at the kind of the beginning, it's like, what's the context or the purpose of gathering online, right? And Casey, you also alluded to that too, in terms of thinking about like, when it makes sense to gather in-person, you know? And really having these conversations with co-researchers, with folks who are producing these materials, to think, why are we doing this? What is the end goal here, and what's the best way to achieve it? Because sometimes it's not about the policy makers. The most change that we can make is within communities and within ourselves. I really think that we are also changed through the process. As we narrowed our conversation today, any words of advice for listeners, or any final thoughts?

## **Final thoughts and reflections on exhibiting visual products online (35:13-38:18)**

### **Casey Burkholder**

I'm going to ruin the podcast format, because my question, Sarah, is for you. You have this gorgeous article about non-participation in participatory visual research. And I wondered, what do you think non-participation looks like in this conversation? Like, what are the affordances and challenges of thinking about nonparticipation when we talk about online photovoice, digital storytelling, archiving. I think this is like a really important thing that continues to impact the way I think. So, what do you think? What about nonparticipation in this space?

### **Sarah Switzer**

Thanks, Casey. I think one of the affordances of working online, is it actually gives folks more leeway to not participate, right? And in an in-person space, yeah, you can sneak out. People do it all the time. People have done it, they will do it, but it's harder, right? It's harder to do. You might feel like, oh, I'm just gonna sit at the back, or I don't want to make a scene, or I'm kind of uncomfortable, and I don't quite know why, and you don't really figure it out until after the fact. When you're online, you can click 'end', and you're done. And there are implications to that too, right? Like if someone leaves and they're activated and they don't have the support systems, but I think it also gives a lot of ownership to folks to say, not for me, not this time, you know, or maybe next time, but not right now. So I think that there's a real possibility there.

### **Casey Burkholder**

No, I was dying to hear what you were going to say, because those strategies are specific to the online space, and that's really exciting.

### **Jean Breny**

I want to agree with Casey. I feel like Sarah, what you just shared is a great way to end this podcast, because it brought it all together for me. I think everything in life, we learn from doing it, you know. And I'm listening to all of us talk, especially myself, thinking about all of the things that I didn't think I knew how to do. I know better now, because I did this virtual photovoice project because of COVID and all the ways I would do it differently, I think that's really how we all come to wanting to do this work. We're reflective. The work is reflective. We learned from our participants, we've learned from our co-researchers. We've learned from ourselves as we go on, and that's why we keep going, because we have questions that we need answered, and I think that that's the power in participatory visual methods, because we can make mistakes and then learn from them and go on.

### **Podcast narrator**

Thanks for tuning in to *Let Me Just Share My Screen*. See the show notes for links to readings and resources mentioned during the episode. We hope you will join us for the next episode.