

## Unspoken phenomena: using the photovoice method to enrich phenomenological inquiry

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### Unspoken phenomena: using the photovoice method to enrich phenomenological inquiry

Photovoice is a powerful method that is gaining momentum in nursing research. As a relatively new method in nursing science, the situatedness of photovoice within or alongside various research methodologies in a single study remains in a stage of early development. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the photovoice method as a means to elicit phenomenological data when researching the lived experience. While the foundational bases of phenomenology and photovoice differ substantially, the argument presented in this paper suggests that the photovoice method can be successfully used in phenomenological inquiry provided that significant rigour checks are pursued. This includes reflecting upon the origins and understandings of both methodology and method to promote methodological congruency. Data collection and analysis approaches that contribute to phenomenological inquiry using the photovoice method in addition to rigour and ethical considerations are discussed. The use of data generated from photovoice in phenomenological inquiry may fill a void of understanding furnished by limitations of traditional phenomenological inquiry and of spoken language and can enhance understanding of the lived experience, which may not always be best understood by words alone.

**Key words:** interpretive phenomenology, photovoice, qualitative methodology, qualitative research.

The discipline of nursing is one of complexities. While heated debates surround the question of what constitutes nursing science, the need for multiple modes of inquiry is seldom critiqued. Because nursing knowledge has a history deeply rooted in causes of social justice (Boutain 2005), the creation of space for under-represented voices is a central part of nursing's disciplinary research and practice mission. Researching the lived experience is one way that nursing is continuing to fulfill this mission because the lived experience can showcase how individuals living on the margin of society make sense of and interpret their world. A critique of the lived experience representation of marginalized individuals and groups is that it may lead to a caricature portrayal

and possibly perpetuate the dominant construction of people and groups (Orbe 2000). Nonetheless, the value of understanding lived experience is significant in its ability to advance understanding beyond the conceptualizations of social structures, in addition to and beyond the everyday world and interpretations of individuals (Orbe 2000). Understanding experience may assist policy-makers and healthcare professionals to make more informed choices regarding various populations, leading to better and more equitable care for those experiencing marginalization.

Understanding individual experiences in isolation, however, does not necessarily give due consideration to the historic and social intersections that shape the experience of health (Kirkham and Browne 2006). Thus, contemplating both the individual's experience and the context in which it occurs fosters research that acknowledges both the expertise of the individual in his or her experience and the influence

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of social context on the experience. Nursing's vested interest in social justice has led to the creation of a gamut of research practices designed to better understand the lived experience and its social, cultural, and other associated meanings. Classic research methodologies are also being used in novel ways to explore issues of social justice. Phenomenological inquiry for example, which is perhaps one of the most widely used methodologies in nursing research to study lived experience, can be used both to study and to raise the profile of the experience of marginalized populations. More specifically, interpretive phenomenology promotes an understanding of the meaning of experience as individuals interact with others and with their environment (Lopez and Willis 2004). In this type of inquiry, a phenomenon of interest is typically investigated through open-ended individual interviews between a researcher and study participants. Often, interviews with approximately six individuals produce sufficient information about the phenomenon to promote data saturation (Morse 1994). While the meaning of experience in common-life practices can be uncovered through narratives that emerge from interpretive phenomenological inquiry (Lopez and Willis 2004), there are other sources of data that can also contribute to understanding the lived experience and its associated meanings.

Photovoice is an example of a research method that may be useful for eliciting data that may deepen understanding of the lived experience. It was originally developed as a participatory health promotion practice in which individuals would take photographs to document the reality of their lives (Wang and Burris 1997). Rooted in the theoretical assumptions of critical consciousness, feminist theory, and documentary photography (Wang and Burris 1997), photovoice is a participatory research approach that creates spaces and opportunities for marginalized voices to be heard. Freire (1970) has described the visual image as a means to enable people to think critically about issues in their community. Building upon this idea, an original emancipatory goal of photovoice was to foster such critical thinking among community members and to create a space for voices on the margin to influence change at both the community and policy levels (Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001).

The basic tenets of photovoice involve asking individuals to take pictures of health resources and needs in their community (Wang and Burris 1997). Individuals then select the photographs that are the most representative of their reality and discuss them in photo-sharing sessions with other individuals who are participating in the study. Logbooks are also used in photovoice studies, in which participants may document their experiences and perspectives (Leipert et al.

2011). In addition to photovoice being an emancipatory health promotion practice, it is also useful as a research method to elicit rich data about the lived experience, which is often sought through phenomenology.

Photovoice has been used within phenomenological research to explore the empowerment change among community health advisors (Lundy, Cuellar, and Callahan 2009), to study the essence of play for children (Berinstein and Magalhaes 2009), and to explore the meaning of leisure within the context of dementia (Genoe 2009). The photovoice method may help to uncover enriched understanding of experience by eliciting additional visual and narrative data in phenomenological inquiry. This article begins with historical accounts of the origins of interpretive phenomenology and photovoice, discusses how the photovoice method can contribute to deepened understanding of the lived experience within phenomenological inquiry, offers practical suggestions for undertaking interpretive phenomenology using photovoice as a method, and discusses how rigor and quality can be pursued within the study context.

## ORIGINS OF PHENOMENOLOGY

‘(Phenomenology) shows what range of experiences are possible in the world that people live, how they can be described, and how language has the ability to communicate these experiences to others in their richness’ (Mostert 2002, n.p.).

The word *phenomenon* originates from the Greek *phaenesthai*, to flare up, to show itself, to appear (Moustakas 1994). Phenomenology, as an epistemology, was first described in the early twentieth century by Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher and mathematician (Dowling 2007). Husserl challenged deductive natures of truth, which dominated epistemology at the time, and suggested that knowledge can be objectively derived from human experience (Racher and Robinson 2003). The philosophical contributions of Husserl greatly influenced the understanding of truth. Husserl argued that the essence of experience, in its purest sense, has no presupposition of the phenomenon as an empirical object and does not account for the mental acts concerned with the phenomenon. Thus, for Husserl, phenomenology is descriptive and occurs prereflexively, prior to being contextualized or attached to social, cultural, or other meanings. Essentially, ‘(phenomenology) is the experience as it is before we have thought about it’ (Crotty 1996, 95). Husserl’s strictly descriptive nature of phenomenology has long been challenged by many who claim that experience and the world in which it exists cannot be separated.

Perhaps the most notable critic of Husserl's descriptive stance on phenomenology was Martin Heidegger, a student of Husserl. Heidegger suggested that experience is not separate from the world in which it exists (Polkinghorne 1983). Therefore, social, cultural, and personal meanings are attached to objects in the world and cannot be removed from consciousness, nor from the experience. Rather, through reflection and interpretation, understanding experience and its associated meanings can be achieved. This understanding of phenomenology has come to be known as interpretive phenomenology (Lopez and Willis 2004). In interpretive phenomenology, the researcher seeks to interpret the lived experience of a phenomenon into a textual expression (van Manen 1997). The meaning of the experience, which is both value- and fact-laden, may be exposed by inquiry, '...in what is asked about there lies also that which is to be found out by asking' (Heidegger 1927/1962, 24). It is through the interpretive process and the hermeneutic cycle that the unfamiliar is exposed (Gadamer 1976), which allows for a deepened understanding of the lived experience.

The interview is perhaps the most widely used method to elicit data of the lived experience through phenomenological inquiry. Yet, limitations of interviews as a method of interpretive inquiry have been acknowledged in the literature, particularly by discourse and conversation analysts (Brunsden and Goatcher 2007). A primary critique of the interview method is that it may not accurately reflect what is most meaningful to those experiencing the phenomenon. Rather, the researcher's agenda and presuppositions may influence the nature of the questions asked, which may shape the content of the responses given (Brunsden and Goatcher 2007).

One way to promote a higher degree of authenticity for phenomenological data is to create opportunities for study participants to provide data that is most meaningful to them. This can be achieved by using research approaches that elicit data from the perspective of those experiencing the phenomenon. With photovoice, for example, participants take photographs of what is meaningful to them. They control the nature of the data. Not only does photovoice create spaces for individuals to express elements of their lived experience from their own perspectives, but it also allows for additional data that can complement narrative interview data. Furthermore, because meaning, in the Heideggerian sense (1962), is developed in relation to others (Conroy 2003), group dialog of experience, as it occurs in photovoice, can deepen understanding of shared social meanings in addition to perceptions of everyday experiences.

van Manen (1998) discusses the importance of literary and artistic sources for hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry as a way to provide the phenomenologist with possi-

ble human experiences and worlds not normally experienced. In fact, the nondiscursive languages or the evocative effect of story and anecdote are often required for phenomenological inquiry to achieve its goals (van Manen 1997). Poetry and novels, for example, can play a part to show, present, and clarify meaning felt and grasped at the core of our being (Gadamer 1996). The use of data generated from photovoice in phenomenological inquiry may fill a void of understanding furnished by limitations of the spoken language, which can be referred to as 'epistemological silence' (van Manen 1990, 113).

## THE ROOTS OF PHOTOVoice

Several photo-methods are currently used in nursing research, the roots of which are deeply embedded in the social sciences, such as anthropology, which may date back as far as the late 1800's (Hurworth 2003; El Guindi 2004). The term photo-elicitation was first documented in the 1950s by John Collier in his work with families and mental health (Collier 1957). In Collier's novel study, families were shown photographs during interviews to sharpen memories and also to clarify misunderstandings (Harper 2002). Photographs can be used in interviews to evoke different types of data than that which is elicited through conversation alone, 'photographs appear to capture the impossible: a person gone; an event past. That extraordinary sense of seeming to retrieve something that has disappeared belongs ... to the photograph...' (Harper 2002, 23). The photographs used in photo-elicitation can be from various sources and may include photographs taken by the researcher, photographs from the press, historical photographs, or photographs taken by study participants (Harper 2002). Photo-elicitation remains widely used in social and health research to this day (Hurworth 2003).

A new wave of photo-data in nursing came perhaps with the introduction of photo novella. In photo novella, study participants are given cameras and take photographs that document the stories of their lives (Wang and Burris 1994). Photo novella can capture reality from the individual's perspective because each individual takes photographs of what is meaningful to him or her. This active act of photographing by study participants is one aspect that differentiates photo novella from photo-elicitation. Ewald (1985) may be considered a foremother of photo novella (Wang and Burris 1994). She was one of the first educators who taught individuals, more specifically children in the Appalachians, to use cameras to document the stories of their lives (Ewald 1985). The Appalachian children engaged in self-portraiture, which provided an opportunity for them to share their voices

through documentary photography. Wang and Burris categorize photo novella as an educational tool that allows individuals to record and reflect upon their needs, promote dialog, encourage action, and inform policy. It has been used to explore elderly women's hospital discharge experiences (LeClerc et al. 2002) and the daily challenges faced by Bosnian children who came to Canada in the 1990s (Berman et al. 2001).

Building upon photo novella's underlay of empowerment, Wang and Burris saw the evolution of photo novella into photovoice, which is categorized as a practice whose goals are the following: '(1) to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialog and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and (3) to reach policy-makers' (Wang and Burris 1997, 184). Photovoice has a clear activist and political focus. Most often used with individuals and groups living on the margins, photovoice has been used with homeless individuals (Wang, Cash and Powers 2000), people living with mental illness (Thompson et al. 2008), and rural women (Wang, Burris, and Ping 1996; Leipert and Smith 2009). The potency of photovoice lies not simply in the pictures, but in the dialogical interpretation that occurs between the researcher and those taking the pictures. It is through dialogical conversation that participants and the researcher are able to offer their interpretations of the phenomenon. This process may deepen understanding of the experience and serve as a consciousness-raising process for participants and the researcher alike.

## USING PHOTOVOICE IN PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

While it has been said that the method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method (Gadamer 1989; Rorty 1979 as cited in van Manen 1990), van Manen (1997) offers six interactive approaches for interpretive phenomenological inquiry. These six practical interactive approaches are signposts along the way toward understanding experience. These approaches consist of: (1) orientating oneself to the phenomenon of interest and explicating assumptions and pre-understandings, (2) investigating experiences as lived through conversational interviews rather than as we conceptualize it, (3) reflecting upon and conducting thematic analysis which characterize the phenomenon and interpreting through conversations, (4) describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting (rethinking, reflecting, recognizing) which aims at creating depthful writing, (5) maintaining a strong and oriented rela-

tion to the fundamental question about the phenomenon, and (6) balancing the research context by considering parts and wholes (van Manen 1997, 30). While a systematic approach may be helpful for phenomenological inquiry, ultimately it is the 'interpretive sensitivity, inventiveness, thoughtfulness, scholarly tact, and writing talent of the human science researcher' that directs the quality of phenomenological research (van Manen 1997, 34).

In phenomenological inquiry, the sample does not simply consist of individuals participating in the study but it is likely to include an array of items such as photographs, logbooks, and interviews (Sandelowski 1995). Thus, the combined use of interpretive phenomenological methodology and the photovoice method could employ an innovative approach to data collection via five methods: (1) individual interviews, (2) group interviews, (3) logbooks written by study participants, (4) photographs taken by study participants and the photographs' titles as provided by each photographer, and (5) the researcher's field notes.

The six-step data collection outline summarized below provides an example of how phenomenological data may be elicited using the photovoice method:

1. Camera orientation session
2. Follow-up
3. Collection and initial review and analysis of photographs and logbooks
4. Individual in-depth interviews
5. Individual photo-sharing sessions
6. Dialogical group conversation and group photo-sharing session

In the first step of the process, the camera orientation session, the purpose, plan, and method of the study are explained. This session also serves as an introductory meeting and is intended to build rapport between the researcher and the participants. Study participants are provided with a disposable camera and a demonstration of its use, and they have an appropriate time, often two weeks, to take up to 27 photographs (the number of images available on most disposable cameras) that they deem relevant to the purpose of the study. Digital cameras may offer several advantages over the use of disposable cameras. Digital cameras are becoming increasingly more affordable, they can be reused in subsequent studies, and photographs can be sent electronically to the researcher which eliminates the need to send delicate film by postal service in some cases. Furthermore, the use of digital cameras allows the possibility for participants to manipulate pictures, which could be considered as an advantage or disadvantage depending on the study. Disposable cameras offer a different set of benefits. Because photographs cannot be deleted on a disposable camera, data are

preserved as taken and may serve as a basis for a rich discussion with participants. Furthermore, knowing that there is a limit of 27 pictures that one can take may encourage deeper reflection from participants prior to taking photographs. This limit may also discourage data redundancy from an over-abundance of photographs. Yet, disposable cameras are becoming increasingly difficult to find and film processing can be quite costly.

Participants are also provided with a logbook at the camera orientation session in which they may document additional information or insights during the picture taking time. The logbook may also serve as a way for participants to communicate confidentially with the researcher, as they may not feel comfortable discussing certain issues in a group setting. In addition, the logbooks will assist participants to provide data as they occur to them and help prevent loss of data and perspectives owing to time issues. Alternatives to logbooks could include participant-researcher communication that is more technologically enabled, which may be more relevant for use with certain populations who have access and inclination to use technology, such as urban individuals or youth. Alternatives to logbooks may also be considered when individuals would not be likely to use logbooks for various reasons, such as low levels of literacy. Step two often occurs approximately 1 week after the camera orientation session. In this step, study participants are contacted via telephone by the researcher to discuss and encourage progress in picture taking and logbook recording.

After the 2 week photo-taking period has expired, the cameras and logbooks are retrieved, and the photographs are developed and the logbooks transcribed (step three). Several days later, the researcher returns to each participant his or her respective set of photographs and asks each individual to provide a title for each of their photographs prior to the individual interview. This process is intended to provide a narrative interpretation by the participant of the picture to encourage reflection on the meaning and significance of the photograph. The researcher then reviews the photographs and logbooks and documents his or her initial thoughts and interpretations. In the fourth step of the data collection process, the researcher conducts an in-depth interview with each study participant individually. During this interview, each participant is asked to share his or her experience of the phenomenon. The interview questions may delve into value, feeling, knowledge, and sensorial realms (Patton 2002). The research process of both phenomenology and photovoice is one of intersubjectivity; both the researcher and the participants begin the process with the intention of advancing individual understanding. 'The hermeneutical circle of

interpretation moves forward and backward... Through rigorous interaction and understanding, the phenomenon is uncovered' (Allen and Jensen 1990, 245).

In the fifth step of the data collection process, participants are asked in a one-on-one session with the researcher to discuss each of their pictures. This session provides the researcher the opportunity to ask questions to each participant individually that may be related to his or her initial analysis of data. For example, it may provide an occasion for the researcher to discuss certain topics related to the phenomenon of interest that may be of a sensitive nature and therefore not appropriate to discuss in group sessions. To further understand how social, cultural, or contextual factors intersect the phenomenon of interest, the SHOWeD acronym (Wang 1999) can be used. SHOWeD consists of the following questions: What do you See here? What's really Happening here? How does this relate to Our lives? Why does this problem or this strength exist? What can we Do about this? (Wang et al. 1998). These questions, which are data collection and analysis approaches within photovoice (Wang et al. 1998), may help to promote reflection and dialog surrounding the experience of health and may be used as a guide to elicit data pertaining to particular pictures.

Upon completion of the individual interviews, all of the study participants and the researcher meet as a group for a photo-sharing session (step six) to discuss the collective meaning of the experience of health. During this session, each participant can be asked to share his or her two most meaningful photographs and their titles with the group. The purpose of this process is to create dialogical conversations and to deepen understanding of data obtained in the individual interviews. Questions can be once again framed using the SHOWeD acronym. One of the purposes of bringing the participants together for a second group session is to promote group dialog (Wang 1999; Wang, Cash, and Powers 2000; Wang et al. 2004), which may contribute to further understanding of the phenomenon and may promote both individual and group reflection. Because phenomenology seeks to understand shared social meanings in addition to perceptions of everyday experiences (Heidegger 1927/1962), dialog among individuals with lived experience of the phenomenon may contribute to a deepened understanding of the social meaning of the phenomenon and the relevance and importance of the experience.

Following each of the data collection sessions, field notes (Patton 2002) can be used by the researcher to document self-reflections and insights and to record and contemplate various aspects of the research (van Manen 1997). The field notes may include observations of the community, such as climate or economic viability, themes regarding health and

health promotion such as health-related information posted on community bulletin boards for example, or thoughts and reflections regarding the photovoice method. Study participants may contribute to the analysis by offering their insights or interpretations of the data in individual or group interviews and in logbooks, which may provide insight into how individuals interpret and make sense of their world (Willig 2001). By collaboratively discussing the data, themes may be refined and a common orientation to the phenomenon can be pursued (van Manen 1997). In a combined phenomenology and photovoice study, data analysis begins at the onset of data collection and continues for the duration of the research.

An approach to phenomenological data analysis that includes the photovoice method could unite van Manen's (1997) approach to interpretive phenomenological data analysis with the Oliiffe et al. (2008) four-step approach to photographic analysis. van Manen's phenomenological analysis can be used to analyze all of the data generated from phenomenological inquiry, including logbooks, individual and group interviews, photographs, and the researcher's field notes. Textual data, including interview and logbook transcripts, can be read, reread, and reflected upon to elicit themes emerging from the data. Furthermore, photographs and their associated meanings can also be described through the art of writing, which fosters rethinking, reflecting, and recognizing the phenomenon (van Manen 1997).

Data that emerge specifically from the photovoice method can be analyzed using the approach of Oliiffe et al. (2008). This approach involves four steps: preview, review, cross-photo comparison, and theorizing. In the preview stage, the photographs are viewed in conjunction with their titles and narratives to elucidate participants' intended meaning and representations of the photographs, from the participants' perspectives. In the second stage of analysis, the review stage, participant photographs and narratives are reviewed a second time, but from the researcher's lens. This stage may include a comparison between the data generated and the researcher's interpretation of various contexts in which the phenomenon exists, which may include an understanding of community or health factors. For example, if a participant takes a photograph of community infrastructure in poor physical condition, the researcher may consider the economic viability of the community. In the cross-photo comparison stage, the researcher views the entire collection of photographs and develops themes that arise from collective whole. In the final theorizing stage, links are made between emergent themes and the theoretical bases of the study.

The significance and value of the experience described by participants in interpretive phenomenological studies that use the photovoice method may be translated by the researcher into textual and visual form. For example, findings and recommendations may be developed into resource material in the form of print or web-based media that can be accessed by various research, policy, practice, and educational audiences. The interpretive phenomenological methodology combined with the photovoice method of data collection and analysis may also assist study participants to reflect upon how they view and enact health in their lives, which may in turn elicit health promotion advocacy and action on their part.

## RIGOR AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research that acknowledges the existence of multiple truths, as qualitative research does, cannot be assessed for its accuracy in measuring one single truth. In qualitative inquiry, methodological congruency with the philosophical assumptions of a paradigm is a criterion for research quality (Sandelowski 1993; Guba and Lincoln 1994), which is an important consideration for research that uses emerging blends of methods and methodologies that have a history in different research traditions. In phenomenological inquiry that uses the photovoice method, particular attention needs to be paid to this standard of rigor as the paradigmatic lines may become blurred when incorporating the photovoice method, which arose from the critical paradigm, into interpretive phenomenological inquiry, which has a long-standing tradition in the interpretive paradigm.

Rigor considerations include reconciling differences in aims and claims between the overarching methodology and the underlying method. For example, interpretive phenomenology seeks to understand the lived experience, while photovoice pursues the identification of oppressing social structures. Furthermore, the photovoice method often seeks emancipatory change, yet interpretive phenomenology makes no such claim. Such foundational bases, as different as they may be, provide an opportunity to create emergent research approaches that are appropriate and fitting to certain research questions that may not be best answered by traditional approaches or by a single approach. Indeed, the use of two complementary approaches such as phenomenology with its emphasis on individual experience and photovoice, which focuses more on social and contextual issues, can serve to deepen and extend understanding. A challenge lies in reflecting upon the origins and understandings of both methodology and method and navigating the lines of methodological congruency and rigor as they present themselves.

In an interpretive phenomenological study with photovoice, authenticity, which represents the balanced presentation of various perspectives, may be pursued by consistently checking the primary transcripts and photographs with the researcher's and participants' interpretations to uphold faithfulness of the participants' constructs (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Moreover, authenticity can be promoted in the researcher's analysis and interpretation of the photographs by asking individuals to provide a title for each of their pictures to clarify meaning and participants can be offered the opportunity to express their refinements, intellectual or emotional, of the researcher's interpretations during the individual interviews and group sessions. The applicability of the research or the transferability of findings to other settings may only be assessed by potential knowledge users in phenomenological inquiry with the photovoice method. The provision of a clear and distinct description of culture and context, participant characteristics, and data collection and analysis methods can promote transferability in the scholarly realm (Graneheim and Lundman 2003). Photographs, just like words and numbers, have different meanings depending upon how they are used. It is therefore important to contextualize how photographs are used for data generation and interpretation. van Manen (1997, 27) refers to a good phenomenological description as an 'adequate elucidation of some aspect of the lifeworld'. Such an elucidation may be recognized by a 'phenomenological nod', which may arise as something 'that we nod to, recognizing it as an experience that we have had or could have had' (van Manen 1997, 27). The six interactive approaches to good phenomenological description offered by van Manen can encourage deep thinking and reflection on the part of the researcher. The phenomenological nod can be used as a criterion to ascertain the credibility of a phenomenology photovoice study.

Appropriate representation is an additional ethical consideration within the photovoice method. Issues of representation, or misrepresentation, can occur when the meaning of a picture, which is only a snapshot of the story, is unclear (Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001). By providing study participants with the opportunity to discuss each of their pictures in an individual interview, clarification of meaning and significance attributed to each picture can be revealed, thereby promoting more accurate interpretation. Participants can also be asked in their individual interviews to discuss pictures not taken. For example, participants may not take pictures of children if the consenting adult is not present. Or, if a specific time of year is meaningful for a certain experience, photographs depicting this meaning may not be taken if the research occurs in a different sea-

son. Examples such as these indicate that research data may be limited in its representativeness of the experiences presented. Discussion surrounding pictures not taken may assist individuals to better contemplate and interpret the experience as a whole.

## CONCLUSION

Data generated from the photovoice method can contribute to a deepened understanding of the lived experience in phenomenological inquiry. Because the lived experience exists within a lifeworld (Heidegger 1927/1962), understanding this lifeworld may, in some cases, be important for authenticating the interpretation of the lived experience. Understanding multiple perspectives, as revealed through photographs, individual and group interviews, and logbook recordings, will certainly contribute to an enriched understanding of the phenomenon. While these interactions may not be known at the outset, they may emerge through the interpretive process as the unfamiliar or unarticulated intersections are exposed through discussion and dialog (Gadamer 1976). Yet, the benefits of integrating the photovoice method into phenomenological inquiry may be somewhat reciprocal. Not only can the photovoice method elicit data that enriches phenomenological inquiry, but also can the phenomenological inquiry strengthen photovoice as a research method. The use of photovoice within phenomenological inquiry provides direction and purpose regarding the phenomenon or experience of interest. The use of phenomenological approaches to data collection and analysis, such as van Manen's (1997) six interactive approaches to phenomenological inquiry may provoke a more thoughtful and reflexive approach to the photovoice method. This in turn may elicit richer data and interpretations that may help photovoice to further achieve its goals of fostering critical thinking and creating a space for voices on the margin to influence change.

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