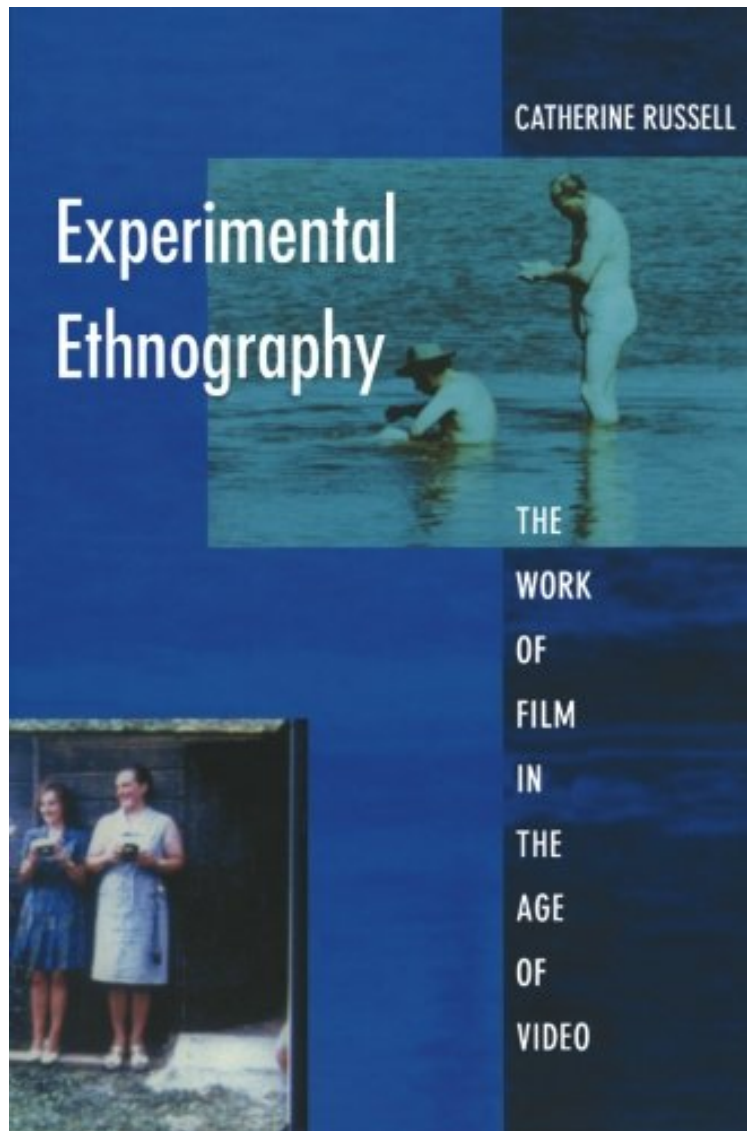


(Library ebook) Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video

# Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video

*Catherine Russell*

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**Catherine Russell : Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Well worth it By Ryan C. Conrath I have to agree with all of the reviews here, in some way. On the one hand, Russell DOES fall victim to a kind of flowery, ambiguous language. Like many of us who tend to write about art or film or whatever, Russell tends to get carried away with her theories

and they become very self-enclosed the farther they go. BUT, I think this book is extremely useful in many ways. It really sets up the stakes for "postmodern" (ugh) ethnography and situates its filmic manifestation within our present situation. Her argument is brilliant when it shows how these questions of representation are implicit within almost any ethnographic film. On the one hand, don't read this as gospel (i dont think Russell is the kind of critic who would want you to). On the other, it is undeniable that this book is an important addition to film studies.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well written and informativeBy Chris LeClereI have thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. It is a great tool for research and a nice theoretical look at the field of Visual Anthropology and filmed ethnography.6 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Artificial intelligenceBy Angela O'HaraI had to write this review as is a place where millions of people buy their books and unfortunately see idiotic reviews such have been offered here before me and this affects the sales of the book. I felt I must defend Russel's book which is an excellent overview of the evolving state of the ethnographic film beyond its roots in anthropological observation. To appreciate this book, one needs to have a few tools to understand some of her ideas, such as the history of the documentary film and its authority over what is to be considered 'real' and 'true' in human experience. This is a book for people interested in a more intuitive exploration of the documentary genre.

Experimental film and ethnographic film have long been considered separate, autonomous practices on the margins of mainstream cinema. By exploring the interplay between the two forms, Catherine Russell throws new light on both the avant-garde and visual anthropology. Russell provides detailed analyses of more than thirty-five films and videos from the 1890s to the 1990s and discusses a wide range of film and videomakers, including Georges Mlis, Maya Deren, Peter Kubelka, Ray Birdwhistell, Jean Rouch, Su Friedrich, Bill Viola, Kidlat Tahimik, Margaret Mead, Tracey Moffatt, and Chantal Akerman. Arguing that video enables us to see film differentlynot as a vanishing culture but as bodies inscribed in technology, Russell maps the slow fade from modernism to postmodern practices. Combining cultural critique with aesthetic analysis, she explores the dynamics of historical interruption, recovery, and reevaluation. As disciplinary boundaries dissolve, Russell contends, ethnography is a means of renewing the avant-gardism of experimental film, of mobilizing its play with language and form for historical ends. Ethnography likewise becomes an expansive term in which culture is represented from many different and fragmented perspectives. Original in both its choice of subject and its theoretical and methodological approaches, *Experimental Ethnography* will appeal to visual anthropologists, as well as film scholars interested in experimental and documentary practices.

The breadth and range of this book is fantastic. Russell tackles many interesting problematics and she does so through an eclectic choice of examples. This will stand out as a major and unique redefinition of the fields of experimental cinema and visual anthropology.Ivone Margulies, author of *Nothing Happens: Chantal Akermans Hyperrealist Everyday*