Abstract

The invention of photography in the nineteenth century became a means to support sayings and practices related to family as well as to medical and penal institutions. Photography appeared at the same time as socialist theories and workers' struggles in France and England which attempted to reform social systems. The development of photography was also contemporary of the scientific and philosophical theories such as physiognomy or phrenology which advocated a more accurate explanation of reality, technique that helped distinguish who were the “deviant” and “unhealthy” people from the “normal” or “healthy” ones. Such theories became instruments of power for those who claimed controlling them over those who had no chance to possess them, at a time when the development of market economy enhanced France’s and Great Britain’s position in the international arena.

Keywords

Photography, social institutions, nineteenth century, body, illness.