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Editorial

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EDITORIAL

Editorial

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This is the editorial video essay for *Journal of Embodied Research*, Volume 1. It takes the form of a “talking head” video, attempting to balance the accessibility of social media with the scholarly rigour of a traditional journal editorial. Journal Editor Ben Spatz introduces the concept of the videographic scholarly journal and touches upon the history of audiovisual documents of embodied research across the twentieth century. After this brief overview of the form, Ben summarizes each of the four video articles included *JER* 1.1 and invites submissions for the next volume.

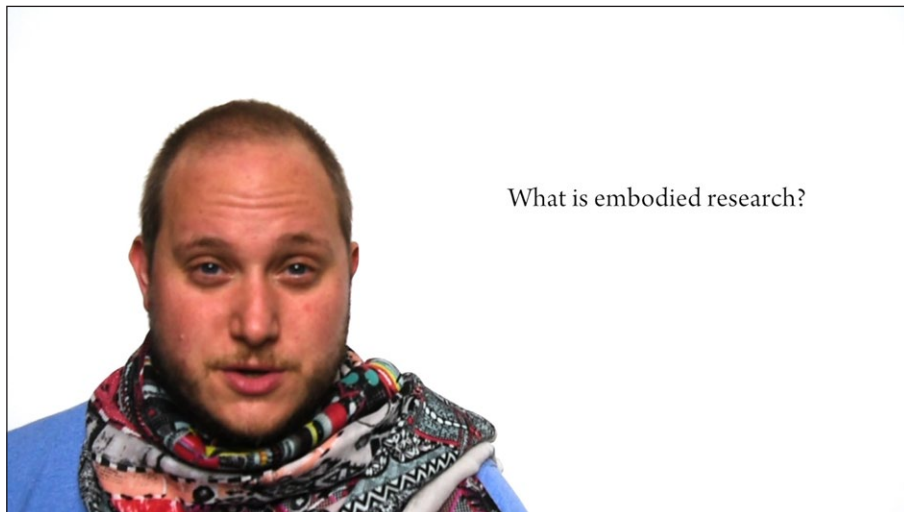
Keywords: videographic journals; embodied research; physical culture; screen studies; performance studies; martial arts studies; dance therapy; embodiment; embodied knowledge; epistemology; audiovisual methods; visual ethnography

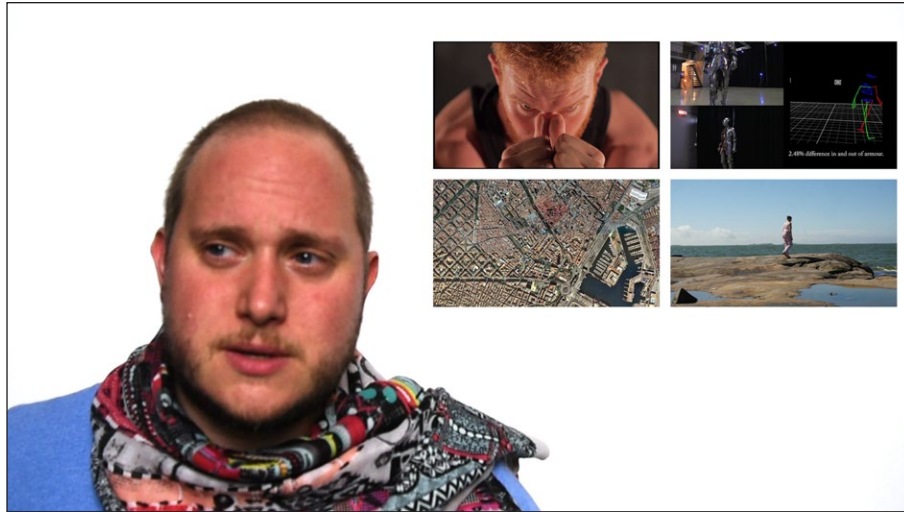
VIDEO ARTICLE

Available to view here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.10>.

Available for download here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.10.s1>.

STILLS FROM THE VIDEO EDITORIAL





Call for Proposals: JER 2.1 (2019)

- submissions welcome from any field
- explore embodiment through audiovisuality
- submissions accepted at any time of year
- video articles go through full peer review

VIDEO EDITORIAL TRANSCRIPT

[00:00]

JER

Journal of Embodied Research

[Ben Spatz:]

Hi. I'm Ben Spatz and this is a video essay editorial for the *Journal of Embodied Research*, Volume 1.

Spatz, Ben (2018) Editorial. *Journal of Embodied Research* 1(1): 5 (7:55), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.10>

It's a little bit unusual to have an editorial essay for a scholarly journal which is also a video essay. But the *Journal of Embodied Research* is an unusual journal. It's composed entirely of video essays. Why have a videographic journal for embodied research?

[00:32]

The Journal of Visualized Experiments (JoVE)

<http://www.jove.com>

[in]Transition

<http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition>

Screenworks

<http://screenworks.org.uk>

More and more we're seeing video journals in a range of different fields. There are video journals in medicine and there are a number of video journals starting up in media studies. But this is the first scholarly journal that focuses on embodied research through video.

[00:44]

What is embodied research?

About six years ago, at an academic conference on theatre, I presented for the first time a montage of four videos.

[00:52]

Clockwise from top left:

- Tirumalai Krishnamacharya (1938)
- Morihei Ueshiba (1935)
- Janet Adler (1968)
- Ryszard Cieslak (1972)

Complete montage and credits:

<http://urbanresearchtheater.com/2017/01/10/epistemic-objects/>

These were video clips from old films, in black and white. They showed a range of moments of practice – and by putting them together, I hoped to show something about how embodied practice could involve research. We could analyze these videos in a lot of different ways: according to gender, nationality, religion, geographic location, indoor and outdoor practice...

But what I wanted to highlight was that all of these practitioners were in the process of developing an area of technique which we can still practice today. Most of these practitioners aren't alive anymore. But you can go into a studio in a city, all over the world, and practice some kind of modern postural yoga; some kind of aikido; some kind of dance/movement therapy; some kind of actor training – which were influenced by these practitioners. So what we're seeing in these old films is not just moments of practice, but really important moments of research.

I still show these videos when I give talks. And another reason I like to put them together is that none of them involve fancy editing. They're all pretty simple. The older ones are extremely simple. These are low-tech, archival traces of embodied research. And they tell us: You don't have to be fancy to make a video document of embodied research. What's important is the practice.

But of course, it's 2018 — and we don't need to document our practices with expensive black and white film stock.

The four video articles in *Journal of Embodied Research*, Volume 1, take very different approaches. They're from different disciplines. They use the camera in different ways. And they have very different ideas of embodiment.

[02:34]

The first video, by Elizabeth de Roza and Budi Miller, explores intercultural or cross-cultural actor training.

de Roza, Elizabeth and Miller, Budi (2018) "The Lion and the Breath: Combining Kalaripayyatu and Fitzmaurice Voicework Techniques Towards a New Cross-Cultural Methodology for Actor Training." *Journal of Embodied Research* 1(1): 1 (20:41).

In "The Lion and the Breath," de Roza and Miller work with a pair of performers using both the South Indian martial art kalaripayyatu and Fitzmaurice Voicework. In this video, we learn something about the two approaches to training: one very physical, a martial art; the other focusing on the internal body of the voice and the tremors that it can send out. We get to see the performers go through a process in which the two lines of technique come together in their bodies, provoking new possibilities that neither the practitioners or the teachers would have been able to imagine before doing the practice. De Roza and Miller make specific editorial choices about how to use colour in the video article. Some sections are in black and white, others in dynamic colour.

[03:27]

In the second video article, "Moving in Late Medieval Harness: Exploration of a Lost Embodied Knowledge," Daniel Jaquet and Vincent Deluz engage with the possibility of historical reconstruction.

Jaquet, Daniel and Deluz, Vincent (2018) "Moving in Late Medieval Harness: Exploration of a Lost Embodied Knowledge." *Journal of Embodied Research* 1(1): 2 (20:59).

This is something interesting people in many fields. In this case, they're working from medieval fight books, which depict martial arts from medieval Europe using images and words. But it's very hard – or maybe impossible – to understand what exactly was happening in those moments of practice from pictures and words alone. In fact, it may be impossible to reconstruct that martial art because our bodies are different. In the embodied research underpinning this article, Jaquet has reconstructed a medieval harness or suit of armour. He aims to show that the suit of armour was not a clumsy, immobilizing, heavy hunk of metal, but an extremely well-designed suit using the advanced technology of that period. They have reconstructed a medieval suit of armour and Jaquet has been wearing it for several years, doing all sorts of activities in it, including research exercises, designed to generate quantitative data; and also some more accessible, fun methods, which may help a wider public engage with an understanding of historical martial arts and with the possibilities of embodied research.

[04:48]

In "Visualizing Embodied Research: Dance Dramaturgy and Animated Infographic Films," Stephan Jürgens and Carla Fernandes look at the work of Portuguese choreographer João Fiadeiro.

Jürgens, Stephan and Fernandes, Carla (2018) "Visualizing Embodied Research: Dance Dramaturgy and Animated Infographic Films." *Journal of Embodied Research* 1(1): 3 (27:41).

In the video article, we see one excerpt from a performance by Fiadeiro himself, in which there is very little of what many people would conventionally call dancing. In the rest of the video, we don't see any dancing! Instead, we are

treated to a couple of extremely beautiful animated infographic films. These are films which, instead of audiovisually recording dancing bodies, attempt to visualize, abstractly, the underlying choreographic processes that are making these new kinds of contemporary choreographic works possible. We see conceptual maps of the choreography overlaid on geographic locations. We see abstract geometric patterns, which refer to the underlying improvisational structure that dancers may be following. In this way, we get an audiovisual glimpse into contemporary choreography that doesn't rely on the standard kind of documentation of performers moving. It allows us to think about what choreography is and what bodies can do, in a very different way.

[06:08]

Finally, in "The Shore Revisited," Annette Arlander returns to a couple of videographic installation works.

Arlander, Annette (2018) "The Shore Revisited." *Journal of Embodied Research* 1(1): 4 (30:34).

These works are durational. They show her doing a few different very simple activities in the same location over time — perhaps over a couple of days, or perhaps over an entire year. By juxtaposing this durational audiovisual material, we're able to see the transformations of a landscape in relation to a human body. Arlander brings in the theoretical work of philosopher of science Karen Barad to think further about how the camera functions to make certain kinds of cuts. This work is not live performance. It's also not just video art. It's something like performance for camera, that goes to the heart of the possibility of embodied research.

[06:55]

To finish, I want to make an open call for the *Journal of Embodied Research*, Volume 2, in 2019. Submissions can be from any field, any discipline, any kind of practice. You don't have to be an academic — and there is no style guide.

Video submissions to the journal should propose their own way of thinking about the relationship between embodiment and audiovisuality. Videos can be very simple or they can be very complex. Submissions are accepted at any time and all submissions that go through the first round of editorial decision making will then go through peer review, so you'll get substantive feedback on your video work from peer practitioners working in related areas.

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[07:33]

I'm really proud to present *Journal of Embodied Research*, Volume 1. I want to thank the extremely interdisciplinary editorial board for supporting this endeavor.

Editorial Advisory Board

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And finally I want to thank the Open Library of Humanities, which has made this journal possible.

If you're watching this on social media, please visit the journal homepage, take a look at the articles, and think about submitting your own.

JER

Journal of Embodied Research

jer.openlibhums.org

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