

# Glossary & Style Guide

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This is the first iteration of the JER glossary and style guide. It was drafted by Ben Spatz with input from Rosemary Cisneros, Elizabeth de Roza, and Michele Feder-Nadoff, and draws on the first five years of JER's publication (2017-2022). We welcome comments and feedback to help improve this document.

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*Journal of Embodied Research* is the first peer reviewed, open access, academic journal to focus on the dissemination of embodied knowledge through video. It advances the scholarly video article as an experimental form supporting diverse embodied research projects. Articles are published on a rolling basis and offer the cutting edge of videographic scholarship, innovating relationships between textuality, audiovisuality, and embodiment.

## Glossary

This glossary proposes a provisional ontology of videographic thought. The following definitions are practical proposals, developed through *JER*'s editorial practice.

### Key concepts

**Text:** The textual is that which can be transcribed into written language or other standardized notation. This includes the verbal content of speech and the notational content of music and dance, as well as words written in any form. Please note that the metadata of any digital object is necessarily textual, because this is (for now) how the internet works.

**Audiovisuality:** The audiovisual refers to all kinds of audio and video content that *cannot* be transcribed into written language or other standardized notation. Audiovisual elements can be *described*, as in audio description, but they cannot be directly *transcribed*.

**Videographic:** The videographic refers to the variety of media that can be incorporated within a single linear video file. In addition to audiovisually recorded material, this includes photos, drawings, sound recordings (including voiceover), diagrams, animation, and onscreen text.

**Linear:** A linear videographic work is a single video file. Although distinct elements, such as text and image, can be juxtaposed simultaneously within it, the file is always the same at any given time code. Viewers may interact with linear video along the time axis using standard tools: pause, fast forward, etc. Nonlinear video, in contrast, contains multiple files or versions.

**Annotation:** Annotation refers to the the placement of written text on top of other audiovisual or videographic material. This may include written explanations, poetic commentary, the repetition of spoken words as text onscreen, citations and references, and much more.

**Diegetic:** Diegetic elements are captured as part of an audiovisual recording process. This is contrasted to nondiegetic elements, which are added afterwards, usually in video editing software. For example, music may be recorded when documenting an event (diegetic) or added afterwards (nondiegetic). Similarly, a spoken analysis of an event might be recorded at the moment the event is happening (diegetic) or added afterwards (nondiegetic).

### Definitions for publication

**Metadata:** Metadata is textual content that appears within a video essay and is also extracted and used in the digital cataloguing of the article as a scholarly work. Any item published in *JER* must include the following metadata: title, authors, abstract, keywords, list of references.

**Transcript:** A transcript includes all verbal content — all words — appearing in a video article. This should be as complete as possible, including any voiceover and onscreen annotations and ideally all words that appear anywhere in the video, even in the background.

**Authorship:** *JER* recognizes that authorship is a complex phenomenon and encourages contributors to develop an appropriate authorship taxonomy for their work. In general, we expect that those whose audiovisual bodies appear onscreen will be credited as coauthors of the resulting article. Contributors from fields where this is usually not assumed, such as anthropology and filmmaking, are invited to consider what would be required to realize this.

**Fair Use:** *JER* invites the fair use of audiovisual materials as part of scholarly research, always with proper citation. A large critical literature has developed around fair use and fair dealing, especially in the context of open access scholarly research.

**Accessibility:** Accessibility refers to the translation of elements across different media and/or languages, so that they can be accessed in various ways. We welcome proposals from authors to make their contributions accessible across multiple languages and forms of (dis)ability. In the future, we hope to provide broader institutional support for such accessibility.

### Types of work

**Video essay:** A video essay is an audiovisual work that explores the relationship between textuality and audiovisuality. This is often done by adding nondiegetic textual elements (such as voiceover or annotations) to audiovisual material, but the juxtaposition of textuality and audiovisuality can also happen within the diegetic or nondiegetic layers themselves. A large critical literature exists on the video essay and its predecessor, the film essay.

**Video article:** A video article is a video essay that has been discussed, revised, and approved through a peer review process, in order to be published in a scholarly journal.

**Composite video article:** A composite video article is made up of a number of shorter video essays, which may not have been peer reviewed individually, but rather curated.

**Video edition:** A video edition is a published version of record of an audiovisual work that was previously not easy to find or cite. *JER* invites submissions of archival and historical materials related to embodied research to be published as a video edition.

**Editorial video essay:** An editorial essay in videographic form, usually offering an introduction to and overview of the contents of a journal issue.

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“The challenge for the digital storyteller becomes one of excavating the collective history hidden in the often highly personal visual information presented.”

— Kara Keeling

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## Style Guide

Primary guideline: **The formal relations of elements (e.g., textual and audiovisual) in a *JER* video article should follow as closely as possible from the research itself.**

Authors should not feel bound to existing conventions of the video/film essay, documentary filmmaking, visual anthropology, or other genres of videographic production. Instead, you should design the videographic form of your article as an articulation of its research content.

This means that different research methodologies will generate different forms and styles of video article. We are not looking for a single standardized form of video article, but for a deep engagement with the relationships between textuality, audiovisuality, and embodiment.

One article might rely heavily on nondiegetic voiceover, while another might instead make use of onscreen textual annotation or of spoken analysis recorded in another form, such as an interview or exchange of audio letters. One article might incorporate music that is directly linked to or arises from the embodied research, while another might have a simple audio track.

Is it possible to publish a video article with no textual content apart from the metadata? Could the audio track be silent? Could the video track be purely animated? We don't know. If you work in a field where videographic research is already established, it may be wise to draw upon existing conventions. If video is not yet accepted as a research medium in your field, you may have to adapt formal solutions from other fields, or invent new ones.

In general, *JER* prioritizes the exploration of linear videographic form over the kinds of nonlinear or interactive functionality that some web platforms allow. A submission to *JER* should usually be in the form of a single video file (an MP4 sent by WeTransfer or a streaming video link to Vimeo or YouTube). If you wish to submit your work in a different form, please discuss the logistics and reason for this with an editor first.

Since 2020, *JER* has made use of Vimeo's chapter function to allow viewers to jump to a particular video essay within a composite article. As of 2022, one *JER* video article includes a closed caption option for Spanish subtitles, also within the Vimeo embedded player. Please note that including such nonlinear elements in the archived version of record is not always possible. While we are open to the incorporation of such features, especially in order to support wider accessibility, our primary form of publication is a single linear video file.

With that in mind, please consider the following general suggestions:

- 1) Tone:** You should orient your video article towards an interdisciplinary community of peers, who are committed to exploring textuality, audiovisuality, and embodiment. *JER* video articles need not be easily understandable to a mainstream or general audience, like a television documentary. Rather, they should make sense to scholar-artists and practitioner-researchers who work with embodiment in a range of fields and disciplines.
- 2) Language:** *JER* videos do not have to be produced first in English. They can be created in any language. However, they must be translated into English as the journal's common language. Authors are responsible for this, although editors will help when possible.
- 3) Music:** Please avoid using nondiegetic (background or incidental) music, as is commonly done in mainstream documentaries. All elements in a video article should arise from or substantively engage with the research content. Of course, music is a central part of many embodied research processes, and should be included where it is part of the research.
- 4) Forms of textuality:** Documentary films often use "talking heads" to introduce and discuss audiovisual material. The video essay form has more often used voiceover. Both voiceover and talking heads are legitimate ways to introduce spoken analysis into a video article. However, please consider what forms of analysis are most appropriate to your research. One we have seen the faces of the authors, there is generally no need for extended talking heads material, as other audiovisual material will usually be preferable. Voiceover can be a very powerful way to analyse audiovisual materials, but it also has drawbacks. We invite you to explore a variety of ways in which textuality can be embedded within videographic form, for example through annotation or recorded diegetic speech. The composition of textual material within videographic form is one of the primary formal questions that *JER* poses, so please think carefully about this and look at what previous *JER* authors have done.
- 6) Citations:** Citations should follow the Chicago referencing format whenever possible. Footnotes, endnotes, and parenthetical citations are all acceptable, as long as the style is consistent throughout each video article. The placement of references within a video article is part of a larger question about textuality in videographic scholarship. Be creative and follow the needs and aims of your research. Some articles may want to foreground their citational landscape by including full citations within the main part of the video, whereas others may

want to minimize the citational apparatus by using parenthetical numerical citations. Please note that references may be reformatted when they are converted to metadata in the transcript.

**7) proofreading:** Authors have primary responsibility for proofreading, although editors may help. Keep in mind that the proofreading of video files must be done primarily by authors, because the editors and typesetters do not have access to the video editing source files.

**8) Transcript:** Following peer review and final editorial approval, authors are responsible for producing a complete transcript of their video article. The transcript should be comprehensive, but authors are free to structure it as they wish. For example, authors can choose whether to repeat words that appear simultaneously in spoken and written forms. Generally, spoken words will be indented to distinguish them from written words. Please note that metadata may appear twice in the final transcript; e.g., if references appear onscreen as videographic “footnotes,” they will *also* be copied into the reference list at the end of the transcript.

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“I venture that the cinematic cuts and sutures between the visual and the spoken, between frames, and between genres are delinking and relinking practices of transfiguration.”

— Eliza Steinbock

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## Bibliography

### Selected *JER* content

- On the form of the video article, see all *JER* editorial video essays.
- For the use of animated infographic films, see Jürgens and Fernandes, *JER* 1(1): 3.
- For layered videos showing durational practice, see Arlander, *JER* 1(1): 4.
- For an unusual approach to *diegetic* voiceover, see Heinrich and Wolsing, *JER* 2(1): 1.
- For the inclusion of screendance in a video article, see Pini and Pini, *JER* 2(1): 2.
- For an interactive approach using standard tools, see Craddock and Harris, *JER* 3(1): 2.
- For a series of composite video articles, see special issue *JER* 3(2).
- For textual “illumination” (annotation) of raw video material, see special issue *JER* 4(2).

### Videographic journals

- *Screenworks*: <https://screenworks.org.uk/>
- *[in]Transition*: <https://mediacommons.org/intransition/>
- *Tecmerin: Journal of Audiovisual Essays*: <https://tecmerin.uc3m.es/en/journal/>
- *Journal for Artistic Research*: <https://www.jar-online.net/en>
- *Journal of Anthropological Films*: <https://boap.uib.no/index.php/jaf/>
- *Anthrovision*: <https://journals.openedition.org/anthrovision/>
- *The Journal of Visualized Experiments (JoVE)*: <https://www.jove.com/>

### Videographic research and pedagogy

- *The Videographic Essay*: <http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay>
- VideoEssay research project: <https://videoessayresearch.org/>
- *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* blog: <http://theatredanceperformancetraining.org/>
- Motion Bank: <http://motionbank.org/>

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