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# Companion for the videography 'Monstrous Organizing—The Dubstep Electronic Music Scene'

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## Abstract

This companion essay contributes to video-based organizational research by critically assessing conventional representational modes of videographic practice and conceptualizing an 'expressive' ontology for videographic research. We offer an image of thought that foregrounds the creative and powerfully affective potential of both videographic work and spectatorship. To advance this perspective and to inspire future research, we present our videography (length 30 minutes) that integrates various 'expressive' elements in montage form. We use the film to scrutinize the potential of video-based research and several methodological considerations tied to it. In doing so, we argue that video-based organizing of research activities can be seen as 'monstrous', an entire emergent mode of aesthetic storytelling that comes into being not in 'capturing' or 'recording', but rather as an affective production of potentialities.

## Keywords

Deleuze, expressive videography, monstrous organizing, music scenes, video

## Prolegomenon

What is opposed to fiction is not the real; it is not the truth which is always that of masters and colonizers; it is the story-telling function of the poor, in so far as it gives the false the power which makes it into a memory, a legend, a monster. (Deleuze, 1989: 150)

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Dear reader, before you continue any further, may we ask you to first watch our videography. Our video is a fast-paced story that traces the unfolding of the dubstep electronic music scene. It is an expressive account of a turbulent and instantly global social phenomenon, and follows the scene's organizing as it grapples with emergence mediated by the immediacy of online connectivity. The videography, *Monstrous Organizing—The Dubstep Electronic Music Scene*, can be viewed at <https://www.vimeo.com/117644344>.

Attempting something that is not constitutive of extant organizing is always a tricky endeavor. Thus, we feel greatly humbled that the editors of *Organization* have chosen to take the bold step of publishing this work, one of the first fully fledged videographic studies in organization theory (see Salovaara, 2014; Wood and Brown, 2011, for more examples of video publications). This companion essay has four principle aims: (1) to clarify our motivation for this endeavor, (2) to produce a concrete link with video work and theorizing, (3) to draw parallels with different modes of video-based research, and (4) to conclude with a message of hope for creative academic work under the guise of 'monstrously' (see Thanem, 2006) 'expressive' videographic research (Hietanen et al., 2014).

While other disciplines such as visual anthropology (e.g. MacDougall, 2011; Pink, 2006, 2007) and consumer research have a comparatively long tradition with alternative modes of representation, including videographic research (Belk and Kozinets, 2005; Kozinets and Belk, 2006; Veer, 2014) that is regularly featured in premier conferences<sup>1</sup> and also published in journal special issues (Caldwell and Henry, 2010; Rokka et al., 2017), organization theory has to date remained somewhat less inclined to explore video-based methods. Nevertheless, it seems that this discrepancy is, in light of recent developments in the field, on the cusp of being rectified. Not only is there a developing inclination toward the visual in studying organization and management (Bell and Davidson, 2013; Bell et al., 2014; Warren, 2002), an increasing focus on video-based analytical approaches and theorizing (Beyes and Steyaert, 2012; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012; Gylfe et al., 2016; Heath et al., 2010; Wood and Brown, 2012), but also an exciting push toward new forms of researcher-made films (Bates, 2015; Lorimer, 2010; Salovaara, 2014; Smets et al., 2014; Vannini, 2015; Wood and Brown, 2011), and a recently published special issue on video-based research in *Organizational Research Methods* (Jarzabkowski et al., 2014).

It is now widely recognized that the diminishing costs of both equipment and broadband connectivity have turned virtually every citizen of a developed country into a potential videographer (Cubitt, 1993), and the same can be said for academicians alike (Belk and Kozinets, 2005; Kozinets and Belk, 2006; MacDougall, 2001; Petr et al., 2015). The availability of editing software now often offered pre-bundled into most operating systems and the computing power readily available to run them has also placed a mobile video studio in the hands of every laptop owner. However, the nature of the medium of video and how it relates to extant forms of reporting academic work has to date received less attention (Hietanen et al., 2014; Wood, 2015). While recent work has noted videography to be associated with ethnographic practice that entails filming in naturally unfolding cultural or organizational contexts (Whiting et al., 2018), the term has been used to refer to almost any form of academic film production including ethnographic film, researcher-made documentary, or video data source, making it difficult to evaluate their distinct ontological and epistemological underpinnings. Moreover, the video medium has generally been understood as a rather straightforward and transparent tool and often constructed to be 'readable like text', as a supplementary material (e.g. Wood and Brown, 2011), or as data that is seen to offer something akin to an objective mirror-of-nature (cf. Gylfe et al., 2016; Schembri and Boyle, 2013). To us, a recent review of video-based research applications in organization theory by Christianson (2018) depicts clear tendencies of both implicit realism regarding the medium and also an 'inward-orientation', where the preoccupation is to produce increasingly 'authentic' video data by, for example, broadening its scope to include increasing amounts of video footage produced by the research participants themselves. While other recent scholarship has begun to increasingly recognize the threat of treating video as a straightforward and

taken-for-granted medium that leads to an ‘illusion of objectivity’ (Toraldo et al., 2018: 12), which should rather be seen as a ‘mode of observation and reflection, providing new insights rather than objective recall’ (p. 15), this epistemological challenge has not received enough critical attention in organization theorizing. Working *with* ‘illusion’ and ‘creative artistic expression’ in video-based research has also been recognized (Belk and Kozinets, 2005; Kozinets and Belk, 2006; MacDougall, 2011; Vannini, 2015; Wood and Brown, 2012), but theorizing on such notions has not generally been of focal importance in the articles published on the medium to date.

Thus, for us, what seems to be at stake is the ontology of the videographic medium itself, or whether we are to understand it as either ‘representational’ (e.g. Pink, 2007; Schembri and Boyle, 2013; Tsoukas, 1998; Tsoukas and Hatch, 2001) or ‘expressive’ (Hietanen et al., 2014). Through our videographic project, we wish to argue for increasingly recognizing the potential of the latter, without necessarily claiming that other perspectives would not remain valid within their own frameworks. In addition, we wish to imagine future possibilities for videographic research in which it might stand on its own as a medium that is not immediately relegated to secondary positions, that is, in the sense that it can only be addressed in comparisons that privilege text and photography. To do so, we will follow the cinematography theory of Gilles Deleuze (1986, 1989) and also incorporate his joint work with Felix Guattari on the philosophy of emergence as it pertains to our videographic project (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 2013; also Linstead and Thanem, 2007). In short, we conceive videography as the ‘entire methodology of the production of expression via moving image’ (Hietanen, 2012: 5). We will also discuss how videographic practice, in terms of fieldwork, editing and spectating can be seen as instances of ‘monstrous organizing’ (Thanem, 2006) *par excellence*. While the focus on expressivity denotes seeing videographic work particularly through the affective potential of the medium, it is a ‘monstrous’ undertaking when conceived as ongoing organizing that comes into being through instability and relationality: a disruptive tracer and participant in organizing that is simultaneously coming into being and unraveling. Instead of producing faithful representations of events in video form, we focus on how the entirety of a videographic endeavor comes into being as a relational assemblage rather than a separated reproduction of realities. This view attempts to disrupt established categorizations of how organizational research is conceived, conducted, disseminated and experienced. It evokes and assembles new forms of relations that are necessarily ‘open-ended matter of becoming’ (Thanem, 2006: 187). While a short companion essay such as this can naturally do only very limited justice to the complex matters at hand, we hope it can nevertheless serve as a conversation starter which adequately represents our perspective.

While the notion of the ‘monstrous’ is employed in our videography to explain how music scenes organize, in this companion essay, we expand this image of thought to equally entail how we come to fathom expressive videographic work from a methodological perspective. Expressive videography should thus not be seen as a creation of ‘wholes’ or states of stability and completion, but rather a ‘trembling organizing’ (Linstead and Thanem, 2007) or a ‘viscous becoming’ that seeks to rupture and reverberate rather than report and represent (Vannini, 2015). Following Deleuze, expressive videography thus becomes an inherently monstrous activity; it always moves on the edges of actualities it creates. It is composed of affective encounters assembled in various stages of conducting fieldwork, gathering footage, choosing and editing clips, organizing shots on the timeline, adding layers of sound, graphics and text, and screening the film. As a result, the film brings us into (and beyond) affective and disruptive relations with embodied, social, and technological worlds. A videographic project is thus a ‘mashup’ of diverse eventifications mediated through our presence in the field, through our fetishistic camera-eye (Marks, 2000), and through our interpretative storytelling on the editing table (Hietanen et al., 2014).

Above all, we argue for expressive videography that deterritorializes video from a ‘mirror’ into a ‘crystal’ (Deleuze, 1989: 274) that is not a reflection of ‘realities’ but a pure generation of a possible

or illusionary one (albeit underpinned by theorizing and empirical practice). Following Deleuze, we believe that only in striving to understand in this way we can seek to harness the potential of videographic work as necessarily a powerful machine of desire and fiction (also Žižek, 2006). These fictions can be immensely powerful and emotionally moving. Next, we will elaborate our ontological stance and distinguish how expressive videography moves beyond ideas that maintain the representational veracity of video work. Finally, we illustrate how this understanding was translated into the ‘making-of’ process and methodological principles which guided our videography.

## **Ontological background—reading alongside Deleuze**

Until relatively recently the audiovisual moving image remained an authentic representation of the world in the traditions of visual anthropology and ethnographic filmmaking. This view of the moving image as a ‘verisimilitude-machine’ began to shatter with the ‘crisis of representation’ of the 1980s and pushed representation toward experimenting with a multitude of new perspectives destined to ‘evoke, animate, expose, impress, unsettle, and rapture reality, rather than “capture” it’ (Vannini, 2015: 231; also Ruby, 1999). Thereafter, the illusory and phantasmatic nature of the cinematographic image has been more readily recognized. The advent of digital forms of producing video proposed another challenge, however. Due to its abstract nonmaterial nature, video media is notoriously difficult to define comprehensively (Cubitt, 1993). Video media cannot be conceptualized as a ‘thing’ in a static state, but in a continuous transformation with respect to technical development that both manifests and drives it, or being ‘[e]mbedded in interactive multimedia, as it increasingly is, video becomes an even more active medium’ (Lemke, 2007: 40; also Bolter and Grusin, 2000), which is readily reworked into other expressions and ‘mashups’. What becomes recorded through the process of digitalization can be argued to be technically as much abstracted from (any type of) reality as a visually represented image of an atom. This abstracting of ‘reality’ into binary series of ones and zeros can be recorded onto data storage devices, and later reincarnated with electronic impulses to reproduce an illusion of what was recorded, an illusion that simulates what was seen through the lens at the time of recording. The video medium has technically nothing in common with a ‘reality’—other than its software-mediated illusionary power of communication (Cubitt, 1993; Hietanen et al., 2014).

Through our almost decade-long preoccupation with video practice, we have increasingly noted that the obstacles in the way of academic videographies are not a lack of interest, poor production skills, difficulties in distribution, or even unacceptability. Rather, it is a problem of vocabulary, particularly of vocabulary arising from video itself. Centuries of academic exchanges have allowed scholars to be relatively adept in interpreting, analyzing, and critiquing text. Yet, when showcasing videos to academic audiences or when submitting them to peer-review, what we often seem to experience are reactions that tend toward emotional responses (whether exhilarated or repulsed) that avoid specifically discussing what was seen. Videography in the form of an academic research methodology is still in its infancy, and thus we often seem condemned to talk about academic videos in ways that immediately make comparisons to article manuscripts. Video is thus rarely thought of on its own terms, but rather always subjugated under other, more established orders such as text and photography. But let us now briefly turn to Deleuze’s (1986, 1989) work on cinema and its underpinnings in the Deleuzoguattarian ontology of emergence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 2013).

One of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s primary projects was to imagine an ontology of change that would overturn the dominant mode of Western thought regarding representationalism (Olkowski, 1999; also Linstead and Thanem, 2007; Thanem, 2004). While this short companion can do little justice to the truly enormous conceptual inventiveness of Deleuze and Guattari, we hope it can nevertheless act as a sensitizing piece for an expressive approach to videography (see Hietanen

et al., 2014). Deleuze has been referred to as the only philosopher who had a deep connection with and truly loved cinema. He wanted to create a conceptual space for cinema, which emerged purely from cinema alone without being *a priori* subordinated to text or photography (Bogue, 2003). In two written volumes, *Cinema 1* (1986) and *Cinema 2* (1989), Deleuze gives a truly exhausting array of concepts that construct a complex taxonomy of the various signs of audio-visual moving images. In what follows, we will focus only on a few key ideas that help define our perspective to expressive videography and enable us to connect it into a circuit with organization theory.

To start with, we need to establish an ontological space for video. As noted before, extant research in video methods exemplified by fields of consumer research and management have often attempted to subsume video to be readable and analyzed as ‘text’ (see Schembri and Boyle, 2013), or as dissectible frames that offer their epistemological weight when frozen and drawn out of their successive movement (see Gylfe et al., 2016; also Hindmarsh and Llewellyn, 2018). In contrast, for Deleuze, the immanent ontology that makes cinema powerful and agentic is its characteristic of movement and its nonlinear relationship with chronological time (also Bogue, 2003). It is *only* in movement where video becomes truly agentic, and this immanence does not ‘cut’ the video outside of the events in the world, but rather makes the event of video as a part of the unfolding of the world, not a descriptive act that records, but a generative act that produces actualities in-the-making. The moving screen is thus not a passive plane awaiting its perception, but enters into a complex embodied relationship with the body and mind of the viewer (also Barker, 2009; Marks, 2000). For Deleuze (1994), thinking is not a harmonious activity, but rather something forcefully surprising and even violent. Through its agency in the form of machinic movement, video can produce affective events that force us to think, not by simply decoding its meanings cognitively, but by forcing our whole bodies into an active encounter with it. Time is not a matter of logical and sequential succession in contemporary cinema either, for the flow of the cinematic image depends on a complex relationship with possible pasts and futures punctuated by images of multiple presents and the ‘virtuality’ of how images of the past and the future coincide with it. In this perspective, video thus must be experientially understood as a whole, and if constructed in an affectively powerful way, a whole that surges beyond itself in the shock to thought or how it forces the viewer to think of ‘impossible worlds’, or to think in new and unforeseen ways (also Bogue, 2003; Massumi, 2002; Olkowski, 1999). Thus, an affective encounter with video is not contained within the frame, but produces sublime relationalities in its potential ‘overcodedness’ and ‘unbearability’. The potentiality of such ‘lines of flight’ in thought also maintains a potential of societal change (Wood and Brown, 2011).

If video, as a potentially affective medium (Wood, 2015), is taken seriously then what becomes epistemologically important are how it imparts its forces in movement (change in the intensities of our thoughts—how changing thought alters our unfolding material relations). When experiencing cinema, we are intertwined in its agentic and machinic movement (Deleuze, 1989: 156), as it does not wait for us to bring it closure, but has already moved on. We are affected by it bodily in a liminal fashion. We are no longer simply cognitive observers, but neither do we react fully corporeally with the moving image. Even from the perspective of neuroscience, the cinematographic image causes ‘action tendencies’ to arise in us (Grodal, 2009). The ontology of cinema is the thinking body’s relation to movement itself. For Deleuze (1986), semiology in this sense, thus, becomes the analysis of movement:

IMAGE=MOVEMENT [...] There is no moving body [mobile] which is distinct from executed movement. There is nothing moved which is distinct from the received movement. Every thing, that is to say every image, is indistinguishable from its actions and reactions: this is universal variation. (p. 58)

In Deleuze's and Guattari's philosophy, emergence can be conceptualized as a simultaneous unfolding of 'content' and 'expression', where systemic forms come into being from uniform matter. Concisely, content denotes this form of stratification, and expression is its 'movement', change, coming-into-being, and decay. From this perspective, the same logic can be used for material forms (crystallization in Earth's strata) or the emergence of thought itself (the formation of a shocking idea that changes one's relations to both one's past and future). In contrast to representational assumptions of stability and a concrete link with a signifier and signified, the relationality of change and becoming takes precedence. Applying this thought to videography, the audiovisual moving image is thus not concerned with any particular image (unlike photography, which aims to 'reach a state of equilibrium at a certain instant' (Deleuze, 1986: 24)), but a successive flow of changing intensities that produce an *excess of meaning*; overcoded relations between the screen and body/minds are external to their terms. 'Space covered is past, movement is present, the act of covering [...] movement is indivisible, or cannot be divided without changing quantitatively each time it is divided' (p. 1). For Deleuze, time is the movement of changing relations and thus not to be thought of as an external variable, but the ontology of immanence, and thus,

We are no longer stable objects or identities external to the modulation of time, we are, rather, of the world, affective and affected nerves. Thus 'the brain is nothing but this—an interval, a gap between action and reaction [...] It constitutes a centre of indetermination in the acented universe of images [...] in the sense of organizing an unexpected response—because it perceives and has received the excitation on a privileged facet, eliminating the remainder'. (pp. 63–64)

This ontology of intensive relations thus does away with the meaning of stable objects, for the 'being' of things or ideas can only have meaning insofar as they relate to their surroundings as constitutive parts of space. On the contrary, being becomes movement and movement *is* expression—the transformation of time in becoming as part of matter and thought. In this way, video is the very expression of incessant change, a constant movement of relational forces that is not simply contained in the screen.

In *Cinema 1*, Deleuze sets the stage by conceptualizing the cinematographic image to find its being not in a succession of images, but in the very mode of machinic movement itself. He then creates a taxonomy of how various images of the film connect creatively with the World beyond the frame in the forms of *perception-image* (the fetishistic gaze) and *affection-image* (typically the image of a face that shows changes in affective intensities by breaking down the sensory-motor coordination of the image). In cinematography, these images are then typically followed by *action-image* (the 'realist' image where events occur in a commonsensical world of agency). These different types of images in movement are then combined in various ways and sequences to produce encounters with the viewers.

Yet, it would seem that Deleuze's true cinematographic project starts in *Cinema 2*, where he sheds his ties to images that can be approached commonsensically as signaleptic material (Bogue, 2003). Here, he reconfigures the very notion of time itself and argues that contemporary cinema has dismantled its tendencies to depict a stable world. This happened when the 'movement-image of the so-called classical gave away, in the post-war period, to a direct time-image' (Deleuze, 1989: xi). In short, time-image denotes an aesthetic stance in filmmaking that problematizes representational or 'realist' images. Such a mode of expression makes the screen a pure virtuality that connects to possible thought itself without attempting to produce an illusion on reality. For Deleuze, before the advent of cinema as the time-image, characters still retained agency over the world in a way that they remained primary to the flows of time and their surroundings. However, with time-image, the realization of the illusory nature of cinema burst out in full force, becoming 'a cinema

of the seer and no longer of the agent [on the screen]' (Deleuze, 1989: 126). This meant that cinematographic image was no longer confined to commonsensical worlds thus becoming increasingly expressive. Through time-image the interest shifted from depicting realist worlds into problematizing the 'reality' of the world we live in by experimenting with 'impossible worlds' or new possibilities of thought itself. Time-images are not attempting for reality, but neither do they make the truth or falsity of the image indiscernible but rather 'undecidable or inexplicable' (Bogue, 2003: 147). These tensions work by forcing new thinking on the viewer, and they are in their fictions more 'truthful' than images that are presented in the guise of reality (Bogue, 2003). For us, all images are simulacra of the fetishistic camera-eye and the selective editing desk that have nothing to do with reproducing a reality—not even a gentle 'refraction of the real' nor a 'halfway between the fictional and non-fictional' suggested by Wood and Brown (2011: 523) regarding their documentary film. In this sense, there is no neutral or innocent image of representation, and thus all images are inherently intentional: political acts of habit and preference, especially if they thrust the viewer into unforeseen and unimagined thought. They show us, through montage, impossible ways of thinking about the world, thus forcing creative thought through this violent encounter; we come to think in new ways (Massumi, 2002; Olkowski, 1999).

It is exactly in this way that we wish to consider videography, not as a 'mirror' of representation but as a 'crystal' of expression (Deleuze, 1989: 274). But, how can academics construct such thought-provoking encounters through videography? We next turn to our expressive videography case and elaborate on how committing to the ontological stance described above played out in our entire filmmaking process.

## **Expressing videographic monstrous organizing**

Our videography explores the organizing and emergent unfolding of the 'dubstep' electronic music scene. The film is based on our filmed ethnographic encounters with the scene and its participants in 2008–2012 that we have presented in more detail elsewhere (see Hietanen and Rokka, 2015). Following Thanem's (2006) articulation of monstrous organizing, the film is our expression of how the rapidly evolving music scene and bass-driven minimalist electronic soundscape unfolds monstrously as a result of the double articulation of content and expression. The point is that we do not see the formation of stable orders or structures, but rather the various coming-into-being and unfolding of desiring intensities. These organize in a flux of relations among underground DJ/producers, commercial market intermediaries, technologies, and online connectivity. For the purposes of this companion essay, we detail five methodological considerations that help demonstrate how the expressive ontology described above guided and inspired our videography production. We must also mention that our application of Deleuzian immanent logics is at best partial and restrained, as we still wished to produce a videography that could be approached by viewers more accustomed to orthodox representational approaches. In effect, we have erected something haunted by structural orders, but these are already fully populated by the seeds of breakdown and disintegration.

### *Expressive storytelling*

Our aim was to craft a story from videotaped events and encounters that had the capacity to evoke ideas, new relations, and perspectives in the viewers. Thus, instead of trying to transparently show 'what is', we hoped to provoke the viewer to think about the tensions at play through the encounters in our video, the participants in it, and how they are 'moved' or 'changed' through videographically expressed unfolding of relations. Toward this end, we cut together a story from our video

material that did not focus on a neutral description of our ethnographic fieldwork of a music scene, but is rather a ‘crafted’ collective enunciation and an encounter with the ‘uncontrollable’ global proliferation of the dubstep sound. In particular, we sought to express a sense of vulnerability and lack of agency that the ‘founding fathers’ of the rapidly evolving underground scene felt, despite their often contradictory narratives. In this sense, and in line with Deleuze, the entirety of the videography attempts to be a convoluted time-image where the DJ/producers find their possibilities of agency increasingly problematic within a cultural flux that is exceedingly racing past them, only to then gaze back at them in disinterest. Importantly, as also encouraged by Wood and Brown (2011; also Wood, 2015), our evocative storytelling employs not only written or spoken testimonies of our filmed participants but also various sensuous and affective capacities of our recorded audiovisual materials, enabling the viewers to ‘feel’ our story as it unfolds.

### *Expressive temporality*

Rather than offering a linear, chronological, or streamlined narrative of our ethnographic experience, we also sought to evoke a polyphony of multiple, simultaneous, and often contradictory stories and emergent embodied sensemaking about the scene studied (Cunliffe and Coupland, 2012). To express our ‘felt’ and ‘lived-through’ fieldwork experience and encounters, we thus wanted to emphasize a distinctive temporal unfolding of our story that resembled a helix rather than a logical narrative with a clear beginning-middle-end structure. This effect we hoped to create by organizing our film timeline in such a way that the viewer is almost violently turned and returned to and from various situations, moods, and characters in increasingly accelerating movement. Although our film arguably opens with a more classic documentary storytelling style and pace, our aim was to create a troubling and hectic pace toward the end of the film produced by an increasingly pressing flow of situations, events, and excess of meaning. Neither do we offer a linear ending or resolution, but rather hope to experiment with uncomfortable and even haunting feelings of co-existing futures imploded in the present, which again hopes to evoke the nature of our fieldwork encounters.

### *Expressive fieldwork*

While our video arguably builds on footage shot mostly in various interview settings including a large number of participant testimonies—which is an otherwise common feature of representational videographies (Hietanen et al., 2014)—our main driver here was merely to highlight the contextual and interconnected nature of the scene. Given that we filmed interviews with 28 participants in London, New York, and Helsinki, which amounted to over 40 hours of footage, it was clear to us that only a small fraction of the collected unique material would end up in the film. This naturally necessitates the purposive selection of characters, sites, and events. For purposes of evocation, we generally included participants with the most fitting affective charge: characters who intuitively caught our attention, either by their stories or simply by their charismatic presence on the screen. Eventually, the filmic and artistic quality of the selected shots also mediated our selection process significantly, in the sense that we wanted to create intense encounters that opened up the videography in ways that brought about a sense of the affective drive, a desiring intensity that propels the dubstep scene. Even with the obvious challenges with sound and image, we insisted on conducting all our filming in situ, which often meant shooting in back stages of booming nightclubs and basements of pirate radio studios. While recent work in video-based approaches has raised the issues of ethicality pertaining to the risk of ‘expert’ researchers ‘plundering’ the social contexts they enter (Slutskaia et al., 2018), we attempted to mitigate this concern by always

including auto-ethnographic members in all stages of the research effort. In addition, we attempted to avoid the typical trappings of ethnographic interviews in making the events of filming into conversations where the scene was not simply described, but actively negotiated, contested, and produced. The filming was thus not intended to reproduce an image of culture: captured, canned, and then paraded. Rather, in its small way, our video is part of the ongoing and ‘monstrous’ process of the scene in becoming.

### *Expressive theorizing*

One of the persistent questions about videography is how to go beyond descriptive and representational modes and express theoretical ideas and propositions. On the other hand, an inclination to theorize is arguably the *raison d’être* of academic videographies and in our view, characterizes their distinction from conventional documentary film and cinema. We have attempted to craft our entire video as an affective argument with an aim to advance theory building of organizing that does not assume tendencies toward stability or harmony. Yet, the audiovisual and non-textual means for making theoretical arguments still remain largely unexplored (Wood, 2015). In addition to using the moving image itself, we chose to integrate theoretical excerpts as ‘floating’ text on screen, which helped in merging our more concise theoretical ideas with the flow of events which were loosely structured into four broader theme sections of the film. For us, theorizing in expressive videography, however, should not be seen as what is explicitly stated as written text or words. Instead, the film as a whole is an encounter with the audience, a brush with impossible worlds that force the viewer to think, and in our view this necessitates an image of video that makes theorizing an affective encounter with actualities rather than a description. In expressive videography, theory can surely be developed, but theorizing is inextricable from praxis in the sense that expressive videography is about affective disruptions and about creating the possibilities of future events of change (see Guattari, 2005).

### *Expressive effects*

While we have used some text to tie the video into a theoretical argument, we remain decidedly more interested in the affective encounter that may contain theoretical inclinations, but moves beyond theory proper by overcoding the logic of theorizing itself. For us, the expressive visuals, including selected close-ups, pans, and transitions that add to the affective intensity of the videography are *where traditional theorizing is deterritorialized and this becomes the theoretical act of expressive videography itself*. These aesthetic approaches also make use of how video should be understood as a largely nonlinguistic medium (see Deleuze, 1989). Moreover, we matched audio including music not only to accentuate the rhythmic, ever-accelerating flow of events but also to give a sense of the auditory landscape that enveloped the scene. As such, the bricolage style of the editing marks the simultaneity and immediacy of how the scene was being negotiated emergently. Admittedly, our video is by no means a purely artistic montage that aims only for time-image aesthetics. Rather, it is an example of a videography that still attempts to converse with conventional academic film work. To add to this, we have sought to incorporate instances of time-image to unravel affective powers that are cinema’s alone. These are moments in the montage where time breaks out of its linear coordinates and the world turns inward in the film. These points mark an inversion where the commonsensical world of continuity and agency evaporate, and the world looks back at its creatures while indiscriminately racing by. Creating affective images is central here. These can be constructed by close-ups that singularize an affective power—for example, an expression of face that moves from sadness to lugubriousness (see Guattari, 2011). What



**Image 1.** Time-image of 'bleeding vinyl' marking the disintegration of the dubstep scene.

As the affective flow builds, the vinyl starts melting to produce a sign of simultaneous fluidity of the culture in its search for 'fresh' sounds and the simultaneous ephemerality of analog medium in the throes of an already digitalized culture.



**Image 2.** Close-up time-image of a pioneering DJ/producer marking the loss of his agency.

This is a time-image of the silent faces of the DJ/producers, who rather than being the causal masters of the particular circumstance, can only stare at the world unfolding on them. The faces are enlarged and the background blurred to show a face removed from the spatiotemporal coordinates to act as a pure surface of affect. The color has been removed, because as it appears, they are already fossilized as a culture of monstrous organizing is already moving beyond them, one they only had in their control in nostalgic narratives of past times.

potentializes such images are their qualities of 'overcodedness' or 'unbearability' as they rise out of a descriptive mode to connect with thought beyond the screen itself (Deleuze, 1989). Images 1 and 2 are provided as cameos of this.

The monstrously expressive videography thus does not strive for a playbook of criteria or simply a methodological practice, but rather a *way of thinking* of videographic work as an assemblage that does not simply attempt to discover descriptions of how social contexts organize. Yet, such

organizing is never passive and always comes into being through desiring intensities and the events such intentionalities bring about (Buchanan, 2015). It is a way of thinking about video as a moving interstice that through its relations continues to inherently intertwine in research contexts. It is something in the world and of the world that forces us to think about it in embodied and aesthetic ways and, in its small way, changes the affective potential of both its pasts and futures.

### **Final notes—unleashing monstrously expressive videography**

In this companion article and our videographic example, we have argued that the idea and practice of expressive videography can help researchers in going beyond ‘dead’ (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000) descriptions of organizations and organizing and instead embrace the evocative power of the moving image. By taking this stance on videography from its inception, as well as by truly leveraging its potential ‘powers of the false’ (Deleuze, 1989) in creating affective, visceral, and sensuous encounters, we can see the tremendous potential when compared to thinking of video as a data gathering and representational device, which still remains the convention in academic video productions (Bates, 2015; Hietanen et al., 2014; Vannini, 2015). A few notable examples of this have recently been unleashed upon organization theory (Salovaara, 2014; Wood and Brown, 2011), but these still remain undertheorized. In this companion, we have conceived and cast an image of thought for academic videography that can be understood as a monstrous and ever-unfolding encounter between research participants, contexts, and audiences.

Unlike the textual forms of representation that we are so accustomed to in academia—which are commonly organized into easy-to-digest sequences of utterances, sentences, and paragraphs for delivering arguments and communicating meaning in a logical manner—the constantly forward-moving image is intensively, intuitively, and deeply felt in our bodies. Viewing monstrously expressive videography thus attempts to escape stable orders, potentially rendering it a more discomfiting, unpredictable, even chaotic, and disturbing experience to its spectator. Precisely for this reason we believe video can help researchers question preconceptions and undermine taken-for-granted ways of thinking and, following Deleuze, deliver ‘shocks to thought’ and spark ‘revolutionary consciousness’ (Bogue, 2003; Massumi, 2002). In imagining video, we thus stand with Thanem’s (2006) more general claim that organization theory needs ‘monstrous others’ to potentially ‘interrupt attempts to organize bodies according to strict categories and behavioral patterns’, and to appreciate ‘how processes and entities of organization work wither and break down’ (p. 186). In a similar manner to how Whiting et al. (2018) showed that engaging with video opens new social encounters in the form of previously unrecognized ‘hyphen spaces’, expressive videography can effectively force us to think that which may otherwise remain hidden, unsaid, or unseen (also Merchant, 2011).

In discussing our video example, we have attempted to elucidate some of the methodological thinking that committing to an emergent ontology entails and how it can translate into the practice of videographic work in organizing. Instead of trying to demonstrate a static description of the dubstep music scene or trying to transparently represent the authentic voices of our participants, our goal was thus to convey, in affective ways, the very possibilities of the scene’s emergent forces. While painting this moving canvas, our videography does not seek to emulate an actuality, but rather to organize into an actualizing event, one that strives to become overcoded in its entirety and nearly unbearable at times (also Bogue, 2003) in its aims to evoke thinking about organizing. In addition, the film becomes necessarily political as it works to eschew the possibility of a neutral image that seeks to ‘capture’ reality. For us the expressive mode of videographic production should not be shy in ‘taking sides’ (see Denzin, 2001), as it can never hope to be a ‘transparent communicator’ of reality. Instead, it

should gladly live on the thresholds of fiction, in so much as it is understood that all fiction has a great stake in the actualities of unfolding cultural discourse. As noted by Taylor et al. (2012), we ‘care about the grotesque, the sublime, the comic, the ugly, and the elegant’ (p. 1) because they are all parts of the richness of human experience. Video should thus attempt to become a turning ‘crystal’ (Bogue, 2003; Deleuze, 1989), questioning the very possibility of a mirror-like faithful representation of reality that continues to linger on in much of the visual anthropological filmmaking tradition (see Pink, 2007; Schembri and Boyle, 2013). Agreeing with other nonrepresentational scholars (Lorimer, 2010; Vannini, 2015), we argue that the affective power of video becomes irrevocably curtailed when video is rendered into a representational medium that simply becomes constructed to replicate the structures and styles of ‘scientific’ mode of academic publishing.

Deleuze noted that the great visionary directors ‘may be compared, in our view, not merely with painters, architects and musicians, but also with thinkers. They think with movement-images and time-images instead of concepts’ (Deleuze, 1986: ix). While our aspirations are likely to remain far beneath such heady heights, a new monstrous action-thought in academic videography could accomplish much challenging and inspiring both for videographic practitioners and their audiences as a medium that dares to stand on its own.

We thus call for monstrously expressive organizational videographies that can break out of the representational thought by embracing the following ideas:

1. *Expressive videography is nothing if not affective.* It is always crafted, planned, shot, edited, produced, and presented according to a vision manifesting through a desiring impulse by its creators that coagulates as a result of contingencies. It is an expression of possible worlds that can open up infinitely via digital mediation. It is not a container of events, but a machinic becoming of affect itself in attempts to create intensities, force thought to think, and think itself with our whole bodies.
2. *Video is movement itself.* It has an embodied agency of its own kind which should be embraced rather than downplayed by emphasizing analysis of particular frames or thinking about it as ‘readable’, akin to a textual account.
3. *Video is fiction.* Since authentic representation is impossible, videography should embrace the powers of fiction more fully, so as to bring about encounters with impossible thought and impossible worlds. Actualized in agentic movement, video can potentially bring about new relations that have ‘real’ effects.
4. *Video is political.* In producing powerful fictions, it becomes the videographer’s ethical responsibility to ‘take sides’ and remain reflexive, including thinking about the effects of the video-based apparatus and culture itself that becomes propagated.
5. *Video is monstrous.* It is monstrous in creating new events, relations, and imaginations. These come into being through fieldwork encounters, its nonlinear relationship to chronology, and the unpredictability of change it can bring about through affected and affective audiences.

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## Note

1. <http://www.acrwebsite.org/web/acr-content/945/acr-film-festival-reflections-on-the-first-10-years.aspx>

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