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# Crafting the Character: Editing and the Politics of Personhood in Image-Based Social Science Research

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## Abstract

Image-based social science research is often fueled by an alleged intention of giving voice to hitherto voiceless people. But as "untold stories" gain material expression as 'storylines', we are urged to consider the implications of the passage from 'person' to 'character'. How does the border-crossing into pictorial territory transform the represented? This workshop aims at exploring some of the intricate dilemmas inherent to the endeavour of portraying people from the perspective of the editing room. The workshop is composed of two sections: during its first third, participants will be presented to the fundamentals of professional editing process and to a reflection about its particularities in academic settings, as well as to a theoretical starting point from which to consider matters of personhood and representation. Towards the end, participants will be introduced to a decision-making-based editing framework that is specifically designed to address key challenges of representing people. In addition to building a common vocabulary and the necessary theoretical grounding, this first stage will comprise the screening of multiple audiovisual examples - the majority of which derived from the lecturer's own work -, as well as the discussion of real-life editing room situations. Following this section, participants will be invited to present their own audiovisual material - from snippets of raw footage, to work-in-progress scenes and sequences, to finalised assets - and engage the group in a discussion about representational challenges they faced or anticipate facing in the editing process. For their presentations, participants are encouraged to "open the black-box" of their editing processes, either by exploring in depth one particular moment, character, or dilemma, or by offering a broad account of the challenges facing their editing process experience. Alternatively, participants may choose to explore an edited piece (e.g. a film, a sequence, or a scene) and analyse how its characters emerge from an editing style or from particular editing decisions\*. It is suggested that all participants lead a brief debate following their presentations. \*: Note that this will be the only presentation format accepted of participants without own material.

**Keywords:** EDITING, FILM, VIDEO, CHARACTER, PERSON

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\*Speaker