VISUAL COMMUNICATION

GUIDELINES FOR VISUAL ESSAYS

Visual Communication welcomes submissions of visual essays. Visual essays are a very important part of this journal and have quite a different role and status from a traditional article, making their argument predominantly through visual communication. The journal is proud to have published numerous visual essays over the years, and to have seen the form evolve and grow. See for example the special issue, the Visual Essay, Vol 10 (3), 2011: http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/vcja/10/3 and the editorial for that issue.

A visual essay can be an entirely visual piece or it can combine image and writing. The length of these essays varies (usually between 6 and 12 pages).

A visual essay can focus on any social or political aspect of visual communication, it can be a response to the visual work of others, a commentary on visual processes, ideas, and so on.

The visual element of the essay should form an integral part of the argument or the ideas expressed, rather than serve only as example, illustration or additional documentation.

The images in visual essays can originate from a range of sources, such as curated collections or archives of images; images produced for the essay; images collected as research data; images selected or produced to enable reflection on a particular aspect of visual communication, and so on.

Illustrations should be used with discrimination and be chosen for relevance to the argument rather than decorative enhancement.

REVIEW PROCESS

All visual essays are double-blind peer reviewed. Submissions must be fully anonymous, including in any image credits.

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DESIGN

Authors can present a mock layout if they have ideas about how the essay should be presented, or present the written text with images separately (as for a research article). In the end, if the essay is accepted, the design is a negotiated process. All authors are strongly encouraged to view a number of recent visual essays in the journal – it will be clear how different they each are.

If presenting a mock layout, please note that:
- all visual essays start on a single right hand page and end on a single left. The Sage logo and author/publication information is also included on the first page.
- fonts, headlines, body copy, captions etc are all set in house style, unless they're for the purpose of being used in an illustration from the author.
- For minimum image sizes please use the following pixel dimensions as a guide:

  DPS
  within text area 3803 × 2604 pixels
  or to full bleed 4228 × 3071 pixels

  Full page
  within text area 1724× 2604 pixels
  or to full bleed 2114 × 3071 pixels

  Half page
  within text area 1724 × 1302 pixels
  or to bleed 2114 × 1556 pixels

SUBMISSION

Visual essays can be uploaded directly to the journal submission page. Authors need to select the category 'visual essay' from the drop-down menu.

QUERIES

For any questions regarding visual essays, please email Louise Ravelli, L.Ravelli@unsw.edu.au