

Show, Don't Tell: Video as Data and Documentation
Karen E. Adolph
New York University

Instructors in psychology courses face a set of difficult challenges: They must describe behavioral phenomena, explain research methods and findings, and discuss issues concerning how to interpret the results—at a level appropriate for students' expertise, and in a manner sufficiently compelling to maintain students' interest and attention. Video can help. Video uniquely captures the richness and complexity of behavior and the subtle details of the surrounding context. It records who did what and when and how they did it. It reveals participant and experimenter speech, gestures, emotional expressions, looking behaviors, postures, and movements; whether experimenters adhered to the protocol and participants complied with the instructions; the physical details of the testing space; the interpersonal dynamics of the testing situation; and so on. As such, video is a remarkably informative source of raw data, beautifully suited for research reuse, and a tremendously powerful tool for documenting procedures, illustrating findings and phenomena, and constraining and enriching interpretations of research results. Here, I use video clips to show how video can be used as data and documentation, and to highlight the power of video to enrich instruction in psychology courses. Finally, I describe how instructors can use the Databrary (databrary.org) video library—a web-based repository of actual raw video data and excerpts—to download video clips of behavioral phenomena, research procedures, displays shown to participants, and research findings to include in their lectures. Instructors can also share their videos and excerpts with other authorized members of the Databrary community.