Routledge Research in Cognitive Humanities

KINESIC INTELLIGENCE IN THE HUMANITIES

Edited by
Guillemette Bolens

ROUTLEDGE

Kinesic Intelligence in the Humanities

This research collection showcases how kinesic intelligence is fundamental to human communication and our ability to produce complex meaning, exploring its manifestations across a range of humanities disciplines, and connecting our past with our social and cultural future.

The book defines kinesic intelligence as a higher-order intellectual competence that allows human beings to interact and grow cognitively and intersubjectively through sensorimotricity and interpersonal movement. Understood in this way, kinesic intelligence can offer insights into the development of humans' meaning-making abilities and, in turn, society and culture more broadly. Recognizing the power of the humanities in furthering sociocultural development, the collection features perspectives from scholars across a range of topics, including the multimodality of language acquisition in children; young adults in clinical psychology and medical humanities; nonverbal communication in history; legal language and reasoning; literature and cognitive studies; the Internet and multispecies anthropology; and sensoriality in history and art.

Foregrounding the impact of the humanities in promoting new understandings of human intelligence, this volume will be of interest to scholars in cognitive literary studies, multimodality, anthropology, history, medical humanities, and those with an interest in the real-world impact of the humanities.

Guillemette Bolens is Professor of Medieval and Comparative Literature at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. She is the author of several books, including *The Style of Gestures: Embodiment and Cognition in Literary Narrative* (2012) and *Kinesic Humor: Literature, Embodied Cognition, and the Dynamics of Gesture* (2021). Her work has been published in *Poetics Today*, *Cahiers de narratologie*, *Studia Neophilologica*, and *Cogent Arts & Humanities*.

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Introduction

What is kinesic intelligence?

Guillemette Bolens

Kinesic intelligence is a higher-order intellectual competence that allows human beings to interact and grow cognitively and intersubjectively through sensorimotricity and interpersonal movement. Defined in this way, kinesic intelligence is foundational to most forms of human communication, whether through gesture, action, and speech, or through artefacts, artworks, and writing. Human interactions involve both sensorimotricity and the ability to produce multilayered meanings from verbal and nonverbal events and experiences within any given cultural and ecological environment. The cognitive faculties of the human brain grow dynamically from birth onward as a result of the interactions afforded by motricity and kinesthesia in relation to the senses of smell, touch, taste, sight, and/or hearing. Essential for such interactions, sensorimotricity enables cognitive faculties to develop, the multiplication of neuronal connections being elicited by sensorimotor experiences. Symbolical, semiotic, and semantic systems are in many ways dependent on such embodied thinking skills and faculties.

Sensorimotor interactions are also instrumental to the development of intersubjectivity and the capacity for and fluidity of social interaction. Intersubjectivity is a necessary function of human sociality. Sensorimotricity and intersubjectivity are codeterminant in the development of a child, who depends on touch and intentional attention by other humans for survival. To be held in infancy and addressed *as* a person and *by* a person are basic human needs. Instances of kinesic intelligence range from adequately meeting those basic and vital needs all the way to the performance of the most complex feats of social, creative, and intellectual life. Kinesic intelligence is exercised in habitual daily communication, as well as in unpredictable innovations and limitless cultural variations, technological adaptations, interspecies interactions, and transformations of thought and matter into artefacts. Some of the most complex forms of intellection are deeply rooted in the human propensity to turn sensorimotor experience into new meanings.

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The significance of kinesic intelligence is thus pervasive and calls for deeper scrutiny. The purpose of this book is to focus on kinesic intelligence in representative fields of the humanities and human sciences. The book is a research collection in which leading international scholars consider kinesic intelligence from the perspective of their own fields of research. It covers kinesic intelligence in the context of linguistics and the multimodality of language acquisition in children; teenagers and young adults in clinical psychology and medical humanities; nonverbal communication in history; legal language and reasoning; literature and cognitive studies; the Internet and multispecies anthropology; and the concept of sensoriality in academic knowledge production with a focus on scent in art. Kinesic intelligence is the common research topic across these chapters which offer a detailed and concrete sense of the complexity and pervasiveness of this dimension of human reality.

Kinesic Intelligence in the Humanities brings together complementary voices in a way that foregrounds the important impact the humanities and human sciences can have in intelligence research. Kinesic intelligence is a type of intelligence that is dynamic at every level: it grows with the person through the development of the brain and embodied cognitive processes; it operates in interactions with others within variable contexts and in response to unpredictable experiences; it adapts and changes throughout a person's lifespan, and it evolves in relation to historical, environmental, and technological situations and semiotic sociocultural systems, logics, and practices. The relevance of bringing together these various fields of research from the humanities and human sciences lies in the fact that an understanding of kinesic intelligence requires complementary perspectives and inputs to demonstrate the multilayered and dynamic reality of this kind of intelligence.

In order to set the scene for the multidisciplinary chapters to follow, this introduction considers recent trends in fields that are relevant to a definition of kinesic intelligence, namely sensorimotor communication and research in human intelligence. Its aim is to emphasize the fact that the term *intelligence* in the phrase *kinesic intelligence* is indeed meant as a higher-order intellectual competence. Intelligence research is a fast-moving domain which is highly contemporary in its implications. While kinesic intelligence is rooted in core brain functioning and pre-reflective embodied cognition, it pertains to a person's higher-order thinking skills and is relevant to the field of intelligence research at large.

The first and second sections of this introduction discuss theories of intelligence, sensorimotor communication, and network theories in neuroscience, highlighting an emerging consensus around the need for a multidisciplinary approach to research on the dynamic quality of intelligence. The third section of the introduction presents the structure of the book, explaining how its chapters showcase the dynamic and transversal quality of kinesic intelligence in the humanities and human sciences.

I.1 Theories of human intelligence

> The construct of intelligence has yet to secure an agreed-on definition, even among psychologists investigating it.
> (Kornhaber 2020, 665)

In the second edition of *The Cambridge Handbook of Intelligence*, general editor Robert J. Sternberg, a leading expert in the field of intelligence research, writes that "there are many and diverse definitions of intelligence. Nevertheless, intelligence is usually defined in terms of an individual's ability to adapt to the environment and to learn from experience in life" (Sternberg 2020a, 679–80). This definition contrasts with the perspective of Charles Spearman who, in the early twentieth century, "developed the correlation method and applied this technique to examine academic achievement within four branches of school study (i.e., English, French, classics, and mathematics)" (Barbey 2018, 8). Aron Barbey goes on to note that "Beyond identifying the contribution of specific mental abilities, Spearman observed that the correlations among the four branches of school study were always positive." This finding—now known as "the positive manifold"—was evidence of the fact that "all cognitive tests measure something in common" (Barbey 2018, 8). Spearman called this commonality the general factor, or *g*, which represents "the component of individual differences variance that is common across all tests of mental ability" (Barbey 2018, 8).

Other theories of intelligence were developed during the twentieth century, refining the categories used to design IQ tests and assess human intelligence. For instance, "the well-established Cattell–Horn–Carroll theory distinguishes between performance on tests of prior knowledge and experience" which measure what is called "crystallized intelligence," and performance on tests "that require adaptive reasoning in novel situations" which measure what is called "fluid intelligence" (Barbey 2018, 8–9). Although "hierarchical models of intelligence [. . .] are very much in favor today among many if not most intelligence researchers" (Sternberg 2020b, 1203), some theories make room for aspects of human intelligence that go beyond IQ tests. Sternberg's *theory of successful intelligence* includes a greater number of human abilities than commonly accounted for by intelligence tests, as "most of these tests assess largely memory and analytical abilities," ignoring important abilities beyond those of recognizing and evaluating information (Sternberg 2020a, 682).

The wider range of human abilities that Sternberg classifies as "successful intelligence" corresponds to the following categories, which notably escape IQ testing: "(1) the ability to formulate, strive for, and, to the extent possible, achieve one's goals in life, given one's sociocultural context, (2) by capitalizing on strengths and correcting or compensating for weaknesses (3) in order to adapt to, shape, and select environments (4) through a combination of analytical, creative, and practical abilities" (Sternberg 2020a, 682). By adding creative and practical abilities to analytical abilities, Sternberg includes the outcome of intelligence in his considerations. He concedes that memory is involved in all analytic, creative, and practical thinking, but adds the caveat that despite it being "necessary for acting on such thinking," it is "far from sufficient for action" (Sternberg 2020a, 682). The ability to act based on complementary thinking skills is hence integrated into the assessment of intelligence. The question remains, however, as to how psychometric tests might measure such thinking skills.

In the 1980s, Howard Gardner proposed the *theory of multiple intelligences*, diverging from "theories rooted at the start of the twentieth century that argue [that] general intelligence, *g*, is central to all human problem-solving," his theory hence standing as a challenge to "measuring intelligence through psychometric methods" (Kornhaber 2020, 659). Gardner listed the following categories of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Regarding bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, Mindy Kornhaber explains that

> bodily-kinesthetic capacities are not measured within psychometric models. However, evidence for bodily-kinesthetic intelligence exists in a developmental trajectory from infancy to mature use that is more variable than that of language, with some uses (e.g., neurosurgery) taking many years of practice.
>
> (Kornhaber 2020, 662)

Although Gardner's theory had an international impact on educational approaches and methods, it was not considered particularly useful by intelligence psychometrists, owing to the difficulty of assessing and measuring such abilities.

Similar difficulties concern subfields in intelligence research, such as cultural intelligence (Ang et al. 2020; see also Matsumoto and Hwang 2016), social intelligence (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2020), practical intelligence (Hedlund 2020), and emotional intelligence (Rivers et al. 2020). In their discussion of social intelligence, John Kihlstrom and Nancy Cantor compare social intelligence and emotional intelligence:

> Emotional intelligence subsumes four component abilities: the ability to perceive emotions in oneself and others; to use emotions in the service of thinking and problem-solving; to understand emotions and the relations among them; and to manage emotions in oneself and others. Emotion is frequently evoked in a social context and many social interactions are laced with emotion. So emotional intelligence and social intelligence do share a sort of family resemblance and it would not be surprising to find that they are correlated. For example, the ability to decode nonverbal expressions of emotion is an important aspect of the ability to "read" social situations in general. On the other hand, emotional intelligence and social intelligence are not the same thing: there is nothing particularly social about snake phobia and there are many aspects of social cognition where emotion plays little or no role.
>
> (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2020, 765)

Borrowing Kihlstrom and Cantor's formulation, one might argue that kinesic intelligence is the capacity to use kinesis "in the service of thinking and problem-solving." In this sense, the present study on kinesic intelligence differs from research in nonverbal communication, which records, describes, and codes nonverbal behavior (Burgoon and Dunbar 2018; Dunbar and Bernhold 2019; Keyton 2018), or measures body movement in proxemics and kinesics (Dael et al. 2016). The core topic of this book concerns the multiple and complex ways in which human beings think kinesically and act accordingly. The chapters that follow elucidate this type of foundational and wide-ranging intelligence.

Kihlstrom and Cantor classify

> social intelligence into two broad categories: *declarative social knowledge*, consisting of abstract concepts and specific memories, and *procedural social knowledge*, consisting of the rules, skills, and strategies by which the person manipulates and transforms declarative knowledge and translates knowledge into action.
>
> (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2020, 769, emphasis in the original)

There is a strong tendency in intelligence research to solve epistemological and conceptual problems by creating categories (e.g., emotional intelligence and social intelligence) in order then to divide a category (say, social intelligence) into two or more subcategories (here, declarative *vs* procedural). Such distinctions and sub-distinctions certainly help to refine analytical tools, but their abstract nature tends to stabilize dynamic aspects into fixed features, obscuring the cardinal relevance of dynamics in the object of study.

Noting that the adjacent field of social cognition originated "in early psychometric efforts to measure individual differences in social intelligence" (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2020, 769), Kihlstrom and Cantor conclude that

> perhaps we should abandon the "ability" model of social intelligence completely, along with its psychometric emphasis on developing instruments for the measuring of individual differences in social competencies of various sorts—tests intended to rank people and on which some people must score high and others must score low. Instead of focusing on *how people compare*, perhaps we should focus on *what people know* and how they bring their social intelligence to bear on their interactions with other people, on the tasks life has set for them, and on the tasks they have set for themselves.
>
> (Kihlstrom and Cantor 2020, 772, emphasis in the original)

This is an interesting proposition, relevant in the humanities and human sciences at large, but paradoxically difficult to investigate in intelligence research. Sternberg discusses social intelligence in the same handbook, presenting it as part of practical intelligence and providing examples of assessments. Among studies conducted to test practical intelligence, he refers to the following examples:

> In these studies, we presented participants with photos and asked them to make judgments about the photos. There were two kinds of photos. In the first kind, we asked participants to evaluate whether a male-female couple posing in a photo was a genuine couple (i.e., truly involved in a romantic relationship) or, rather, a phony couple posed by the experimenters just for the photo. In the second kind, we asked participants to indicate which of two individuals was the other's supervisor (Barnes and Sternberg 1989; Sternberg and Smith 1985). We found that females were superior to males on these social-intelligence tasks. Scores on the two social-intelligence tasks did not correlate with scores on conventional cognitive-ability tests, nor did they correlate with each other, suggesting a substantial degree of domain specificity in the photo-identification task.
>
> (Sternberg 2020a, 690)

Using such experiments to test practical intelligence is perplexing. Even though these studies were published in the late 1980s, they are still referenced in *The Cambridge Handbook of Intelligence* (2020). Their purpose is to provide evidence of factors proper to practical intelligence that cannot be subsumed under the *g* factor, and which do not even correlate at the level of practical intelligence. However, the designs of the tests feature numerous unproblematized issues regarding false beliefs about facial transparency relative to normative emotional, social, and gendered behavior—a fact that undermines the relevance of the tests' results.

Unquestionably, Sternberg's handbook is extremely rich and interesting, offering a most valuable range of perspectives on twentieth- and twenty-first-century intelligence research. The point here is that researchers' social intelligence presiding over a study on social intelligence needs to be included in the authors' reflection. The same applies to research in kinesic intelligence. As a higher-order thinking competence that is grounded in sensorimotricity and active in interpersonal interactions, kinesic intelligence is not only at the core of social, cultural, practical, and emotional intelligence, but also necessarily at work when this fluid and multilayered type of intelligence is investigated. This can clearly be seen in the chapters of the present volume. Rather than multiplying categories and subcategories of different types of intelligence, the contributors account with detailed precision for the complexity of human intelligence in specific situations and acts of communication from the vantage point of their disciplines which provide the means whereby their own kinesic intelligence can be deployed with accuracy and lucidity. In the process, each chapter illustrates how research in the humanities and human sciences can itself be a source of fundamental training in kinesic intelligence.

I.2 Sensorimotor communication and dynamic neuronal networks

This section first considers sensorimotor communication and, second, neuroscientific research on the dynamics of brain functioning. Its purpose is to highlight a common denominator between recent trends in communication studies and neuroscientific studies regarding the central importance of dynamics in cognition. Both the previous and the present sections suggest that, when an approach stabilizes a cognitive phenomenon into abstract categories and fixed data, one of the most crucial aspects of this phenomenon, namely its dynamics, tends to be overlooked.

Giovanni Pezzulo and colleagues write that "across the last decades, human communication has been a flourishing field of research in many disciplines, including psychology, neuroscience, and linguistics. However, the study of human communication has principally focused on language use, gesture, and deictics" (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 2). Pezzulo and colleagues are interested in the fact that "during on-line social interactions humans often use non-verbal, *sensorimotor* forms of communication to send coordination signals, i.e., signals that are embedded within standard pragmatic actions and (potentially) improve coordination success" (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 2, emphasis in the original). Furthermore,

> *Sensorimotor communication* (*SMC*) can be found in every type of social interaction—from freeform interactions like transporting together a heavy object to more ritualized interactions such as playing together in an orchestra or engaging in a dialogue. For example, a person who is transporting a table together with a co-actor can push the table in a certain direction to *signal* where and when he intends to place it. In other words, he uses a *haptic channel* rather than language to communicate.
> (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 2, italics in the original)

Pezzulo and colleagues highlight two "intriguing aspects" of sensorimotor communication (SMC). The first is that sensorimotor communication "does not seem to require prior knowledge or prior arrangements but can arise also between persons that have never met before (although cultural differences may need to be taken into consideration)" (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 2). The second intriguing aspect is that sensorimotor communication "often consists of very subtle (changes of) kinematic or bodily cues," which provide "a surprising abundance of information about others' intentions, . . . emotions and attitudes (is he happy or disappointed?), beliefs and preferences (e.g., does he like me or not?), etc." (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 2). The authors stress that "SMC has recently surfaced (or resurfaced) in several fields—neuroscience, cognitive psychology, human–robot interaction, linguistics, and experimental semiotics—reflecting the truly interdisciplinary nature of the topic" (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 3). Notwithstanding such scientific breakthroughs as the discovery of the mirror neuron system, they claim that "we still lack a comprehensive theoretical synthesis of this multifaceted phenomenon" (Pezzulo et al. 2019, 3). Indeed, a multifaceted phenomenon calls for a multidisciplinary approach.

Cordula Vesper and Vassilis Sevdalis further develop the perspective of sensorimotor communication by defining three functions:

> (a) an informing function of body movements, to highlight action intentions for an observer; (b) a coordinating function of body movements, to facilitate real-time action prediction in joint action; and (c) a performing function of body movements, to elicit emotional or aesthetic experiences in an audience.
> (Vesper and Sevdalis 2020, 1)

They distinguish between "predominantly communicative actions such as gesturing while speaking" and sensorimotor communication which is "instantiated through actions that are guided by both communicative, social intentions and by instrumental, goal-directed intentions." Arguing that "the systematic investigation of movements still receives less attention compared to the study of other cognitive processes" (Vesper and Sevdalis

2020, 5), they claim—like Pezzulo and colleagues—that "the complexity that research on sensorimotor communication in social interaction needs to address" calls for multidisciplinarity: "to investigate such complexity, future research will benefit from a multidisciplinary dialog across fields as varied as human movement science, joint action, communication studies, and performance psychology" (Vesper and Sevdalis 2020, 5).

Numerous recent publications emphasize the relevance not only of multidisciplinarity but also of a focus on dynamics in intelligence and communication research. Offering a connection between sensorimotor communication and intelligence research, Alexander O. Savi, Maarten Marsman, and Han L. J. van der Maas conclude their article entitled "Evolving Networks of Human Intelligence" with the statement that "humans are dynamic, and so is human intelligence." Their article forms part of a special issue titled *The Future of Intelligence Research*, published in 2021 in *Intelligence*, a psychology journal linked to the International Society for Intelligence Research, which aims to promote "an understanding of the nature and function of intelligence." In their article, Savi and colleagues suggest that "theories of intelligence must evolve by formalizing the developmental dynamics of cognitive ability," adding that "the paradigm shift from factor theories to network theories has created the perfect conditions to formalize developmental dynamics" and that "the formalization of developmental dynamics demands the identification of robust developmental phenomena and empirically grounded mechanisms" (Savi et al. 2021, 1). They explain that "network theories represent intelligence as an open complex system; open because the system interacts with its environment, complex because the system consists of many interacting parts." Foregrounding the relevance of explanatory levels in the understanding of human intelligence and the dynamic interactions between such levels, this perspective also highlights the importance of dynamic features at every level, from within the brain itself to highly complex social interaction and artefact creation.

With regard to the neurological level, Aron Barbey notes that "an enduring vision captured by early research in the neurosciences conceives of the human brain as a dynamic network of interconnected elements" (Barbey 2018, 9). Integrating the *g* factor, Barbey claims that "research on the nature and origins of *g* must [. . .] extend beyond psychology to examine the neurobiological mechanisms that shape individual differences in cognitive ability" (Barbey 2018, 9). The aim of his *network neuroscience theory* is to understand "individual differences in the general factor of intelligence based on the [. . .] network dynamics of the human brain," by observing how "the dynamic reorganization of [the brain's] modular architecture [is] in the service of system-wide flexibility and adaptation (enabling mutual interactions between cognitive processes)" (Barbey 2018, 10). Accumulating evidence suggests that "instead of originating from a specific brain network, [. . .] individual differences in crystallized and fluid intelligence reflect global, system-wide dynamics and the capacity to flexibly transition between network states" (Barbey 2018, 13–14). "Network flexibility and dynamics" are therefore considered to be of crucial importance "for the diverse range of mental abilities underlying general intelligence" (Barbey 2018, 15).

Along the same line, Roger Beaty and colleagues propose that "creative thought involves dynamic interactions of large-scale brain systems" (Beaty et al. 2016, 87). They focus on two such systems: the default network (which comprises midline and posterior inferior parietal regions) and the executive control network (which comprises lateral prefrontal and anterior inferior parietal regions). The default network shows "increased metabolic activity in the absence of most externally presented cognitive tasks. Default network activity is associated with spontaneous and self-generated thought, including mind wandering, mental simulation, social cognition, autobiographical retrieval, and episodic future thinking." Conversely, the activity of the executive control network is "associated with cognitive processes that require externally directed attention, including working memory, relational integration, and task-set switching" (Beaty et al. 2016, 88). Significantly, the default and control networks can "exhibit an antagonistic relation at rest and during many cognitive tasks. During working memory tasks, for example, the control network typically shows increased activation while the default network deactivates, presumably reflecting the suppression of task-unrelated thoughts during cognitive control" (Beaty et al. 2016, 88). Knowing this, it is remarkable that "creative cognition involves dynamic interaction of the default and control networks" (Beaty et al. 2016, 92). Rather than exhibiting an antagonistic relation, this type of dynamic interaction, which is typical of divergent thinking, promotes a cooperation of the two networks. "In contrast to convergent thinking tasks, which involve discovering a single solution to a creative problem, divergent thinking involves generating several possible solutions to an open-ended problem, such as inventing creative uses for common objects" (Beaty et al. 2016, 88). For creative thinking to be possible, the two networks must be recruited together.

In sum, recent studies concur in stressing the significance of dynamics in the interplay between fluid and crystallized intelligences (Barbey 2018, 12; Barbey 2021), between fluid reasoning and working memory—both of which are activated during complex problem solving (Greiff et al. 2015), and between default and executive control networks supporting complex creative cognitive processes (Beaty et al. 2016, 87). For Savi and colleagues, a key priority in future research is the integration of the "genetic, neurobiological, psychological, educational, and societal systems that underpin human intelligence" (Savi et al. 2021, 5). As these systems "do not function in isolation," they claim, "networks provide the means to connect the different levels" (Savi et al. 2021, 5; see also Van der Maas et al. 2006 and 2017). More levels may be added to the five listed above, offering cross-sectional views of multilayered cognitive processes. The present research book focuses on kinesic intelligence: an intelligence which is by definition dynamic, cross-sectional between levels, and transversal between various fields of knowledge and types of reasoning and acting.

I.3 Structure of the book

In Chapter 1, "The Role of Kinesic Intelligence in Child Language Development," Aliyah Morgenstern discusses how children's linguistic development is grounded in situated multimodal interactions with their caregivers, whereby bodily sensations are transformed into meaningful experiences, progressively eliciting the emergence of acts of "languaging." She explains how and why "kinesic intelligence results from the interweaving of human beings' sensorimotor and conceptual experiences," illustrating in detail the fact that "children's cognitive and linguistic development centers on learning how to act and interact in response to events, which serve as the basic unit of experience." Analyzing interactions between children and their caregivers, drawn from longitudinal data contained in adult–child home recordings that she produced, Morgenstern elucidates the embodied and cognitive processes whereby children's sensations and experiences are at the root of the language-acquisition process within the context of everyday interactions. It is crucial that the development of children's "multisensory and multimodal language skills" entails the interactive presence of others in a constant kinesic dialogue from birth onward. Kinesic intelligence during such interactions is at work between children and their caregivers in their everyday embodied practices for "sensing the world in an intersubjective way." It is also at work when Morgenstern perceives and astutely analyzes these interactions, offering a framework that sheds light on one of the most foundational processes of embodied cognition, necessary for the ability to communicate verbally and nonverbally, and for the development of human intelligence in the first years of a person's life.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the transition from adolescence to adulthood, which is marked by the advent of puberty and the development of the "sexual self." In clinical psychology, the sexual self is a concept that denotes the progressive integration of psychophysical transformations ultimately leading, when maturity is reached, to the possibility of an adult sexual life. This progressive integration cannot be taken for granted and may be hampered by various factors, including life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer. In "Kinesic Intelligence in the Care Relationship: The Contribution of Clinical Psychology to Healthcare Provided to Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer," Élise Ricadat foregrounds the need to pay focused attention to the extreme risks incurred by adolescents and young adults (AYA) in the development of their sexual self when their body has become a locus of severe chronic pain and invasive, long-lasting, and repeated treatments for cancer that induce physical and sensorial alterations. How medical care includes this type of risk in a perspective of lasting recovery into adulthood is the essential question with which Ricadat's chapter grapples. Kinesic intelligence, as a higher-order thinking skill grounded in sensorimotor multimodal cognition and knowledge, is instrumental, she argues, to the elaboration of sensitive, cautious, and respectful forms of care that answer such a need by protecting and strengthening the sensorial anchoring of the patient to their embodied self. Such therapeutic means must, of course, not be even remotely sexual. Rather, they aim at maintaining and supporting the patient's relationship with their own body as a source of potentially positive perceptions and sensations. Ricadat's research is based on two strategic sources of information: one-on-one interviews with patients and healthcare professionals and the creation of focus groups including healthcare professionals and researchers. She explains how "both strategies played a crucial part in the co-construction of our results, highlighting the subtle nature of kinesic intelligence in care, while supporting critical medical humanities in their ambition to create new experimental conditions conducive to the emergence of new knowledge."

In the same way that kinesic intelligence in Chapters 1 and 2 is at work in Morgenstern's and Ricadat's close attention to the exact nature of interactions, either between children and parents or between AYA patients and healthcare professionals, Chapter 3 focuses on the complex nature of human interactions, only this time between adults living in early modern England and the perilous environment of the Tudor court. In "Kinesic Intelligence and Historical Research: Gestural Communication at the Court of Henry VIII," Greg Walker offers sharp analyses of kinesic encounters between the despotic Tudor monarch, Henry VIII, and his entourage (e.g., Thomas More and Anne Boleyn), as recorded by an imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys. In such instances, the historian has the challenging task of making sense of kinesic information that is communicated verbally by a witness who was himself engaged in interpreting gestures and multimodal acts of communication fraught with personal and political danger. Walker argues that "watching people watching other people through traces in the archives is thus as important a part of the attempt to reconstruct historical events as is leafing through account books, estate records, or trial proceedings in search of more empirical data." His chapter advocates a reflective use of focused kinesic intelligence in reading historical accounts, which is all the more important when the authors of such documents insist on the extreme relevance of kinesic features in political interactions concerning fights for power and domination.

To understand the kinesic data conveyed in historical documents, historians must sharpen their own kinesic intelligence and ability to make sense of recorded and culturally coded or less coded kinesic acts of communication. The tokens of kinesic thinking in historical figures performing gestures, in their witnesses (such as Chapuys) reporting these gestures, and in the historians reading the reports constitute multilayered interactions that occur in synchrony and diachrony. Chapter 4 addresses issues pertaining to synchrony and diachrony in legal reasoning. In "Kinesic Intelligence in Common Law Reasoning," Maksymilian Del Mar expounds on the numerous levels at which kinesic intelligence operates in common law. For instance, legal practice uses a language that tends to prompt conceptually generative perceptual simulations relative to kinesis. Furthermore, "both legal methods and substantive legal principles are often ushered in through particular postures, gestures, movements, or sequences of such bodily actions in certain kinesic scenes, which echo across time and which are variously transformed by subsequent generations." Synchrony and diachrony are regularly interconnected in legal performances and practices of the law, when the latter are based on novel thoughts relative to procedures established in the past. Kinesic intelligence is notably manifest "in the language deployed by judges when justifying their decisions," and it is used to reason not only about a specific case but also about the law in general. The prevailing presence of kinesic intelligence in the practice of common law is illustrated in Del Mar's chapter by two detailed examples, one from the sixteenth century (Edmund Plowden's *Commentaries* written in the 1570s) and one from the twentieth century (*Ingram v Little* 1960). In the latter example, "everything depends on how [facts] are described, including how the parties' actions and interactions are described. The common law is formed precisely through such normatively laden descriptions of facts," which regularly involve kinesis. Kinesic intelligence is thus active at the multiple levels of describing and reasoning about the facts in a case, of practicing legalities, of judging and justifying one's judgment, and of thinking about the law in general, past and present. Del Mar's illuminating analyses lead him to conclude that "kinesic intelligence enables not only decision-making but also the very creation of law."

Whereas the facts of any legal case are a priori nonfictional, literature is freer to navigate between facts and fiction to offer a creative response to experiential truths. Indeed, the power of literature comes partly from authors' ability to use language to prompt cognitive simulations grounded in sensorimotor knowledge without warranting any sense of mimetic concordance with the world as it is. In "Reading as Embodied Simulation: Literary Techniques and Intersubjective Collaboration," Paul B. Armstrong problematizes the notion of cognitive simulation by focusing on the collaborative interactions between authors and readers, which are induced by the literary techniques employed by the former—here, Samuel Richardson, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf. Armstrong explains that

> literary works can simulate experience because simulation processes are ubiquitous in everyday cognition and language understanding. Broad experimental evidence exists to show that we know the world not only by conceptualizing it through neural representations but also by activating patterns of sensorimotor response acquired from past experience.

In prompting embodied simulations, the literary techniques that Armstrong analyzes in Chapter 5 strongly suggest that the aim of authors using them is not mimetic representation but rather "setting interaction in motion" with a cognitively active reader. Literature affords a type of interaction and intersubjective collaboration that connects the writer's kinesic intelligence with that of the reader. Armstrong's expert perspective is an important corrective to the fashionable yet simplistic claim that literature improves empathy because readers increase their understanding of people through their access to fictional characters, whatever the literary work may be. For example, Keith Oatly explains that "recent findings indicate that those who engage in such simulations, readers of literary art, which is mostly fiction, *have better understandings of other people than those who do not*" (Oatley 2016, 618, emphasis mine):

> In an experiment on empathetic effects, the more readers were transported into a fictional story, the greater were found to be both their empathy and their likelihood of responding on a behavioral measure: helping someone who had dropped some pencils on the floor. The vividness of imagery during reading has been found to improve transportation and to increase empathy.
>
> (Oatley 2016, 621)

Such studies are more revealing about the beliefs and social intelligence of the scientists designing the experiments than about literary works and what they do to readers via the practice of embodied simulations. Because fiction can dramatically convey stereotypes and biases, it is too simplistic to expect literature of all times and places to foster "better understandings of other people." What literature powerfully does must be analyzed more carefully.

With topical doubts about the "internalist-communicational" paradigm—in many respects similar to the idea that reading about fictional characters increases social intelligence because then we understand how people think—Ellen Hertz questions the belief that we understand what "goes on within" animals. Her chapter "Why Love a Cat? An Anthropology of Human–Feline Kinesic Engagement On- and Off-line" investigates the mass digital phenomenon of cats on the Internet, which she refers to as "cat-based Mass Enjoyment through Online Witnessing, or cat-based MEOW." From the vantage point of her discipline (social-cultural anthropology), along with a delightful sense of humor, she grapples with the fact that "images and videos of cats are among the digital world's most viewed materials, accounting for as much as 15% of all Internet traffic." After reviewing several academic and less academic approaches on human–animal interactions, she analyzes viral videos belonging to the cat-video genre. Using the distinctions between the kinesic, kinesthetic, kinetic, and kinematic, which co-occur dynamically in sensorimotor events, Hertz emphasizes the enjoyment elicited by watching movement. In online contexts, our multisensory access to cats is limited and leads us to focus on the specificity of their movements. Cats'

> inattention to the camera, combined with their fundamentally underdetermined relationship to communication and social relations, takes us outside the internalist-communicational paradigm. This allows us to focus on movement and form in space and time—our most primordial form of embodied cognition.

The kinesic intelligence of the anthropologist helps us to govern our tendency to project human thoughts and emotions onto any organized movement in which we recognize potential kinesic meanings. While it is essential that this intersubjective process occurs between children and their caregivers, it may prove to be misguided vis-à-vis a cat (or a bat, a dog, etc.), no matter how intriguing the cat, and even if that cat is the fascinating and deservedly famous Maru. At the other end of the spectrum, and for opposite reasons, it is equally misguided to project a theory of mind onto an artefact, such as an Artificial Intelligence (AI) device, a robot, an application, or a computational system, no matter how developed its algorithmic functions might be.

Engaging with movement is foundational to humans, and its importance is reflected in the overwhelming evidence that, once survival is guaranteed (and occasionally even when it is not), humans spend most of their time and energy performing and watching movements, just for the sake of it. To provide a very limited series of examples, the movements may consist in kicking a ball into a net (football), throwing it over or into a net with one's hands (volleyball, basketball), or hitting it with either a strung racket or stick (tennis, lacrosse) or a wooden, diversely shaped bat (cricket, baseball, Basque pelota, etc.). The movement may also entail direct contact with an opponent, as in sumo and wrestling, for instance. Every culture at every stage in history develops interesting ways of producing movements that others seem eager to watch. The movements may consist in driving wheeled artefacts (e.g., cars, bicycles), or training animals to run as fast as possible, with or without a human being sitting on their back (e.g., horses, greyhounds).

The human fascination with kinesis may involve crowds gathering to watch a group of people produce musical sounds or utter words and perform actions on stage or on screen (Gardner 2018; Kemp and McConachie 2019) or produce nonpragmatic movements either in synchrony with others or alone (dancing, figure skating, acrobatics, or athletics). This non-exhaustive list includes videogaming, as gamers train to shoot at moving targets with finger movements, straining to increase their sensorimotor cognition to become faster and more efficient, while potentially being watched by others through screen sharing. The shooting (or slashing, etc.) often aims to destroy the moving target, which raises the thorny question of the ultimate function of such training when videogames are sponsored by the military. The shooting gesture and its cognitive training impact are real, even though the mediated target is virtual. This dual fact may skew the gamer's relation to reality—a relation to reality which, by contrast, grounds sensorimotor training and cognition in non-virtual sports and performative arts.

When movement is mediated diachronically, as is the case in visual arts, cinema, and literature, kinesis remains central to the impact and significance of the artwork. In such cases, studying the kinesic intelligence at work in creation as well as in reception requires a specific approach that comes to terms with the various ways in which authors use language and artists practice their visual literacy to communicate complex sensorimotor information (Bolens 2012a, 2012b, 2021, 2022a, 2022b; Cave 2016, 2022). To this end, a close analysis of the cognitive process of perceptual simulations is key, deterring the lure of a vague and illusory sense of unmediated access to fictional minds. The mediated access is, for better or worse, to another human intelligence: that of the author, artist, graphic designer, or robotics engineer. In Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, discussed by Armstrong in Chapter 5, readers do not learn about the way a woman (Pamela) thinks: they learn about the way Richardson, a man, portrays the way a fictive woman supposedly thinks. The notion of empathy in such a context must be appraised with extreme caution.

Any practice trains abilities that may be used in either positive or negative ways. Kinesic intelligence entails positive higher-order thinking skills when it elicits greater lucidity as regards how we think by means of sensorimotricity. It becomes negative when it promotes the abuse of sensorimotor mimetic responses by immersive effects aimed at political, economic, or ideological manipulation. Such a potential threat is posed by the misuse of AI, notwithstanding the usefulness of AI in numerous specific domains, such as cancer diagnosis. The manipulation of sensorimotor responses by increased irreflective immersion activates embodied cognition while forestalling kinesic intelligence, that is, the ability to process embodied cognition in a manner that warrants personal reflective responsibility and augments the possibility of integrated nonvirtual agency.

In *Cognitive Evolution: From Single Cells to the Human Mind*, David Boles explains that:

> A large brain serves as only a crude indicator of the sensory, motor, and cognitive abilities *Homo sapiens* acquired over 7.5 million years of hominin evolution. Our ancestors used brain specializations, as do we, to collect inputs from the environment, to understand meaning, and to produce outputs in response. How sensation and movement evolved provides important context for understanding the evolution of the cognitive faculties that bridge them.
>
> (Boles 2022, 95)

Kinesic intelligence is rooted in our species' remote past, which remains active in the way in which human beings live and function in the world today. In the chapter introduced by the quotation above, Boles discusses "the mechanical and chemical senses of touch, balance, hearing, smell, and taste, and the evolutionary trajectory shared by some of them" (Boles 2022, 95). With a focus on smell, Chapter 7 of *Kinesic Intelligence in the Humanities* raises the question of sensoriality in academic research and knowledge production. Considering smell at a different level—which is, however, complementary to Boles' perspective—, Jessica Hemmings, in "Material Scent: Textiles Beyond Touch," offers insightful reflections regarding the cardinal, albeit volatile, sense of smell. Odors cannot be recorded and can hardly be described without tautological similes (*X* smells like X^2), but they prompt some of the most powerful sensory reactions in any situation, including, of course, human interactions. As a specialist of textile arts, Hemmings emphasizes how scent is "overlooked in historical accounts and underestimated in contemporary practice" of textile arts. Her chapter bridges this gap, as it explores the historical realities of scent, and then focuses on contemporary artists who include smell in the multimodal scope of their artworks, namely, Meekyoung Shin's *Translation* series (2002–2011), Linda Florence's *Sugar Dance* (2008), Ernesto Neto's

Installation (2015), and Doris Salcedo's *A Flor de Piel* (2013–2014). As they are made of soap, sugar, spices, wax, and petals, these artworks emit scents that are accessible in presence only. This striking and memorable aspect of the works disappears entirely when the latter are mediated.

Hemmings rightly points out that "embodied experiences that are difficult to capture in language are also difficult—though not impossible—to bring into academic discourse." Her own and every chapter in *Kinesic Intelligence in the Humanities* provide evidence that it is indeed possible and eminently fruitful to do so. While the specific objects of study these contributions consider can obviously not be in any way exhaustive, they show nevertheless that the humanities and human sciences can foster higher-order thinking skills regarding dynamic kinesic practices in reasoning, feeling, interacting, and acting in multiple environments, cultural moments, and social contexts, thereby anchoring sensorimotor experience and human intelligence to facts and reality.

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1 The role of kinesic intelligence in child language development

Aliyah Morgenstern

Introduction

Kinesic intelligence results from the interweaving of human beings' sensorimotor and conceptual experiences. It thus lies at the core of children's linguistic development in situated multimodal interactions with their caregivers that are permeated by bodily sensations. Children's cognitive and linguistic development centers on learning how to act and interact in response to events, which serve as the basic unit of experience. The continuous and dynamic flow of sensation and experience is structured in terms of discrete events, which involve various participants and objects and significant defining moments, and which follow a temporal structure that flows from beginning to end. It is the regularity and predictability of these events that allow children to master them as basic building blocks of experience; not only do they begin to recognize typical and less typical events, but they can also gradually use these experiences to make sense of significantly more complex sequences of events. They will eventually learn to construct and "language"[1] sophisticated mental structures. Indeed, when an event occurs repeatedly in the child's daily experience, the predictable nature of the event structure provides a convenient linguistic entry point (Nelson 2007). While children have innate biological and cognitive capacities, they must nonetheless learn social and linguistic conventions from such input. They construct these capacities in parallel with other cognitive and social skills, such as the ability to follow the others' gaze, to attract their attention, to read their intentions, to make analogies, and to symbolize. Joint parent–child action/interaction provides the necessary scaffolding for children's burgeoning ability to grasp both what is occurring around them and the language used in the situation at hand. They learn to understand language and action in tandem, each

1 We use the verb "to language" here to encompass speaking, signing, and gesturing (including facial expressions).

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supporting the other. The well-established language associated with simple events provides conceptual scaffolding that allows the child to grasp more complex events.

In this chapter, we shall follow the pathway of children's linguistic development and observe how sensations are shaped into linguistic constructions with the support of their parents' input and scaffolding. We shall first present the constellation of approaches that we deploy to analyze language development. An analysis of conversational snippets from children's daily lives extracted from longitudinal data contained in adult–child recordings will then allow us to directly apprehend the extent to which children's sensations and experiences lie at the root of the language acquisition process in dialogue. Our observations of children's first forays into language can only enhance our appreciation of how important their interactions with expert others are in the development of their multisensory and multimodal language skills.

1.1 Multimodal approaches to language development and the role of adult scaffolding

1.1.1 The role of multisensory experience in language development

Theories of communication and language first assumed that representations of words were abstract—a-modal—and did not involve any activation of the auditory, visual, olfactory, or gestural modes, being present only in the associative cortexes (Fodor 1975). However, modern theories suggest that symbols and concepts are not disembodied; rather, their elaboration depends on our sensorimotor experiences with the environment and on experiences that encode explicit information. This approach, called "embodied cognition," has been trialed by several researchers (Barsalou 2008; Pulvermüller 2005) and demonstrates that understanding the meaning of words implies sensory, emotional, and motor experiences. Luria (1973) demonstrated that the reception of sensory information involved the recoding of the auditory, visual, and vestibular afferent elements into kinesthetic elements (sensations of movements) in an area of the parietal lobe that is closely connected to the anterior motor cortex. Researchers have recently studied this coupling of reception and emission under the term "mirror neurons": the observation of others' gestures or actions activates a complex network that involves the occipital, temporal and parietal areas and, particularly, motor functions (e.g., Decety et al. 1997; Rizzolati et al. 1996).

Rizzolati and Arbib (1998) propose that the mirror neuron system represents the neurophysiological mechanism by which language emerges in the child. Several observations and experiences have demonstrated continuities between our various sensorimotor skills and between these skills and language development. Multiple theories of embodiment have been developed, differing with respect to the degree to which emphasis is placed on sensorimotor experiences for conceptual and language processing. Thanks to detailed observations, Piaget (1952, 1962) had already repeatedly demonstrated that sensorimotor experiences in early infancy are an essential aspect of learning and that later cognitive processes develop from these sensorimotor abilities (see our detailed analyses of spontaneous data in section 2). Infants have been shown to develop a representational system as a result of early perceptual and motor interactions with their environment (Meltzoff 1990), and these representations allow embodied learning to continue throughout childhood. While Piaget (1978) proposed that children go on to develop concepts that are abstracted from their sensorimotor experiences, other scholars have argued that, as children develop their cognitive and physical capabilities, their sensorimotor interactions with the environment remain important for their linguistic and conceptual development (Gibbs 2006; see example 5 for an illustration).

We apprehend language use as a collective human craft grounded in sensorimotor and social skills that allows us to extend the body's capabilities and to increase its potential to interact with others. This multimodal social craft is deployed and transmitted to children by the expert languagers who surround them.

1.1.2 Multimodal approaches

Mondada (2019, 47) explains that

> research in multimodality—that is, the diversity of resources that participants mobilize to produce and understand social interaction as publicly intelligible actions, including language, gesture, gaze, body postures, movements, and embodied manipulations of objects—can be further expanded by considering not only embodied resources for interacting but also embodied practices for sensing the world in an intersubjective way.

Sensory experiences and situated activities are indeed particularly important for all children's linguistic development as "meaning comes about through praxis—in the everyday interactions between the child and significant others" (Budwig 2003, 108). Joint parent–child action/interaction provides the scaffold for children's growing ability to grasp both what is happening around them and what is being said in the situation. They learn to understand language and action together, each providing support for the other. Zlatev (1997) suggested that sensorimotor schemes provide the "grounding" of language in experience and subsequently facilitate children's access to the symbolic function. It is thus important for us to apply Mondada's (2019) suggestions and to capture children's developmental paths by analyzing their daily sensory experiences and their use of all the semiotic resources at their disposal in their situated environments (Morgenstern et al. 2021a).

We are engaged in several collective research projects involving longitudinal studies of adult–child interactions[2] with the objective of observing language within its natural ecosystem to articulate its actional roots and symbolic functions. Therefore, we analyze the participants' bodies both as that which Boutet (2018) called a *substrate* (that is to say, what constitutes it and gives it its structure) and as a *support* (an instrument) for "languaging." While we owe this term to Maturana (1978), we prefer to borrow the meaning as defined by Linell (2009, 274): "linguistic actions and activities in actual communication and thinking." In referring to the multimodal use of language in *interaction*, I also use the term *interlanguaging* in recognition of the fact that we language with and for others and constantly adjust to one another. To capture plurisemiotic *interlanguaging* in all its subtlety and situated dimension without omitting the role of the participants' environment and their use of artifacts, we privilege daily ecological interactions.

Therefore, we analyze human interaction in an approach that permits the inclusion of language in embodied action rather than considering it to be the use of a code or a mere symbolic system (Bottineau 2012). This foundation enables us to apply what Slobin (1987, 443) calls "thinking for speaking" to "thinking for languaging" in truly multimodal analyses. According to Slobin, each of us can choose to express an experience using the linguistic means made available to us by our mother tongue. This theoretical foundation can be adapted to plurilingualism and to that which is called "translanguaging" (Lewis et al. 2012), which allows multilingual subjects to navigate between their languages or to weave them together. However, it is also adaptable to all the modalities of expression that are most relevant at the time of production, depending on the context, the participants, the situation, or—to use Cienki's formulation (2012, 2015)—"the dynamic scope of relevant behaviors." "Languaging" (or "multimodal languaging") is thus related not only to the languages and cultures to which we belong, but also to the available and coordinated semiotic resources at our disposal, which, of course, allow our mental

2 In particular, ANR project Leonard (http://anr-leonard.ens-lsh.fr), ANR project CoLaJE (ANR-08-COM-O21; http://colaje.scicog.fr) and more recently, ANR project DinLang (ANR- 20-CE27-0010-01) funded by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche.

constructions to become embodied but which also reciprocally and continuously inform and construct them and give them meaning.

1.1.3 Multimodal language development

This chapter is grounded in the framework of a usage-based, functional, socio-cognitive approach combined with discourse analysis, enunciative theory, and cognitive linguistics. Following Tomasello (2003), we assume that children initially learn concrete chunks of language, linguistic gestalts that can take assorted sizes and shapes, in dialogue. They then generalize across those various elements to assemble abstract constructions (Fillmore 1988; Goldberg 1995) in the process of creating new utterances. These linguistic constructions are units of language that contain multiple cross-modal elements used in tandem to facilitate coherent communicative functions. Language is thus analyzed in terms of "usage events" encompassing physical, social, and cognitive factors, including, for spoken language, "the full phonetic detail of an utterance, as well as any other kinds of signals, such as gestures and body language" (Langacker 2008, 457). Language's multimodal nature leads us to investigate how various semiotic systems, including speech, gesture, body position, action, facial expressions, and eye gaze (Goodwin and Goodwin 1992; Kendon 1988), are simultaneously deployed in interaction and grounded in the child's senses.

This perspective on language acquisition as a multimodal, situated, interactive socializing process grounded in everyday experience and reverberating to caregivers' actions, touch, gestures, facial expressions, and voices is in line with Bakhtin's profound insights into dialogicality (1981, 1986). In the Western cultures that form the context for the studies presented in this chapter, adults and children attune to one another and eagerly maintain their interaction thanks to the adults' adaptation to the child's motor, cognitive, and linguistic development.

Through constant exposure to adult input during interaction, children's language thus gradually develops into rich linguistic constructions containing multiple cross-modal elements that are subtly used together for communicative purposes. Indeed, the notion of "language" cannot be restricted to verbal or signed units. Gestures, verbal productions, signs, gaze, facial expressions, and postures are all part of our socially learned, intersubjective communicative system, and human beings combine modalities with all their representational skills to share meaning, to refer to present and absent entities and events, and to express their projects, their desires, and their inner feelings.

To capture children's language development, it is necessary to capture how they use their senses and analyze the coordination of speech, gesture, facial expressions, eye gaze, actions, and events (Goodwin 2017) as they are mobilized and interpreted in interaction with others in everyday activities. It is through the kinesic and multimodal coordination of their productions and perceptions that children become fully co-operative participants in their own cultural communities (Merleau-Ponty 1962). The sense of agency that they experience through their bodies in motion in the mundane activities of their daily lives resonates with their environment filled with people, dynamic events, and artifacts that they perceive and organize with their burgeoning sensorimotor skills.

The children we study—irrespective of the language or languages that surround them, whether they are hearing or deaf—use all the resources provided by their bodies to express themselves when they are healthy and grow up in an environment that is conducive to language acquisition. All have a shared repertoire of gestures and vocal productions, but they consistently use the plurisemiotic resources at their disposal and progressively enrich the complexity of their productions thanks to the scaffolding and cooperation of adults. The multimodal resources are first used in an integrative manner in service of a global communicational intent and are then subtly mastered and coordinated (Morgenstern 2022a), the productions becoming gradually more complex. In hearing communities, the vocal modality that is privileged because of its specific affordances becomes predominant when children's productions become increasingly conventionalized. However, each modality can then be deployed with specific distinct functions that either reinforce or complement one another.

1.1.4 Experience and scripts

Children's first languaging productions acquire their values in situations supported both by the context and by the adult's interpretation in a dialogical situation. Adults will eventually take up the child's words and imbue them with greater depth (cf. Bruner 1983; François et al. 1984; Nelson 2007). The repetition of these situations will lead to modifications in memory, notably through the erasure of details and a certain level of generalization (cf. Goldberg 2006), but also by the constitution of what is called a script (Shank and Abelson 1977)—that is, complete memorized sequences that make it possible to organize and apprehend complex situations. Progressively, the child's daily life will come to be constituted by the bottle-feeding sequence, the bathing sequence, the book-reading sequence, etc., which allow the child to organize their actions in time and in relation to those of others. The child thus has an entire range of memories—some unique, others repeated a variable number of times with a range of variations—that foster the recollection of constructions as assemblies of linguistic forms and perceptive, motor, and emotional sensations.

1.1.5 The role of the adult

Social interaction in infancy is dependent on the interplay between infants' affects, their neural learning processes, their perceptual and motor limitations, and the structure of their social and affective environment. Social information helps infants to decipher the meanings of others' language acts. Their drive to attend to the same objects facilitates their entry into the language community.

Kaye (1982) suggested that to understand intentions, infants must themselves be treated as intentional beings by adults. Adults must interpret their every move and action as having some meaning or goal and must provide various types of feedback to this effect. They therefore give meaning to the child's every gaze, gesture, facial expression, and vocal production, thereby projecting some kind of agency onto the infant. This begins very early on and creates the mental context for the emergence of the infant's intentional action. In the first months of life, parent–infant synchrony plays a formative role in brain maturation and has been found to be predictive of children's self-regulation, symbolic play, and more general cognitive skills (Feldman and Eidelman 2004). Indeed, infants engage in "protoconversations" from as young as two months old (Bateson 1975; Trevarthen 1974). These protoconversations involve rhythmic attunement of adult and infant vocalizations. However, the caregivers' role is not symmetrical, as they produce amplified, enhanced versions of their child's sounds (Papousek 1989). Those exchanges are accompanied by smiles, mutual gaze, and gestures, which Stern (1985) has called "supportive emotional colored attunements" and which are therefore enriched with affect.

From a language socialization perspective, language is a set of symbolic resources that constitute and organize the social world and through which individuals make sense of their everyday lives (Duranti, Ochs, and Schieffelin 2012). This perspective centers on the crucial role of language, and the analyses focus on the socially and culturally organized interactions around shared activities (Aronsson 2012). Adults sometimes speak *for* as well as *to* children as they verbalize every possible visual, vocal, actional, and tactile cue that the child enacts to co-create discourse. Children progressively internalize the adult's role and appropriate the linguistic tools, social codes, and behaviors used in their community in and thanks to dialogue.

By analyzing conversational snippets from children's everyday lives extracted from the longitudinal data collected during several funded projects (Morgenstern and Parisse 2012; 2017), I shall substantiate the role that kinesic intelligence plays in child language development. The scaffolding role that the children's caregivers play is crucial in the child's socialization to the cognitive activations of the perceptual simulations sedimented in languaging. The children's language development and the adults' roles are also subjectively filtered through my own processing of what I observed while filming the children or watching the video recordings. My rendering in the analyses detailed herein is of course another way of applying my own kinesic intelligence by combining my sensorimotor activations and languaging to account for meanings that I have reconstructed by bringing them to a reflective level (Bolens 2022).

1.2 Kinesic intelligence in snippets of children's everyday life

1.2.1 Adults' scaffolding of children's kinesic intelligence

Bathing is one of the activities that characterize babies' daily experiences in Western communities. Caregivers supervise their babies and socialize them into the bathing experience by feeling and sharing their pleasure at being in the water and by verbalizing every possible sensation. For example, Theo, 7 months old, is bathing in a small plastic bathtub. He has a huge smile on his face and is giggling. His mother is holding him firmly and smiling at him. She addresses him with the following words: "*C'est bon ça, hein? C'est bon ça!*" (That feels good, doesn't it? That feels good!). Theo's mother is verbalizing the sensations that she interprets from his facial expressions and laughter, which resonate with her own past experiences.

Parents whose experiences with water have been fun or pleasant, whose control ensures that the baby is safely held and not in danger, and whose knowledge regarding the sensation of water at an appropriate temperature provides confidence, expect their babies to enjoy bathing. The parent can manipulate the bath's meaning and the sensation as experienced by the child and establish a sequence of experiential histories that will provide a background for subsequent bathing experiences. Verbal and gestural expressions convey meanings that will come to be shared. Although their experiences of baths in their youth and throughout their lives may differ considerably, they focus on the same elements in the same moment—a unique human property, according to Tomasello (2003): both participants experience the event's core aspects together.

In this extract, language emerges as an essential tool that the mother uses to go beyond joint attention and share meaning by verbalizing her empathy with the child's sensations and thus combining it with her own experiences of bathing. The utterance "*c'est bon ça*" makes sense of the child's sensation, filtering it through her own past experiences and transforms it into a communal experience. It is through the repetition of the scene in association with words that it becomes a script and the words are imbued with meaning.

Sensations are shared from the very beginning of life by babies and their caregivers, who can express them in conventional semiotic expressions that they thus transmit. In the next excerpt, Madeleine is “smelling” flowers in her own way, synesthetically blending smell and taste (turns 2 to 4), as observed by the adult participants.

Example 2. Madeleine 1 year and 1 month.

Madeleine, held by her mother, is standing outside over a pot full of flowers and is both smelling and feeling a flower with her mouth (a petal is in her mouth).

1 Observer: Tu manges les fleurs, Madeleine? (Are you eating the flowers, Madeleine?)

2 Mother: Mais en fait elle les mange pas. (In fact, she does not eat them).

3 Observer: Tu les sens avec la bouche. (You smell/feel them with your mouth).

4 Mother: Elle les sent avec le nez et la bouche (She smells/feels them with her nose and her mouth).

Mother walks away in the garden with her daughter in her arms. Madeleine leans toward the flowers within her reach. Her mother helps her to lean closer (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 The child smelling a flower.

Figure 1.2 The mother taking the child's place to share her sensation.

5 Mother: Celles-ci je pense qu'elles ne sentent pas grand-chose. On peut essayer. (I don't think these smell much. We can try.)

The mother smells the flowers (Figure 1.2).

6 Mother: Ça sent pas grand-chose (They don't smell much).

Madeleine then smells the same flowers again.

7 Mother : Ce n'est pas très intéressant (It's not very interesting).

Mother and child are sharing sensations. The mother takes the child's place (turn 5) and smells the second flower just after her to create a community of sensations with her daughter. This forms the basis for the construction of "transcendental intersubjectivity," as Husserl (1970) would term it—the required condition for a shared objective world and for some interdependence between those two specific individuals.[3] Experience results from the children's encounter with the environment, involving

3 As seen through the lens of Duranti's striking comments on Husserl (Duranti 2010).

perception through smell, touch, taste, and then action and interaction via communication. In our first two examples, the children's sensations and experiences are entirely social, because the adults invest considerable effort in attempting to discern what they are feeling and thinking. However, the children's experiences remain private, inaccessible in a way, given that all the adults can do until the child learns to "language" and express themselves through conventional semiotic means, such as gesture and speech, is to make interpretations based on visual cues and their own sensations.

Learning to be a "languager" involves not only understanding the symbolic power of language, but also learning to use the appropriate units of language at the right time, in situated activities. Learning the function of "thank you," for example, means to understand the rules of a conventional scenario or a script in which we express our gratitude to interlocutors for something that they have given us (e.g., an object, a compliment). Even before children can speak and learn to use the phrase "thank you," they can perform actions for others and be thanked. The *giving–thanking script* is thus first modeled by caregivers who empower their children by assigning them active roles and by adjusting to their cognitive, motor, and language skills. This is illustrated in example 3, in which Naima, raised in Providence Rhode Island (Evans and Demuth 2012), at almost a year old, is given an active role in recognition of her motor and cognitive skills and eagerly complies with her father's request. His *languaging* using a movement verb ("get") triggers the dynamics of the child's movements, strongly ratified via speech as the requested actions are being accomplished ("thank you").

Example 3. Naima 11 months and 28 days.[4]

Nb	*Participant*	*Actions and gestures*	*Vocal and verbal productions*
1	Father	Picks up newspapers	Daddy's gonna put these papers away OK?
2	Father	Extends hand toward a newspaper on the floor	Will you go get that one for me?
3	Naima	Looks at father	

4 See Morgenstern (2022b) for a more extensive analysis of children's acquisition of politeness.

Nb	*Participant*	*Actions and gestures*	*Vocal and verbal productions*
4a	Father	Keeps arm extended toward paper	Naima, will you get that paper? Will you get that paper for me please?
4b	Naima	Alternately gazes at father and paper on the floor	
5	Naima	Starts walking toward paper	
6	Father		Thank you
7	Naima	Arrives near paper, bends down and touches it	
8	Father		Thank you sweetie pie.
9	Naima	Picks up the newspaper, walks to father	
10a	Naima	Hands out newspaper to father	
10b	Father	Extends arm, starts speaking and takes the paper	Thank you booboo (high pitch and elongation of each vowel).

Naima's father has asked her to participate in the activity of putting the newspapers away (turn 2). He uses the politeness marker "please," the modal "will," and an interrogative intonation, which combine to clarify Naima's role as an agent, a partner who can help her father pick up the newspapers. After that turn, which triggers Naima's action, the timing of the father's speech and of his daughter's actions is particularly interesting. "Thank you" is repeated three times at three different moments, which punctuate and acknowledge the child's actions as she responds to his request. Turn 6, he indicates that he understands her physical movement toward the newspaper (turn 5) as being the signal for her compliance. Turn 8, he demonstrates that he has maintained his attention and is following her progress as she is picking up the paper (turn 7). Turn 10b, he says "thank you," as she hands him the newspaper, just before he has grasped it. This timing may be regarded as a specific feature of parental scaffolding. The meaning of "thank you" is over-extended from being the formula produced after receiving an object to an acknowledgement of the child's bodily positive response and attention to her full performance. The form "thank you," accompanied by terms of endearment—"sweetie pie" (turn 8) and "booboo" (turn 10b)—that function as what we might term *affect* "*keys*" (after Hymes 1972) may be interpreted as not merely an expression of gratitude but also as having the power to transform the child's action into a full accomplishment (Ochs 1990) for which she receives praise (Aronsson and Morgenstern 2021) through escalating pitch and intensity (turn 10b).

These little chunks of language, those *affect keys* produced by her father, serve as affective comments in the final turn position. They provide the child with affective information about her own action and highlight positively her compliance with her father's request. They permeate the giving event and contribute to building both Naima's sense of agency, as she is integrated as a full participant into her cultural community, and her kinesic intelligence by combining her sensorimotor skills (as she performs her actions) and her language comprehension. The repetition of those situations socializes her to the *giving–thanking* script in which she can be an interlocutor and an agent before she becomes a full-blown *languager*.

However, before a desire or its realization is expressed verbally in the data we collected from French, British, and American families, children's thoughts and intentions are interpreted by their caregivers through the mediation of their actions, their facial expressions, their prosody, and their gestures, as example 3 illustrates.

Example 3. Ellie 1 year and 5 months.

Ellie is playing with her pushcart on which her teddy bear is sitting. She stops it.

1 Ellie: Teddy, Teddy.

Her voice has a very affectionate tone. She starts walking toward the teddy bear and her lips are forming the shape of a kiss (Figure 1.3). *Two steps before she reaches Teddy, her grandmother interprets her action.*

2 Grandmother: Give Teddy a kiss.

Ellie kisses Teddy almost simultaneously with the above words.

3 Grandmother: Oh, that's a good girl!

Such scenes are quite extraordinary to watch: the child's stream of consciousness and her intention are visible on her face and her body as she moves eagerly toward her teddy bear. The grandmother can verbalize that

Figure 1.3 Ellie about to kiss her teddy bear.

intention because Ellie's behavior and its target are highly predictable, thanks to their shared experience and their common socio-cultural code. Her intention—embodied in her body movements—is recognized through perceptual simulation because it conforms to the anticipated intention in that context (Duranti 2015). We could say, following Gibson (1986), that the context—the child's body movement and the preparation of her lips—create the *affordance* that makes the grandmother's interpretation possible and feasible. The grandmother's explicit interpretation of the child's behavior grounds her actions in their shared physical and mental space. Language is used to express the child's intention and therefore plays an important socializing role (Ochs 1988).

Ellie's mother and grandmother are constantly attempting to enter Ellie's consciousness and to project themselves into her first-person experience while she senses, perceives, feels, thanks to their own processing and formalization of her every move. Children are probably the best recipients of the illusion of complete empathy as it was understood by Theodor Lipp (1907), as the recognition of emotions expressed through bodily gestures or facial expressions serves as the primary basis for recognizing the other as a sentient being. Empathy in this context can indeed be understood as a phenomenon of "inner imitation," whereby the adult's mind mirrors the child's mental activities and experiences based on the observation of her physical activities and facial expressions. The adult might even experience (or think she is experiencing) kinesthetic sensations similar to those felt by the child and thus expresses them to and for her with the help of the most magnificent of the social arts: language.

1.2.2 Children's displays of kinesic intelligence in pointing

Neurological maturation allows children to control their movements and transform them into gestures by virtue of their finer motor skills. At the same time, children develop the cognitive prerequisites that allow them to take up the symbolic ritualized gestures performed for them in routines when leaving and saying, "bye" or singing "The Itsy Bitsy Spider." Pointing gestures emerge thanks to the mastery of fine motor skills and the ability to symbolize and to imitate, repeat, and deploy the conventional forms used by adults.

Children's pointing gestures may develop out of prehension (Werner and Kaplan 1963; Wundt 1912). According to this hypothesis, unsuccessful grasping movements are interpreted by the adult as a gesture of request addressed to others (Vygotsky 1934). Alternatively, pointing may evolve from index-finger extension used to touch, press, or feel objects and explore the surrounding world (Masataka 2003). In any case, children across a wide range of cultures witness their caregivers pointing from very early on, as such gestures are frequent occurrences in child-directed communication.

Pointing is indeed used by adults when objects or events are not in the infant's immediate vicinity or when objects cannot be grasped because of their size or properties (e.g., a star in the sky, a hot dish, a picture in a book) because they cannot handle, show, or hand those things to them. Children will then take up those pointing gestures directed at them and reciprocate by indicating, commenting on, or requesting objects that are out of reach by the same means. Pointing gestures are less frequent than gaze shifting, but they are more salient for infants by virtue of the movement they involve. Bruner's classical account (1975) is focused on the adult–child social interaction involved in pointing events grounded in meaningful social exchanges. Pointing is analyzed within the framework of joint attentional formats that are considered a type of scaffolding owing to which infants share information and affects with helpful adults, as observed by Werner and Kaplan, who termed them "primordial sharing situations" (1963).

Pointing can be observed before the age of 12 months, usually shortly before the production of first words. According to Cabrejo-Parra (1992), this gesture represents a necessary condition for the construction of language because it allows the child to point to an object as a locus of shared attention and exchange with the adult. The indicated object takes on a particular status because the gesture of pointing, accompanied by gaze, distinguishes it from its environment (Bruner 1983). The child thus performs an operation of symbolization in a "meeting of minds" (Tomasello 1999) with the adult. This constitutes the first manifestation of specific human prerequisites in children's access to language: the capacity to share, to communicate, and to understand an intention.

Pointing has attracted considerable attention in the field of language acquisition since the mid 1970s. It is one of the most widely studied—if not the most studied—gestural forms. According to Bates et al. (1979) and Bruner (1983), who worked in Western cultures wherein pointing is particularly recurrent while reading books or during everyday activities in which parents name things and events for children, children's use of pointing anticipates their linguistic development and labeling of specific activities.

The following example may be interpreted as a prototypical instance of pointing in which the symbolic gesture appears to be a direct extension of touch.

Example 4. Ella 1 year and 4 months—Toothies[5]

1 MOT (mother): have you got all your big toothies coming through?

2 MOT: oh, the big, big toothies! Oh, you got even more toothies coming through!

3 MOT: she's got another one at the back coming through at the bottom.

4 CHI (child): mummy.

CHI is pointing at her mother's teeth (making contact with one of her teeth; her mother has her mouth wide open)

5 MOT: oh, big toothies. Oh, the big toothies. Oh, the big toothies.

CHI points at her Dad

6 MOT: oh, daddy's got toothies too.

CHI points at her own teeth, touching them

7 MOT: baby's got big toothies.

CHI points at her Mum's teeth, touching them

8 MOT: and Mummy's got big toothies

CHI points at her Dad's teeth

9 MOT: and Daddy's got big toothies.

10 FAT (father): yeah.

11 FAT: here.

12 FAT: don't have to get up!

5 See Morgenstern 2022b for an extensive analysis of pointing gestures.

13 FAT: show me!

Father comes close for Ella to be able to reach to him.

14 MOT: where's the daddy toothies?

CHI stops her pointing teeth tour and hands her food to her mother.

After her mother explains that Ella's teeth are growing (turn 1), the child leans toward her Mum, opens her own mouth, and points at her own teeth, her index finger touching the place at which a tooth is growing (Figure 1.4). She thus shares the topic and enters the dialogue through her action, which is also a symbolic gesture. With a single movement, she can both touch her growing tooth, thus feeling it for herself, and point at it to show it to her mother, whose attention is fully engaged.

Her mother then addresses Ella's father (turn 3) and continues her explanation, enacting the indication of her growing teeth with a movement that is also both a touch and a symbolic gesture (Figure 1.5).

This triggers Ella's pointing tour (turns 7–8). She touches her mother's teeth (Figure 1.6) in response to her mother's own gesture and initiates a comparison/association between herself, her mother, and her father by successively pointing at their teeth. Ella even simultaneously points at her mother and father's teeth with both her arms (Figure 1.7).

Her mother is close enough for the pointing gesture to be associated with touching the teeth, whereas her father is standing further away (Figure 1.8).

Figure 1.4 Ella touching and pointing at her tooth.

Figure 1.5 Mother touching and pointing at her own teeth.

Figure 1.6 Ella touching and pointing at her mother's tooth.

Figure 1.7 Ella pointing at her mother's and father's teeth with her two arms.

Figure 1.8 Ella pointing at her father's teeth.

The father then moves closer to participate in the tactile designation of teeth. This sequence could be regarded as an echo of all previous situations in which the parents have explicitly compared themselves to the child, initiating routines by pointing to various body parts, such as that described in the previous example, combining sensorimotor activations through touch, and languaging through symbolic gestures and speech.

Butterworth (2003) conducted several experimental studies and found that children do not point in the absence of adults, which would appear to confirm that pointing is a "triadic" gesture (Tomasello 1999) with a communicative value and is therefore deployed exclusively in dialogue (or in multiparty conversation, as in example 4). The characteristics of pointing appear to be in line with the properties of language, as described by Tomasello: "(. . .) language is nothing more than another type—albeit a very special type—of joint attentional skill; people use language to influence and manipulate one another's attention (. . .)" (1999, 21).

However, in Theo's video recordings, my observations of the data confirm the production of what I have called "monologic pointing" (Morgenstern 2012). This type of pointing was produced as early as 1 year and 2 months as a manifestation of Theo's interest in surprising or interesting objects in his environment, which he pointed at without touching but creating a symbolic connection between his own body and the object by means of his extended arm and index finger. The camera captured these pointing gestures without his parents' presence and without the child using his gaze to share the object of his attention with anyone else. He may have been pointing at a lamp that was new, an element of his toy garage that was broken, or an object that had changed places. Other instances of this monologic pointing occurred when he discovered the house of the friends the family was visiting during the Easter vacation (at 1 year and 9 months). Theo went from room to room, babbling excitedly and pointing at everything he encountered. He continued in the garden, away from the adults who were having evening drinks.

This mode of pointing to oneself may be categorized as a "reported" gesture or an instance of "fictive interaction" (Pascual 2014) in which the child is reenacting with a gestural performance the type of behavior that adults recurrently perform for him. This allows the child to assume and enact the adult's role in their usual adult–child exchanges. In a condensed sediment of an interactive script that he has internalized, the child thus performs two roles for himself: he is both the one who perceives and shows (with his pointing gesture) and the one who is invited to share attention (with his gaze). Adults use pointing to complement speech addressed to children to attract their attention, to invite them to share an interesting object or phenomenon by showing it to them, symbolically creating a link between themselves and the object of joint attention. Children can reenact that conventional gesture in dialogue, to demonstrate to the adult what has attracted them, but also in monologue, to indicate interesting objects to themselves. Children can thus assume the roles and perspectives of their adult interlocutors who regularly show them striking and curious objects by simply moving their arms and extending their index fingers toward their targets.

If pointing is indeed taken up thanks to the motor, cognitive, and mental capacities of children who fully appropriate the movement that constitutes that gesture with its symbolic value in the flow of language use which surrounds them, children can then use it in their interactive practices with others but also for themselves. This phenomenon is reminiscent of the resumption of routine games that the child plays when alone, perfectly illustrated by the episode of the fort/da that Freud (1955) described involving his 1-year-old grandson, a sort of peekaboo game replayed in solitude. These episodes involve a game between otherness and identity: the child enacts the disappearance of his mother, and he is both his mother who disappears and the child who masters the game and can thus bear the anguish of separation.

The data relating to Theo also include instances of what is apparently a face-to-face dialogue with one of his parents, in which Theo appears to engage in pointing primarily for himself. For example, at 11 months, Theo goes from plant to plant in the house and plays with the leaves. His parents warn him not to pull them off. Theo restrains himself for the most part but suddenly goes too far and tears off a small piece of leaf. His father, who is in front of him, says slightly more loudly and severely than usual, “No, Theo, that’s a plant!” Startled, Theo looks at his father and then his face relaxes, and he smiles and points in his direction. In my own reading of the child’s multimodal expressive cues, I interpreted his behavior as indicating “oh, I must not be afraid of this man who has a big voice and is scolding me; it’s just my daddy!” Even if the exchange occurred between the two interlocutors, the child’s pointing gesture and subsequent smile may be interpreted as signs intended to reassure himself, to calm the anguish caused by the discontinuity between the angry voice and his existing impression of his father.

Thus, by pointing, children exhibit their kinesic intelligence: they create a symbolic link, physically bridging the discontinuity between a memorized representation and an unexpected object or event with a controlled movement of the arm and the index finger. This use of pointing demonstrates the child’s appropriation of the gesture in functions proper to language, thanks to its organizing qualities, thereby helping to master the anguish caused by a discrepancy or transforming surprising salient phenomena that could be experienced as destabilizing into positive reactions. Such monologic occurrences, which are in fact reenactments of interactive scripts, demonstrate that the function of pointing gestures has become fully internalized.

1.2.3 Children's productive use of negation

Children's use of negation takes on a range of values (e.g., failure, rejection, denial, refusal, absence, non-existence) that we shall not detail here (but see Boutet et al. 2021; Morgenstern et al. 2017). We shall limit ourselves to analyzing three negation types that demonstrate the blossoming of Theo's kinesic intelligence.

One of the first negations produced by Theo was performed when he was about to touch an electrical outlet or the stove button or (in line with the sequence analyzed above) before he tore a piece of leaf from a plant and stopped just before performing the action, produced a headshake or a verbal "no" and turned away. This was an echo of his parents' consistent prohibitions. Theo thus demonstrated how he could identify with his "forbidding" parents. He internalized the prohibition and enacted it with a gesture or a word. This negation could be interpreted as a manifestation of the child's power—over things, over actions, over himself, and over his limited ability to satisfy his wishes—perhaps not because he had fully understood the danger of electric outlets, stoves, or the damage he could cause to a plant but because he was complying with the repeated prohibition that was stored in his memory. He had appropriated the role of the adult and had made it his own.

Another striking episode of negation emerged from Theo's data. The first "no" he uttered in front of me when his lexicon appeared to consist exclusively of onomatopoeia (e.g., "vroum" for car, "oua" for dog) occurred when he was aged 1 year and 4 months. He was playing with his new workbench and holding toy pliers in his right hand. His mother then asked him "do you want to play the piano, Theo?" He turned to her, smiled, took two steps toward her and the piano (I interpreted both signs as his confirmation that he wished to play the piano). He then lowered his head, turned slightly away from his mother, looked at the tool he was holding, moved his right hand, and said "no." He took several steps back, put the pliers away on the workbench, and then ran happily toward the piano and climbed onto the stool. This "no" can be interpreted as meaning "there is something wrong, I can't play the piano with a pair of pliers in my hand, this pair of pliers doesn't fit in the project that mom is proposing." This "no" was not addressed to his mother; rather, it was a monologue that he produced *sotto voce* for himself, without addressing any interlocutor.

It seems that once the use of a form and its function in dialogue is captured by the child, that child can use language for himself, to voice out a problem to be solved alone: the discrepancy between the reality that Theo is physically sensing (the pliers he is holding) and a project (playing the piano with his two hands). He resolves this problem by making a clear connection between proprioception, touch (the feel of the pliers), language ("no"), and action (putting the pliers away to play the piano) and has therefore fully displayed his kinesic intelligence. Theo initially used negation and its function to play out a prohibition, but in this example, he has appropriated the marker and the power of language use to organize and categorize his situation.

Theo often uses negation to express refusal. Since the age of 18 months, he systematically marks his refusal by producing a buoyant "NO!" and an energetic headshake when his mother wishes to undress him for his bath while he is busy in his room playing with his toys. She must employ various tricks to induce him to accept this activity and plunge him into the bath, sometimes against his will, since she knows he actually enjoys it once he has accepted the transition.

According to Vygotsky (1934), language development is initially social (and dialogic) and later individualized and internalized (and monologic). Rather than approaching it as a development in two phases, however, language internalization may also be analyzed as a constant back-and-forth movement between interactive scripts and their reenactments. This back-and-forth movement is marked by the repetitions and borrowings that children produce from the small segments they have made sense of in their input, which they manipulate and use in various situations. With monologic pointing, Theo reappropriates a symbolic form to designate to himself the salient objects in his environment, just as the adults have for him. With negations, he can either formulate a prohibition to himself, giving himself the power to control the anguish potentially caused by the non-satisfaction of his desire, express a discrepancy that he feels in his own body between the reality he is in (sensing that he has pliers in his hands) and the project in which he agrees to engage (freeing his hands to play the piano), or take a stand against the adults who are interfering (imposing bath time) in the management of the evening activities he is experiencing with his body (playtime).

1.2.4 Embodying distal events in multiparty interaction

All previous analyses focused on adults' and young children's *interlanguaging* to index sensations as they are experienced in the moment. However, the symbolic power of language and the body's expressivity are also constantly used in family interaction as instruments to embody and share distal events and sensations. I shall use an example drawn from our family dinner data (Kremer-Sadlik and Morgenstern 2022; Morgenstern et al. 2015; Morgenstern et al. 2021a) to illustrate how, once they have become experienced languagers, children can reenact past events and engage the other participants' bodies, as well as incorporate their environment and its artifacts.

Dinner time constitutes an ideal occasion during which participants can discuss the here and now—that is proximal discourse—but also narrate the day's events, collectively recall past events, make plans, or argue—that is, use distal discourse (Dancygier 2019). Participants dynamically switch to discourse that spans beyond dinner time—specifically children, who have typically spent the day away from their parents at school (Morgenstern et al. 2021a). Stories about school events offer opportunities for children to take the floor but also to engage the participation of the entire family, who may elicit or add important narrative components (Ochs and Tailor 1992). The parents are eager to find out more about the parts of their children's lives that they do not witness.

Joint attention is being secured in the sequence of example 5 through gaze, gestures, and objects that everyone can observe, comment on, and reuse. The overall multimodal sequence demonstrates to a young boy's parents and little sister a school activity that they did not witness.

Example 5. Mother (MOT), father (FAT), child 1 (CHI1) 8 years old, and child 2 (CHI2) 5 years old

1 CHI1: Papa?

Father is eating.

2 FAT: Oui? (yes?)

He raises his head toward his son.

3 CHI1 : C'est trop facile de faire une citrouille en couture. Tu découpes, un rond . . . de . . . (it's very easy to sew a pumpkin. You cut a round shape . . . in . . .)—*CHI1 molds his hands into the shape of a ball* (Figure 1.9*) then brings his hands on the table to a rest position*—. . . de tissu . . .

Figure 1.9 Child 1 molds the shape of the pumpkin.

Figure 1.10 The mother indicates the blue lid.

Figure 1.11 Both mother and child 1 are using the blue lid to represent a circle.

(in fabric) *CHI1 lifts his hands again and begins enacting the fabric by moving them around.*

4 MOT: genre de la taille de ce couvercle? (you mean the size of this lid?) *She indicates the lid laying on the table with her right hand* (Figure 1.10). *Then, she touches the lid as she continues speaking.* Ou plus grand ou plus petit? (or larger or smaller) (Figure 1.11).

5 CHI1: Ça là. *The child uses the same lid and traces a circle*. Mais sans les trous (but without the holes).

6 MOT: Oui, sans les trous (yes, without the holes). *Both parents laugh*.

7 MOT: OK

8 CHI1: Donc tu passes l'aiguille (so you slide in the needle) (Figure 1.12). *CHI1 reenacts in front of him with both hands all the actions he is verbalizing* tu fais une petite bosse, tu vois, tu montes le tissu des deux côtés pour que ça forme une petite bosse (you make a little bump, you see, you bring up the fabric on both sides in the shape of a little bump) (Figure 1.13).

Figure 1.12 Child 1 enacts the threading of the needle.

Figure 1.13 Child 1 enacts the bump made from fabric.

Figure 1.14 The father outlines the circle.

9 FAT: OK

10 CHI1: tu mets l'aiguille (you put the needle) *CHI1 is still showing every move with his two arms and hands* et tu refais, tu refais, tu refais (and you do it again and again and again) *Each repetition is paralleled with his tying movements* jusque tu arrives au bout . . . (until you get to the end).

11 FAT: ouais (yeah).

12 CHI1: au bout tu serres (when you're at the end, you tighten).

13 FAT: sur le bord, sur le bord du cercle (on the edge, on the edge of the circle). *The father traces a circle with his index finger on the lid that the mother had used a moment earlier and that is placed right in front of him* (Figure 1.14).

14 E1: oui (yes).

In this sequence, the young boy reenacts an activity that he experienced in school as part of a sewing workshop during which the children learned how to make a pumpkin out of fabric. Joint attention is being secured in this sequence by means of gaze, gestures, and objects that everyone can observe, comment on, and reuse. Spoken discourse, with its specific vocabulary for the domain in question ("couture" [sewing], "tissu" [fabric], "aiguille" [needle]), images, and geometrical terms ("bosse" [bump], but also "cercle" [circle] or "rond" [round]), is the modality that weaves together the parts that contribute to creating the narrative. However, the multimodal sequence as a whole and the use of objects to represent and materialize the scene make visible and almost tangible to the parents—and perhaps the little sister—the distal activity that the young boy is representing. An object—a blue lid that was on the table (turns 4 and 13) and body segments (the child's arms and hands molding, tracing, enacting, and the parents' hands showing and tracing) are used. Interestingly, the child's hand gestures both reenact the sewing event in which the same body parts were engaged (turn 8, Figure 1.12), and represents the pumpkin and the fabric used (Figures 1.9 and 1.13). Incarnation transforms distal events into visible and almost tangible representations (as all three active participants touch the blue lid used to embody the circle to which the child refers). This is accompanied by linguistic markers, such as the use of the present tense and the second person pronoun (turns 8 and 10), which abolish the temporal and spatial distance between the event that happened earlier in school and the dinner table. The child is acting out the entire scene and thus embodies the sewing lesson to include it in the family's discursive and physical space. All participants are either physically involved by means of their gestures (the father imitates his son's sewing and both parents use the blue lid to trace a circle) or visually engaged, as indicated by their gaze (although they are not the child's main interlocutor, the mother's and little sister's gazes are fixed on the boy's face and hands at turn 13.

This sequence was thus composed of different gestural modes of representation, as categorized by Müller, Bressem, and Ladewig (2013): acting, molding, tracing, and representing. According to the authors, "while in the first three modes of representation the tactile and sensory-motor experience of actions of the hands provide the derivational base for gestural meaning, in the fourth mode the derivational base of the gesture might as well be a visual perception only" (p. 712). The cognitive activation of perceptual simulations is thus multifaceted, while the movement-based meanings are grounded in hand and arm movements as well as in discourse. Different modalities are used to language and anchor a distal event into a narrative vividly performed by a skillful *languager* at the dinner table, which is used as an actual stage. The event is productively received by his *co-languagers*, who are fully engaged in embodied *interlanguaging* to process the event that is reenacted in front of them, for them, and with them, thanks to their own kinesic knowledge.

1.3 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to demonstrate the extent to which kinesic intelligence lies at the core of child language development. Our analyses of sequences extracted from everyday family life presented the interplay between children's sensorimotor skills and meaning making, scaffolded by their *interlanguaging* with expert adults.

The morsels of language that children link to specific sensations in specific situations bear traces of the scripts experienced previously in similar contexts and of the intersubjectively constituted properties of these sensations across situations. Children's developing language is thus tied to the contexts of their previous experiences and evokes the sensations that they associate with those contexts, thanks to the expansion of their memory span. We have demonstrated how parents language the sensations that they project onto their children's bodies, informed by their own past experiences. Children progressively internalize the adult's role and appropriate conventional multimodal constructions in and thanks to dialogue. They use symbolic gestures, such as pointing or headshakes, and first words to language their sensations, feelings, and thoughts throughout the daily exchanges that take place in their natural environment. As they progressively master the semiotic resources at their disposal, not only can they exploit the symbolic power of *languaging* to refer to the here and now, but they can also embody and share past sensations. Thus, they fully engage their *co-languagers* by materializing their recollection of distal events and creatively crafting, shaping, and molding meaning into precious sediments of human kinesic intelligence and co-operative activity, that is, multimodal language forms.

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2 Kinesic intelligence in the care relationship

The contribution of clinical psychology to healthcare provided to adolescents and young adults with cancer

Élise Ricadat

Introduction

A few decades ago, the field of medical humanities began to contribute works stemming from humanities, social sciences, ethics, and philosophy to enhance medical training and research. The overall ambition of medical humanities is to promote a holistic perception of an ill or vulnerable person, rather than to consider somatic symptoms alone.

With the issues raised by bioethics in the 1960s and 1970s, and the advent of narrative medicine in the 1980s and 1990s, medical humanities have played a significant part in defending a conception of care that extends beyond the purely curative or therapeutic aim: care should be apprehended through the multiplicity of the inherent and interconnected aspects of health and illness, rather than through biomedical standards only. Therefore, the subjectivity, identity, and socio-cultural backgrounds of all those involved in the experience of illness, as well as the cultural, geographical, and historical context underlying medical practices and institutions, are at the core of medical humanities (Bleakley 2020; Lefève, Thoreau, and Zimmer 2020).

Today, the prevailing trend in critical medical humanities (Whitehead and Woods 2016), while embracing this legacy, focuses on two main propositions. First, it encourages a wider divergence from the biomedical approach, by inviting researchers to distance themselves from purely professional and clinical stakes in their approach to care. This decentered stance works in favor of the second proposition, which calls for medical humanities to reject their conventional opposition to biomedical research and their role of "supportive friend" (Whitehead and Woods 2016, 2): research should transcend such antagonism, in favor of a greater involvement with medicine and all those concerned, at all stages of knowledge production. Thus, critical medical humanities support scientific practices

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based upon transversal methods that are shared between distinct epistemologies and motivate experimental conditions conducive to the emergence of new, or renewed, conceptions of medicine and care. The Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University highlights this ambition in its invitation for researchers to "improve human health by understanding hidden experience—experience that is marginalized, difficult, unspeakable, unacknowledged, or invisible" (Durham University 2022).

In this context, the concept of kinesic intelligence seems particularly suitable for conducting research on subjective and intersubjective dynamics, which, by definition, are overlooked by protocols based on data that may be interpreted as objective. Indeed, kinesic intelligence corresponds to

> a competence that allows humans to interact and grow cognitively and intersubjectively through sensorimotricity and interpersonal movement. Defined in this way, kinesic intelligence is foundational to most forms of human communication, whether communication takes place in presence through gesture, action, and speech or via the mediation of writing, artworks, and artefacts. Human interactions involve both sensorimotricity and the ability to produce multilayered meanings out of verbal and nonverbal events and experiences within any given cultural and ecological environment.
>
> (Bolens, introduction to this volume)

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the heuristic value of kinesic intelligence in the field of medical humanities, and to show that clinical psychology, although its epistemological application within medical humanities is not prevalent, is particularly relevant for highlighting the founding principles of this field. To this end, we shall present a qualitative study conducted on the love lives and sex lives of adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer.

We shall first delineate the methods used to conduct this study, with a particular emphasis on two strategies of significant epistemological value for the refocusing of medical humanities: (1) the cross-referencing of data gathered from two sources (one-to-one interviews with healthcare professionals and patients); and (2) the creation of focus groups including healthcare professionals and researchers. Both strategies played a crucial part in the co-construction of our results, highlighting the subtle nature of kinesic intelligence in care, while supporting critical medical humanities in their ambition to create new experimental conditions conducive to the emergence of new knowledge.

We shall then present our results, which reveal the key importance of the experience of care in providing support to AYAs as they begin or resume their love lives and sex lives, thus shedding light on an issue rarely mentioned in biomedical literature and contributing to the identification of factors detrimental to patients' psychosexual dynamics. An analysis of the nature and practicalities of the relations established by healthcare professionals with their young patients uncovers complex, multimodal interactions that aim to meet the specific needs of AYAs. These interactions support the elaboration of the patients' "sexual self" (a concept to be explained in due course), this elaboration being a process challenged by both cancer and the changes caused by puberty. These interactions are usually intuitive; they are shaped by representations of adolescence—a period that healthcare professionals perceive as crucial in identity construction; they are expressed through actions, gestures, and practical care intentions beyond the sole curative aim; and they involve patients holistically.

Our observations highlight the high heuristic value of the concept of kinesic intelligence in the field of medical humanities, as well as the importance of clinical psychology to identify the subtle manifestations of kinesic intelligence—such manifestations are often unnoticed, and yet they are crucial for improving the care of AYAs. As such, clinical psychology has much to contribute to critical medical humanities, even though it remains, to this day, less prominently represented in this field than other subject-specialized epistemologies.

2.1 Designing and conducting interactive research in clinical psychology for the co-construction of knowledge about the care of AYAs receiving cancer treatment

The motivation to conduct research about the love and sex lives of patients receiving cancer treatment during their adolescence originates in the psychological support that I provided to such patients in specialized hospital departments, namely acute medical units, follow-up care units, and hospital schools. All young cancer patients were experiencing often severe bodily harm as a side effect of their treatment. Such harms could be either temporary or permanent, they interfered with AYAs' love and sex lives, and the continuation or initiation of their relationships, and, yet, paradoxically, these patients were still maintaining relationships. They were anxious and eager to preserve this aspect of their lives, even while receiving acute treatment. Data found in medical literature did not adequately address this paradox.

2.1.1 Identifying gaps in the medical literature

Following the increase in survival rates among AYAs, as a result of considerable therapeutic improvements over the past few decades, the issue of cancer in adolescents has received growing scholarly interest since the

2000s and is addressed in an increasing number of publications in biomedical and psychosocial literature (Desandes et al. 2013; Gatta et al. 2009). However, the consequences of cancer for the medium and long-term quality of life of AYA patients deserve particular scrutiny, owing to the young age of these patients at diagnosis, and the acute nature of the psychosocial challenges specific to this time of life, such as identity construction, romantic and sexual issues, work, etc. Numerous publications have emphasized the challenge of both cancer and adolescence at the psychological level, and these challenges are only increased when young patients face cancer and adolescence simultaneously (Marioni 2009). The combination of these phenomena generates problems that contradict and complement each other, especially when considering the psychological processing required from the patient. Indeed, the psychological impact of the illness, of its potentially terminal diagnosis, and of the onerous nature of treatments may hinder or delay psychological processes induced by adolescence; conversely, these processes may complicate the management and treatment of cancer. For instance, medical literature reports that adolescent patients have significant difficulty in adhering to a treatment plan (Butow et al. 2003). Thus, support for AYAs with cancer must be sensitive to the needs specific to a time of life that has a crucial impact on adulthood.

The antinomy between the processes linked to the illness and those linked to adolescence is intensified by the issues inherent to AYAs' love and sex lives, because adolescence and early adulthood are crucial periods in psychosexual development. Indeed, the development of secondary sexual characteristics and the introduction to genital sexuality and procreation are accompanied by unprecedented physiological transformations, which deeply affect all relationships between an individual and their self, their body, and others. Furthermore, because of the delay between the onset of these physical transformations and their assimilation into an individual's identity and subjectivity, adolescence and early adulthood must be considered as a process that takes place over several years, and whose completion is not immediate. The onset of cancer during this period can cause a wide range of difficulties, even many years after treatment has ended.

Indeed, studies have shown that, for young patients, experiencing cancer and cancer treatments can have long-term detrimental effects on the quality of their sex lives. Studies have also revealed how much the progressive nature of psychosexual development prevents the clear identification of precise causes for the low quality of the sex lives of AYAs treated for cancer, even when they recover fully. There is a significant discrepancy between the success of treatment resulting in physical recovery, and the lingering psychosexual difficulties mentioned by patients receiving long-term follow-up (Cherven et al. 2021; Evan et al. 2006; Tindle et al. 2009).

As a result, most studies highlight the need for AYA-specific hospital services, where the psychosocial characteristics of AYAs would be considered from treatment outset. The findings also motivate qualitative research to produce evidence that reflects the complexity of these questions against the background of the progressive nature of psychosexual development. The overall aim of this area of research is to explain the discrepancy observed between therapeutic success and ongoing difficulties in the love lives and sex lives of patients after they reach adulthood. The reasons for this discrepancy are multifaceted and may be physical, psychological, interpersonal, or social, for instance; therefore, understanding these reasons constitutes a challenge, at both the epistemological and the methodological level.

2.1.2 A research question and a methodological approach to address the unique needs of AYAs with cancer

An unusual research strategy resulted from the association of my clinical observations to these well-documented considerations. Rather than attempting to identify the objective factors explaining the difficulties encountered by AYAs with cancer in their intimate lives, this strategy focused on understanding if, and, more importantly, how, some of these patients had still been able to begin or continue romantic or sexual relationships, despite the physical and psychological pain that they had endured. The goal of this research project was to investigate the subjective experience of patients, from diagnosis to remission, as well as to determine whether the care they received at a key period in life had been able to support their psychosexual dynamics.

Furthermore, it was essential that the outcome of this study should improve the care and management of AYAs with cancer. Medical literature provides evidence, at the medical level, of the variety of physiological disorders observed in patients: low libido, erectile dysfunction in men, vaginal dryness in women, and, of course, risk of infertility. It also acknowledges the recurrent communication difficulties between healthcare professionals and patients on the topic of a patient's intimate life, although this topic has been identified as central to the restoration of the patient's quality of life. Therefore, our study also intended to determine, through an analysis of patient narratives, whether interactions and specific care practices played a part in supporting psychosexual development during courses of acute treatment—periods of time that are rarely scrutinized in themselves.

2.1.2.1 Use of grounded theory

The Grounded Theory, a qualitative methodology borrowed from sociology (Glaser and Strauss 1967), suits both aims of this study. Through its inductive and iterative nature, and its process of investigation through "constant comparison," it produces conceptual analyses that are firmly rooted in field data, and thus yields results that match the experience of the patients as closely as possible. This methodology enables the formulation of general, population-based hypotheses, while taking into account the subjectivity of the participants, and their individual narratives, values, and representations. Such an approach is of paramount importance when dealing with the sensitive and intimate topic of sexuality.

2.1.2.2 Interactive research and cross-referencing

Initially, only retrospective interviews of patients were planned.[1] However, analyses of these interviews highlighted the crucial role, for young patients, of their interactions with healthcare professionals, which were described as very comforting during courses of treatment. Therefore, we added to the project a series of interviews with healthcare professionals[2] from the hospital unit in which our research was conducted. Both series of interviews were transcribed in their entirety—including non-verbal elements such as silences, sighs, emotive gestures, etc.—and systematically compared until an analysis template, organized in thematic categories, was created.

Conceptual development then relied on cross-referencing to establish relationships between these categories. Cross-referencing is a strategy used in qualitative methodologies, which seeks to increase the validity of conceptual hypotheses by combining techniques or data sources. Two modes of cross-referencing were adopted in our study. The first was the cross-referencing of data sources, in which data from the "patient" and "healthcare professional" series of interviews were compared. The second was a stage of validation, during which we asked participants to verify analyses and interpretations. An interactive strategy of action research was then added to the study to support the co-construction of results; only healthcare professionals were involved—it was not possible to include patients, who may live some distance from the hospital, and who may not be easily contactable. Another aim of the interactive strategy implemented for the co-construction of results was to render them more easily transferable among professionals, and thus to support our goal of improving the care provided to AYAs.

1 With a representative sample of 24 patients, maintaining ratios of gender, age (under/over 18 years), and treatment received for acute leukemia and high-grade lymphoma (bone marrow transplant/chemotherapy only).

2 With a representative sample of 31 healthcare professionals, all of whom were members of the pluridisciplinary team working in the unit dedicated to the care of AYAs suffering from malignant hemopathy, in a Parisian hospital.

The action research involving healthcare professionals was conducted in two stages, through collective feedback sessions during which the thematic analyses drawn from interviews were reported, and through the formation of focus groups, instigated by the caregivers themselves, to provide a space for further reflection and conceptual development. In total, seven focus groups met for one hour each, consisting of professional nurses and care attendants used to working together, in day shift or night shift teams, for instance. Each focus group delved further into one or two of the themes presented during feedback sessions, and their discussions were also fully recorded as verbatim transcriptions.

All the chosen themes reflected the tensions felt and identified by healthcare professionals in the dynamics of adolescence and of cancer. While caregivers noted these tensions appeared most acutely in the bodies of young patients, the patients themselves made the crucial observation that the impact of treatments on the body resulted in the loss of gendered traits, which could in turn induce an identity crisis. Although the former is temporary, the latter has much deeper consequences for AYAs, because any such crisis of identity can undermine an AYA's sense of self at a time when it is most dependent on the psychological construction of gendered identity.

The cross-referencing methodology and the interactive strategy adopted during the process of conceptual analysis successfully highlighted the nature and practicalities of the relationships established by healthcare professionals with young patients to support their psychosexual development. Such parameters are mostly intuitive and may be grasped through the transdisciplinary concept of kinesic intelligence, insofar as it accounts for the subtle and complex multimodal interactions of care described below.

2.2 Kinesic intelligence in the context of care relationships

Identifying the processes of kinesic intelligence at work in care first requires us to state the central thesis derived from the analysis of our data: the possibility of experiencing satisfying intimate and loving relationships depends on the capacity of each young person to be able to psychically transform the extreme bodily experience with which they were all confronted. Indeed, it constitutes the starting point for all patient narratives without exception, regardless of age or sexual and emotional maturity at the time of diagnosis, and regardless of the time span between the end of their treatment and the time of the interview.

The formulation of this thesis calls here for the introduction of the concept of the sexual self, a concept that highlights the intrinsically psychosexual nature of human sexuality, and which is described in medical literature as "a major component of sexual health and the core of sexuality" (Potki et al. 2017).[3] The construction of the sexual self is a lifelong process, and is a blend of several elements that determine the ability of individuals to relate positively or negatively to their body, their sexual identity, and their sexuality: the "sexual self is a multidimensional construct that refers to an individual's positive and negative perceptions and feelings about him- or herself as a sexual being" (Rotosky et al. 2008). The sexual self is the product of a psychological construction process, based on the biological body, as well as on life experiences and interactions with others from childhood onward. Thus, this concept links together the physiological *and* psychological aspects of the body, from which all individuals draw their subjectivity and identity—including their sexual identity.

This construction process is especially intense during adolescence because the physical transformations and the new genital and reproductive functions induced by puberty must all be integrated to the sexual self. The possibility to attain a fulfilling love life or sex life depends on the success of this integration, to which the impact of cancer and cancer treatment is a major obstacle, because it erases the physical transformations of puberty and the masculine or feminine traits of the body: body image can thus deteriorate, and self-esteem can drastically decrease. Thus, cancer and cancer treatments may be included as factors in medical literature that have the potential to alter all aspects of the sexual self: "factors affecting sexual self-concept were categorized to biological, psychological and social factors" (Potki et al. 2017).

Our results corroborate this hypothesis. The romantic and sexual difficulties described by patients stem primarily from the severe bodily harm that they have endured; however, it appears that the type of care received has the potential to mitigate adverse consequences in the long term. Cross-referencing our two data sources confirms that the nature and practicalities of the care provided by professionals to young patients are key elements for lessening the traumatic nature of their physical experience, because such care has a twofold impact: as often as possible, healthcare professionals provide—alongside their most technical medical acts—gestures, words, or intentions, through sensory or interpersonal interactions, that enable young patients to relate more positively to their own bodies and self-image. Such actions, words, and intentions are performed with the utmost respect for the psychological and physical integrity of the patient and are of course devoid of any erotic or transgressive intention. Indeed, they reflect the skills and propriety defined by the ethical framework of professional care.

3 The concept of "sexual self" best translates the French concept of "corps érotique," which I use in the theoretical development of my research.

The multimodal and intersubjective nature of such care allows for the sexual self to root itself in less damaging physical experiences and relations to others, and therefore allows the psychosexual development of young patients to continue. Indeed, our results show that some patients later engage in more confident sexual relationships, unencumbered by normative expectations, filled with a pleasurable freedom that is highly valuable and often rare at such a life stage.

2.2.1 Severe bodily harm as the source of negative aspects in the sexual self

2.2.1.1 Desexualization of the body and loss of identity markers

Cancer treatments result in a process of desexualization that is reflected in the disappearance of visible sexual characteristics, which, for some patients, might only recently have been acquired during puberty. Madeleine, diagnosed at age 15, expresses this clearly:

> I'd reached puberty . . . a year before [diagnosis] I think. But the treatments changed my body a lot . . . I lost a lot of weight . . . my shape . . . and my chest went flat, yes, it disappeared completely . . . actually it was as if I hadn't had anything, as if I hadn't gone through puberty . . . [4]

Some of the most frequently mentioned side effects of cancer treatment are hair loss, which affects the scalp and the rest of the body (including pubic hair), the loss of female and male physical traits (buttocks, hips, musculature) following severe weight fluctuation, and functional disorders affecting sexual activity (low libido, vaginal dryness in women, and erectile dysfunction in men). These side effects induce a loss of identity markers and hamper the development of a gendered identity.

> Morale was good, but it was more the second [recurrence], losing my hair again and all, it's a part of femininity, hair (. . .) It makes you question your femininity (. . .) I lost my buttocks . . . [smile] well, I could see [in the mirror] a girl with no ass, this . . . this was hard. (. . .) Breasts were fine, mine are not very big so it's not obvious [smile], it's the buttocks mostly.
>
> (Anita, chemotherapy at 15, recurrence and transplant at 20, 21)

4 To preserve confidentiality, all names have been changed. Each verbatim transcription below is followed by the fictitious name of the patient, their age when diagnosed, the type of treatment received, and any blood cancer recurrence.

Some patients also report experiencing depersonalization: they lose contact with a body that used to feel familiar, and that allowed them to experience themselves in their subjectivity and identity—feeling their self as "oneself."

> Before, I felt good how I was, I felt good in my body, my face . . . With this illness, I don't feel good anymore. I feel small, shriveled, old in my body.
>
> (Anatole, 23, chemotherapy and transplant at 23, 27)

The underlying content of the following clinical transcripts, full of hesitations and silences, reflects states of psychological distress caused by these unfamiliar, overwhelming, disturbing physical sensations. The overpowering and sudden nature of these changes, occurring over a very short period of time, highlights how traumatic the experience was for the patients.

> Yeah, for the first few days . . . well the first few weeks, it's so obvious. Afterwards you get more or less used to seeing this body, you still get used to it quickly. But . . . it's a bit dumb, but the first shock was when I sat down in the bathtub at home and felt the bones in my ass. I'd never felt that [laughter]. That really gave me a big shock.
>
> (Jean-Marc, chemotherapy at 21, 23)

> It's really really hard to deal with it, it's a struggle. You're very very weak. That's what the first shock was, actually. [Silence] All the times between chemos, when I could be at home, and I, actually, I didn't feel good . . . well, I didn't recognize myself. [Silence]
>
> (Violette, 24, chemotherapy and transplant at 20, 21)

The analysis of these verbatim reports brings to light how the construction of the *sexual self* for young patients is burdened by the inability to positively invest in their own body. To defend themselves, we observed among many of them a dismissal of interest in their bodies via a defensive splitting mechanism. Psychologically, this translates into a psychic disinvestment in their body, another obstacle to the development of the "sexual self":

> It was a sick body, you know . . . I left it aside . . . Well, I wasn't concerned with it, you know . . . nor was anyone else [smiles]. But I didn't think too much about my life as a woman later on. I was really unwell, in the moment that I had to live, you know, now . . .
>
> (Alexandra, chemotherapy at 22, 24)

2.2.1.2 The deterioration of romantic and sexual relationships

This physical weakness has immediate interpersonal and psychological consequences, interfering with intimacy. Young patients may engage only in minimal exchanges with others, owing to death anxiety or physical pain; such exchanges are in complete opposition to the dynamics underlying romantic and sexual relationships.

> Yes, I'd had intercourse before, but I think you put yourself in a mode of . . . not a survival mode, but you stop thinking about those kinds of things when you live with cancer . . .
>
> (Félicie, chemotherapy and transplant at 23, 25)

> There's also a fairly huge decrease of libido so you think about things other than . . . than to have a girlfriend and that kind of thing. [. . .] And there's also a mental level that means you don't really want to have a long-term relationship.
>
> (Jean-Marc, chemotherapy at 21, 23)

Patients are less inclined to consider engaging in romantic relationships, because doing so requires self-confidence, as well as confidence in others, and in the possibility to undertake joint projects.

> The problem, is that you don't know if you're going to have a relapse . . . Is it worth making projects again, if you fall ill again and it stops everything?
>
> (Armelle, chemotherapy at 23 transplant at 24, 28)

To consider having sexual relationships is also a source of anxiety: patients may have a fear of not being attractive, of being unable to give or feel pleasure, or of displaying a damaged body that may not appear desirable. Furthermore, the weakened immune and physiological state of the patient can be a source of anxiety for their partner. This anxiety may persist even after the treatment or hospitalization has ended:

> It changed my sex life, yes, my partner became worried about hurting me, and it's still very rooted in him, like an apprehension.
>
> (Martha, chemotherapy at 14, two recurrences, transplant at 26, 28)

Young people who were in a relationship when diagnosed reported that they temporarily stopped having intercourse, suspended their romantic relationship, or felt the need to separate romantic commitment and sexuality. Those who were not in a relationship tended to put aside psychosexual dynamics in which they were engaged when diagnosed. For instance, Blandine and Jules explain that, although they did engage in sexual intercourse while receiving treatment, they derived no pleasure from it, or could engage in it only as long as they did not involve themselves emotionally in the relationship.

> Well, the treatment had side effects yes, especially on mucous membranes, the mouth, eyes, the vagina also. So it was not easy. It was an extra step to take to be able, er . . . to be able to be er . . . to cuddle in that way. That, and exhaustion.
>
> (Blandine, chemotherapy at 15, recurrence, transplant at 22, 23)

> [My girlfriend] came to the hospital, yes, in the beginning. Afterwards I was a bit firm with my decisions and so, so she understood, she found another guy, etc. That's fine. So actually, that's when it ended. Then, the whole time I was getting intensification therapy, I wasn't in a relationship. Well, I kept seeing my ex regularly, another person, I mean. [. . .] But really, you're only human, like everyone else, you've got needs, desires etc. I could have that sort of thing with an old girlfriend, well . . . that's what bothered me the most: when you see a guy who's lost his hair, his eyebrows, when you get the impression that he's more or less about to die . . . I didn't want to be with someone who'd be sort of pitying me.
>
> (Jules, chemotherapy at 21, 26)

In such cases, the construction of the sexual self is endangered. Indeed, the psychological integration of the attributes of genital sexuality and of the gendered body supports the construction of the sexual self, as do reported interactions with others. Such interactions are a key factor in enabling the process of genital sexualization specific to psychosexual development to be perceived as a positive experience. But many cancer patients may experience negative feelings about their sexual selves, and such feelings may prevent AYAs from engaging in romantic and sexual relationships.

2.2.1.3 Interacting with others counteracts death anxiety

At this stage of their experience of illness, most patients explained that they had felt the threat of a greater danger: withdrawing from romantic or sexual interactions intensifies death anxiety, as shown in the transcripts below.

> [My partner and I], we didn't really talk about, what if I die and all . . . Well, I never said it. I never did. I think I wrote it on one of the first days

> I wrote to A. But, well, I soon realized that there wasn't really any solution. So . . . well, I had to go with the flow and let myself be caught in all this. I had to have a connection with her . . .
>
> (Anatole, 23, chemotherapy and transplant at 23, 27)

> Yes, it was important not to feel alone, since . . . well it's hard to be all alone when you're sick like that. You're tired and all, but you quickly start losing hope. I really wanted to fight against that. And it's true, having someone with me every day, well it changed everything.
>
> (Violette, 24, chemotherapy and transplant at 20, 21)

> The first time I relapsed, I put myself in a protective bubble, and I wouldn't touch anything that was outside of that bubble, and it stopped me from having a life. And today I've dealt with this second relapse differently, I've told myself: "OK, I've relapsed, I'll follow the treatment, but I can't put myself in that bubble, I can still have a life on the side." And I really think it matters. There's a treatment, it's really important [. . .] but you shouldn't forget that you've got to keep living as well. And to keep living, you've got to feel like you've got a private life too, intimacy, you need to feel loved.
>
> (Martha, chemotherapy at 14, two recurrences, transplant at 26, 28)

Interacting with others is intuitively identified as a crucial condition for psychological survival, and for sustaining the hope to be able to live again, which can be achieved only through the ability to relate again to one's body less negatively. Many patients then highlighted the importance of the care received and of the tactfulness of caregivers. They all confirm that the nature of these interactions was essential for them to be able to recreate a more positive body image, despite the difficult perceptions and sensations caused by their illness.

2.2.2 Care practices supporting the construction of a less negative sexual self

Healthcare professionals acknowledge that, for AYAs, the issue of psychosexual development is at the core of identity construction itself, which is not the case for children or adults. This is not a theoretical presupposition, but a tangible form of knowledge grounded in the caregivers' personal memories of adolescence, or in empathetic perceptions stemming from their own experience of having adolescent sons or daughters. Therefore, healthcare professionals develop individual and collective strategies to "take good care of AYAs" far beyond the basic medical protocols required to manage illness. The quality of care that they provide has a twofold impact, which has been identified and validated by the interactive nature of this research, as its purpose is to respond to and support the psychosexual development of AYAs.

2.2.2.1 The twofold impact of care

As often as possible, healthcare professionals enhance medical, therapeutic care with gestures, words, actions, or intentions that allow young patients to experience enjoyable sensations in a body that more often feels vulnerable and damaged. Such care is interpreted at several levels in the patients' minds—physical, psychological, interpersonal—and helps them to recover their sense of identity. It is provided mainly through a focus on sensorial elements, and paying attention to those parts of the body whose role is prominent in the subjective narrative and psychosexual construction of each patient: the skin and the mouth, and their corresponding senses, touch and taste. The impact of chemotherapy on the oral mucous membrane is severe, and the risk of developing infection from food needs to be managed in patients whose immune system is weak; hence the importance of the nutritionist's role. A nutritionist describes how she collaborated with doctors to obtain the authorization for some patients to eat dishes prepared by their families, outside the hospital, despite the fact their diet should have been limited to sterilized food:

> As a rule, a transplant patient is not allowed to receive anything from his or her family—dishes that are homemade and stocked here, and then reheated . . . [One patient, of Indian origin] would only eat food prepared by his parents . . . I think that for him, and for his family, food was very important . . . because food is an intimate thing for people, it's "comforting" and it gives pleasure and . . . it represents a link that you can still . . . have with the world. (. . .) It's the value of food, other than nutritional: comfort. And so I always adapt my methods.

Following her intuition that food, beyond its nutritional value, also has a strong emotional and intimate value for adolescents, this professional nutritionist confirms to the patient that their subjectivity is worthy of respect and should be taken into consideration. She is caring for a body that is simultaneously weakened and in need of protection and healing, but also eager to feel desire and pleasure. Her recommendations are shaped, in each case, by her assessment of the pleasure derived by adolescents from having access to foods that they enjoy and that they can share with their peers; as such, her suggestions enable young patients not only to enjoy favorite foods, but also to engage in dynamics specific to adolescence:

> Before I took on the management of the unit, I had seen in a documentary a study about the alimentation of adolescents and the representation of food (. . .): all this aspect of de-structured food, street food, food that you eat standing up with friends, eating the same thing, the way you choose your food: for example, you have what your friend is having. Well, it's a time of life when the group of peers can be more important than what you eat, as long as you're sharing the same experience . . . Because they're on a diet, and because of what they're going to do, I tell them: "If you go to a fast-food restaurant—yes I know some of you are going to go there—have well done chicken burgers rather than medium rare beef burgers, have nuggets . . . you see? not with a salad of raw vegetables; nuggets and fries is less risky." I remind them of what they're not allowed to have, but I don't forbid it because I know they'll go [to the restaurant], and it's better to help them choose dishes that present less risk, if they go out, rather than say no. I'm just being mindful of what's normal for adolescents.

Massage is another example of a type of care that is not usually provided in oncology. It is often offered to alleviate pain developed during treatment in certain areas of the body, but it also meets the more specific need for patients to re-possess their body. Through the sensation of touch, they feel their shapes and contours again, and recover their subjective, even sometimes gendered, markers. In such cases, great tact is required from healthcare professionals, who draw upon processes pertaining to kinesic intelligence. When offering and performing a massage, a caregiver uses his or her whole body to imbue each motion or gesture with particular attention to the sensations, emotions, and intersubjective reactions exchanged throughout the care relationship. This is conveyed very clearly in the words, transcribed below, of a nurse who was among the first caregivers to introduce massages in her hospital unit. Her words convey the depth of her reflection, which combines both conception and practice of this act of care and upholds the highest standards of propriety toward the modesty and needs of the patients, and toward the ethical and deontological requirements of her profession.

> I started with giving massages to the little ones [she worked in pediatric units for a long time], because I thought that, in the evenings, we resorted too quickly to giving them drugs to calm them down when they were agitated—which was mostly due to corticosteroids, by the way. And so I would give them massages, or more like cuddles, depending on their age; it's relaxing, for children, I do it with my children, and I love it too myself, and so I would do it; and then, with older patients, I told myself "Let's do it," I'll go with it, we don't live in a society where we

> touch each other much and it's not easy, and with adolescents, when it comes to the body, there's a . . . and actually to start with I didn't do it for boys, I started with girls, I felt less awkward (. . .) So to start with I'm treading on eggshells, I don't go on doing it for half an hour at a time, I see how they react and when I see that they're comfortable and that they're the ones saying to me when I stop "oh, already," it's a success! (. . .) And I never start with areas . . . sometimes I offer to do their feet only, to start with, so they don't need to undress, to take their t-shirt off. And then I say, "Tomorrow we can do your back, if you want." I do it around the neck to start with. And then gradually, if I feel that the patient is comfortable and relaxed, I say, "If you want me to go further down your back, you can lift your t-shirt and bring it in front of you." But I've never been trained to do massages, if I knew how to do it, it would be even better.

The twofold impact of such care helps young patients to re-connect positively with their body. The two transcripts below describe the experience of receiving a massage, and explicitly highlight how important they are to the re-construction of a better perception of the body, and how they support positive aspects of the sexual self.

> A lady was giving me massages. And the sensation of softness returning to my skin, that was nice. And I even regain some self-confidence, it was helping me to say to myself: "You see, you can also feel nice things on your body, it's not all illness, all pain." That's what really helped me to keep going, otherwise I don't think I would have [kept going].
>
> (Anita, chemotherapy at 15, recurrence and transplant at 20, 21)

> Touch, for me at least, is very important, it reveals that the body is still there. I think it's a very good thing, honestly. It's as if you realized that your body still existed. Because the more you're in bed, after a while, yes, the body is there, but it's kind of in the same state as you, it's surviving, so to speak. And to have these massages, or physio, or sessions where you do a bit of exercise, it makes the body revive a little. And that's important, if only for your femininity, it releases some femininity. It's still very important, yes. For me, it's important that it comes from someone else. It doesn't have the same impact, actually, because, yes, you can touch your own body, but it doesn't give the same sensations than when it's the contact of someone else's skin, someone else's strength, it has a different impact.
>
> (Martha, chemotherapy at 14, two recurrences, transplant at 26, 28)

The twofold impact of such care is also identifiable in intentions underlying speech, of which caregivers are extremely mindful, as soon as they feel that the care provided could convey to the young patient a degraded image of his or her body. Caregivers are careful not to use words that might reduce the patient to the negative identity of being in pain. In such cases, they often resort to humor to emphasize the human dimension instilled in their acts of care:

> All these little things are important . . . every day, we have to pay attention to "how" to convey things . . . for those who are incontinent, obviously it's not easy to deal with, the first few times, we are very careful. As for me, I apologize, I say: "Well, I'm sorry, but I'm going to wash you, we'll roll you onto your stomach, I'll give you a little massage." (. . .) It's an opportunity to apprehend the body differently.
>
> (Day nurse)

2.2.2.2 Care strategies supporting the acknowledgment of gendered aspects of the body

In a wider conception of care, healthcare professionals recognize the necessity of respecting the intimacy and modesty of young patients. The body of each patient in its gendered dimension is considered as precious, because it is still developing. It is being transformed by the changes induced by puberty, combined here with illness, and is progressing toward an active sex life. Although caregivers observe that treatments can undermine the gendered dimension of a patient's body, they also all believe that this aspect of an individual's identity must not be denied or ignored when providing care. As such, they perform their work with the awareness that the development of this aspect of identity occurs through interactions with other, gendered, individuals. They are conscious that patients have no contact with anyone else during treatments, and they develop strategies to work in pairs so as to respect the modesty of patients and acknowledge the gendered aspect of their body. These issues are the object of careful consideration among the team, including the organization of their work:

> The other day, a girl needed a dressing for a catheter, a very sweet girl, but very very feminine, with a very large bosom, and my [male] colleague was extremely embarrassed, and she must have been embarrassed too . . . she was "his" patient [he was her designated nurse], but we [female nurses] were the ones who sorted out the dressing.
>
> (Night nurse)

In the next example, a male caregiver mentions a comparable situation, in which he asked a female—and older—colleague to replace him, to spare the modesty of a young woman:

> In this unit, I noticed that's how it was, they have women looking after girls. I think it's only logical. I can imagine, if you were a girl of thirteen, fourteen, and you had a thirty something guy looking after you, I'd find it . . . I think, as a boy, I'd be embarrassed, so, as a girl, with an appearance that's already more or less deteriorated, it's terrible. Well maybe not terrible, but at least awkward.

Focusing on the subjectivity of patients—age, maturity, gendered identity—is also intuitively acknowledged as crucial for the process of identity formation in AYAs with cancer. Care is repetitive, invasive, and sometimes perceived as humiliating, and it presents the constant threat that young patients may revert to relating to their body in a purely material and objective, rather than subjective, way. This may result in exhibitionist behaviors in some patients—although this is rare; caregivers all emphasize how modest their patients usually are. Exhibitionist behaviors often occur as a result of prolonged periods of hospitalization, of time spent in intensive care units, or when a patient's bodily condition has deteriorated, thereby degrading the patient's body image. These "provocative" behaviors are, for healthcare professionals, a signal that the psychosexual development of the patient is at risk, insofar as they reflect the patient's detachment and withdrawal from their body, which they surrender to the sight of others and to medical treatments and divest of all positive dynamics in the construction of the sexual self. A male night nurse reports an instance when a patient undressed in front of him, which supports this hypothesis:

> Well, in these cases, I am the one who creates a distance. I remember a patient, a young woman of nineteen, who needed to change clothes. She didn't even wait for me to leave, she started to change, and so I turned aside, and I said: "OK, I'm leaving" and she said: "It's fine, I'm not shy." "Well, yes, but [laughter] maybe I don't want to see you get undressed in front of me." So yes, sometimes we've got to be the ones to create a distance. In that case, it wasn't really flirting, but . . . no, it's embarrassing, and I prefer to leave and say, "I'll come back."
>
> (Male night nurse)

This anecdote reflects a form of trivialization of care on the part of the patient, which can be considered as an expression of the desexualization process, with harmful consequences for the psychosexual development of the patient. When caregivers interact with so-called immodest patients as gendered individuals, they do much more than simply comply with the rules of acceptable conduct in hospital. They also convey to the patient the idea that his or her body could still be perceived as desirable despite the illness, and in doing so, they counteract the de-subjectivization tendencies that loom over hospitalized patients.

The ability of caregivers to apprehend patients in their subjective and gendered dimensions also supports the patients' independence, as shown in the following transcript. The patient was able to express his desire to be assisted by his partner, rather than by his mother, to take a shower, supported by the (female) nurse who perceived the significance of his request:

> I told him: "It's not easy to take a shower when you're on a drip, would you like your mum to go with you, or do you not have this kind of relationship anymore, is it embarrassing for you or not?" He whispered back: "Not my mum, not my mum!" She was just behind us. I said: "Well, I'm happy to help you, unless it makes you feel awkward. You'll have to get undressed, everything will have to stay around the drip, your t-shirt and all, and then you'll have to keep your arm raised, with the drip, and you'll have to use the soap and rinse off all by yourself, it's not easy when you're not used to it." He hesitated, and he said: "Well, I have a girlfriend, and my mum doesn't know it, she's coming later and so maybe she could help me?" I said: "Of course, that's perfect!'. (. . .) It would have been different if it had been a young woman, but in this case, the interaction with a young man . . . ."
>
> (Female night nurse)

This interaction displays another trivial, everyday scene in a hospital context, and, yet, behind the seeming banality, a fundamental act of empowerment is taking place. First, the young patient appeals to the caregiver for help in looking after his sick body, symbolized by the hindrance of the drip. The response to this appeal, given by a female carer as a female individual, restores the sick body in its gendered dimension, and prompts from the young man the suggestion that he ask his girlfriend for help. This has a high symbolic value because it allows the body to cease being a sick and rejected object, and to recover a gendered status through a moment of shared intimacy with his girlfriend. Because he is perceived as a young man, this patient is allowed to interact with others as a young man.

These seemingly insignificant interactions and exchanges allow adolescent patients to begin the arduous task of integrating their sexual self with the physical sensations and experiences produced by the illness. The nurse's perceptive intervention in the above transcript is a perfect example of kinesic intelligence. The knowing support, devoid of any flirtation, provided by the nurse when she allowed the patient to wait for his partner to take his shower, allows the young man to engage in an intimate situation with his girlfriend, and to regain the sensation of being in charge of a body that, although diseased, is recognized as male. Restoring to him the responsibility of his desire gives him the opportunity to apprehend his hurting body more positively. Through an act that counters the passive dynamics of the hurting body, accompanied by well-chosen words from the caregiver, the body may gradually revert to being a source of pleasure, shared with a partner.

Healthcare professionals may thus support the construction of the sexual self by providing adolescents with the assistance that is best suited to their needs, and by respecting their independence. They maintain that only reflexive physical care, which they administer as soon as they identify a wish for it in a patient, may achieve this goal.

> With a child or an older patient, dependence, the need for almost maternal care, is more acceptable, whereas with a teenager, who is in his or her own sexuality, in the process of constructing him- or herself, it's more complicated. Because of illness, they've been put in a position they shouldn't be in. (. . .) I think that if they haven't started their sex life or their sexuality, it's even more invasive to have to be seen naked than . . . It's another situation where I put myself in their place, when I was fourteen, fifteen. (. . .) The body which should be seduction, seductive, becomes a bruised body, falling into dependence instead of being autonomous and supporting their gendered identity . . .
>
> (Female day nurse)

2.2.3 Significant consequences for the love lives and sex lives of AYAs

The significant consequences of the care practices highlighted by our results should now be examined. In this study, many patients mentioned that their intimate relationships had been deeply transformed. First, they explain that their near-death experience has made them feel much more entitled to admitting their fragility, but also more confident in asserting their opinions and desires. Thus, self-esteem is restored, at an age when individuals often experience difficulties in that regard.

> Actually, life is short, and I don't want to live things for nothing. I want to live things fully, with my friends, my family, and M.-A. [her partner]. No, I don't want to weigh myself down with useless things. That's what's changed, and I know what I want and what I don't want.
>
> (Félicie, chemotherapy and transplant at 23, 25)

> So, I did everything I could to go unnoticed, at the start, during treatments, when I lost my hair. And later, actually, I became completely comfortable with it. Yes, actually, I think I am even more self-confident than I was during treatments.
>
> (Madeleine, chemotherapy at 15, 18)

Other patients report that they found greater freedom and flexibility toward some of the norms dictated by gendered identification in peer groups at that age, and allowed themselves to adopt behaviors regarded as specific to the other gender. For instance, a young woman describes how, after her treatments, she feels much more inclined to take a leading role when flirting with men:

> I recently replaced my car, and I found the car dealer really sweet, I had . . . Well, I asked him if he wanted to go out for a drink . . . Because we'd had a good conversation, etc. So I said to myself: "Why not?" And, well, I took the first step [smile].
>
> (Aure, chemotherapy and transplant at 24, 28)

More generally, young women tend to free themselves from expectations regarding physical appearance, when adolescents often feel that they must conform to standards of beauty, including those associated with femininity. During her course of treatment, one of these young women felt much more comfortable expressing her homosexuality. Young men tend to free themselves from expectations, associated with virility, which promote the assertion of sexual potency over the expression of sensitivity:

> People come to me more easily, to talk about themselves, because I talk about what I've been through. Even with women, I used to be shy, I wasn't brave enough to talk to them about their private life and all that. In the end, they're the ones reaching out to me, because they know that I've been through something tough, that I've gained experience that could help them.
>
> (Tristan, chemotherapy and transplant at 15, 18)

> It made things easier . . . I became more relaxed. It really . . . I felt better, actually, afterwards. When I made love again with my boyfriend, he took off my head scarf and saw my bald head, and . . . I'd dressed up to make sure I'd look pretty . . . I got so scared, but later, I realized it hadn't killed me, and . . . he hadn't been that shocked. It was important that he was the one to take off the scarf. But it will always remain . . . it's a moment that will really stay with me, I'll always remember it.
>
> (Blandine, chemotherapy at 15, recurrence, transplant at 22, 23)

Young people also report feeling much freer in their sexuality, because they accept themselves as they are, and feel accepted by their partner as they are, a fact that cannot be taken for granted and which often creates anxiety in adolescents.

> He saw me when I was so unwell, he saw me in such a state . . . well in such a state that I was barely human! Honestly . . . and so, well, there's almost no inhibition that we haven't overcome, at last I have no taboo, we can talk of anything.
>
> (Annabelle, chemotherapy and transplant at 21, 22)

In this case, sexual satisfaction increased because the negative aspects of the cancer experience were acknowledged—even integrated into the couple's intimate life and acceptance of their vulnerability. The following transcripts reflect a sexuality that is less focused on intercourse and built instead on sensorial and emotional experiences that young people describe as highly erotic.

> Some sensations became so much more intense, because while I was in isolation for six weeks we weren't allowed to touch, no kissing, nothing. Yes, it was horrible [not to be able to touch, and be touched by, her fiancé for those six weeks]. To start with, you're completely dispossessed of your body, and the first time that our fingers just barely touched, it was so powerful, it made us both cry . . . it was so . . . well it was really so incredible. I'll never forget this moment . . .
>
> (Annabelle, chemotherapy and transplant at 21, 22)

> And I remember the first time we were able to have intercourse at the end of all this. Well . . . even though it wasn't very nice at first . . . well . . . I cried. I felt like there was even a lot less inhibition than before the illness. Even now, these days, sometimes, sure, where lubrication is concerned, it's not always great, and sometimes it hurts a little, so, so then he understands something's wrong. But we have really established a dialogue that we didn't necessarily have before the illness. That's why, actually, it . . . it's good, and even better than before, yes.
>
> (Violette, 24, chemotherapy and transplant at 20, 21)

> Afterwards, actually, it was really good, better even. Less pressure . . . And the day it happened it was so intense . . . Totally.
>
> (Anatole, 23, chemotherapy and transplant at 23, 27)

The combination of these observations highlights the high heuristic value of the concept of kinesic intelligence in the field of medical humanities, as well as the value of clinical psychology to identify the more subtle forms of this intelligence, which are as inconspicuous as they are crucial to the improvement of care.

2.3 Conclusion: Combining clinical and research approaches for an embodied psychology

To conclude this chapter, I wish to stress the twofold epistemological significance of this study. Our study first reveals the heuristic value of kinesic intelligence for apprehending the clinical stakes of care. Our results show that beyond standardized and objective practices on which evidence-based medicine usually focuses, care resides also, and above all, in a multitude of subtle interactions, some of which are barely noticeable and yet essential, insofar as they allow the patient to feel "cared for," i.e., recognized as a whole individual; they may be someone suffering from illness, but they are not reduced to this sole aspect. This recognition is psychologically essential to the recovery process. In the case of AYAs with cancer, our research concludes that, beyond the medical treatment of a severe illness, gestures, thoughts, and intentions, elaborated individually or collectively by healthcare professionals, must meet the complex needs of AYA patients for the latter to recover psychologically.

The application of the concept of kinesic intelligence to care relationships is thus fruitful for research and for the development of new knowledge. It encompasses the theories of embodied cognition to which medical humanities often refer, and rests upon the idea that knowledge may be derived not only from theoretical learning, but also from experience felt and apprehended by an individual's whole body, beyond cognitive mechanisms alone. Thus, the dynamics of the roles of carer and cared-for may be appropriately analyzed and considered through critical approaches that are mindful of the importance of such interactions in the recovery process, insofar as they meet two fundamental needs in any vulnerable individual: to be considered as a patient, but also as a human being. Such interactions are rarely observed or valued, and yet they are crucial for improving care by balancing the technical approach of modern medicine with deeply human acts.

This study also highlights the fact that the epistemology of clinical psychology in its psychodynamic dimension, although it is rarely exploited in medical humanities, is particularly suitable to identifying processes specific to kinesic intelligence. This is due to the nature of the theoretical foundations of clinical psychology, which are based on an approach to the patient as a whole, rather than as someone defined only through his or her physical symptoms or difficulties. In the context of somatic illness, this research supports a conception of the body whereby the recognition of an individual's identity should complement its purely biological dimension. Clinical psychology rests upon a conception of care in which subjective and intersubjective processes complement purely medical aims. It promotes a therapeutical method based on the dynamic analysis of the interactions between carer and cared-for, through a reflexive and co-constructive approach, in order to support patients' independence of thought and action. Such an epistemology seems particularly suitable for grasping the subtle and invisible—as well as subjective and complex—aspects of a care relationship.

This method is, however, not applicable to scientific research and requires clinical psychologist researchers to base their work upon methodological strategies borrowed from other social sciences, such as qualitative and inductive methods, and the cross-referencing method used in sociology. These methods were used with the intention of integrating the foundations of clinical psychology to a research technique recognized in the wider scientific community. Action-research was most effective; it allowed for knowledge to be co-constructed in close connection with the emic perspective of all participants, so that it was more easily transferable to all carers, whether professionally trained or not.

This study offers interesting prospects for critical medical humanities owing to its ties to clinical psychology and to the involvement of both healthcare professionals and patients in the production of knowledge. It encourages the implementation of scientific practices based on transversal methods that are shared between distinct epistemologies, and the development of new experimental conditions, to generate forms of knowledge that are able to transcend the boundaries separating research and training in the field of medicine and care: "In expanding our range and scope of inquiry, our aim is not to produce a new binary between teaching and research, areas of activity that are rightly and necessarily intertwined, but rather to consider how a critical reorientation might potentially invigorate both aspects of the field" (Whitehead and Woods 2016, 4).

For instance, in this study, the collective acknowledgement of care practices designed to support puberty in its multiple aspects allowed caregivers to identify these practices as an integral element of qualitative care, despite them being previously unacknowledged by medical literature (Ricadat 2019). Action-research made this knowledge more immediately transferable and resulted in further training and in the validation of collective and individual strategies better suited to meet the psychosocial difficulties of AYAs with cancer. Admittedly, this knowledge was gathered in specific geographic, cultural, and social circumstances, but it presents a high potential for yielding prevailing and transferable principles, which may be applied profitably in other contexts, among other patients and carers.

These observations suggest that it is necessary to incorporate clinical psychology to the cognitive systems favored by critical medical humanities. Kinesic intelligence is fundamental to the appreciation of human complexity; therefore, its application to relevant fields of study is epistemologically fruitful and provides the benefits of inter- and trans-disciplinary cross-fertilization. Transdisciplinary dynamics challenge and answer contemporary issues by referring to a type of knowledge that is co-constructed from a variety of points of view, and by recognizing that the diversity of these points of view may benefit a more creative, less standardized type of research. Indeed, transdisciplinary approaches have become a relevant scientific model in a world of increasing complexity, the understanding of which requires approaches rooted in knowledge that transcends the boundaries between fields of study, and between untaught and academic expertise.

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3 Kinesic intelligence and historical research

Gestural communication at the court of Henry VIII

Greg Walker

As I write this chapter, the physical self-presentation of political leaders has arguably never been more scrutinized. The body language of presidents, prime ministers, and their entourages—their postures, gestures, and facial expressions; the way they greet one another in public, touch, clasp hands, or line up for group photographs—is scrutinized in minute detail and commented and re-commented on in newsprint, on television, in film and social media, in blogs and satirical cartoons, and in the monologues of comedians. Such things, it is assumed, have much to tell us about a politician's self-image and public persona, their real or projected character and emotions, their inter-personal relations and professional competences, and the possible state of their mental or physical health. But this is not a new phenomenon. Long before the advent of social media or even daily newspapers, observers deployed the same kinds of kinesic intelligence to analyze the body language of Renaissance princes and politicians. And historians have had to do the same. Unlike the contemporary media commentator, however, the scholar of pre-modern history cannot examine such phenomena at first hand. There are, alas, no snapshots of the Medici family at dinner, no footage of the Tudors discussing their marital problems on chat shows. One must look elsewhere for evidence of the body language of pre-modern subjects.

Seeing things at one remove, the historian must assess the affective power of particular gestures and actions (in the contexts of both their performance and their reception) from the written accounts of witnesses, or those who have themselves only heard reports of events yet have chosen to record them. A good deal of the political historian's stock-in-trade thus lies in second-hand or second-order observation through the accounts of individuals (ambassadors, chroniclers, people writing from the court or metropolis to friends or family in the provinces) who were themselves attempting to make sense of other people's motivations, emotions, and intentions by observing their gestures, interactions, and performances.

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Watching people watching other people through traces in the archives is thus as important a part of the attempt to reconstruct historical events as is leafing through account books, estate records, or trial proceedings in search of more empirical data. Or, to put it another way, it may well be, as Sir Keith Thomas observed, that "the human body . . . is as much a historical document as a charter or a diary or a parish register . . . and it deserves to be studied accordingly" (Thomas 1991, 2). But (except in the special case of portraiture) the pre-modern body can be studied only when its movements and gestures have been recorded in words on paper by contemporary observers. Hence, the same skills required to infer the movement and actions of literary characters from the written descriptions in novels or poems are required to analyze the actions of historic individuals recorded in the archives, and with all the same challenges involved.

Kinesic intelligence is vital at every stage of this process. It is clearly at work, for instance, as we shall see, when an ambassador watches the interactions between a prince and his ministers and tries to determine what they might reveal about the likely direction of royal policy. It is also at work when that ambassador writes a report on those interactions for his employers in Paris, Venice, or Madrid, using what skills he possesses to convey in words the precise nature of a royal gesture or facial expression and its possible implications, in the expectation that, if he does so successfully, his readers will in turn be able to visualize those gestures and interpret them in a similar way. Finally, it is kinesic intelligence that must guide the historian's encounters with that report in the archives, as they seek to learn from it not only who said what to whom and when they did so, but also *how* they did so, how those long-dead individuals interacted with each other, and with what apparent symbolic, semiotic, or affective intentions and impacts.

3.1 Kings' moves

In the elite cultures of the late medieval and early modern periods, the precise nuances of the bodily movement and deportment, gesture, and facial expression of those in positions of power or influence were considered highly significant social or political phenomena. This was especially so when individuals of different social class, status, or authority (or those of similar status who wished nonetheless to claim or imply superiority) occupied the same physical space and were obliged to interact with one another. In monarchical states such as England, this was nowhere more true, and nowhere more sensitive, than in the spaces around the prince, whether in the rooms and corridors of the royal palaces or, beyond these, in the less clearly defined fields of cultural influence that sovereigns carried with them as they moved around their territories.

As with the king on a chessboard, the movements of a prince such as Henry VIII around the suites of public and private rooms in palaces such as Greenwich or Hampton Court were closely watched by ambitious courtiers and curious foreign diplomats alike, and reported on as valuable indications of the current state of English politics and the likely direction of its foreign policy. In a culture in which it was the person of lower status in any encounter who conventionally did the conspicuous moving (Burrow 2002, 28, citing Goody 1972, 40)—acknowledging the other's superiority by immediately standing up (if sitting) when he or she entered the room, or removing their hat, bowing, or kneeling as they passed by, while the superior could choose whether to move or not in response—Henry's responses to those who visited the spaces around him provided an index of his political attitudes and intentions. How did he admit a visiting ambassador into his presence chamber, and how warmly did he welcome him? Did he remain seated as the ambassador approached, or did he stand up and move to greet him? Did he remove his own hat in response to the visitor's doffing of his, or did he keep his on? Did Henry even come out of the chamber to meet the visitor *en route* and escort him the rest of the way himself? To whom did *he* doff his hat, nod, or return a bow as he passed them? And how fully or cursorily did he do so? Such subtle indications of favor and intention were staple ingredients of ambassadorial reports throughout Henry's reign.

A sense of what was at stake in such moments of kinesic interaction and of how they might be interpreted or misinterpreted may be gleaned from an account of a meeting between Henry and his counselor, Sir Thomas More, at some point in the mid 1520s. The occasion was vividly recalled many years later by More's son-in-law, William Roper, who chose to write about it in his *Life* of More (published *c.*1556), in which he presented it as something akin to a moral fable in miniature about the fickleness of kings and the difficulties of using their gestures as evidence of their apparent affections.

The story recounts an occasion when the king, who frequently called More into his company for conversation on all manner of subjects from high politics to philosophy and astronomy, decided to do him the singular (and no doubt stressful) favor of descending upon his household unexpectedly ("unlooked for") and staying for dinner to "be merry with him" (Roper 1935, 20–1, spelling modernized). "[And] after dinner, in a fair garden of his [i.e., More's], [Henry] walked with him by the space of an hour, holding his arm about his neck." These gestures of familiarity and favor were open and obvious, and the naïve younger Roper was eager to celebrate with More the exceptional nature of his good fortune. No sooner had the king departed, writes the older, wiser Roper, than,

> I, rejoicing thereat, told Sir Thomas More how happy [i.e., fortunate] he was, whom the king had so familiarly entertained as I never had seen him do to any except Cardinal Wolsey, whom I saw [his grace] once walk with arm-in-arm.
>
> (Roper 1935, 21)

But More's response offered a sobering reflection on the necessary relationship between signs and truths and on the likely transience of both fortune and royal favor.

> "Thank our Lord, son," quoth he, "I find his grace my very good lord indeed, and I believe he doth as singularly favour me as any subject within [his] realm. Howbeit, son Roper, I may tell thee I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head [could] win him a castle in France (for then there was war between us) it should not fail to go."
>
> (Roper 1935, 21)

For the young Roper, those remarkable gestures of affection: the fact of the visit itself, the length of Henry's stay, and—most obviously—the convivial arm around More's shoulders, speak volubly to a genuine "familiarity" on the part of the king. These are surely the actions of a friend, and one who wishes, quite literally, to keep More close to him. Instinctively conflating the spheres of the personal and the political, the human body and the body politic, Roper thus assumes that More's future is assured and that he must be the happiest of men in both the Tudor and the modern senses of that word. More, however, is more cautious. For him, the two spheres remain determinedly separate. Kings do not and cannot have friends in the way that other people do, even if they think they can. The needs of the body politic will always prevail over purely human concerns. As More had written in his *History of King Richard III*, "kings' games," like stage plays, were very different to real life, irrespective of appearances, and were always ultimately played out upon scaffolds (More 1963, 483). The older Roper, writing for readers who were all too aware that Henry would later have More executed for denying his claim to be Supreme Head of the English Church, thus chose very deliberately to highlight that it was More's *neck* around which Henry's arm was placed. This may well, of course, have actually happened, but Roper's stress upon the point, coupled with More's subsequent reference to his head going off, could not but have created a chilling realization, in some readers' minds at least, that it would be that same neck and that same head that would suffer far less well-intentioned royal attention little more than a decade later.[1] The account cautions that,

1 For an account of one extended creative response to More's relationship with Henry VIII, see Walker 2020, passim.

even where apparently simple and spontaneous gestures are concerned, political context is all—as a second case study, taken from a little later in the reign, will further suggest.

3.2 The politics of petition: Kneeling and praying

On October 16, 1531, the Imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys, reported that Queen Katherine of Aragon, now separated from the king and their daughter Mary and exiled to the royal palace of The More in Hertfordshire, had been visited by a delegation of four courtiers sent by the king. The party consisted of two clerics—the royal secretaries Edward Lee, archbishop-elect of York, and Richard Sampson, archdeacon of Suffolk and future bishop of successively Chichester then Coventry and Lichfield—and two laymen—Robert Ratcliffe, first Earl of Sussex, and Sir William Fitzwilliam, the future Earl of Southampton. All were conspicuously loyal to Henry VIII, and their mission was to persuade Katherine to withdraw her appeal to have the "divorce" case between Henry and herself tried in Rome, and to agree to having it decided instead "by amicable compromise, by means of judges appointed from among the prelates and lawyers of this kingdom" (Gayangos 1882, item 808). This, they asserted, would be the right thing to do in the light of the "manifold inconveniences that might arise from the continuance of the difference between the king and herself should the pending suit be carried on by rigorous terms of justice" in the Roman courts, where the Pope "would not dare to do justice, through fear of imperial pressure." All of this, Chapuys reported, was spoken very quietly, "in low voices," so that the assembled members of Katherine's household, looking on, might not hear.

Queen Katherine, while she answered "in the mildest and most moderate terms," nonetheless spoke up "loud enough to be heard by every one of the bystanders." She observed that she had herself originally offered to have the matter tried by the English bishops, when she believed that Henry had indeed been motivated to doubt their marriage based solely on a scruple of conscience, as he still claimed. However,

> now that she was aware that the king was not actuated by mere scruples of conscience, but by passion pure and simple, she could not possibly think of consenting to the compromise proposed by the king, especially in this country, where all those consulted would by dint of threats and corruption say white was black and black white.
>
> (Gayangos 1882, item 808)

Faced with such politely expressed but resolute resistance from the queen, the men then gave their entreaties a more physical and symbolic form. All four, "after many answers and replies of the same kind," dropped to their knees before Katherine and

> humbly entreated her for the sake of the king's honour, for the princess's welfare, for the peace of the kingdom, and for her own repose (as the king promised to treat her much better than ever before) to consent to the process being tried in the kingdom.

By kneeling before the woman who was still legally their queen (although Henry denied her that title), the four men tacitly appealed to her in the traditional queenly role of peace-weaver and conduit of royal mercy. Moreover, with two tonsured clerics and two lay supporters kneeling before a majestic female figure to ask for grace, they implicitly positioned Katherine symbolically in the role of the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, who could be expected to grant mercy to all who pray for it. Whether knowingly or unconsciously, the men were deploying the semiotics of kneeling to oblige Katherine, before her gathered household, to respond to their request with generosity. Similarly, their verbal appeals to her respectively as a faithful wife and subject (for the sake of the king's honor), as a loving mother (for the princess's welfare), as a queen (for the peace of the kingdom), and as a vulnerable, unsteadfast woman (for the sake of her own repose) sought to activate thoughts of four other female roles conventionally associated with obedience, self-sacrifice, and benevolence.

Rather than succumb to the concerted semiotic coercion of the four kneeling men, however, Katherine responded in kind. As they completed their appeals,

> the queen went also on her knees, praying each and every one of those present for the sake of God's honour and glory, and of His sufferings and death on the cross, for the discharge of the king's conscience and their own, and for the removal of such a scandalous example to Christendom, to persuade the king their master to return to her, since he well knew that she was his true and legitimate wife. If, notwithstanding this . . . the king should still entertain some scruple, let him allow the case to be heard and sentenced at Rome, where he may be sure no undue influence or violence will be exercised, and no intrigues practised.
>
> (Gayangos 1882, item 808)

Chapuys, as a staunch supporter of the queen's cause and the representative in England of her nephew Charles V, is hardly a neutral observer. Nonetheless, there is, perhaps, some credibility in his observation that, upon hearing the queen's "sound reasoning and earnest entreaties," the king's party "knew not what to answer, and were actually moved to pity," as, more predictably, were the members of her own household.

Considered from the vantage point of almost 500 years later, there is perhaps something surprising in this spectacle of both sides in a dispute kneeling in supplication to one another, each begging the other to act with charity and mercy to find a solution to their impasse in the wider interests of all concerned. But Katherine's decision to respond to kneeling with kneeling was an intelligent deployment of the affective politics of petition that nullified the advantages claimed by her visitors' earlier supplication. While they had sought to position themselves as humble and unworthy suitors seeking grace from a Madonna-like figure, whose only choice would have been between either granting their request or appearing cruel and "unwomanly" by denying it, she now reversed that dynamic by seeking *their* mediation between her and the supreme authority of the king they served. In what was now a contest of humility, she, as a "mere woman," held rare natural advantages in a patriarchal culture such as Tudor England. Facing a kneeling woman entreating them to consult their consciences and represent her petition to their master, it was the men who were now conventionally obliged to respond mercifully. The aristocratic laymen, on hearing the appeals of a defenseless woman in distress, were obliged by chivalry to respond generously, while pastoral responsibility had the same effect for the clerics hearing a wronged woman appealing to them in the name of the crucified Christ to help to reconcile her with her heartless husband. Katherine had deftly turned their attempt to position her as the Madonna on its head. It was her interlocutors who now had to consider the obligations of their positions and react to the suggestion that they must respond as mediators on her behalf. It would thus not be surprising if, as Chapuys claimed, the men were genuinely moved by the queen's appeal, and embarrassed by the evident sincerity of her claims. Either way, they retreated to the king in some disarray.

As J.A. Burrow notes, kneeling conventionally placed the kneeler in a position of inferiority, as either seeking or acknowledging a benefit from, or trying to prompt or prevent some action on the part of, the one before whom they kneeled (2002, 23). But, as Katherine's actions demonstrate, it could also, paradoxically, place one in a position of rhetorical and moral advantage if the game being played was based on the appeal to mercy and charity. The potency of the queen's position lay precisely in her claim to impotence. Christian culture, of course, invested great agency in the posture of the kneeling supplicant, particularly when the kneeler was a wronged woman who was friendless and without other recourse to justice. And Katherine exploited that potential to the full. Indeed, Doctor Lee and his companions ought to have been more wary of the queen's capacity to turn kneeling to her advantage, as she had already done so very publicly more than once, most notably in the still more fraught circumstances of the legatine trial at Blackfriars, London, which had been convened to investigate the validity of her marriage in the early summer of 1529. There, before the judges, Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio, she had upstaged everyone by kneeling not once but twice to demand that the case be revoked to the Roman courts.

As Janette Dillon has described, Katherine first appeared before the court during its preliminary deliberations on June 18, unexpectedly entering the chamber to reject its authority outright (2007, passim). As the chronicler Edward Hall describes it,

> [t]he queen was called, which, within short space, being accompanied with the four bishops and other of her counsel, and a great company of ladies and gentlewomen following her, came personally before the legates, and after her obeisance, sadly [i.e., soberly] and with great gravity done, she appealed from them, as judges not competent for that case, to the court of Rome, and after that done, she departed again.
>
> (Hall 1550, sig. Clxxxii)

The queen's posture may have been carefully deferential and petitionary (she began, Hall notes, with an obeisance "with great gravity done"), but the impact of her intervention, sweeping in with so impressive a retinue to deny the authority of the judges and then immediately sweep out again, was strikingly authoritative and pointedly regal.

When the court resumed on June 22, Henry and Katherine were both present to hear the judges respond to her appeal, which was, unsurprisingly, rejected. The court moved swiftly on to ask the king to outline the scruples of conscience that had prompted him to question his marriage. But, as he was speaking, Katherine again acted with startling boldness, once again using the gesture of kneeling to, as Dillon neatly puts it, frame open opposition to royal demands "in terms of the wifely virtues of duty and obedience," while offering "the least possible evidence of disobedience and wilfulness" (Dillon, 124–5). Crossing the floor to kneel at Henry's feet, she begged him for justice in a speech recorded in slightly different ways by different observers. In the version in George Cavendish's near contemporary *Life of Wolsey*, the crier called Katherine by name, but she,

> [m]ade no answer to the same, but rose up incontinent out of her chair . . . and, because she could not come directly to the king for the distance which severed them, she took pain to go about unto the king, kneeling down at his feet in the sight of all the court and assembly, to whom she said in effect, in broken English as followeth: "Sir . . . I beseech you for all the loves that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me

> have justice and right; take of me some pity and compassion, for I am a poor woman and a stranger born out of your dominion. I have here no assured friends, and much less indifferent counsel. I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas, sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion of displeasure have I deserved against your will or pleasure, intending (as I perceive) to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure, that never said or did anything to the contrary thereof, being always well pleased and contented with all things wherein ye had any delight or dalliance . . . "
>
> (Cavendish 1959, 80, spelling modernized)

The slightly different account recorded in Lord Somers' Tracts has her say,

> I take God to be my judge, I have been to you a true and humble wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure, never contradicting or gain-saying you in anything . . . and when you had me first, I take God to be my judge, that I was a maid [i.e., virgin], and whether it be true or no, I put it to your conscience . . .
>
> (Somers 1809–1815, I, 34; cited in Dillon, 122)

In Cardinal Campeggio's own account, Katherine was still more prostrate and still more obdurate:

> She interposed [herself into the proceedings] with a lengthy appeal and plea to the Pope and retired, but first she knelt before the tribunal; although twice the king tried to raise her, and asked permission from the king to write and send messengers to Rome, in view of the honour and respect due to her and to the Spanish royal house.
>
> (Ehses 1893, translated by Dillon, with the help of Silvia Bordoni, in Dillon, 123)

Katherine then curtseyed once more to the court and departed, never to return. When she failed to heed the three formal requests that she come back, she was declared contumacious, and the trial proceeded without her.

Katherine's performance here, like the later speech delivered while kneeling before Sampson, Lee, and company, appears to have left the king and court dumbfounded. According to Hall's account, she ignored the judges and the court's ongoing process to kneel directly to Henry as her husband and king, thereby redirecting attention from the supposedly neutral trial process toward the real instigator of proceedings. No doubt feeling the need to respond, and probably sensing the mood of the chamber turning against him, Henry offered the following remarks, in the version recorded by Hall, claiming that he was pursuing the case solely for the discharge of his troubled conscience,

> and not for any grudge that I bear to her that I have married, for I dare say that for her womanhood, wisdom, nobility, and gentleness, never prince had such another, and therefore, if I would willingly change, I were not wise . . .
>
> (Hall, sig. Clxxxii)

Much virtue in "if" Henry must have hoped;[2] but, in Hall's eyes at least, the damage had been done.

Katherine had managed to play the markedly inferior hand of cards that early modern culture dealt any woman in her position as skillfully as she could. Faced with the cruel injustice that determined that the only way she could prove her own claims about her sexual history and the integrity of her own body was to appeal on her knees to the man who was slighting that integrity, she did so in the hope that he would repent and attest to her virginity when they first lay together. Only thus could she write into the historical record the truth that she herself knew all too well. Hence, unlike in the earlier example of Henry's arm placed around More's neck, there was a clear correlation between Katherine's gestures and the reality of her situation. By kneeling so conspicuously, she not only navigated carefully around the protocols of courtly behavior, as Dillon demonstrates, signaling due deference to her husband, her judges, and the court itself, but she also literally embodied the nature of her own circumstances, friendless and reliant upon the men around her for justice. After almost three decades in England, her spoken English might still, as Hall notes, have been "broken," but her capacity to use her body to compel the attention of her judges and enter her account of events into the trial records on her own terms was impressive. Falling to her knees was thus a speaking gesture of great eloquence, and, paradoxically, one of considerable power and efficacy too.

3.3 Showing and performing respect: Reverence and irreverence

In my final and most substantial case study, I will examine a series of powerful gestures, some highly formalized and considered, others seemingly more spontaneous, affective, and potentially psychologically revealing, performed on a single day in the Henrician court in April 1536.

2 *As You Like It*, 5.iv.100–101 in Shakespeare 2006.

Our source for these events, and the lens through which we must encounter them, is again the imperial ambassador, Eustace Chapuys, who had reported Queen Katherine's encounter with the Sampson–Lee delegation nearly five years earlier. In that previous scenario, Chapuys himself was merely one of the conduits through which the details of the story passed into the record. Here, however, he takes center stage, as he was a major player in, as well as the recorder of, the particular events he describes. It is thus worth considering him in a little more detail before we go any further.

A native of the small eastern French town of Annecy, Chapuys entered the direct service of Emperor Charles V from that of the Duke of Bourbon in 1527, serving initially as secretary to the imperial council and a master of requests.[3] However, when in May 1529, the current imperial ambassador in England, Don Inigo de Mendoza, requested a recall (the life of a resident ambassador was often arduous, and chronically underpaid), Chapuys was provided with rudimentary written guidance, told to get what more he needed from Mendoza when they crossed paths in Antwerp, and dispatched to England to take his place, arriving in August 1529, in the midst of the "Great Matter" of Henry VIII's divorce proceedings. And the consequences of that divorce and their repercussions for Katherine of Aragon, her daughter Mary, and for Chapuys' *bête noire*, Anne Boleyn, were to dominate the entirety of his stay.

As a non-English speaker, who was obliged, like Queen Katherine herself, to learn the language and local cultural idioms on the job, Chapuys was probably never completely able to follow the nuanced cut and thrust of vernacular exchanges in real time (Mackay 2014, 40), at least during his first period as ambassador, which lasted from 1529 to 1536. He thus remained perhaps unusually alert to the extra-linguistic clues to attitudes and motivation offered by the gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and the ritualized or symbolic actions of those with whom he interacted. As I have suggested, details such as who sat where and with whom on ceremonial occasions, who deferred to whom, who was taken furthest into the increasingly private spaces of the royal palaces mattered to, and were noticed by, everyone in the hothouse atmosphere of the Henrician court. But they were especially important to Chapuys and his fellow ambassadors as they tried to determine for themselves the shifting dynamics of influence and favor around the king and to read beyond the official or self-interested lines spun for them by Henry and his ministers to provide a more accurate picture of English politics for their employers. Thus, as Lacey Baldwin Smith observed, Chapuys "was for ever noting that the

3 For an engaging and accessible account of Chapuys and his English embassies, see Mackay 2014.

king sighed frequently, that his face expanded and his eyes glittered with pleasure, or that his color changed with indignation" (Smith 1971, 90). These were signs that even a non-native speaker could interpret for him or herself. And this fascination with gestures and what they might mean or be taken to mean, is strikingly evident in Chapuys' account of one very tense visit to Greenwich, rich in gestural and kinesic activity.

The context for Chapuys' visit was provided by a significant shift in the diplomatic landscape. On January 7, 1536, Katherine of Aragon had died in internal exile at Kimbolton Castle, Huntingdonshire. Such was the pragmatic nature of European diplomacy, however, that, rather than offering an opportunity for all parties to further reflect on the grievances that divided England and the Empire, it opened the door to a possible rapprochement between the two states. For, with Katherine's strident claim to be Henry's true wife removed, Anne Boleyn's de facto status as Henry's queen became less of an obstacle to the resumption of the "natural" alliance of England and the Empire against France. Thus, soon after Katherine's death, Henry himself, encouraged by many of his closest counselors, including his principal secretary Thomas Cromwell, began to sound out Charles V through Chapuys' good offices about what it might take to agree to a new Anglo-Imperial alliance. For Henry, this would allow him to move beyond an enforced reliance on the notoriously precarious relationship with Francis I and once again become an independent operator on the European stage.

Henry's principal demand from Charles was that he recognize the legitimacy of his marriage to Anne and thus the legitimacy of their daughter Princess Elizabeth and any future male offspring of that marriage, which would thus secure the succession and the Tudor dynasty. This would involve Charles rejecting—or at least choosing to ignore—the papal sanctions issued against Henry after his refusal to accept the papal verdict on his divorce case and his claim to be Supreme Head of the Church in England. For Charles, conversely, the crucial points at issue were the re-establishment of Princess Mary's place in the line of royal succession; reconciliation between England and papal authority; and support for Charles's ongoing campaign against the French, especially over their rival claims to overlordship of the dukedom of Savoy and the city of Milan, and for the imperial campaign against the Turkish empire in the east. The last of these issues were practical matters, readily resolved with goodwill on both sides. The first two, while directly opposed to current English claims, were not beyond the prospect of pragmatic or symbolic compromise. Beyond these political issues, however, what was really at stake in the highly personalized culture of early modern monarchical politics was Henry VIII's royal ego. He wanted Charles to acknowledge that he, Henry, had been right all along, about his marriage, about the theology behind the "Great Matter" of its annulment, about his right to marry

Anne and make her his queen, and about his powers as an "imperial" king to determine the nature and direction of the church in his territories without external interference (for a similar argument, see Lipscomb 2009, 74). These things Charles could not and would not grant if they meant the long-term exclusion of Mary from the succession and the continued schism between England and Rome. So discussions between Chapuys and Cromwell danced nervously around those principal points of contention for several weeks, with each assuring the other of their respective masters' mutual affection and good intentions, and asking for, if not yet concrete written evidence of their sincerity, then for signs and indications of progress toward a lasting treaty. It was in this context that Chapuys visited Cromwell in mid April, prompted by a new set of instructions empowering him to offer a formal alliance with England if progress on those four major points at issue appeared to be at all possible.

Once they were settled in Cromwell's new house, Chapuys reminded him "of our frequent conversations with respect to mutual friendship and amity" (Gayangos 1888, 86, item 43a), finding him in return "as firm and constant as ever in his purpose, and as determined to bring the negotiation to an issue." Chapuys then passed Cromwell a letter from the emperor addressed specifically to him and aimed at encouraging his mediation with the king. This the secretary received with elaborate gestures of gratitude.

> I did not hesitate to hand over to him Your Majesty's letter, which he kissed and received most reverently, assuring me over and over again that he really knew not how to acknowledge the immense favour and honour you did him by deigning to write to such an insignificant person as he was [*que de avoir daingne luy escripre, que nestoit que ung petit compaignon* (lit. "a little friend")].

Cromwell clearly intended that his extravagant response would be relayed back to Charles himself, as indeed it duly was by Chapuys. But then they got down to discussing the emperor's four principal points. On reconciling Henry with Rome, Cromwell was adamant that now was not the time for that. But he suggested that, should a treaty of alliance be agreed, Charles "might in time have greater authority and credit to persuade his master to a reconciliation with the Apostolic See."

Regarding the status of Princess Mary, Cromwell was more accommodating, if equally short on concrete proposals. He had, he said, "no doubt that the king would behave towards her as the virtuous and magnanimous prince and father that he was" (Gayangos 1888, 88, item 43a). However, as this was a personal matter, "which depended entirely on the king's own good feeling, it was not an article to be included in the treaty." Again, Cromwell suggested, progress on this front should follow the conclusion of an alliance rather than serving as a prerequisite for it. On the final two imperial demands, Cromwell was more positive: both Henry and his entire council agreed that Francis I's actions in Italy were "wild" and dishonorable. Chapuys had only to say the word, he said, and the king would dispatch an envoy at once to reprimand Francis and insist that he end his incursions immediately (Gayangos 1888, 89, item 43a). In response, Chapuys assured Cromwell of the emperor's good intentions toward Henry and of his genuine desire to conclude a treaty of alliance, news that Cromwell said was more welcome to him than a gift of 25,000 crowns in cash. Buoyed by this apparent progress, Cromwell traveled to court the following day to inform the king and wrote to Chapuys that same afternoon to say that Henry had heard his report with pleasure "and desired that I [Chapuys] should appear at court on the following Tuesday [April 18] at about 10 o'clock in the morning, where I should be welcome and get such an answer as would greatly please me" (Gayangos 1888, 90–91, item 43a).

All appeared to be set, then, for an amicable and productive interview with the king on the appointed day. And when Chapuys arrived at Greenwich, the signs were indeed propitious. He had, he reported, "from the privy councillors and other lords, such a cordial and honourable reception that nothing better could be wished for, all and every one of them coming up to congratulate me upon the prosperous news just received." Chief among these smiling lords was Anne Boleyn's brother, George, Viscount Rochford, to whom Chapuys hinted "that I had no doubt he was as much pleased as any other of the king's courtiers at the favorable prospect of affairs," which he said he believed "could not fail to be beneficial to the community at large and especially to himself and his family," a suggestion at which Rochford seemed to be particularly pleased. Evidently, Chapuys had already let it be known in his conversations with Cromwell that he was prepared to make some acknowledgment of Anne Boleyn, something he had scrupulously refused to do while Katherine of Aragon was alive. But what form might this acknowledgment take? How far was he mandated to go? A delicate *pas de deux* now began between he and Cromwell over the precise terms of any public recognition of Anne.

Cromwell, coming from the king just prior to the latter's departure to hear mass, asked whether Chapuys would be prepared to visit Anne in her private suite, and perhaps to kiss her hand there. The king, he said, would be particularly pleased if he would do that. The ambassador resisted so full and open a recognition of Anne's regal claims, observing that this would be inappropriate as things currently stood, for reasons that he would happily explain to the king when they met privately later. He was evidently wary of appearing openly to pay court to Anne in her own chamber as a supplicant, as he would to a queen. Would Cromwell pass on his apologies to Henry, and assure him nonetheless of his goodwill and willingness to forward the negotiations between the king and his master? Cromwell did so and returned to reassure Chapuys that the king had taken his reluctance "in good part, and hoped that very shortly all matters would be speedily settled to the satisfaction of the parties [concerned]" (Gayangos 1888, 92, item 43a). Henry would meet Chapuys after dinner and they could speak at leisure at that point. Following that meeting, Cromwell said, injecting a new note of formality into the discussion, the ambassador could go to the privy council chamber and report to the assembled councilors on his brief and what would be agreed with the king. This, Cromwell assured him, was a customary formality. But it was not, and Chapuys rightly perceived it as a slight on his honesty, an implicit suggestion that he could not be relied upon not to renege on any promises he might make privately to Henry in conversation. If Henry was able to agree matters directly with Chapuys, the ambassador retorted, what was the need to rehearse the discussion again before his advisors? Perhaps Cromwell could meet the council and tell them himself? Either way, until he knew what Henry was willing to agree to and what he would demand in return, Chapuys saw no reason to agree to go and report their conversation to others after the event.

Mutual suspicion was evidently vying with the shared desire for an agreement, and the situation was subtly poised between concord and latent recrimination. And it was at this point that Henry VIII himself made his first direct contribution to events. Happening by chance (or, more plausibly, by deliberate contrivance) to pass by where Chapuys was standing, he chose to offer him a decorous—even fulsome—public acknowledgment: "he made me a most gracious bow, holding his cap in his hand, and not allowing me to remain longer uncovered." Chapuys had clearly doffed his cap to the passing king and bowed, as etiquette demanded. Henry had doffed his and bowed in return, encouraging the ambassador to put his hat back on at the same point that he himself did—a signal courtesy. Moreover, Henry came over to Chapuys and asked him how he had fared since they had last spoken—another gracious condescension. He welcomed Chapuys to court and asked after the emperor's health and whereabouts, expressing pleasure when he learned that he was in the vicinity of Rome, and enquiring how long he intended to stay there.

Mindful of the first of Charles's principal demands, the desire to see Henry reconciled with papal authority, Chapuys said that he thought Charles would not stay long, unless, that is, he could do Henry any service while he was there, "in which case would surely remain longer, doing anything for his honor and for love of him." At this, Henry merely "smiled and made another bow" (Gayangos 1888, 92, item 43a). Henry then began to suggest how Charles might best organize his forces in Italy to bring about the defeat of the French, and Chapuys graciously noted that

Charles would surely take very seriously any advice given to him by the king who was "his oldest friend, brother, and almost father" (Gayangos 1888, 93, item 43a). Henry then departed for the chapel, leaving Chapuys in the company of Rochford once more, and it was soon after this point that the much-anticipated opportunity to encounter and respond publicly to Queen Anne would present itself. It is worth quoting Chapuys' account of this encounter in full to capture the full symbolic and kinesic significance of what occurred.

> *[. . .][E]t venant le roy a lofferande il y eust grand concours de gens, et une partie pour veoir quelles mynes la concubine et moy nous tiendrons, elle en usast assey cortoisement car comme jestoye derrier la porte par ou elle entroit, elle se retournast du tout pour me faire la reverence conforme a celle que luy fiz.*
>
> (National Archives, PRO 31/18/2/2, 65)

The English translation in the *Calendar of State Papers Spanish*, the account primarily relied upon by anglophone scholars, renders this as follows:

> [I was conducted to the chapel by lord Rochfort, the concubine's (Anne's) brother,] and when the offering came, a great many people flocked around the king, out of curiosity and wishing, no doubt, to know what sort of a mien the concubine and I should put on; yet I must say that she was affable and courteous enough on the occasion, for on my being placed behind the door by which she entered the chapel, she turned round to return the reverence which I made her when she passed.
>
> (Gayangos 1888, 93, item 43a)

What exactly occurred between the two, then? Chapuys was evidently standing behind the door between the royal pew and the chapel. Anne entered the chapel through that door, and Chapuys "made a reverence" to her as she did so, which she then returned. What precisely did such a gesture involve? Scholars collectively acknowledge the significance of what occurred but differ quite sharply over the precise nature and implications of this mutual acknowledgment. Eric Ives and Suzannah Lipscomb both describe Anne as turning and bowing, but suggest that she did so first and that Chapuys merely responded to her in similar style. Ives says, "knowing that Chapuys was placed behind the door . . . she stopped, turned, and bowed . . . and necessarily he responded likewise" (2004, 313). Lipscomb offers, "Anne stopped before Chapuys, turned and bowed to him. Etiquette necessitated that he do likewise—a significant diplomatic coup" (Lipscomb 2009, 73). Both scholars agree that Anne had evidently taken the initiative and trapped the ambassador into responding if he was not to offend against etiquette. He was thus obliged to offer her a gesture of recognition in return for hers, regardless of whether he had intended to do so. But Chapuys' report makes clear that the reverence that Anne performed was a response to a similar one that Chapuys had already made to her and not vice versa. "[*E*]*lle se retournast du tout pour me faire la reverence conforme a celle que luy fiz,*" which the *Spanish Calendar* translates as "she turned round to return the reverence which I made when she passed." Retha Warnicke's account of the exchange recounts the order of the bows correctly ("Anne . . . graciously turned to face the envoy . . . He bowed, as protocol absolutely required, and she returned the reverence"), but suggests that Chapuys' bow followed Anne's turning to face him, and she assumes that Anne was acting in ignorance of the fact that Chapuys had "snubbed" her earlier by declining to visit and kiss her, and so was misreading the situation in choosing to reverence him, a detail not supported by the account (Warnicke 1989, 209). John Schofield and G.W. Bernard, conversely, while avoiding the question of precedence, are less certain that bows were exchanged, or at least that those bows were full and gracious. Schofield observes that they "exchanged the faintest of bows," Bernard simply that "they nodded to each other" (Bernard 2010, 133; Schofield 2011, 138).

While each historian is responding to the same account of the incident, each infers a different sequence of movements with different kinesic qualities and a different set of motives and implications behind them. For Ives and Lipscomb, Anne takes the initiative, bows demonstratively herself, obliging Chapuys (implicitly reluctantly) to return the gesture to avoid breaching courtly protocol. For Warnicke, Anne behaves as protocol suggests she ought (she bows "gracefully") but does so in ignorance of the full political context (the fact that Chapuys has earlier refused to greet her), and thus exposes that ignorance and her isolated position at court to the watching crowd. In this account, Anne also provokes Chapuys' bow by turning toward him, again instigating the exchange. For Schofield and Bernard, by contrast, both actors seem implicitly awkward at the situation, and so perform the minimum of what is required of them, exchanging only the faintest of bows or merely nodding to each other, with neither notably taking the initiative in the exchange. Each scholar applies their own kinesic intelligence to the task of interpreting Chapuys' letter, inferring different kinds of bodily movement and various motives and outcomes: a diplomatic coup for Anne and Henry and an awkward moment for Chapuys himself, a personal humiliation for Anne alone, a difficult situation successfully navigated by all parties, or a necessary acknowledgment achieved with the minimum of fuss. The actions are thus either expansive and demonstrative or brief and minimal, the actors' bodies either gracefully theatrical or tense with stress, all of which is inferred from the bald statement that "reverences" were exchanged.

Is it possible to choose between these contrary interpretations? What did it mean to "reverence" someone in the early Tudor period? Could it encompass something as cursory as a nod or (very) faint bow? *The Oxford English Dictionary* offers the definition (acknowledged as "Obsolete"): "to greet (a person) with deep respect; to pay respect to (a person) by bowing, kneeling, etc.; to make obeisance to" (OED, reverence, *verb* 1.a. *transitive*). That "etc." might, perhaps, leave room for a mere nod alongside the other gestures listed, but the instances cited from the earlier sixteenth century suggest that something rather more fulsome, involving bowing or even kneeling, was indeed the norm. Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey* mentions someone having "most humbly reverenced him upon his knees" (Cavendish 111, spelling modernized), and John Palsgrave's *Lesclarcissement de la langue francoyse* (1530) offers the example "I reverence or do obeisance or honour to any other person, or make curtsey to him" (Palsgrave sig. cccxl(v)).[4] All of this suggests that, although Chapuys was later to tell Charles V that he neither kissed nor spoke to the queen at the time, the mutual gestures they exchanged went considerably further than curt nods or faint bows. Rather, Chapuys' account suggests that what happened was a carefully prepared encounter. For his part, Chapuys bowed as Anne began to pass, offering a courteous but conventional greeting of the kind he might offer to any woman or person of authority, and he did so first, of his own free will. This was, his wording implies, an acknowledgment, certainly, but hardly anything dramatic on its own terms. He is careful, in writing to Charles V, to avoid the implication that he exceeded his brief to show goodwill without accepting Henry's claims regarding the succession. Anne's response, however, was evidently more studied and elaborate and seemingly designed to gain the maximum symbolic capital from whatever the ambassador chose to do by way of acknowledging her.

Mindful of the sizeable crowd looking on, a good many of whom were there precisely to see how Anne and Chapuys would react to one another, Anne responded with a carefully choreographed series of gestures. *The Spanish Calendar*'s translation rather undersells the degree of (no doubt prearranged) interest in the encounter itself. Chapuys wrote, not that "many people flocked around the king, out of curiosity, and wishing no doubt to know what sort of a mien the concubine and I should put on," but that "when the king came to the offering, a great many people flocked, a section of them (*une partie*) to see what *miens* (literally 'what faces')" he

4 See also Burrow 2002, 20: "To 'reverence' someone in Middle English commonly meant to bow to them."

and Anne presented. It is not so clear from the French text that the king was the main attraction and Chapuys' encounter with Anne merely of secondary interest to the onlookers. Rather, it suggests that some at least had come primarily to witness the latter. And, as we have seen, as Anne passed through the chapel door, Chapuys courteously performed his bow to her as she began to pass. Rather than simply nodding in return and moving on, however, she responded in such a way as to create a moment of maximum visibility, in which the gesture would be witnessed and imprinted on the memories of those looking on. She entered the room, saw Chapuys' reverence, and then stopped and turned completely around to face him. He is careful to report that she turned completely around (*elle se retournast <u>du tout</u>* [my emphasis]) in order to deliver in response a reverence just like that which he had directed toward her (*conforme a celle que luy fiz*, *conforme* suggesting "just like," "in conformity with," an exact equivalent). Had he not bowed as she entered, she might, no doubt, have simply kept on walking. But, because he did bow, she ensured that everyone would register his gesture and appreciate its diplomatic significance by mirroring it exactly back to him through her own reverence. One does not stop and turn through 180 degrees to face someone standing behind a door merely to give them a nod. Anne's reverence was clearly a significant gesture. She wanted to ensure that what was happening was noticed and interpreted by the assembled courtly elite in a particular way: the representative of Europe's most powerful prince, who had hitherto been resolutely opposed to the Boleyn marriage and all that it stood for, had now finally, it seems, acknowledged Anne's existence and position as queen—he had not, of course, but her actions sought to give his reverence that implication.

Why does this matter? It mattered to Henry, to Anne, and to their court because, as we have seen, it was a crucial aspect of the diplomatic rapprochement toward which England and the Empire were working in the wake of Katherine of Aragon's death. It matters for the historian, in part at least, because of the evidence provided by this exchange of gestures that, as late as mid April 1536, Henry and his ministers were going to considerable lengths to engineer an imperial acknowledgment of Anne and of her position as Henry's queen. At this point, Henry's long-term dynastic ambitions were clearly predicated on cementing the idea that Anne was his wife and that their children, present and future, were the only legitimate heirs to his throne (Bernard 2010, 133–4; Lipscomb 2009, 74; Walker 2002, 9–14). Thus, the oft-repeated idea that Henry had determined to dispense with Anne as early as the winter of 1535–36 and more assuredly by the time of her miscarriage in early February 1536 is clearly mistaken. Anne was not at this point isolated and exposed at court, a dead woman walking; rather, she was playing a leading role in courtly politics on a matter of intense diplomatic concern. Whatever brought about Anne's arrest on multiple charges of adultery less than two weeks after this encounter at Greenwich, it was evidently not something that Henry knew about, or was planning, on April 18, at the point of Chapuys' very public reverence.[5]

That reverence was not, however, the only significant gesture that Chapuys was to witness and record that day. Indeed, the gestures that followed were arguably even more striking, and more politically significant. After the encounter in the chapel, the king and queen dined in her chamber with courtiers and other ambassadors. Chapuys had again excused himself and dined with a group of privy councilors in the presence chamber. His willingness to acknowledge Anne's position clearly went only so far. But, when Anne asked why he had not joined them, Henry replied that "there were good reasons for it" (Gayangos 1888, 93, item 43a). Anne had also spoken out, with the French envoy present, against Francis I's plans to attack Milan. And, when dinner was over, the king came to Chapuys in the presence chamber and continued in the affable way that he had begun earlier in the day. Evidently, the exchange of reverences had been well received, and the words spoken in Anne's chamber and Henry's subsequent actions were intended to convey this to Chapuys. If anything, indeed, Henry was still more effusive in his gestures of favor and intimacy at this second encounter. "He showed me," Chapuys wrote, "the same marked attention as in the morning." "[T]aking me by the hand, [he] conducted me to his private room, followed only by the high chancellor [Sir Thomas Audley] and Master Cromwell. Once inside, he took me apart to the window." The markers of favor here are obvious. Taking the ambassador by the hand suggests friendship and intimacy, especially if the two men were ungloved and made skin-to-skin contact; leading him into a more private room still more so, and, finally, separating him from the already select company to take him alone into the extreme privacy of a window bay (the most intimate space in the always crowded rooms of the royal court, where even the servants could not listen in) indicated the peak of privileged seclusion with the monarch. Chapuys was conspicuously being given the "most favored envoy" treatment.

In the privacy of the window, king and ambassador recapped the progress they had made thus far in their negotiations. Chapuys recalled the "many conferences" he had had with Cromwell and then formally laid out the four principal points on which Charles wished to base a treaty, doing so, he later assured Charles, "as mildly and courteously as possible," so as not to irritate or offend the king. Henry listened without interruption, "calmly

5 For the widely held notion that Anne's fall was long planned and carefully engineered, see, for example, Schofield 2011, 171ff. For contrary views, see Walker 2002, *passim*; Lipscomb, 2009, 72–76.

and without giving the least sign of impatience"—a rare occurrence. Only when Chapuys observed that Charles's goodwill could be judged by the fact that he had, when dealing with Francis I, waived any claims to the duchy of Burgundy, "which he took to be an English possession" rather than belonging to those who were currently invading Savoy and Milan, did Henry intervene. Disconcertingly, he "burst out laughing" and said that Milan belonged to Francis I, along with the duchy of Burgundy, as Charles had accepted in the Treaty of Cambrai. No doubt somewhat startled, Chapuys explained that Henry had been misinformed about the terms of recent treaties (an argument that Cromwell later told him that Henry had subsequently accepted). But the intervention prompted Chapuys to suspect that things might not be going quite as smoothly as he had been led to believe and that "the affection this king professes to have for your majesty is neither sincere nor disinterested." Henry observed pointedly that he would fulfill any treaty obligations that he had undertaken punctiliously, much better indeed "than many other princes had done with respect to himself" but would otherwise "naturally lean to the side of those who should show him the greater affection."

The king then summoned Audley and Cromwell, and asked Chapuys to repeat to them what he had said to him, which he did. Then Henry and his ministers conferred privately in the window bay while the ambassador was led away to talk with Sir Edward Seymour. As he and the latter exchanged pleasantries, however, Chapuys kept his eyes discreetly fixed on what was evidently a rapidly developing argument going on between Henry and Cromwell in the window recess. There was an altercation, and angry words seemed to be passing between the king and Cromwell, for after a considerable interval of time the latter seemed to end the conversation himself, and came out of the embrasure of the window in which the king was standing, on the excuse that he was so thirsty that he could no longer continue, but "this really was from sheer annoyance," for he came away "grumbling" ("*grondissant*") and went to sit on a chest out of the king's sight, and asked for something to drink.[6]

6 The original French reads: "*Ayant tousiours loyel aux mynes du d[ict] roy et ceula questoient avec luy, et la y eust de la dispute et courroux assez aigre comme il sembloit entre le d[ict] roy et Cremuel, et apres ung grand espace de temps le d[ict] Cremuel recomplant et grondissant se part du conclave de la fenestre on estoit le d[ict] roy prenant excuse qu'il estoit faict altere qu'il n'en pouvoit plus, comme aussi il l'estoit vrayement et de pour enuyt et se aller asseoir sur ung coffre hors de laspet du d[ict] roy, et la se fait apporter a boyre*" (National Archives, PRO 31/18/2/2, 67). The English translation (Gayangos 1888, 43a p. 95) seems to mis-transcribe Chapuys' observation that Cromwell left the window space "*recomplant et grondissant*" ("ending [the conversation] and grumbling") as the nonce phrase "*romphant et grandissant*," and so understandably elides it in the translation.

For Cromwell to effectively dismiss himself from the king's presence and leave grumbling was shocking enough, but worse was to follow:

> Shortly after, the king came out of the recess, whether to approach the place where I was or to look for Cromwell I cannot say, but the fact is that he came up to me and said that the matters proposed were so important that, unless I wrote them down, it would be impossible for him to communicate them to his privy council and make an answer thereon.[7]

What had happened to prompt Henry to follow Cromwell to where he and Chapuys were standing? Evidently, Henry had suddenly taken exception to something in the way that the discussion had been proceeding and suspected bad faith on the part of the emperor, and this, in turn, had aroused memories of what he saw as previous injustices and slights received at Charles's hands. Perhaps the extravagance of the suggestion that Burgundy was actually English had suggested that Henry was being fed encouraging platitudes rather than serious proposals. He had thus suddenly backtracked on his overtures to Chapuys and begun to lambast Cromwell in particular for pushing him into the alliance, and Cromwell had walked away, grumbling to himself about the treatment. The secretary would later meet Chapuys on the way back to London and complain about Henry's behavior, evidently "so affected that he could hardly say one word." "Whoever trusts in the words of princes," he lamented, "who one day say one thing and on the next retract it, relies on them, or expects the fulfilment of their promises, is not a wise man" (Gayangos 1888, 99, item 43a).

Chapuys responded passionately to Henry's suggestion that he put his proposals in writing. This was, again, as much as to imply that his own word, and that of his emperor could not be relied upon. But Henry was evidently working himself up into something of a tirade against perceived injustices previously received from the emperor, and, at least by implication, mistreatment from his own advisors too. He proceeded "from one thing to another" in a "vague, confused and rather passionate" response to the four points at issue (Gayangos 1888, 95–6, item 43a). Charles should leave his relationship with the papacy to him. Should Henry wish to negotiate with Rome, "he had plenty of means at hand and friends who would help him thereto, without having recourse to Your Majesty's intercession." Similarly, Princess Mary was his daughter, and "accordingly as she was obedient or disobedient he would treat her; nobody had anything to do

7 Gayangos 1888, 43a p. 95, translating National Archives, PRO 31/18/2/2, 67.

with that" (Gayangos 1888, 43a p.96). On the matter of Savoy and Milan, the king reiterated that he would fulfill any existing treaty obligations. But then a still more extraordinary outburst followed. He was not, he said,

> at all inclined to break through promises he had or might have made, or refuse his friendship to those who desired it, provided it were on convenient terms; but . . . he was no longer a child to be whipped in the first instance and then caressed and petted, and urged to come back and called all manner of sweet names. Saying which, and in order to show me practically what he meant, the king began to play with his fingers on his knees, and do as people who want to appease and call back a crying child. [*Et en ce disant le d[ict] roy pour monstrer quil estoit praticque pour faire commenca jouer des doiz sur ses genolz, et faire comme lon rappelle et rappaise les enfans*.]
>
> (Gayangos 1888, 43a p.96, original French from National Archives, PRO 31/18/2/2, 68)

Before asking for help from one who had received injury, he said, it was necessary that the past should be acknowledged. It was not for him to seek Charles's friendship but rather the reverse. Charles ought to write to him, apologizing for past ingratitude and requesting forgiveness, or at least to indicate that past injustices should be put behind them. Charles would not be emperor now, after all, and would not peacefully enjoy his Spanish kingdoms, had it not been for Henry's support, such things Charles had quickly forgotten when he forsook Henry and "tried to have him declared contumacious by Pope Clement, and deprived of his kingdom" (Gayangos 1888, 96–7, item 43a). While Henry ranted, Audley and Cromwell stood and watched, "looking sad and dejected," and, "whatever signs the king made encouraging them . . . to support his reasoning and applaud his argument, neither of them said three words to the purpose" (Gayangos 1888, 98, item 43a).

For a prince to be so animated, to pursue a social "inferior" (Cromwell) into another part of a room, and to stoop to mimicry, especially mimicry of so "low" a subject as a parent rebuking and then attempting to appease a child, would have been shocking to elite Tudor observers. And Chapuys' account duly registers that shock. It is little wonder that Audley and Cromwell stood so transfixed and dumbstruck, unsure how to react. The form as well as the content of their master's declarations must have dismayed them. The traditional handbooks of rhetoric and noble deportment cautioned consistently against both energetic gesturing and mimicry alike. Quintilian described most gesticulation as coarse and vulgar, and stressed especially that speakers should avoid at all costs gestures which indicate things through mimicry. And gesturing agitatedly with the hands held either above eye level or below the waist was completely unacceptable (Graf 1991, 41 and 46–7). Henry's playing with his fingers on his knees to simulate a parent addressing a child clearly failed that test on all fronts, as did the implication that Chapuys was so dull-witted as to need a mime to indicate to him what was meant.

The sudden and unheralded switch from gestures of high formality and coded symbolism (the king returns a bow swiftly, his doffed cap in hand; he moves across a public room to take Chapuys by the hand to lead him into steadily more secluded and intimate spaces) to seemingly unpremeditated movement and gesticulation and almost pantomimic mimicry must have been unsettling, and the ambassador's report suggests his evident surprise at Henry's actions. Yet, as an accomplished people-watcher, mindful of the significance of the king's behavior for the outcome of his mission, Chapuys nonetheless strove to capture it, seeking the correct form of words to convey to his imperial reader exactly what Henry had done and the tone of voice he employed as he did so. Just as he had been careful to capture the precise degree of formal acknowledgement employed by Anne earlier (the fact that she had turned completely around to face him, even though he was partly hidden behind the door), he was now careful to describe Henry's seemingly spontaneous, undiplomatic gestures and angry words however wild and random they seemed. For the king's very loss of decorum and self-control was itself important political data to be reported back to the emperor.

What, then, did Chapuys make of Henry's outburst, and what can the historian draw from his account? Of course, all of this could have been carefully planned beforehand. Henry's apparent anger could itself have been a performance, designed to throw Chapuys off-guard and to suggest that Henry was not as desperate for an alliance as Cromwell might have implied, and so his agreement to Charles's demands should not be assumed.[8] The bluster and mimicry could have been as carefully modulated as the earlier condescension of the doffed hat and the offered hand, and designed to further the same ends. Indeed, the very indecorum and emotionality of the royal outburst might itself have conveyed a diplomatic message. Given that the Spanish were traditionally viewed as restrained in their public gestures, and temperamentally inclined to keep their emotions in check, while the French were considered second only to the Italians in their tendency to displays of feeling and gesticulation (Burke 1991, 78), might Henry's performance before Chapuys have been intended to signal a natural predilection for French manners and style as a counterweight

8 Schofield 2011, 175, suggests precisely that Henry was playing Chapuys off against the French ambassador at this point, first offering and then seeming to shun the prospect of an alliance to extract the best terms.

to Cromwell's stated pro-Spanish sympathies? Was Henry, that is, being deliberately very "French" in his behavior, just as he was expressing very French opinions about the rightful claim to Savoy and Milan, with the aim of disconcerting Chapuys? This is, of course, a possibility, but, if so, Chapuys does not seem to have read it that way. Rather, he appears to have interpreted Henry's angry gestures as genuine, and genuinely rather unhinged, and so more likely to reveal Henry's true feelings and character. And Cromwell also seems to have shared that interpretation. When asked later what he thought had caused "the radical change in the king's mind, he [Cromwell] answered that he did not know in the least, nor had the king said anything to enable him to form a conjecture. On the contrary, he [Henry] had been much pleased with the modest terms" in which Chapuys had addressed him and had been resolutely hostile to the French ambassador the previous day (Gayangos 1888, 99, item 43a). Both men were clearly blindsided and confused by Henry's dramatic change of attitude, as the secretary's highly discourteous disengagement from his discussion with the king and very visible grumbling at the time would seem to confirm.

Historians have tended to dismiss Henry's actions as a tantrum, evidence of his own emotional and political volatility, and taken it no further. But the very care with which Chapuys recounts the incident suggests that he saw it as warranting greater attention. And it does seem to invite closer scrutiny. Indeed, a potential conflict in Henry's own emotional state is suggested by those oddly displaced performative gestures, playing with his fingers on his knees in the manner of a parent summoning a wayward or recalcitrant child. Henry mimics the actions and calls of the parent, which is the role he ascribes to Chapuys and the emperor, who allegedly seek one moment to chastise him, the next to appease him. Where is Henry himself in this scenario? He is presumably the absent child to whom his own parodic gesture is aimed. The king thus mocks Chapuys by seeking to parody *his* actions, or those of the absent emperor for whom he speaks. But the pantomime succeeds only in making Henry himself appear more extreme, more childish, and less powerful than the supposed adults at whom the performance is aimed—indeed, precisely the kind of person who might need to be treated in the way he parodies. There is a convoluted, self-defeating quality to the action too. Henry performs a loving gesture (calling to appease a troubled child), but does so *angrily*, and the mismatch between the action mimicked and the dynamics of its execution must have been as evident in the tonicity and tempo of his gestures as it was in the tone of his voice.[9] This is all very odd, and evidently struck Chapuys as odd too, indicative of what he and Cromwell agreed was the "strange nature" of

9 For the crucial importance of the *dynamics* of gestures, see Bolens 2021.

Henry's character (Gayangos 1888, 99, item 43a). And in the short term, at least, it effectively undid all the carefully choreographed gestural diplomacy undertaken earlier in the day. Like Chapuys and Cromwell, it is difficult for the historian not to respond with a degree of incomprehension at so strange a combination of movements and statements.

3.4 Conclusion

In the work of Guillemette Bolens and others, one finds compelling accounts of the multiplicity of ways in which writers of fiction seek to cue perceptual simulations in their readers through their depictions of gesture, posture, and expression (Bolens 2012; Bolens 2021; Cave 2016). In this chapter, I have examined the rather different cases of how one gifted letter writer, Eustace Chapuys, used words to describe the movements, gestures, and interactions he witnessed in the world around him. Such events, unlike those depicted in fiction, were not designed *ab initio* by an author to indicate significant truths about a character's motivations, intentions, or character. Rather, they were generated by their performers, at times consciously, to signal favor or disfavor and suggest courtesy toward, or dissatisfaction with, the individuals or groups toward whom they were aimed. At other times, they were generated seemingly spontaneously in response to external stimuli. In each case, the modern reader witnesses them through the words of Chapuys, a writer who was himself a reader of the world around him, and we seek to infer from his account how he interpreted the actions of those he was paid to observe and report on.

When a character in a novel glances askance at another character, coughs before speaking, or plays subtly with their toe on the floor after a period of prolonged prostration, it can be assumed that these are significant actions.[10] The all-knowing author has put these actions into the narrative as cues for the discerning reader to decode and thereby enrich their reading experience. It is thus our task as readers to respond to these clues and interpret them, mindful of the perceptual simulations they cue in us. With Chapuys' letters, our task is similar, but also different in important ways. We are reading the words of an observer who is witnessing a world that is beyond his immediate control and to a degree opaque to him, a world about which he, like us, is only partially and imperfectly informed and reliant on his own kinesic intelligence for guidance.[11] He is thus always a potentially unreliable narrator, trying to make sense of what he sees, and

10 For the last example, see Bolens' chapter, "Sterne: The Naturalness of a Toe Movement" in Bolens 2021, 51–62.

11 Bolens 2012 and 2021 are the foundational studies for the significance of kinesic intelligence in textual analysis.

to convey that sense to his correspondents in another realm and another culture, and thus also, unwittingly, to us.

In this scenario, we cannot be quite so certain that the gestures Chapuys describes are inevitably so revealing of the character and intentions of those who perform them. Sometimes a cough is just a cough, a look just a look. We have to take on trust that the fact that Chapuys describes them indicates that *he* felt them to be significant and base our interpretation on that fact. But he does not always tell us *why* he thought them significant, either because he thought them so familiar a part of the contemporary cultural repertoire as to require no commentary (for example, being taken into a window space obviously signals a privilege and a desire for greater privacy, rather than, say, a desire to see someone in better light), or because he was not himself certain what they meant, but thought them sufficiently striking or suggestive to warrant description anyway. Either way, the modern scholar must try to decode at second hand the nature and significance of the interactions Chapuys describes, using those same tools of kinesic intelligence and perceptual simulation and symbolic and psychological analysis explored throughout this volume. Historians do, as we have seen, readily deploy kinesic intelligence when reading the documents they study (responding to Chapuys' mention of a "reverence" as indicating variously a bow, the faintest of bows, or a nod of the head is, for example, a kinesic judgment), albeit they do not always openly acknowledge that this is what they are doing. To do so and thus add kinesic intelligence to the toolkit of skills regarded as fundamental to the work of the historian, would offer a truer account of what it is we do when we read the sources on which we work. All of this stands as a graphic demonstration of the truth of Thomas More's observation that a king's gestures, however apparently fond or familiar, should not be relied upon as indications of deep or abiding truths, but must be read in context, mindful of both what the prince might have wanted to convey by them and what they might convey, regardless of his own intentions. Kinesic intelligence and perceptual simulation, More might have concluded (had he known those terms), were crucial aspects of the courtier's art where kings' games are concerned, and were, when deployed with awareness of their political context, essential for survival in the precarious world of the Tudor court.

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4 Kinesic intelligence in common law reasoning

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Introduction

Examining kinesic intelligence involves investigating the role played by the cognitive processing ('simulation') of bodily postures, gestures, and movements. This includes the ability to construct language that invites readers or listeners to simulate kinesically, as well as the simulation process itself. As several cognitive scientists, literary theorists, and historians have demonstrated, such simulation is a pervasive aspect of human cognition (Bolens 2012; Cave 2016; Chesters and Banks 2017). Crucially, exercising kinesic intelligence has been shown to play a vital role in linguistic communication (both verbal and written) across texts of all kinds, including those at a high level of abstraction, such as religious and philosophical texts (Bolens 2012). The so-called "high-level" process of abstraction, it transpires, is highly dependent on so-called "low-level" forms of knowing, that is, embodied, sensory, and emotional knowledge. Texts of all kinds often explicitly invite us to rehearse, in our imagination, the postures, gestures, and movements of bodies. Indeed, some of the most important effects of writing—those that make it most emotionally engaging but also simultaneously conceptually generative—are achieved through such invitations to simulate kinesically that are issued to the reader.

It may be surprising, at first glance, to recognize that law is made, in part, kinesically. However, the closer one looks, the more one appreciates the extent to which legal practice is replete with such kinesis, including a language that is characterized by descriptions of bodies performing certain actions in certain spaces, bodies engaging with material things, and bodies interacting with other bodies. Indeed, if one reads common law cases with a view to looking out for the use of kinesic language and its invitations to simulate kinesically, then many examples of prominent and prevalent kinesis emerge, as well as many recurring kinesic themes or commonplaces—that is, particular kinds of gestures, postures, or

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movements that are frequently repeated and that are associated with certain methods, arguments, concepts, attitudes, or dispositions.

There are, in fact, many kinesic legalities: both legal methods and substantive legal principles are often ushered in through particular postures, gestures, movements, or sequences of such bodily actions in certain kinesic scenes, which echo across time and which are variously transformed by subsequent generations. Many legal ideas and concepts have kinesic profiles (some through figural forms, such as the actions of the reasonable person) and are thus experimented with, thought about, challenged, changed, or extended via the exercise of kinesic intelligence. The history of the devices of legal argumentation and reasoning arguably have roots in bodily postures, gestures, and movements. For example, the notion of *stasis*—or the issue in a case—comes from the posture a boxer adopts, and one can trace the kinesic profiles of many different types of argument (e.g., metaphorical argument involves a carrying over of something from one domain to another).

Furthermore, the very idea of legal intelligence, as articulated in various times and places, has kinesic resonance—for example, the ancient Greek notion of *metis* (translated as "cunning intelligence": see Detienne and Vernant 1991) is associated with swift movement, and one can trace this legacy through the ages, from the orator's need for mental agility and dexterity to the contemporary advocate, who is best when "quick and light on their feet." The advocate, it turns out, like other good storytellers (such as Odysseus) needs to be a shapeshifting, quick-turning, and witty tongue-athlete (Hawhee 2004). Other legal virtues, such as those associated with being a good legislator or judge, also have kinesic profiles and rich, complex embodied histories. For example, a judge's intelligence is often equated with kinesically expressed skills, such as the delicate balancing of rights or values, and there is a rich visual tradition (in paintings hung on the walls of courtrooms, in emblems, and in frontispieces of books, to mention but a few relevant genres) of representing good and bad judges in certain postures (e.g., sitting rather than standing, thereby suggesting a more thoughtful judgment) and with certain embodied features (e.g., being blindfolded) (see Jay 1996). In many ways, this rich visual tradition of depicting the bodies of good and bad advocates, judges, and legislators is very much part of the philosophical and practical debate concerning the virtues and vices of advocacy, judgment, and legislation.

It would be a mistake to neglect the broader history of the legal body and more direct examples of how gesturing, posturing, or moving one's body had immediate legal consequences—for example, contractual agreements or the manumission of slaves in Roman law were initiated and signaled through particular ritualistic bodily shapes and interactions, and the practice of transferring property in customary law was long secured by literally walking the bounds of a property (Hibbits 1992; Ingram 2021). Such practices arise, in part, as a result of a culture being primarily oral, gestural, and visual, with limited literacy among the wider population. However, these practices do not dissipate when literacy becomes more widespread (Clanchy 1993); on the contrary, the practices themselves, and thereafter echoes of them in the form of embodied images and kinesic commonplaces, persist and infuse legal thought and doctrine.

Despite the richness of these historical echoes and links, the exercise of kinesic intelligence has largely remained invisible in legal scholarship and it remains generally unacknowledged as a crucial factor in the life of the law (but see, however, Del Mar 2020; Johnson 2018; Spolsky 2015; Winter 2001). My aim in this chapter is to offer useful resources for reversing this trend by offering one historical example and one contemporary example in which kinesic intelligence plays a central role. The historical example centers on one of the most important moments in the history of equity within the common law: Edmund Plowden's *Commentaries* (published in the 1570s), and his use of variable and intensely kinesic imagery to argue for the importance of equitable statutory interpretation in common law courts, which proved highly influential. The contemporary example focuses on a case that all students receiving a common law education read as part of a standard course on contract law—a case that is important in the law of mistake (i.e., one of the grounds for making an otherwise valid contract void). This second example focuses on the use of kinesic intelligence to craft facts in the particular case in question and thus also on the process by which a decision was justified in the case, with repercussions for the broader development of the law in this area.

4.1 Making equity kinesically

The famous case of *Eyston v Studd*, heard by the Common Bench in 1573, concerned a dispute over real property (for a discussion of this case, see Behrens 1999). Interestingly, the key issue at stake in this case was whether a woman could dispose of her property as she saw fit or whether, as in the circumstances of this case, a statute (11.H.7.) constrained what she could do. Margaret was the original owner of a piece of land. Upon marriage to William and seeking to strengthen his interest in the property, Margaret arranged what was called a "fine," which involved transferring the property to another—in this case, a man called Richard—whereupon he then transferred it back to both Margaret and William, with certain conditions attached. This "fine" or "transfer" effectively protected William's interest and, crucially, secured their children's inheritance claim to the property. In due course, Margaret and William had a son, John, who, in accordance with the "fine," stood to inherit the property. However, William died shortly after and Margaret decided to remarry—as it happens, to Richard, the man who had been involved in that first "fine." Margaret and Richard subsequently had three children and decided that they wanted their children rather than John (Margaret's son from her marriage to William) to inherit the property. Therefore, they executed a second "fine," and thus by a transfer (as with the first fine) secured their three children's claim to inherit the property ahead of John. They then leased the property to a man called Studd. John was outraged by this and entered the property, leasing it to a different man (Eyston). The case name derives from these two lessees—Eyston and Studd—whose relative rights as lessees depended on who owned the property: Richard or Margaret—who contested John's right to enter the property—or John.

This issue, in turn, depended on how one interpreted the statute. John, in entering the property and arranging Eyston's lease, had relied on the statute, which indicated that in situations where a woman disinherits her heir(s) through the execution of "covin" (i.e., something, in this case, like the second "fine"), the heir had the right to enter and claim the property. Strictly speaking, John was right: Margaret and Richard's second fine constituted "covin" and thus fell within the rule in the statute. However, Margaret argued that the statute's purpose was to protect an heir to property originally owned by a man—that is, to prevent widows (after their husbands' deaths) from disposing of their late husbands' property in ways they (presumably) would not have wanted (i.e., in ways that disinherited their children). However, this case, Margaret argued, was different: the property had been hers from the outset, and the first "fine" was simply an attempt to strengthen her first husband's interest in it. It was not the purpose of the statute to control what she, as the original owner of the property, could do with her property; rather, its purpose was to protect heirs' inheritance of property originally owned by a man. Margaret could, she argued, do what she wished with the property, as it was hers to begin with.

The Court agreed with Margaret, saying—as Plowden reported—that

> . . . the Intent of the Statute 11.H.7. was to restrain Women, who had Jointures which proceeded originally from their Husbands or from the Ancestors of their Husbands, from disinheriting or doing Injury to the Heirs of their Husbands. But in the principal Case there was no Jointure made to the Wife by William,

precisely because the property had belonged to Margaret in the first place (Plowden 1816, 464).

This case was made famous by its inclusion in the *Commentaries* of Edmund Plowden (1518–1585). Plowden's *Commentaries* are perhaps best known for their employment of the distinction between the monarch's natural and political bodies—the "king's two bodies"—which was vital in arguments over the succession and related rights to the Crown at the time (Kantorowicz 1957). However, they are also highly significant concerning the development of equitable statutory interpretation within the common law courts. Although equity was formally exercised by the Lord Chancellor in the Chancery Courts, traditionally (according to the orthodox view) the Common Law courts—prior to the sixteenth century—did not resort to equity, applying the law strictly, no matter what the outcome. In reality, common law practice included some equitable aspects prior to the sixteenth century (Brand 2013), and common lawyers also called for the more explicit infusion of equity into the common law, most notably Thomas More (Mazour-Matusevich 2017). Christopher St Germain (1460–1540) made a significant contribution to the debate in the sixteenth century with his *Dialogue of Doctor and Student* (1523), which argued for a rapprochement between the values of equity (mercy, justice, and compromise) and the values of the common law (predictability, consistency, and stability) within the practice of the common law courts (Ibbetson 2013). This issue of the relationship between equity and the common law became all the more pressing during the reign of Henry VIII (1491–1547), who engaged in frequent legislation, resulting in more cases relying on judges' interpretations. The place of equity in relation to the common law and in relation to judgment more broadly was one of the period's most vibrant and complex debates, entangling law, religion, and literature, with long-lasting cultural and political effects (Fortier 2015; Watt 2009).

Plowden's report of this case and his commentary on it, first published in 1571 and subsequently revised with the addition of new cases, thus entered what was a politically fraught and delicate debate. To make matters even more delicate, by this time, Plowden had already fallen out of monarchical favor: as a Catholic, he had enjoyed a successful career during the reign of Mary I, even being called at one time to the prestigious office of serjeant-at-law in October 1558. However, following Mary's death and the succession of Elizabeth I, his fortunes changed: Queen Elizabeth did not renew his call to be a serjeant, and so he never progressed any further through the ranks (it was from the pool of serjeants that judges sitting in the common law courts were selected). Thus, it might be said that much was at stake for him in his *Commentaries*, as Plowden conceived of them, both politically and personally. Could the common law courts engage in equitable interpretation and reasoning regarding its purpose, thereby exercising considerable power and oversight over monarchical legislation? On what basis could this be a legitimate exercise of judicial power, particularly given that it was being undertaken by a Catholic lawyer who had fallen out of favor after the succession of Elizabeth I?

It should also be remembered that Plowden's *Commentaries* are unique and highly significant in the development of the common law, as the first example of a different approach to recording the debates and reasoning in common law courts, replacing the older forms of the Yearbooks, which recorded the pleading dialogues (but not the reasoning of the Court) and which included Plowden's own commentary (distinguished from the report by the use of italics). These represent the earliest common law case reports—a form that was subsequently popularized by Sir Edward Coke in the name of the legitimate exercise of judicial independence, as set against the arbitrary will of King James VI/I (see Helgerson 1992).

The novelty of the *Commentaries* is important to bear in mind, particularly the absence of any clear precedents for the tone or style that such a reporter or commentator should adopt. Indeed, a fascinating history waits to be told as regards Plowden's potential sources of inspiration for such a form (e.g., the practice of essay writing in France is a possibility). Certainly, Plowden's comments on the case are expressed as his own personal perspective on the merits of the Court's decision and reasoning. Again, it is noteworthy that Plowden did not hide his voice but rather flagged it precisely as his own (he notes explicitly in the margins where his own commentary begins). It is also significant that Plowden often refers explicitly to the "Reader" and calls attention to what they should observe or read with particular care.

In the case of *Eyston v Studd*, Plowden approved of the Court's approach. His commentary runs to over three full pages and contains abundant remarkable kinesic imagery. Plowden recognized that he had to be persuasive—as noted above, the issue was controversial, particularly in light of his circumstances, and thus advocacy for equitable interpretation in the common law courts required considerable rhetorical support. Plowden was obliged to be innovative and effective in his use of language to win the reader over to his endorsement of the Court's approach. He accomplished this, in part, by deploying highly kinesic language, thus encouraging his readers to simulate kinesically. As such, I argue here that kinesic simulation played a critical role in the development of equity within—and as part of—common law reasoning.

Plowden begins with an image that had a rich biblical genealogy and resonance but that he articulates in his own voice, directly addressing the reader (in the second person):

> . . . it is not the Words of the Law but the internal sense of it that makes the Law (like all others) consists of two Parts, viz. of Body and Soul, the Letter of the Law is the Body of the Law, and the Sense and Reason of the Law is the Soul of the Law . . . And the Law may be resembled to a Nut, which has a shell and a Kernel within, the Letter of the Law

> represents the Shell, and the Sense of it the Kernel, and as you will be no better for the Nut if you make Use only of the Shell, so you will receive no Benefit by the Law, if you rely only upon the Letter, and as the Fruit and Profit of the Nut lies in the Kernel, and not in the Shell, so the Fruit and Profit of the Law consists in the Sense more than in the Letter. And it often happens that when you know the Letter, you know not the Sense, for sometimes the Sense is more confined and contracted than the Letter, and sometimes it is more large and extensive.
>
> (Plowden 1816, 465)

This breathless passage plunges the reader directly into the analogy of the kernel and the shell, representing the spirit and letter of the law (the other analogy, which is mentioned initially but drops slightly from view thereafter, is between the body and the letter of the law and the soul and the spirit of the law). The reader is invited to simulate the absurdity of relying exclusively on the shell of a nut: one cannot eat the shell, and one would derive no nourishment or pleasure from such an exercise. Indeed, the shell is an obstacle to reaching the "benefit" of the fruit—the kernel within. The image is, in fact, quite radical in that respect: the words of the statute, being likened to the shell of a nut, are rendered very much secondary, their role rendered entirely subservient to the protection of the spirit—the kernel, or fruit, that is the nut. Of further note is the association of the "sense"—that kernel, the benefit—of the statute with the power of equity to either contract or expand its meaning; equity itself, it seems, is a kind of movement that renders smaller or larger the meaning of a certain set of words. The power of this imagery is only heightened by choice of direct address to the reader, thereby inviting them directly to engage in the process of simulating kinesically, both peeling away the shell and eating the nut, as well as either contracting or expanding meaning. It may also be significant that the kinesic imagery does not quite add up: it is difficult to see, for instance, how expansion or contraction might relate to the imagery of the shell and the kernel. The reader, then, must engage substantially in kinesic simulation, progressing from one kind of movement to another to make kinesic sense of the passage.

Plowden swiftly follows this image with another, forging a relationship between that image and the new one. Referring to the Aristotelian notion of "epichaia" (sic), as an "exception to the generality of the text of the statute law" (Plowden 1816, 465), Plowden quotes explicitly from Aristotle to the effect that "Experience shows us that no Law-makers can foresee all things which may happen," and, therefore,

> From whence the Reader may observe how convenient a Thing this Equity is, and the wise Judges of our Law deserve great Commendation

> for having made Use of it where the Words of the Law are rigorous, for thereby they have softened the Severity of the Text, and have made the Law tolerable.
>
> (Plowden 1816, 466)

This itself is a kinesic image, associating equity with a softening of something otherwise hard, inflexible, and—by implication here—intolerable. Having quoted Aristotle, Plowden recalls the image of the nut, bringing it in relation to Aristotle's imaginary exercise of asking the legislator a question:

> So that a man ought not to rely upon the Letter only . . . but he ought to rely upon the Sense, and as the Kernel is the Fruit of the Nut, so the Sense is the Fruit of the Statute. And in order to form a Judgement when the Letter of a Statute is restrained, and when enlarged, by Equity, it is a good Way, when you peruse a Statute, to suppose that the Law-maker is present, and that you have asked him the Question you want to know touching the Equity, then you must give yourself such an Answer as you imagine he would have done, if he had been present. As for Example, in the Case before mentioned where the Strangers Scale the Walls, and defend the City, suppose the Law-maker to be present with you, and in your own Mind put this Question to him, Shall the Strangers be put to Death? Then give yourself the same Answer which you imagine he, being an upright and reasonable Man, would have given, and you will find that he would have said "they shall not be put to death."
>
> (Plowden 1816, 467)

I shall return to Plowden's suggested imaginary conversation with an "upright and reasonable" legislator. First, however, let us dwell momentarily on the example offered here—that of strangers scaling a city's walls. Plowden claims that he took this example from "Geraldus a Odo, who wrote a Commentary upon Aristotle" (466). Geraldis Odonis, or Geraldus (1285–1349), was a French Franciscan friar, whose commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* (entitled *Sententia et Expositio cum quaestionibus super libros Ethicorum Aristotelis*, 1330?) was among the most popular and influential of commentaries on Aristotle, not only in the fourteenth century but considerably beyond (in the fifteenth century, for instance, Geraldus was ranked alongside Buridan and Aquinas as exemplary and authoritative commentators on Aristotle). In his comment, Plowden quotes him as follows:

> Lex est in quadam civitate quod peregrini muros civitatis ascendentes capite puniantur, contingit autem quod peregrini innocenter tranfuentes

> per illam civitatem audiverunt clamorem quod hostes contra civitatem repente irruerunt, qui peregrini promptiores quam cives muros ascenderunt, et urbem defendentes salvaverunt; nunc ergo quid juris? Utrum mori dabeant ficut lex dicit? Respondit Epichaia quod non, quia contra jus naturale est reddere malum pro bono, nec legislator, si praefens, suisset, reos dixisset.
>
> (Plowden 1816, 466)

> There is a law in a certain city that strangers climbing the walls of the city should be beheaded, but it happens that strangers innocently passing through that city heard a cry that the hordes [the enemy] suddenly rushed against the city, and the strangers climbed the walls faster than the citizens, and saved the city by defending it. Now then, what is the law? Should they die as the law says? Epichaia answered that no, because it is contrary to natural law to return evil for good, nor would the legislator, if he had been presiding, have found them guilty.

Here, Geraldus casts Equity as the figure to whom one addresses questions, imagining the legislator presiding (presumably acting as a judge) as an alternative scene. Although the scene in Geraldus' example does not involve persons being locked out of a city, the image of strangers—who are, in a sense, locked out, for they are not citizens of the city—scaling walls echoes another set of examples in which such imagery (of being locked out) is highly explicit and prevalent. In St Germain's *Doctor and Student*, with which Plowden was surely familiar, the Doctor, in Chapter 16, on "Equity," gives the Student the following example:

> Also if a law were made in a city, that no man under the pain of death should open the gates of the city before the sun-rising; yet if the citizens before that hour flying from their enemies, come to the gates of the city, and one for saving of the citizens opens the gates before the hour appointed by the law, he offends not the law, for that case is excepted from the said general law by equity, as is said before. And so it appears that equity rather follows the intent of the law, than the words of the law. And I suppose that there be in like wise some like equities grounded on the general rules of the law of the realm.
>
> (St Germain 1886, 45)

Here, persons (in this case, citizens) are explicitly locked outside the citadel and thus cannot avail of the safety provided by the city walls. The experience is one that readers would have easily been able to simulate: being locked out because the gate closed at some arbitrary hour. Should these citizens, arriving late, be left to be slaughtered by the enemy? The imagery is not only kinesic but also highly emotionally charged: one is invited to infer that of course one would open the gate and save these citizens' lives. Indeed, the very act of opening the gates is equated to interpreting the law equitably.

Interestingly, moreover, such images—of persons being locked out and experiencing both kinesic frustration and emotional valance (clearly associated with something negative and to be avoided)—also appear in a later report, in which Plowden returns to the task of arguing (once again, kinesically) in favor of equitable interpretation by common law courts. In this case, *Nichols v Nichols*, also adjudicated by the Common Bench (in 1576), a similar problem arose as to how a piece of legislation should be interpreted. The details of this case need not detain us, but in a striking passage, Plowden offers the following image:

> . . . to take away is contrary to Reason and Justice, for which Cause every reasonable Man will extend the word (Right) to have every Thing which one has or may have of, in, or out of Land. And if this Question had been put to the Makers of the Act of Attainder, Did you intend to save the Condition of Wright the Lessee, who was innocent of the Crime of Treasons, or to take it away? They would certainly have answered, God forbid that we should take it away. And if it had been further asked of them, Did you intend that it should be saved in the Word (Right)? They would have answered, Yes . . . he that flicks to the letter, sticks to the Outside of the Law, and cannot enter into the inward Sense and Spirit of it, for Want of the Application of Reason, and such Person is pretty much in the same Situation with him who is commanded to enter into a House, and is obliged to stand without, knocking at the Door, and can't enter in, because he has not the Key to open the Lock of the House-door, for Reason is the Key which pierces and opens the Sense of obscure Words.
>
> (Plowden 1816, 487–8)

In this extraordinary passage, in which Plowden employs and illustrates his method (of asking the upright and reasonable legislator a question, or, indeed, a series of questions), the kinesic imagery is prevalent and potent. Once again, persons not versed in equity find themselves in the kinesically frustrating and exasperating—if not also comical—situation of being locked out of their homes. Here, the spirit of the legislation is equated with the inner sanctum of a house, and reason—or equity—is the key required to unlock it. Equitable interpretation is configured as a kind of kinesic relief or release and certainly something that makes kinesic sense: equity is that which solves a kinesic problem, enabling one to enter a house that is otherwise locked (in the above examples, which are in a more tragic register, kinesic release is offered by saving the lives of others through some movement, e.g., opening the city gates).

In this passage, Plowden frames equity as something that is kinesically attractive and its opposite as something kinesically frustrating or nonsensical. Indeed, in many respects, the imagery is comic, and we know from the work of Bolens (2021) just how closely kinesis relates to comedy: comedy often highlights and heightens awareness of kinesis—particularly of unexpected or surprising gestures, postures, or movements and equally those that do not make sense. Here, the comic and forlorn figure is that of the fool who does not have a key to their own house. Indeed, one might argue that what the foolish figure lacks here is kinesic intelligence—the key to the house: it is as though equitable interpretation is kinesic intelligence itself.

The imagery is rendered even more evocative by the smaller image buried within the example of someone who "flicks to the letter" and in so doing "sticks to the Outside of the Law." This too is comic, and perhaps even more strikingly so, for this is an image of someone who cannot open their house—here, the house of law—not only because they have no key but also because they are now somehow stuck to its walls. This is kinesic comedy and, here, also kinesic rhetoric, arguably at its most powerful: it invites its readers to kinesically simulate the kinesically uncomfortable, embarrassing, and absurd situation of being stuck to the walls of one's own house, without a key to open it and thereby to associate the absence of equitable interpretation with something that makes no kinesic sense and its presence with something that resolves such kinesic difficulties and makes perfect kinesic (and, by extension, normative) sense.

I return now to Plowden's suggested imaginary conversation consisting of questions posed to the legislator. Although this device is one that we find already in Aristotle (in his *Nicomachean Ethics*), whom Plowden explicitly quotes, Plowden made several key additions to it. Aristotle gives no example of a question to pose to the legislator and, even more significantly for our purposes, Aristotle imbues the legislator with no attributes. Plowden explicitly refers to the legislator as an "upright and reasonable Man." The addition is a momentous one: we are invited, as readers, not so much to imagine what the actual legislator might have answered in response to our question—as we "converse" with him (see Plowden 1816, 467)—but rather to imagine an "upright and reasonable" legislator. Aristotle's language arguably leaves open whether the questioning of the legislator is to be a largely empirical task—for example, as this was interpreted later, of trawling through parliamentary debates in a bid to find the facts of what the legislator (the parliament) must actually have intended—or whether it is to be a more expansive, moral one, not necessarily based on any fact-finding mission, but rather one concerned with ensuring that the meaning of the statute is "upright and reasonable."

In Plowden's case, we are left in no doubt that in imagining our conversation with the legislator, we are to imagine him as an "upright and reasonable Man" (a highly gendered kinesic commonplace: see Hornby 2022). Of course, this still leaves room for subsequent readers, when simulating kinesically and thus employing this kinesic test of equitable interpretation, to simulate "uprightness" and what this entails in any one case, in their own way. In this sense, Plowden's kinesic language prescribes a certain method—a certain direction and attitude in the interpretation of statutes—but also leaves a good deal open, in fact, requiring any subsequent application of the method to be led by that person's own embodied experience of uprightness.

The image of the upright legislator and its imaginary process is an ingenious one: on the back of it, Plowden can argue that all that the judges are doing in exercising equitable interpretation is giving effect to the legislator's will, given that the legislator is—how could he not be?—upright and reasonable. Plowden argues for a considerable extension to judicial power but under the pretense of paying one's compliments to the legislator's exemplary decorum, wisdom, and reason. Indeed, it is important to observe that amid that which is effectively an argument in favor of extending judicial power, Plowden places all the attention on the legislator's qualities and attributes: judges (who are otherwise invisible) simply enter into conversation with the legislator, humbly posing questions and loyally and obediently following the answers given by this "upright and reasonable Man."

Plowden's arguments for and modeling of the equitable interpretation of statutes in common law courts is highly kinesic. That is, it is Plowden's kinesic intelligence that enables him to make such intensely kinesic arguments for the importance of equity but also for giving a kinesic profile to the method of equitable interpretation—that is, via the device of an imaginary conversation with an "upright" legislator. Plowden's kinesic imagination is rich and varied; it includes a range of kinesic imagery—nuts and their kernels; strangers scaling walls; citizens locked out of their cities; owners unable to open their own houses or being stuck to its walls; and movements such as expansion and contraction, or the softening of something hard. Plowden clearly thinks kinesically, both when arguing for the importance of something and when articulating how it works, and this is so even (or perhaps especially) at the abstract level of the appropriate method of interpreting statutes.

4.2 Deciding *Ingram v Little* (1961)

We now skip forward from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. One of the radical changes that occurs in this period relates to the practice of law reporting. Although there were no professional law reporters in the sixteenth century, with Plowden's *Commentaries* offering an idiosyncratic (but no less influential for that) perspective on some of the cases he considered to be most challenging and interesting with a view to taking notes both for his own benefit and for the benefit of the students in the Inns of Court, a professional law-reporting practice gradually emerged in the ensuing centuries. By the twentieth century, the procedure typically involves a judge orally delivering a judgment and then authorizing a written text, which would be sent to the reporter allocated the task of compiling the judgments and arguments of counsel in the case and finalizing them for publication. Although this constitutes a genuinely radical change in legal practice, twentieth-century law reports retain traces of the informality and orality of preceding ages: for example, judges write their judgments in the first person, giving an "opinion" to which they sign their names. In appellate courts, where multiple judges sit, they deliver multiple judgments, sometimes including a dissent, with different descriptions of the facts.

The fact that contemporary common law case reports still leave room for the expression of individual judges' opinions, including their individual descriptions of the facts, is crucial to the discussion that follows. The case I analyze here—*Ingram v Little* (1960) 1 QB 31—is a decision of an appellate-level court (known as the Queen's Bench of the Court of Appeal). It involved three judges—Lord Justices Sellers, Pearce, and Devlin—each of whom delivered their own judgment. The case's text thus comprises (1) a brief summary of the decision and the reasons for that decision (known as the headnote, which is often written by the reporter); (2) a brief summary of the judgment made by the first instance court (again written by the reporter); (3) arguments made by counsel in the case (once more written by the reporter); and (4) the three judgments delivered by the above-mentioned three judges.

In this case, two of the judges agreed on the result (Pearce and Sellers LJJ), although they offered different descriptions of the facts and different reasons for their decisions, while one of the judges (Devlin LJ) dissented, also offering his own descriptions of the facts and reasons for his dissent. Again, this multiplicity and variability of factual description is a key feature of contemporary common law reasoning and is fascinating to any scholar interested in the cognition of narrative and character, given that a large portion of such descriptions involves narrating the case and characterizing the parties' actions in a particular way.

In this case, the descriptions of the parties' actions were highly kinesic: the judges in the majority, to decide as they did, engaged in kinesic work, characterizing the parties' actions in kinesic terms to justify their decisions. It is also significant, as we shall see, that all the judges in the case were men (there were no women in the English judiciary until the late twentieth century): the gender dynamics of the kinesic work in this case are very important. All of the judges, but particularly the two in the majority, deployed a paternalistic narrative of vulnerable women being dominated by the brute physical presence of a man and fitted their kinesic imagery into this narrative mold.

To appreciate the challenge that the judges were facing in this case, it is necessary to take a step back and briefly explain this area of the law. It is widely recognized that the law of mistake is among the most challenging areas of contract law, and so it will be necessary to satisfy ourselves with a necessarily brief explanation (for a more extensive explanation, see MacMillan 2010). One of the difficulties for this area of law is that some of the issues that cases confront appear to be classifiable under one of two stages in the adjudication of contracts: the first is the formation stage, in which certain elements must be in place for a contract to be prima facie valid (e.g., offer and acceptance); the second is an assessment of whether an otherwise prima facie valid contract is actually void. With respect to the second stage, there is a distinction between void and voidable contracts: a void contract is invalid from the outset, which means that no property ever passes from one party to the other; a voidable contract means that although the contract is now regarded as invalid, property is allowed to pass. Practically, this means that where a contract is found to be only voidable (and not void) and thus where property has been allowed to pass and where an innocent third party has bought that property in good faith (without knowledge, for instance, of it having been obtained through fraud), then that third party can retain that property. By contrast, if the contract is found to be void and thus no property is permitted to have passed, the third party will need to return the property (or its value) to the original owner.

The law of mistake concerns one possible basis upon which a contract that otherwise appears valid may be classed as void. In practice, such cases often involve two innocent parties fighting it out in court: the original seller versus the innocent third-party purchaser. Thus, it often ensues that the original seller is deceived by the original purchaser, who may, for example, present them with a false cheque, and then go on to sell it to the innocent third-party purchaser before absconding. The original seller then sues the innocent third-party purchaser, claiming that the contract is void for mistake, with no property having changed hands, and with the loss falling on the innocent third-party purchaser. The innocent third-party purchaser, by contrast, argues that there was no mistake; that the contract is only voidable and thus that the original seller should incur the loss. Courts typically prefer not to make contracts void (as it undermines the predictability and security of contracts), and they also prefer not to oblige innocent third-party purchasers to carry the burden of loss. Therefore, the circumstances in which a court will void a contract for mistake tend to be very narrow.

Among the possible mistakes that a plaintiff (e.g., the original seller) may claim is that which is called mistaken identity, whereby the plaintiff may argue that they never intended to enter into a contract with the original purchaser but rather with someone else. As noted above, sometimes these cases are analyzed as though they relate to formation: thus, one side makes an offer to a particular party and only that party can accept. The original purchaser's acceptance of that offer is thus invalid, and hence the contract is never formed, and the property does not pass over. Sometimes, however, the cases are analyzed as mistaken identity cases: so, although there is a prima facie valid contract, the courts allow for a successful claim for mistake, voiding the contract, with the property also not passing. Although the case under consideration here involves precisely such a claim, the judges sometimes analyze it as a formation case and sometimes as a mistake case.

Prior to this case, courts tended to find that where the contract was made in person (e.g., someone walking into a jewelry store to buy jewelry), it was assumed that the seller had intended to deal with the person before them (and not with any other person). By contrast, where the transaction was executed in writing (e.g., with the forgery of a well-known firm's letterhead) or via an agent representing a particular company (e.g., with the original purchaser masquerading as the authorized agent of a well-known firm), then it was generally assumed that the seller intended to enter into contract with a particular purchaser (precisely that well-known firm). In the first scenario—in which the original purchasers presented themselves in person—the court would generally not void the contract for mistaken identity, and the original seller would bear the loss (*Phillips v Brooks Ltd* [1919] 2 KB 243). In the second scenario—which was in writing or via an agency—the courts would usually allow for mistaken identity claims, with the innocent third-party purchaser bearing the loss (e.g., *Hardman v Booth* (1863) 1 H&C 803; *Cundy v Lindsay* (1878) 3 App Cas 459). At the time, this was not yet a particularly well-established distinction (it became so later), but it was present in the facts of the above cases.

We come now to the facts of *Ingram v Little*. Part of the point here is the impossibility of presenting these facts neutrally: everything depends on how they are described, including how the parties' actions and interactions are described. The common law is formed precisely through such normatively laden descriptions of facts. In broad terms, however, we can safely say that the transaction was executed in person, and that the cards were thus already stacked against the original seller: as above, where transactions took place in person, the courts tended not to allow for successful mistaken identity claims, instead assuming that the original seller wanted to sell to the physical person present. This case, however, presented a difficulty. The reporter in the headnote summarizes the facts of the case as follows:

> Three plaintiffs [the three Ingram sisters], joint owners of a car, advertised it for sale. A rogue, introducing himself as H [Hutchinson], offered to buy it. When he pulled out his cheque book to pay for it, the first plaintiff, conducting the negotiations for the plaintiffs, told him that they expected cash, and that the proposed sale was cancelled. The rogue thereupon said that he was PGMH, a reputable businessman, living at an address in Caterham, and having business interests in Guildford. The plaintiffs had never heard of PGMH, but the second plaintiff forthwith went to the local post office, and ascertained from the telephone directory that there was such a person as PGMH, living at the address given by the rogue. The second plaintiff told the first plaintiff what she had learnt and, as a result of that information, they believed that the rogue was PGMH and decided to let the rogue have the car in exchange for his cheque. The rogue had nothing whatever to do with the real PGMH, and the rogue's cheque was dishonoured on presentation. Meanwhile, the rogue had sold the car to the defendant [Little], who bought it in good faith.
>
> (*Ingram v Little,* 31)

Here, we thus have the classic scenario of two innocent parties contesting who will bear the loss: on the one side, we have the three Ingram sisters, who are the original sellers (two are actively involved in the negotiations); on the other, we have the innocent third-party purchaser (the defendant, Little). If the court finds the contract void for mistaken identity, as the plaintiffs argue, then the loss will fall on the defendant as no property will have passed to the original purchaser (referred to as a "rogue"). By contrast, if the court finds the contract only voidable, then the plaintiffs will incur the loss and the defendant will be permitted to keep the car.

The court finds, by majority, in favor of the plaintiffs. Thus, two judges—Sellers and Pearce LJJ—find in favor of the plaintiff, and the third judge—Devlin LJ—dissents and finds in favor of the defendant. The key question is how the two judges in the majority manage to overcome the above-mentioned difficulty: that in most cases in which a transaction had taken place in person, the court did not find the contract void for mistaken identity but merely voidable. My argument here is that the two judges achieve this by exercising kinesic intelligence—that is, they draw on kinesic language, inviting the reader, whom they are attempting to persuade, to kinesically simulate the parties' actions in such a way that the reader is more likely to accept a decision finding that the contract should be void for mistaken identity. The judges face a considerable challenge here: ordinarily, the courts would not find in favor of the sisters, and the judges must thus undertake substantial persuasive work to convince the audience (of advocates, fellow judges, scholars, and other readers of cases—the legal community at large) that their decision to void the contract for mistaken identity is justifiable.

The two judges both approach this formidable task by amplifying the agency of the original purchaser, portraying him as a particularly active and manipulative agent, while the sisters are characterized as largely passive, their own agency effectively taken over by the original purchaser, as though they were his puppets. The two judges do this by deploying intensively kinesic language, painting the original purchaser's actions in such a light that the reader simulates these actions as highly active and manipulative (rather than, say, merely amusing trickery or swindling) and the sisters' actions as passive (rather than, say, naïve). In other words, kinesic intelligence is used to characterize the original purchaser as blameworthy to such an extent that the sisters are rendered wholly blameless. The kinesic language and the kinesic simulation it invites are inseparable from the normative argument being made and the normative judgment being invited—that is, to find the contract void for mistake.

The judgment of Sellers LJ, for instance, emphasizes the knowledge of "the rogue, Hutchinson" (as the judge refers to him), throughout: for example, "Hutchinson *knew* he was not the person the plaintiffs believed him to be . . . Hutchinson *knew* that the offer to sell the car in exchange for a cheque was not made to him as he was . . . he *knew full well* that it was not his cheque they were accepting" (*Ingram v Little*, 48; emphasis added). These statements regarding the original purchaser's heightened epistemic agency are reiterated frequently, and at certain points in the judgment, they take on a particularly vivid kinesic quality. Thus, for example, Sellers LJ says,

> Hutchinson, the offeree [here we see the judge analyzing the case as if the issue was the first stage mentioned above, i.e., the formation stage], *knew precisely what was in the minds of the two ladies for he had put it there* and he knew that their offer was intended for PGM Hutchinson of Caterham and that they were making no offer to and had no intention to contract with him, as he was. There was no offer which he Hutchinson could accept and, therefore, there was no contract.
>
> (*Ingram v Little*, 49; emphasis added)

Here, the highly charged kinesic imagery invokes the sisters' minds as mere passive receptacles, filled by the male's active epistemic agency. This kinesic language and the kinesic simulation it invites are crucial in the judge's efforts to persuade his audience that the sisters are blameless and could not have done more than they did.

Kinesic intelligence is even more strikingly at work in the judgment of Pearce LJ. The issue, as Pearce LJ presents it, is "whether the plaintiffs were in fact intending to deal with the person physically present, who had fraudulently endowed himself with the attributes of some other identity, or whether they were intending only to deal with that other identity" (*Ingram v Little*, 56). Pearce LJ is aware that, as he himself notes, the courts' usual assumption in cases of person-to-person transactions is that the original seller intends to deal with the person who is physically present. He is thus aware that he will need to do some work—describing the facts in particular ways—to dismiss that assumption. Via his description of the parties' actions and interactions, he proceeds to demonstrate how the individual identity of another person came to predominate over the physical presence of the "cheat" (as he refers to him throughout). This is achieved, perhaps somewhat paradoxically, by emphasizing the cheat's physical agency, indicating just how much he did, repeated, to create a potent, blinding belief in the sisters' minds, despite their best attempts to resist him. The description of the interaction is highly gendered, drawing on a culturally pervasive paternalistic narrative mold: it posits an active, virile, younger man, using his power and agency to overwhelm the sisters, who eventually yield to him and consent (to part with the car). The description is thus not only gendered but also laden with sexual tension; the narrative it tells is one of helpless spinsters who are physically dominated by a younger, virile man and eventually—albeit reluctantly—agree to his overtures. For instance:

> The man tried to make Miss Ingram take a cheque [having earlier described how this man "pulled out" his cheque book]. She declined and said that the deal was off. He did not demur but set himself to reconstruct the negotiations. For the moment had come, which he must all along have anticipated, as the crux of the negotiations, the vital crisis of the swindle.
>
> (*Ingram v Little,* 58)

As related by Pearce LJ, the nature of the entire transaction changes in this moment, in which one of the sisters rejects the cheque as a payment method of payment. In this moment—the "crux" or "crisis"—the negotiations change from one concerned with a cash sale of goods in which the original purchaser's identity is unimportant to one in which their identity is of the utmost importance. Again, narrative suspense—and simultaneously normative significance—is created through the description of the physical interaction: this moment demonstrated, Pearce LJ relates, "that she was not prepared to sell on credit to the mere physical man in her drawing room though he represented himself as a man of substance" (*Ingram v Little*, 58–9). What is crucial is what he—the man, the cheat—then does to impose himself on her:

> He proceeded to "give airy nothing a local habitation and a name" [quoting Shakespeare]. He tried to persuade her to sell to him as PGM Hutchinson of Stanstead House, a personality which no doubt he had selected for the purpose of inspiring confidence into his victim.
>
> (*Ingram v Little, 59*)

The plaintiffs check the name and address in the local post office; this is critical, in that it demonstrates their reliance on the belief—manufactured in their minds by the cheat—that the person in front of them is a reputable man. Their actions, however, as well as their beliefs, are conjured and directed by the cheat, Hutchinson, who is presented as having foreseen and anticipated all of this. Throughout, Pearce LJ emphasizes even Hutchinson's most negligible actions—for example, "the man wrote the name and address on the back of the cheque" (*Ingram v Little*, 59). The sisters, once again, are figured kinesically as passive "victims," preyed upon by the omniscient man present in their drawing room. Eventually, because of the cheat's efforts, the sisters, having become "dominated" by "his individuality," are "ready to trust" (*Ingram v Little*, 62), give consent, and part with their car in exchange for his cheque.

Of course, in the case of both judges, the kinesic characterization of the parties is only one element in the package of persuasive techniques deployed to justify a decision in the sisters' favor and the voiding of the contract for mistaken identity. For instance, part of what the judges do is to situate this case in particular ways in relation to other past cases, and here a kind of spatial imaginary also plays a part (e.g., Pearce LJ positions this case in the "debatable area between two extremes" [*Ingram v Little*, 58]). However, kinesic language, which invites its audience to simulate kinesically in particular ways, undoubtedly plays a substantial role in characterizing the parties and, in particular, in coloring them evaluatively, such that the normative conclusion appears almost "self-evident" (*Ingram v Little*, 49). It is, in short, impossible to disentangle the highly kinesically charged descriptions of the parties' actions and interactions from the normative argument being made. The use of kinesic intelligence, then, in this case, is instrumental in making and justifying a certain decision.

Lest it be thought, however, that kinesic intelligence is used here only to persuade the audience, it is important to note that the use of kinesic language is not a mere means to an end that one already has in mind. Rather, kinesic intelligence here, for all its persuasive effects, is also part of an inquiry into what values, vulnerabilities, and norms are relevant to this area of the law. These judges' judgments are important not only to the decision in the present case: they also have repercussions for what the legal community may come to think the law is trying to protect in this area. One of the values behind the assumption that in-person transactions are unlikely to be voided for mistake is the sanctity and predictability of contracts: such an assumption makes it less easy to unravel the many millions of contractual transactions made in shops and markets and thus protects innocent third-party purchasers. Meanwhile, this case also illustrates how sellers can equally be vulnerable to exploitation, perhaps particularly when they are private and inexperienced sellers (rather than, say, battle-hardened jewelers on Oxford Street). Thus, the case may be understood as creating a legal distinction between different kinds of sellers, attempting to capture something normatively important about situations of this kind, which, it may be thought, the law ought to protect. Thus, the case has potential legal significance, and kinesic intelligence is part of the way in which the judges establish that legal significance: using kinesic language, they create something of normative importance for future cases (i.e., a recognition of the potential for experienced cheats to exploit the vulnerability of inexperienced sellers). Kinesic intelligence thus enables not only decision-making but also the very creation of law.

4.3 Conclusion

The two examples analyzed in this chapter are separated in time by four centuries. They demonstrate that kinesic intelligence has, in different ways, played a vital role in common law reasoning for a long time. In both examples, the work of kinesic intelligence enables tasks of central importance to legal practice, including making and justifying a decision in a case, as well as more broadly proposing methods or concepts of lasting legal significance.

Plowden's *Commentaries* are not of minor historical importance: they are among the canonical texts in the history of the common law. They were relied on by generations of law students and legal practitioners. My argument here has been that their power lies, in part, in Plowden's skillful use of kinesic language and the way in which this invited his readers to simulate kinesically. Kinesic imagery made the text both memorable and persuasive, in part because of how it activated its readers' emotions. It is this kinesic imagery that has allowed the text to transcend time and shape the growing presence of equity within common law practices.

Plowden was not a judge; rather, he was a particularly influential advocate-jurist. However, the twentieth-century example examined above reveals that kinesic intelligence is also directly at work in the language deployed by judges when justifying their decisions. One of the features of common law cases is that judgments are written as opinions containing—in appellate-level courts, with multiple judges sitting—multiple versions of the facts of the case. The common law is intimately related to the art of fact description, including the art of spinning and weaving a narrative and constructing character. What I have attempted to demonstrate is how vital kinesic intelligence can be to this practice of fact description and, at once, law-making. We have also observed that kinesic intelligence is closely related to gender in its spatio-temporal contexts, the judges' narrative being typically paternalistic. Law, for all its attempts to escape its own particular time and place, remains wedded to cultural—including gendered—particularities, and tracing the use of kinesic language and kinesic simulation can help to demonstrate this.

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5 Reading as embodied simulation

Literary techniques and intersubjective collaboration

Paul B. Armstrong

Introduction

The best works of literature, according to Henry James, produce the illusion that "we have lived another life, that we have had a miraculous enlargement of experience" (1970 [1888], 227–8). This is a common phenomenon that most readers will probably recognize, but it is nevertheless a paradox that seems to defy our cognitive limitations. How, after all, can we experience another life? When we read a novel or a poem, we may feel that we are participating in other lives, experiencing what it is like to inhabit their consciousness and their bodies in ways that are impossible in our everyday interactions with our friends and loved ones. How this happens cannot be explained by aesthetic theories that view literary works as object-like formal structures or that regard imitation as a static correspondence between signs and the things they represent. What is required is a kinesic theory that understands literature as a kind of symbolic action that solicits and sustains intersubjective interactions.

We can share other lives through literature because literary works hold ready potentialities-for-action that we activate when we read. Reading on this view is a process of doubling whereby we simulate cognitive acts held ready by a work, awaiting reactivation through our participation as we fill in its absences and make its world present. The embodied resonances between the activity of reading, the actions represented in the work, and the stylistic linguistic actions through which these are staged make this miracle possible. These resonances do not erase the formal dimension of the work or collapse the distinction between art and life. Rather, as a kind of symbolic action that both is and is not like everyday pragmatic action, literature uses the differences between art and life (the dimension of the as-if) to set interactions in motion that may seem life-like.

Literary works can simulate experience because simulation processes are ubiquitous in everyday cognition and language understanding. There is broad experimental evidence that we know the world not only by

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conceptualizing it through neural representations but also by activating patterns of sensorimotor response acquired from past experience (see Armstrong 2020, 105–49). Lawrence Barsalou describes cognition as simulation because it entails "the reenactment of perceptual, motor, and introspective states acquired during experience with the world, body, and mind" (2008, 618). We understand the world by drawing on, testing, and reconfiguring models based on past experiences that predict how patterns of sensory inputs will form. These cognitive models are activated when we read. As Ben Bergen argues, "we understand language by simulating in our minds what it would be like to experience the things that the language describes" (2012, 13). Vittorio Gallese and Valentina Cuccio explain that

> Seeing someone performing an action, like grabbing an object, and listening to or reading the linguistic description of that action lead to a similar motor simulation that activates some of the same regions of our cortical motor system, including those with mirror properties, normally activated when we actually perform that action.
>
> (2015, 13 [540])

For example, well-known experimental evidence demonstrates that the same sections of the motor cortex fire when we read about kicking or throwing a ball as when we perform those actions (see Hauk and Pulvermüller 2004). Brain-imaging studies have also shown that "words related to odours (for example 'cinnamon') activate olfactory brain areas more strongly than do control words" and that "words that are semantically related to sounds (for example 'telephone') . . . strongly activate superior temporal auditory areas even if presented in written form" (Pulvermüller and Fadiga 2010, 355). If, as Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. argues, "literary experiences of all types are fundamentally grounded in embodied simulation processes" (2017, 236), this is because cognition in general and language understanding in particular already entail simulative reenactments of past experiences.[1]

It is important to remember, however, that simulations are not exact, identical reproductions of the original experience whose neural traces they reactivate. As Barsalou explains, "simulations rarely, if ever, recreate full experiences" but instead are "typically partial recreations of experience

1 As Micah Mumper and Richard Gerrig (2019) point out, "simulation theory has emerged as the most common explanatory mechanism" in psychological theories of literature, but they also correctly complain that "simulation" in these models is often a black box. My analyses of the complications and contradictions of simulation are an attempt to clarify the confusions and ambiguities they criticize. Also see my analysis of "grounded cognition" and "the paradoxes of simulation" in Armstrong 2020, 117–25.

that contain bias and error" (2008, 620). Only a subset of the neurons fire that were originally active, setting in motion only partial traces of the physiological processes in the sensorimotor system that are reactivated by the simulation. We may feel the represented action or emotion we respond to, but we do not necessarily stand up from our chairs and act out what we're reading about. Not a bad thing, these discrepancies allow reconfigurations of past patterns to meet the unpredictable challenges of new situations.

They also make possible aesthetic recreations of experience, as if we were living another life and sharing another's experience. As Dan Zahavi and John Michael point out,

> To insist that the empathizer must have the same (kind of) state as the target, is . . . to miss what is distinctive about empathy, namely, the fact that it confronts you with the presence of an experience that you are not living through yourself . . . [T]he asymmetry between self-experience and other-experience is consequently crucial for empathy.
>
> (2018, 597)

When we read a literary work, a sense of the foreignness of the cognitive patterns I am temporarily inhabiting invariably shadows my immersion in them, even when I feel them in my own body in the fears and tears and other impassioned responses that the work may bring about. Embodied resonances relate worlds to each other not by erasing differences but by setting interactions in motion. The peculiar feeling of being inhabited by thoughts and feelings that are not our own calls attention to the difference between worlds that literature cannot overcome even as it gives us the illusion of doing so by producing simulations that both are and are not the experiences they recreate.

Both in everyday cognition and in aesthetic renderings of other worlds, the not-like in a simulation is as generative as the like. The doubled resonances set in motion by the as-if make possible the crossing of boundaries, but the mediation established by a simulation is not a seamless merger of the worlds that it brings into relationship. The as-if of embodied simulation is both the limit of any crossing of boundaries and what makes the crossing possible.

Taking examples written in very different styles from the eighteenth century to the modern period, the next three sections of this chapter analyze how various literary techniques deploy the as-if of simulation in order to set in motion interactions between worlds: Samuel Richardson's epistolary style in *Pamela* (1740), whereby the technology of "writing to the moment" stages the gaps between experience, inscription, and reception even as it seeks to overcome them; George Eliot's omniscient pedagogical narrator in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), an embodied presence that both asserts and withholds authorial power in order to invite readerly participation; and Virginia Woolf's dramatization of the interplay between metaphorical and experiential action in her experimental "play-poem" *The Waves* (1931). In each of these examples, a particular literary technique employs the as-if of simulation to transcend the difference between worlds, even as the limits of its ability to do so foreground the differential structure of simulative relations between like and not-like. These three texts provide examples of different ways in which the as-if of aesthetic artifice should be understood not as an inert, object-like form but as a potentiality for interaction based on the power of the unlike to produce dynamic relationships. Although they differ radically in their formal structures, these texts all foreground the kinesic power of literary techniques to generate interactions between writers and readers that cross historical distance.

5.1 *Pamela* and "writing to the moment" as embodied simulation

By telling the story of the servant Pamela's ultimately triumphant resistance to her employer's erotic advances through a series of letters to her parents, Richardson used a literary form designed to convey a sense of immediacy by bringing the reader into direct contact with her world. That is the claim made, for example, by one of the prefatory notes to the novel, published with Richardson's approval (and perhaps authored by himself): "the Letters being written under the immediate Impression of every Circumstance which occasioned them, and that to those who had a Right to know the fair Writer's most secret Thoughts," the heroine's experience is rendered with more directness "than can possibly be found in a Detail of Actions long past, which are never recollected with the same Affections, Hopes, and Dreads, with which they were felt when they occurred" (2001 [1740], 5). As Ian Watt explains in his classic account of "the rise of the novel" in the eighteenth century, "the epistolary method impels the writer toward producing something that may pass for the spontaneous transcription of the subjective reactions of the protagonists to the events as they occur," which thereby "makes us feel that we are in contact not with literature but with the raw materials of life itself as they are momentarily reflected in the minds of the protagonists" (1957, 192–3). The technique of "writing to the moment" presents the writer's experience through letters composed during the heat of the action—or, more precisely (and this is the point), just after the event described, never quite simultaneous with it, even if as close in time as possible to the occurrence itself.

There is always necessarily a gap between the act of composition and the reported events, as the "to" in the phrase "writing to the moment" tacitly acknowledges. This gap—the difference intrinsic to "writing to the moment"—is both the enabling condition of Richardson's epistolary style and the obstacle it can never overcome in its quest to render what it is like to share Pamela's experience. As Pamela herself repeatedly notes in asides about the intervals that have passed between her reports and the action they record ("I have just now retreated to my closet to record what has occurred," she says in one form or another again and again), this gap is unavoidable. There is necessarily a delay between experience and reporting, a delay that makes it impossible to convey the experience simultaneously as it happens. As William James points out, reports about experience can never quite catch up with consciousness: "introspective analysis . . . is in fact like seizing a spinning top to catch its motion, or trying to turn up the gas quickly enough to see how the darkness looks" (1950 [1890], 1: 244). This gap is epistemologically insuperable.

This gap is a negative, but it is also profoundly productive in the actions and interactions it makes possible. It is what enables Pamela to write letters about her experience by structuring their difference from the events they report to give us as readers a sense of what that experience was like. Pamela's letters are simulations of her experience, allowing us to re-live it with her as she re-creates it, but they can do this work only because they are not identical with what they report. This difference is a negative that allows Richardson to set in motion interactions between three kinds of action: Pamela the letter-writer's acts of composition, the dramatic action of defending her "Virtue" against Squire B's advances, and the imaginative acts of readers whose interpretations fill in the gaps between what Pamela reports and what she experienced, either sympathetically, through acts of empathic identification and appreciation, or suspiciously, by doubting her veracity and reading otherwise (as Richardson's contemporary Henry Fielding notoriously did by seeing Pamela as a deceitful manipulator seeking to advance her fortunes).

Richardson turns this negative into a positive by making the act of writing itself an integral part of the dramatic action. Pamela's letters are both moment-to-moment enactments of her experience, the letters themselves playing an important part in it, and after-the-fact recordings of what happened, even if those events have just occurred moments before the writing (a gap Pamela tries frantically but impossibly to close). This double status of the letters as both actions in themselves and recordings of past actions is foregrounded by the novel's obsessive attention to the mechanics and materiality of writing. It is no doubt preposterous that the captive, kidnapped Pamela could have access to all the paper, ink, and quills she needs to produce these many pages or that she could write so much in the intervals between the squire's periodic attacks. Pamela's repeated references to these practical difficulties and her ingenious efforts to overcome them are realistic attempts to authenticate her record by explaining how she managed to produce such a massive written archive, but they also call attention to the artificiality of the epistolary convention the novel is employing. It would of course not be natural or easy or perhaps even possible for someone in Pamela's straits to write as she does.

The extremity of the efforts necessary to produce the archive makes her authorship as much a part of the drama as the conflicts she reports. Defying probability, her acts as a writer are as heroic as are her efforts to defend her virtue. Her obsessive letter-writing may be unnatural and even absurd, but pretending it is realistic and integrating it into the dramatic action naturalize the artifice. The reader may not notice its improbability, indeed, until Pamela's periodic anxieties about her access to writing materials call attention to it. Immersing ourselves in her world, our acts as readers habitualize us to her acts of writing and induce us to overlook their absurdity.

A similar doubling of the act of writing and the dramatic action is evident in how Pamela creates herself as a character by writing. The act of writing makes her both author and character, a doubling only possible because of the as-if of simulation. She explicitly thinks of herself *as* the heroine in her own story, referring to herself in the third person (and italics) as "*Pamela*," thereby anticipating the celebrity she will in fact become when Richardson's novel is published to controversy and acclaim. She repeatedly imagines what others will think about her after she is dead: "The unhappy *Pamela* may be undone," she writes her parents at one point, "(which, God forbid, and sooner deprive me of Life!) before you can know my hard Lot!" (99). She composes "Verses on my going away" that imagine herself in the eyes of others: "My Fellow-servants, dear, attend / To these few Lines, which I have penn'd: / I'm sure they're from your honest Friend, / And Wisher-well, poor Pamela" (89). The action of reporting her defense of her virtue is not a transparent reflection of those events but an artful construction that presents her as the heroine in her own story, a persona that she both is and is not. Pamela can be both author and character only because she is not completely identical to either role, but once again this is a generative difference that allows her to stage versions of herself.

Pamela can and indeed must construct such a persona because "Virtue" itself is a differential state of affairs, a matter of how one is perceived by others, and not a stable, determinate property. "Virtue" is consequently a notoriously shifty, ambiguous term, subject to conflicting definitions and interpretations, as the controversies over *Pamela* amply demonstrate. Richardson may have felt he was crafting a straightforwardly moral text, as the title page proclaims: "Published In order to cultivate the Principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the YOUTH of BOTH SEXES" (1). But the epistemological contradictions inherent in the epistolary style make it a vexed vehicle for conveying moral instruction and instead make possible a variety of responses that dramatize the instability of virtue.

The problem of virtue was an especially fraught and intensely debated topic in the eighteenth century, the age of the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution, but the epistemological questions it raises are of enduring interest across the history of *Pamela*'s reception, up to the current day.[2] The ambiguity of virtue is evident in this early piece of advice from her parents: "Yes, my dear Child, we fear—you should be too grateful,—and reward him with that Jewel, your Virtue, which no Riches, nor Favour, nor any thing in this Life, can make up to you" (14). The comparison of virtue to a "Jewel" is both misleading and revealing. Pamela's "Virtue" is precarious, not because it is a material object with an intrinsic value, as a jewel seems to be, but because its value is a product of how it is regarded, as is actually also the case with precious stones and metals. Its value is its exchange value, which makes it open to variable interpretations, competing assessments of its worth based on conflicting assumptions about what it represents and can be exchanged for. Is Pamela's virtue a spiritual issue on which her destiny at the Last Judgment ultimately depends (salvation delivered in exchange for maintaining her innocence and a clear conscience)? Or is her virtue a commodity that she must protect because her value on the marriage market is contingent on its preservation (lest she become "damaged goods")? The novel's subtitle—"Virtue Rewarded"—can be read either way, with Pamela finding her ultimate reward in heavenly redemption, or with the pay-off for her successful resistance the reward of an up-scale marriage (as Fielding's heroine in *Shamela* cynically declares, "I thought once of making a little Fortune by my Person. I now intend to make a great one by my Vartue" [1961 {1741}, 325]). The debates about how to read *Pamela*, from the eighteenth-century disputes between the Pamelists and the anti-Pamelists up to contemporary debates about the novel's gender politics, are generated and sustained by these indeterminacies.[3]

2 On the various debates about virtue in the eighteenth century, see Harol 2004, Pocock 2002, and Morse 2000. As Morse explains, "the eighteenth century went in search of virtue as if in pursuit of the philosopher's stone. For if virtue was elusive this simply served to confirm the thought that it really ought to exist—*somewhere*!" (2000, 23, original emphasis).

3 For example, among contemporary critics of the novel, David Morse interprets *Pamela* in moral and spiritual terms, as a reflection of eighteenth-century debates about virtue informed by "the contemporary conviction that a benevolent and kindly God would not wish to do his faithful servants harm" (2000, 119), whereas Nancy Armstrong reads the novel in economic and political terms, as a domestic battle of the sexes "in which a woman's virtue alone overcomes sexual aggression and transforms male desire into middle-class love, the stuff that modern families are made of" (1987, 6).

Defending her virtue requires that Pamela become expert in controlling and manipulating signs. And so it is only an apparent contradiction that virtue demands that Pamela learn how to lie and deceive—hence her craftiness at misleading her captors in various ways, hiding her letters, staging her death, and plotting her escape. There is something inherently duplicitous about "Virtue" because it is a sign, a double structure that stands for something it is not. As Corrinne Harol explains, the disputes about Pamela's virtue are ultimately a consequence of the problem that "virtue, like virginity, can be faked" (2004, 199). This doubleness means that Pamela's moral character is not an intrinsic feature of her person (in Lockean terms, a quality of the property she has in herself) but instead depends on her persona—how she is regarded by others. The role of heroic virtue she plays in her life-story is a self-for-others that is necessarily not her self-for-herself.

This gap enables her to perform "Virtue" and also to write about it. Her moral character is a rhetorical and semiotic construct that depends on how effectively she can perform herself as a character in her story and how persuasively she presents this performance as she writes. Pamela's virtue is a double structure created by her defense of it in the dramatic action and also by her portrayal of its defense as an author, offered rhetorically to what she hopes will be an appreciative audience. As readers, our relation to this character is also double, because we either admire the performance (as Richardson hoped we would) or regard it with suspicion (as the anti-Pamelists notoriously did). The energy with which Pamela not only fends off her employer's advances but also writes about her efforts allows us as readers to feel with her, experiencing the liveliness of her response to her predicament, but this energy is also evidence of the constructive work that symbolic action requires. What signs mean cannot be taken for granted, and Pamela the author must consequently work to win over the reader. Reading Pamela's self-presentation in the era of the "#MeToo" movement calls attention to the unfortunate double-edge of the slogan "Believe women!" Belief is only required, after all, if there is the possibility of doubt. Pamela repeatedly insists on her honesty and sincerity, but such claims are only necessary because they are rhetorical postures—assertions of trustworthiness—and not transparent reflections of her true inner being or her objective properties.[4]

4 The reliability of testimony is, of course, a controversial issue not only in cases of sexual harassment and assault but also in cases of child sexual abuse. See Beverly Haviland's analysis in *The Literary Legacy of Child Sexual Abuse* of the debates about the reliability of the governess in Henry James's novella *The Turn of the Screw*, a notorious instance of epistemological ambiguity analogous to the *Pamela* debates (Haviland 2023). Haviland argues that the very certainty of the governess that the ghosts are real is discrediting, inasmuch as memories (especially of traumatic events) are typically fraught with indeterminacy, which therefore should not necessarily impugn the testimony of victims of abuse whose recollections are imperfect.

The need for us as readers to fill in the gaps in the text is evident even in those scenes where the resonances of bodily presence and physical activity seem most vivid and alive. As many readers have noticed, some of Pamela's renderings of the squire's attacks seem like passages from a melodramatic bodice-ripper:

> He then put his Hand in my Bosom, and the Indignation gave me double Strength, and I got loose from him, by a sudden Spring, and ran out of the Room; and the next Chamber being open, I made shift to get into it, and threw-to the Door, and the Key being on the Inside, it locked; but he follow'd me so close, he got hold of my Gown, and tore a Piece off, which hung without the Door.
>
> (32)

The diction here may seem antiquated to a twenty-first-century reader, but if the experiments on sensorimotor simulation in language understanding are correct, this series of actions nevertheless sets embodied resonances in motion as we reanimate them in reading. Those resonances explain why even such archaic wording can produce a lively response centuries later. This response is not wholly determined by the text itself, however, but depends on what the reader brings to it, and our participation is why it can seem alive. This virtuality also means that readers can fill it in differently, however, feeling the energy of the resonances either *as* resolute acts of defense against aggression, or *as* the excitement of a sexual encounter, or *as* the terror produced by a would-be rapist's assault. Anti-Pamelists worried that young male readers would be erotically aroused and might even be moved to emulate Squire B's deplorable behavior, but a twenty-first century reader might be appalled at the idea that a rape could be perceived as erotic entertainment.[5] The embodied resonances of scenes like this one may produce vivid responses, but because they are simulations with an as-structure, these responses are not pre-determined and automatic.

5 See James Grantham Turner's fascinating analysis of the contradictions and anxieties evident in the anti-Pamelist literature: "The anonymous *Pamela Censured*, like Fielding's *Shamela*, rests on the idea that the representation of subjectivity operates on the young and susceptible reader 'almost without the Intervention of the Will.' (The phrase comes from [Samuel] Johnson's famous *Rambler* essay on fiction, a reminder of how widespread was this fear of novel-induced automatism.) . . . *Pamela Censured* shuts out the obvious objection that a reader 'naturally' prone to relive every impression must be influenced more strongly by Pamela's explicit terror than by any eroticism implicit in the silences of the text . . . Confident that he is appealing to a like-minded audience, the Censurer assumes that 'few Youths' would not 'secretly wish to be in the Squire's Place' when he attempts to rape Pamela" (1994, 79–80).

The *as* has been construed differently by Richardson's readers, who have notoriously disagreed about whether the novel is morally uplifting or sexually titillating. As Ian Watt observes, *Pamela* is "a work that could be praised from the pulpit and yet attacked as pornography, a work that gratified the reading public with the combined attractions of a sermon and a striptease" (1957, 173). The text's symbolic actions are invitations for readerly interaction, and these interactions are what make the text life-like, giving it the feeling of happening as readers resonate bodily in response to its simulations. But as responses to what is not given in the text but only simulated, these acts of readerly involvement and filling-in will necessarily vary in ways the author cannot completely control. As James Grantham Turner explains,

> the underlying issue—whether a particular effect could be induced by a particular expressive form—led partisans to characterize the reader or spectator as an automaton, overwhelmed by passions beyond her control or programmed by subliminal messages from the concealed author. (1994, 82)

Arguments by Pamelists that the text was necessarily morally instructive, just as much as the claims of anti-Pamelists that it was automatically, inevitably erotically arousing, both ignore the openness of simulative performances to variable modes of collaborative participation. Richardson may have thought he was writing a conduct book that could do double duty, providing models of excellent prose that would inculcate exemplary moral behavior, "as though the prescription of a model literary style could also involve the regulation of thought and conduct" (Keymer 2001, xiii). The gaps opened up by "writing to the moment" make the epistolary style an undependable vehicle for moral instruction, however. Richardson was dismayed and alarmed by some of the responses his text received, but this variability was built into the openness of the as-if to different ways of filling in what simulations leave incomplete.

5.2 Authorial omniscience as interactive intersubjectivity in *The Mill on the Floss*

Omniscient narration is much more complex and paradoxical than it might at first seem, a God-like, all-knowing third-person narrator simply and authoritatively stating the facts of the matter and what to think about them. As Jonathan Culler points out, "the ascription of omniscience" and "the postulation of omniscient narrators . . . have thereby not only obscured the distinctiveness or salience of these practices but have repeatedly obfuscated them so that we fail to see what is going on," and he calls on us "to remove the blinders and explore alternative vocabularies better attuned to the strange effects of literature" (2007, 201). Foremost among these "strange effects" is the peculiar dependence of omniscient narration on intersubjective interactions with readers who produce its authority by tacitly acceding to its demands. Unlike an almighty God, the omniscient narrator is not all-powerful but is an agent whose actions require reciprocity and response.

George Eliot's unfailingly wise, morally authoritative narrative stance is an exemplary instance of omniscient narration, but Eliot is acutely aware of its contradictions, especially the precarious dependence of her authority on unpredictable intersubjective interactions with readers. Her power as a moral and epistemological authority paradoxically depends on our willingness to collaborate and fill in what the text leaves unsaid. Eliot's authority is not absolute but is contingent on her ability to set in motion relations of reciprocity that are active and open-ended, and she acknowledges this co-dependence in the various ways in which she manipulates the conventions of narrative omniscience.

Eliot's classic *Bildungsroman The Mill on the Floss* repeatedly makes strange the authoritative strategies it employs in order to solicit the reader's collaboration by opening up space for our active, variable engagement. For example, after beginning the novel with an extended objective description of the river Floss and the surrounding landscape, an embodied first-person voice surprisingly emerges and undercuts the illusion of impersonal objectivity:

> How lovely the little river is, with its dark, changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank and listen to its low placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving. I remember those large dipping willows. I remember the stone bridge.
> (1994 [1860], 7)

The as-if quality of what seemed like a factual report becomes more and more apparent as the chapter proceeds, culminating in a peculiar narrative moment: "It is time . . . for me to leave off resting my arms on the cold stone of this bridge" (8), the narrator declares, as if he is an embodied witness to what he has described.[6] But then, crossing the boundary between fiction

6 The question of the narrator's gender is a further anomaly that makes strange the persona of the omniscient narrator: Is the female author behind the pseudonym a reason for believing the narrative voice to be female? Or if the pseudonym is enacting a masculine gender role, is that a reason to code the narrator as male? How can an omniscient narration be gendered in the first place? The very uncertainty created by these questions calls attention to the intersubjective interaction between corporal subjects through which omniscient narration does its work. We grant its omniscience and play along with its games by not thinking about the bodies whose interaction makes its effect possible, but uncertainty about their gender reveals what is usually invisible.

and reality, he curiously reports “Ah, my arms are really benumbed,” not because of the winter cold, but because “I have been pressing my elbows on the arms of my chair, and dreaming that I was standing on the bridge in front of Dorlcote Mill, as it looked one February afternoon many years ago” (8). Having established the illusion of reality, the narration exposes it, not to destroy it but to set the action of narration in motion by establishing a relation with the reader in which the tacit understanding is that the tale both is and is not what it seems to be: “Before I dozed off, I was going to tell you what Mr and Mrs Tulliver were talking about, as they sat by the bright fire in the left-hand parlour, on the very afternoon I have been dreaming of” (8).

The contradictions of the as-if are on full display here. This is a reality that the narrator knows omnisciently and in detail, down to a specific location in the Tullivers’ house, but this reality in turn is the product of an embodied act of phantasy as the narrator dreams, with elbows pressed uncomfortably against an armchair. We as readers in turn engage with the product of this act of imagining in our own embodied particularity, wherever we are sitting, as agents who respond to the narration’s invitation to participate in realizing the storyworld. Teller and listener are revealed as implied embodied presences, interacting across a virtual distance that separates the acts of writing and reading, a distance that cannot be abolished but that, because of the contradictory *is/is-not* duality of the as-if, makes possible long-distance virtual interactions.

This fully embodied narrative presence (benumbed elbows and all) gives way to third-person omniscient narration after the opening chapter, but the narration is occasionally interrupted by an “I” who addresses the reader as “you,” in acknowledgment of the intersubjective interactions, in all of their unpredictability, that writing and reading entail. These interactions are crucial to Eliot’s pedagogical project, as the novel demonstrates in its dramatizations of how its protagonists learn. *The Mill on the Floss* is a classic *Bildungsroman* not only in its depiction of the dual educational journeys of its protagonists Tom and Maggie Tulliver but also in the efforts of the novel’s eminently wise, morally authoritative narrator to educate the reader. Part of this education entails an understanding of how learning best occurs, as well as how it fails, insights that the narration itself must take to heart. This understanding goes against the assumption that an omniscient narration can be straightforwardly didactic and deliver moral truths to a passively receptive audience. As is suggested, for example, by Tom Tulliver’s resistance to the classical and religious instruction that his teacher Mr Stelling tries to inculcate, education is a collaborative enterprise that depends on the activities of the pupil as much as on the work of the teacher. “I say nothing against Mr Stelling’s theory,” the narrator declares:

> if we are to have one regimen for all minds, his seems to me as good as any other. I only know it turned out as uncomfortably for Tom Tulliver as if he had been plied with cheese in order to remedy a gastric weakness which prevented him from digesting it.
>
> (117)

If reading is an educational experience, Eliot's narrator cannot simply inculcate her moral authority by a straightforward transfer of knowledge or by direct control over her pupils who may be as recalcitrant as Tom. Rather than a coercive disciplining of a pliant subject, education requires consensual, participatory sense-making.

Hence the narrator's frequent addresses to the reader as an "I" appealing to an anticipated but unknowable "you" to collaborate by filling in what is missing. These appeals typically come in the form of indirect ironic anecdotes where the truth is not a simple lesson to be learned but an implication that is not at all obvious. In order to draw the moral implied by Tom's resistance to Mr Stelling's mode of instruction, for example, the reader must pause and wonder how, exactly, forcing cheese onto a lactose-intolerant patient as a cure for stomach upset is like compelling a restless adolescent to memorize Latin. This comparison is both strange and apt, and its oddity is a puzzle for the reader to ponder. Of course, such a treatment is absurd, the reader may think, but what is the point of this bizarre comparison?

The dilemma for the writer is that the absent reader is unknowable and unpredictable, and cooperation cannot be taken for granted. The narrator acknowledges this agency by leaving us to puzzle out the implications of an anecdote or example like this, even as he steers us in a particular direction. The result is a curious exercise in joint attention, whereby the different perspectives of narrator and reader interact in the open space of implication where we try to figure out the connections the text suggests but does not fully specify. We feel the narrator's pressure, as we do with a partner in a collaborative activity like (say) a dance or a tennis-match, but how we respond to the other's action is not fully prescribed, and our partner's intention cannot be fulfilled without our active, creative, and freely given response. Forcing more of the same kind of instruction onto a recalcitrant pupil is both like and not-like plying someone with food they cannot tolerate, and the space between the like and the not-like leaves the reader room to fill in the implications of this strange but striking analogy.

As the novel repeatedly shows, acts often have unpredictable consequences that rebound against and frustrate the efforts of agents to exercise power over contingencies that extend beyond their knowledge and control, as when Mr Tulliver's attempts to regain ownership of the mill land him in his enemy Wakem's clutches. The inability to control unpredictable contingencies also limits a novelist's rhetorical power over future readers whose bodies and minds are not all identical. Eliot must convert these contingencies into opportunities for joint attention and collaboration, and she does so by offering her moral wisdom indirectly, through appeals to "you" the reader to reflect about the gap between well-intended principles and their slippery, uncertain application. The narrator explicitly calls our attention to this gap in one of the novel's most-quoted passages:

> All people of broad, strong sense have an instinctive repugnance to the men of maxims; because such people early discern that the mysterious complexity of our life is not to be embraced by maxims, and that to lace ourselves up in formulas of that sort is to repress all the divine promptings and inspirations that spring from growing insight and sympathy.
>
> (403)

The paradox here—a maxim questioning the value of maxims—is an instance of Eliot's strategy of indirect education through lessons that cannot be passively assimilated but instead require imaginative, creative response. The "insight and sympathy" that the reader must supply cannot be produced by the narrator alone, and the danger of authoritative, didactic exercises of rhetorical power is that they could squelch the improvisational agency—"the divine promptings and inspirations"—that are necessary if the collaborative interaction set in motion by the narrative is to have transformative effects.[7]

Reciprocal collaborative interactions are inherently paradoxical because the relation between partners is both intersubjective and solipsistic, characterized both by shared understandings that make cooperation possible and by barriers to mutual transparency that can result in unexpected responses. The narrator repeatedly calls on the reader to recognize their shared experience of the world: "we have almost all of us" had this happen to us, or "We have all of us" felt such and such emotion, and if you

7 Also see Forest Pyle's insightful analysis of Eliot's "aesthetic teaching" as an indirect practice of soliciting the reader's imaginative filling-out of what is not said: "The drama of the narrator involves most directly the eliciting . . . of that which remains lacking in the events and actions of the story: a sympathy forged out of the romantic conditions of the imagination" (1993, 18). Eliot's tacit faith in the reader's cognitive powers calls into question Nicholas Dames's claim that she is an adherent of Victorian physiological theories that reduced the psyche to a mechanical "network of nerves" incapable of "individual agency, even the agency of introspection," with the consequence that "the ethical cannot be in any way rooted in an account of mental processes" (2011, 215, 232–3). Quite the contrary, Eliot's view of the reader as a partner in imaginative collaboration is based on a conception of narration as a pedagogical practice that exploits cognitive processes for ethical ends by soliciting our agency.

think you are an exception, "Is there any one who can" deny they are subject to the constraints the narrator is describing? (56). Eliot finds the basis for this commonality in our shared childhood experiences: "such things as these are the mother tongue of our imagination, the language that is laden with all the subtle inextricable associations the fleeting hours of our childhood left behind them" (36). This appeal cuts two ways, however. It may be the case that "we could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it . . . where the same flowers come up again every spring that we used to gather with our tiny fingers" (36). But everyone's childhood experiences leave different memory traces, and these differences may separate us into private, non-shareable worlds.

The narrator is no exception, as he admits in explaining his unique, otherwise inexplicable "delight in an elderberry bush overhanging the confused leafage of a hedgerow bank": "there is no better reason for preferring this elderberry bush than that it stirs an early memory" (127). A memory unique to the narrator, this is not something all readers will share. Intersubjectively, "the loves and sanctities of our life" all have "deep immovable roots in memory" (127). This is an experience common to everyone. But these memories may in turn lock us solipsistically in private worlds, apart from others who do not share them—who do not have the narrator's peculiar fondness for elderberry bushes, for example, or who do not understand what a pocket-knife means to Tom's friend Bob (a mystery unfathomable to Tom) or Dorlcote Mill to Mr Tulliver (a sentimental attachment the hard-nosed businessman Wakem does not share but knows how to exploit). The appeals of Eliot's "I"-narrator to "you" the reader are based on the possibility of mutual recognition and shared experience, even as the gap between the "I" and the "you" acknowledges the opacity of each to the other that makes such an appeal necessary, as it would not be if intersubjectivity could be taken for granted.

That is the mistake Mrs Tulliver makes in one of the many moments of mutual misunderstanding in this novel that dramatize Eliot's sense of the paradoxical combination of intersubjectivity and solipsism in interpersonal interactions that she too must negotiate in her relation to her reader. Mrs Tulliver wrongly assumes that our minds are all transparent to one another, an assumption that flies in the face of the evidence of her marriage: "Mrs Tulliver had lived thirteen years with her husband, yet she retained in all the freshness of her early married life a facility of saying things which drove him in the opposite direction to the one she desired" (64). Assuming transparency, she comes to the ill-considered and ill-fated conclusion that a direct approach to Mr Tulliver's arch-enemy Wakem will solve their problems: "Nobody, it appeared, had thought of going to speak to Wakem on this business of the mill; and yet, Mrs Tulliver reflected, it would have been quite the shortest method of securing the right end"

(202). Of course her mission fails, because Wakem thinks differently than she does and sees in the information she provides an opportunity for a business deal that will thwart her plans:

> These were the mental conditions on which Mrs Tulliver had undertaken to act persuasively, and had failed: a fact which may receive some illustration from the remark of a great philosopher, that fly-fishers fail in preparing their bait so as to make it alluring in the right quarter, for want of a due acquaintance with the subjectivity of fishes.
>
> (209)

As the characteristic irony and indirectness of this maxim demonstrate, Eliot does not share Mrs Tulliver's assumption that the transparency of other minds makes a direct approach the best way of soliciting their cooperation. If a narrator is "to act persuasively" and succeed, a posture of omniscience runs the risk of making unwarranted assumptions about how the subjectivity of that slippery fish the reader will respond. A better way is to proceed indirectly, through strategies that acknowledge the unknowable subjectivity of the partner whose cooperation the author requires but cannot command, control, or even fully predict.

Eliot does this by making reading a practice in moral experimentation in which we are invited to reflect about how to apply principles in action. If "the mysterious complexity of our life is not to be embraced by maxims," as she recognizes, and "we have no master-key that will fit all cases" (403), what is a teacher to do? A danger well illustrated in the novel is cognitive rigidity: "strength of will, conscious rectitude of purpose, narrowness of imagination and intellect" that are inconsistent with "that complex, fragmentary, doubt-provoking knowledge which we call truth" (370). An abuse of rhetorical power, direct instruction may backfire and either reinforce prejudices or provoke resistance and will not enhance the improvisatory flexibility necessary to bridge the gap between general rules and individual cases:

> the man of maxims is the popular representative of the minds that are guided in their moral judgment solely by general rules, thinking that these will lead them to justice by a ready-made patent method, without the trouble of exerting patience, discrimination, impartiality—without any care to assure themselves whether they have the insight that comes from a hardly-earned estimate of temptation, or from a life vivid and intense enough to have created a wide fellow-feeling with all that is human.
>
> (403)

This maxim can be read, ironically, as an admonition by an authoritative narrator against the temptation of authoritative pronouncement. Paradoxically pronouncing a general rule against judging by general rules, Eliot enumerates virtues she hopes to facilitate in her reader—"patience, discrimination, impartiality," and "wide fellow-feeling." These virtues are guides for practice that cannot be reduced to "a ready-made patent method" because they are ways of applying principles that are not dictated in advance by those principles. This pragmatic approach recognizes that instructions for action typically do not specify in every detail how to apply them but instead require tact, flexibility, and imagination. The cognitive flexibility and facility in experimental exploration that Eliot wishes to enhance in us, her readers, cannot be delivered through the controlling, didactic lessons of narrative omniscience. Instead, these are practical abilities that readers may develop in improvisatory responses to her narrator's ironic indirection as active participants in collaborative interactions. Or so Eliot hopes, if we as readers cooperate, an interactive response she can solicit but cannot compel or control.

5.3 The interaction of symbolic and dramatic action in *The Waves*

Virginia Woolf's abstract, experimental work *The Waves* is a radical departure from the conventions of realistic representation that may seem to have abandoned the project of sharing life-like experience that Henry James identifies with the novel. Woolf explained in her diary that she wished to escape "this appalling narrative business of the realist" that seemed to her "false, unreal, merely conventional" (1980, 209). Instead, she asked, "Why not invent a new kind of play . . . prose yet poetry: a novel and a play" (128). Hence the peculiar form of *The Waves*, a "play-poem" consisting of symbol-laden pre-chapters that chart the rise and fall of the sun over the course of a day, alternating with chapters of soliloquies presented by six characters, as if taking turns on stage, at different points in their lives parallel to the passage of the sun. Woolf's goal, however, was not to abandon experience for artifice but to find a form that would convey "life itself going on" (229). This ambition is a continuation of the project announced in her famous essay "Modern Fiction" where she protests the artificiality of the demand that a novel "provide a plot" in "the accepted style"—"provide comedy, tragedy, love interest and an air of probability embalming the whole"—and she asks "Is life like this? Must novels be like this?" (1984 [1925], 149–50). Instead, Woolf demands, "Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall," in the hopes of capturing life's "luminous halo" (150).

The dilemma, of course, is that life cannot be rendered in language without forms that are not the life they seek to convey. Woolf's extraordinary decade of experiments in form, from *Jacob's Room* (1922) through *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927), culminating in *The Waves* (1931), is an extended attempt to solve this problem: How can the as-if of literary style render "life itself" without betraying it because of the conventionality of language and the artificiality of form?

Woolf responds to this dilemma by embracing the artificiality of the as-if and using its negativity in order to create possibilities of action and interaction that simulate the experience of life. As she explained in a letter to her friend Ethel Smyth, she wrote *The Waves* "to a rhythm and not to a plot" (1978, 204). What matters to capturing life's "luminous halo," she felt, was less the representational content of the narrative than the rhythms—the patterns of action and interaction—that her writing set in motion. Rhythm, the feeling of pattern generated in and through the temporal unfolding of subjective experience, is fundamental to our sense of life. Not merely private and subjective, however, the capacity of temporal rhythms to be shared makes possible what Ezequiel Di Paolo and colleagues call "participatory sense-making" (2010, 63). As they explain, "social skill depends on a 'rhythmic capacity,' . . . the ability to coordinate through the interaction with another person" (70), and to synchronize patterns of experience intersubjectively in to-and-fro exchanges across the boundary between self and other.

Narrative builds on these capacities for rhythmic action and interaction. As Marco Caracciolo points out, "it is possible for readers to respond to narrative discourse through their bodies because discursive patterns can take on quasi-musical, rhythmic qualities" (2014, 50–1). The comparison to music is particularly apt because the life-like qualities of music are a result not of its representational contents but of its forms, and it is not surprising that *The Waves* has often been compared to music. For example, Paul Ricoeur calls *The Waves* a "polyphonic novel . . . a pure novel of multiple voices, . . . no longer a novel at all but a sort of oratorio offered for reading" (1985, 97). Like a piece of music, the abstract forms of Woolf's novel set in motion interactions between aspects of the text that, in their patterned recurrence, give a rhythmic sense of life, patterns of action and interaction that are not dependent on what is represented by the plot but that offer possibilities to the reader to make various connections between its elements.

As readers, we co-create patterns of intentionality held ready by *The Waves* and thus participate collaboratively in activating its rhythms, and we do so through interactions of at least three kinds: interactions within and between the pre-chapters, between the pre-chapters and the chapters, and between the soliloquies of the six major characters. In each instance, Woolf creates empty spaces that leave it to the reader to form patterns and make connections that a plot would otherwise specify. The pre-chapters recount various aspects of a natural landscape that seem to have symbolic qualities, but what they stand for is a virtual state of affairs that the reader is invited to fill in. Not a static search for correspondences, this activity of filling-in will shift and change as these metaphors recur in various forms between the pre-chapters over the course of the day. The interactions between the pre-chapters are complemented by connections readers are encouraged to discover between the pre-chapters and the chapters, not only through the general mood that each pre-chapter establishes for the subsequent chapter (a time of day corresponding to a particular time of life in the biographies of the characters), but also sometimes through explicit recurrences of images from the pre-chapter in the chapter. These connections and recurrences then rebound on the pre-chapters in a to-and-fro manner and may refigure the meanings the reader discovers there.

Right from the very beginning the pre-chapters foreground the power of the as-if to project relations between the like and the not-like and thereby to generate meanings by provoking imaginative, improvisatory responses:

> The sun had not yet risen. The sea was indistinguishable from the sky, except that the sea was slightly creased *as if* a cloth had wrinkles in it . . .The wave paused, and then drew out again, sighing *like* a sleeper whose breath comes and goes unconsciously. Gradually the dark bar on the horizon became clear *as if* the sediment in an old wine-bottle had sunk and left the glass green. Behind it, too, the sky cleared *as if* the white sediment there had sunk, or *as if* the arm of a woman couched beneath the horizon had raised a lamp and flat bars of white, green and yellow spread across the sky *like* the blades of a fan.
>
> (1992 [1931], 3; emphasis added)

The repetition of these as-if comparisons signals to the reader with unmistakable clarity that this is a text with a virtual, symbolic dimension that we will be called on to fill in by building patterns that connect the like and the not-like. But it is equally clear that we can expect these patterns to shift and change and not settle down (as the wrinkled cloth mutates into a sighing sleeper, who transforms again into the sediment in a wine-bottle, and then into a woman raising a lamp or a fan). Similarly setting in motion as-if interactions between the like and the not-like, the chapters that follow continue the mood established in the pre-chapters but do not repeat them exactly—they are both like and not-like the introductory pre-chapters—although images from them may recur (like the birds in one pre-chapter that "spied a snail and tapped the shell against a stone" [82], a violent image consistent with the "harsh discord" of their songs [81], images of conflict and even violence which are then echoed in the following chapter, with Louis thinking that "to be loved by Susan would be to be impaled by a bird's sharp beak, to be nailed to a barnyard door" [90], and Bernard reflecting that the six "have sung like eager birds each his own song and tapped with the remorseless and savage egotism of the young our own snail-shell till it cracked" [92]). There are connections to be made, interactions between images to configure into patterns, but likenesses are no sooner established than the un-like in the comparison makes it possible to shift the equivalences to a different purpose, a different relationship, a different meaning.

These unstable, shifting, back-and-forth processes of establishing connections and forming patterns are further complemented by the similarities and differences among the characters, who are each recognizably distinctive, even as they seem at times to be aspects of a collective self. As Bernard reflects in his final soliloquy,

> what I call "my life," it is not one life that I look back upon; I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am—Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis: or how to distinguish my life from theirs.
>
> (212)

Readers of *The Waves* have similarly reported a paradoxical doubleness in their experience of the work's characters, noting the defining characteristics that distinguish each of the six from their very first speeches (Susan's affinity to the natural world, Jinny's orientation to society, Rhoda's depressive isolation, Louis's outsider status, Neville's academic aspirations, Bernard's phrase-making), even as their growing-up together, sharing their lives, defines them as a group with a collective self (like "a six-sided flower," Bernard thinks, "made of six lives" [175]). As Mark Hussey observes, "many readers have understood the six voices as aspects of a single character, a point of view apparently endorsed by Woolf herself" (1995, 358). In a letter written to G. L. Dickinson shortly after the novel was published, Woolf explained:

> I did not mean that in some vague way we are the same person, and not separate people. The six characters were supposed to be one . . . I come to feel more and more how difficult it is to collect oneself into one Virginia; even though the special Virginia in whose body I live for the moment is violently susceptible to all sorts of separate feelings.
>
> (1978, 397)

As readers shift back and forth between the characters' speeches, recognizing some patterns that form them into separate identities and others that join them into a collective self, these connections and interactions recreate the duality Woolf reports. Alternating between identifying the characters' uniqueness and recognizing their fundamental connectedness replicates in our experience of Woolf's text a fundamental paradox of intersubjective life, the primordial my-own-ness of experience (the separateness of these selves, like Woolf's sense of herself as "the special Virginia in whose body I live"), even as we co-habit a shared world (their collective identity, like Woolf's own sense that she is the many selves of her intersubjective life, the Virginia she both is and is not).

The experience of creating, dissolving, and reforming these patterns as we read is elusive and does not settle down into a determinate plot, and this patterned fluidity is Woolf's attempt to simulate the to-and-fro interactions within and across subjective and intersubjective experience that characterize life. For some readers, to Woolf's surprise and delight, this experiment apparently succeeded. As she observed in a letter to her friend Ethel Smyth, "How odd this is—so far most of the low-brow reviewers (whose sense I respect) find the Waves perfectly simple: and it is selling beyond all my other books! Now why?" (1978, 389). Despite the strangeness and unconventionality of its forms, something about the relationships it figures and the interactions it sets in motion resonated with readers who would not otherwise be expected to appreciate the technical difficulties of modernist experimentation. Perhaps this is evidence that the text's rhythms do somehow convey a sense of "life itself going on." But such has not been the experience of all readers: even as sophisticated a critic as Frank Kermode reports finding the text's instabilities profoundly discomfiting, and he calls it "an intolerable novel, I mean I find it intolerable in that it makes me sick, in fact, to try and read it" (quoted in Hussey 1995, 360–1). This visceral response also suggests, however, that the text's rhythms work in an embodied manner, the discordances and disjunctions of its ever-shifting as-if relations provoking physical unease because of their refusal to settle down.

The life-likeness of a text, whether experimental or conventional in its forms, depends on the interactions and resonances that its simulations set in motion, and these will necessarily vary between readers because the text depends on us to actualize possibilities it holds ready but does not completely specify. The as-if of a simulation can be generative because of the variability of responses it leaves open, and such contingencies cannot always be predicted or controlled. But this in turn is just like life.

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6 Why love a cat?

An anthropology of human–feline kinesic engagement on- and off-line

Ellen Hertz

Three years ago, upon realizing that my children really had grown up and left home, I got a cat. Called her Maggie. As a child, my family had always kept cats. There was the short-lived but angelic Ribby, whose death represented my first exposure to that bad idea. And there was the velvet-furred, plump-but-not-obese, neutered male tabby named Simpkin, an object of devotion around which members of the family gathered numerous times a day, singly or collectively, to pay delighted tribute. When I myself grew up and left home, my parents continued to dote on him while I became detached. He died at the age of 16, and I remember being surprised and ashamed that I did not feel particularly sad. After the seriously hundreds of hours I had spent burying my face into his dense and buttery short hair or feeling his weight on my chest as he kneaded my sweater and prevented me from reading, after dreading my separation from him as I set off to university, why did I not now feel more of a twinge at the news of his passing? I tried to hide my indifference from my parents, afraid to hurt their feelings, but did not succeed. More troubling still was admitting to myself that my mourning period for the many years spent loving this animal amounted to a matter of seconds, marked by feelings of guilt more than loss.

I am guessing that the unease occasioned by these contrasting feelings of attachment and indifference dogged me (so to speak),[1] because during my graduate school training in anthropology, three classmates and I made a short ethnographic film about purebred cat shows. The film was fun to make and analytically productive; we not only collected attractive footage of well-groomed, unusual-looking cats, but also easily captured the mixture of embarrassment and fascination that surrounds the implicit

1 As artificial and pervasive as any of Lévi-Strauss's famous binaries, the cat–dog opposition underpins much thinking about the subject of this chapter, pushing representations of both animals toward their most caricatural expressions. I shall be attentive to this binary without crediting it with much ontological reality, for I believe that it is safe to say that cats neither view themselves as "the opposite" of dogs nor vice versa.

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racism of the pedigreed cat world, through interviews with purebred breeders and owners. Purebreds are valued for their ability to approximate an ideal type, conceived of in both physical and psychological terms. On the one hand, there are the highly formalized visual "qualities" of the breed (the word "race" is occasionally still used), codified in rules, prizes, guidelines, and international protocols,[2] materialized through a breeding economy,[3] and enforced through both training programs for judges and registration requirements for breeders and owners. On the other hand, there are the equally standardized "temperaments" of each breed, which come to qualify owners in return: she is a "Persian person"; he, a "Scottish Shorthair."

Two decades later, when my two children hit the ages of seven and ten, I decided to "get them each a cat." They picked out two kittens from a neighbor's litter, and soon we were all paying devoted tribute to Grigris and Tigrane. The cats cooperated nicely; translated into the Internet cat lover's idiom, my daughter's cat quickly adopted her new "hooman" and, when not outside diminishing our neighborhood's biodiversity, spent most of her time on my daughter's pillow. My son's cat was more wary of her "owner," probably because he could not help but chase her around the apartment. However, she did do serious community service by producing six kittens whom we all adored. Although I am not by nature an early riser, I found myself waking up at 5:30 a.m. just to watch them do their morning antics: batting, slipping, climbing, chasing, stalking, pouncing, and finally, curling up.

In sum, I know cats, I love cats, I know I love cats, but the question remains: why? What kind of bond links me with cats? Is it with specific cats or cats in general? In other words, what do I love when I love my cat? In this chapter, I would like to explore the hypothesis that we[4] love cats

2 See, for example, the "Russian Blue" as described on the official website of The Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA), a US-based but internationally ramified organization with divisions throughout the world: https://cfa.org/russian-blue/. The CFA currently comprises more than 600 member clubs and has registered over two million pedigreed cats. On the bottom of each page of its website is the following disclaimer: "it is the policy of The Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc. to promote equal participation without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, or disabilities." This statement presupposes a radical distinction between the treatment to be accorded to cats and humans that many anti-speciesist activists contest, but that would be another chapter altogether.

3 See, for example, the costs associated with buying and raising a Norwegian Forest Cat (capital letters are in common usage for names of purebreds): www.hepper.com/norwegian-forest-cat-cost/. This website details such information as the estimated entertainment budget for the breed (weighing in at US$5–65/month).

4 The attentive reader will note the shift from "I" to "we" here.

for reasons that are helpfully illuminated by kinesic intelligence: looking at cats and watching them move helps us remember and celebrate some of our most basic kinetic, kinesic, and kinesthetic experiences, both of our own bodies and of the world.[5] While kinesic analysis is a mode of understanding that can be fruitfully applied to many fields (that, at least, is the premise of this book), applying it to cats helps explain some of the mysteries that have traditionally surrounded our relationship to this animal, an animal we erroneously label "mysterious."

My argument proceeds as follows: in trying to understand what is so lovable about cats, scholars have been distracted by what I shall call the "internalist-communicational" paradigm—that there is something *within* cats that *speaks* to us. This error of appreciation is differently declined in different disciplinary fields. Thus, in the first part of my chapter, I briefly and selectively examine some of the open questions raised by cats in the fields of literary studies, (zoo-)archeology, evolutionary biology, ethology and social-cultural anthropology, all of which have contributed to creating an aura of mystery around this most common of animals.[6] In the next part, I turn to popular culture—notably to the phenomenon of cats on the Internet which, as my readers probably know, is huge. Whether one views feline popularity as the Internet "choosing" cats[7] or cats "taking over" the Internet,[8] the phenomenon speaks to a special relationship between cats and audiovisual online culture that merits our attention. I argue that rethinking human relations to cats through the lens of kinesthetic intelligence helps us to understand a good part of what we do when we interact with cats off-line as well as on: we watch them, but we do not "understand" them, and if we are seeking communication, perhaps we are (. . . ahem . . .) barking up the wrong tree. Furthermore (and here I fear provoking cat-lover rage, apologies in advance), perhaps it is precisely *because* cats don't have all that much to say for themselves that they provide a specific intellectual lesson, along with deep and particular forms of joy, to their human admirers.

5 I refer here to the distinctions drawn by Bolens (2022), who restates the 4Ks of kinesic analysis as follows: "*kinetics* (laws of physics relative to movement in general, e.g., gravity), *kinesthesia* (the sensations of movement in one's body), *kinesis* (the perception of movements), and *kinematics* (physiological configurations and biomechanical constraints, e.g., joint orientation)" (2).

6 By many accounts, cats are the second most numerous mammal—just after humans—on the planet.

7 https://thoughtcatalog.com/leigh-alexander/2011/01/why-the-internet-chose-cats/

8 www.wired.com/2015/08/how-cats-took-over-the-internet/

6.1 Cats as an object of science: The enduring unknown

Although contemporary zooarchaeological evidence suggests that the "special relationship between people and cats" (Driscoll et al. 2009) dates back at least 9,500 years to a double human–cat burial in Cyprus, there is hardly a book or article that does not begin with a mention of cats in Ancient Egypt, and many authors continue to name Egypt as the place where cats were domesticated. This association seems to stem from cats' status as sacred animals in Egyptian religion, although the scholarly literature on this question cultivates an aura of mystery rather than clarity. In his well-known work *The Cat in Ancient Egypt* (2006), Oxford Egyptologist Jaromir Malek argues that "the progress of the cat in Egyptian religion was, in many respects, unusual" for although the cat never attained the official status of a deity, its popularity—much like its Internet successors—"eventually surpassed that of any other animal and reached far beyond Egypt's boundaries" (73). Malek details the changing status of the cat over the course of more than 10,000 years of history, claiming that its "strength lay in its humble origins, its economic usefulness and its apotropaic (protective) qualities, which first brought it widespread respect and a prominent place in the personal religion of ordinary people" (73). Through a series of dynastic reconfigurations, the male cat was gradually associated with the sun god and then, in an "unexpected twist of history" (73) during the first millennium BCE, the female cat was linked with the goddess Bastet. During the Ptolemaic period (305–30 BC), the cat "was the most Egyptian of all the animals associated with the gods and one which never lost a certain aura of aloofness and mystery, although it was a familiar sight in most houses" (Malek 2006, 75).

In her preface to an anthology of literary writings on cats (compiled with Daniel Halpern (1992)), Joyce Carol Oates takes the divine-and-mysterious hypothesis and runs with it, applying it particularly to artists and writers over the ages. She observes that "writers have been drawn to cats above all animals: not simply to loving relationships with them, but to the veneration of them in poetry and prose" (xi). Oates reframes this veneration as a writerly attraction to the wild *Felis silvestris* that lurks behind the "mask" of her domesticated descendant, *Felis catus*: "the wildcat is the 'real' cat," she writes, "the soul of the domestic cat; unknowable to human beings, he yet exists inside our household pets, who have long ago seduced us with their seemingly civilized ways" (x). Writers (and artists more generally), inhabited as they are by the uncontrollable force that we call the unconscious or the imagination, are naturally drawn to this essence of cat. "[A]nd so, in the accessibility of *Felis catus* we sense the secret, demonic, wholly inaccessible presence of *Felis sylvestris*" (xii). Oates's account centers on the uncontrollability of cats, which becomes a metaphor or a reminder of the uncontrollable process that is artistic creation. Like cats, inspiration springs from left field, pouncing on its host only to take leave just as suddenly as it arrived, thereby abandoning the artist to the mediocrity of her conscious mind. The problem with this approach, resonant as it may be, is that it cannot explain the fascination that the less creative among us also feel for cats—although it would explain why cats have also been known to incite fear and loathing, with cruel consequences (Rogers 2001). It also requires us to believe in a force called "the unconscious." Surely, we can come up with something less invisible!

Surprisingly, the evolutionary biology of cats echoes these preoccupations. Drawing on zooarchaeology, it focuses on the mystery of origins, that is, the process by which one subspecies of wild cat evolved into the domesticated house cat. The inexplicable element here revolves around the fact that cats seem to be only semi-domesticated, a hybrid status that we humans apparently have a hard time wrapping our minds around. According to the standard account (Tucker 2016, 32–3), all of the world's domestic cats can trace their genetic ancestry back to one species of wild cat, the *lybica*, currently residing in southern Turkey, Iraq, and Israel. Domestication of the *lybica* began in the Fertile Crescent and dates back at least 12,000 years to the period when humans began domesticating grain and storing it in granaries. Wild cats were probably drawn to farms, villages, and temples where they could feed off new rodent populations, creating "commensal processes of cat domestication" (Hu et al. 2013). Indeed, one enamored author (Thomas 1994) even suggests that we give cats credit (or blame) for enabling the first Agricultural Revolution, for without cats to eat mice, the accumulation of surplus grain in granaries (and, I would add, all that follows: storable wealth, taxes, elites, specialized knowledge, the birth of the state, bureaucracy, the Ivy League . . . global warming) would not have been possible.

While this finding reflects a scientific consensus, the exact circumstances leading to the birth of *Felis catus* are notoriously difficult to trace as cats have changed so little over the course of the domestication process (Tucker 2016, 32). Specifically, cats have seemingly resisted that evolutionary pattern called the "domestication syndrome": after millennia of living with humans and experiencing the change in diet, lifestyle, and life expectancy that this involves, cats have barely been physically or genetically altered (Tucker 2016, 152–3). Indeed, many biologists currently consider cats oxymoronically self-domesticating (Driscoll, Macdonald, and O'Brien 2009): it is they who "chose" to evolve to live in closer proximity to humans, not humans who manipulated, bred, or otherwise constrained them to do so. This is related to the fact that cats, in the words of one expert lover, "transcend the practical" (Tucker 2016, 52). Unlike their domesticated brethren (cows, chicken, sheep, horses, and, of course, dogs), domestic cats produce no milk, eggs, or wool; they plough no fields and pull no sleds; and they are eaten only on rare and probably unhappy occasions. Indeed, the only clear purpose they serve—catching mice—appears to stem not from a desire or need to be useful, but from a kind of hobby, pastime, or passion from which they draw sadistic pleasure.[9] Still more importantly, cats can easily do without a home and revert to feral status at any moment as demonstrated by the millions of feral cats living in many cities throughout the world.[10] Indeed, specialists wonder whether cats should be classified as "exploited" or "exploiting" (British zoologist Juliet Clutton-Brock, quoted in 2008, 39), as they seem both capable of and inclined to impose the conditions of their own captivity.[11]

The debates about how cats behave "in captivity" bring us from evolutionary biology to ethology where, given their omnipresence in human life, we would expect to find clearer answers. Alas and surprise, it turns out that despite their aura of fascination, cats are understudied and little understood—particularly in comparison with (you guessed it) dogs. In a recent paper, ethologists Péter Pongrácz and Dóra L. Onofer (2020) investigate for the first time the links between perseverative behavior (making behavioral errors based on past experience) and ostensive human signals (a heavily researched area in human developmental psychology influenced by Piaget). Through a series of controlled experiments, they test whether the presence of ostensive verbal cues affects cat behavior, such as finding hidden food, and whether this is a function of the cat's familiarity with the

9 For Elias Canetti (1973), a cat playing with a captured mouse represents the quintessential expression of power:

> The space which the cat dominates, the moments of hope it allows the mouse, while continuing however to watch it closely all the time and never relaxing its interest and intention to destroy it—all this together, space, hope, watchfulness and destructive intent, can be called the actual body of power, or, more simply, power itself.
>
> (281)

10 It is difficult to obtain reliable numbers on feral cats, but some estimates go as high as 400 million—twice as high as the number of house cats. For a fascinating glimpse into the controversies surrounding feral cats, see the long entry by the disagreeing authors of Wikipedia at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feral_cat.

11 In a return of the Canettian repressed, the trope of the captive cat circulates widely on the Internet (see, e.g. "Henri 2, Paw de Deux" www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q34z5dCmC4M) and provides a key locus for the dog–cat comparison (e.g. www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfoyBv97WmY).

human "demonstrator." The outcomes are as hilarious as the descriptions of the experiment itself:[12] the experimenter visited 68 possible "subjects," seven of which failed during preliminary testing while 21 refused to cooperate. Of the remaining cats, only seven managed to complete all four stages of the experiment; 18 finished three stages, and 13 finished only two (Pongrácz and Onofer 2020, 685). Nonetheless, the authors draw on the results of these 38 trials to conclude that "domestic cats could successfully find the hidden food [. . .] only when the experimenter [not the owner] did the hiding with simultaneous ostensive verbal cueing" (687). In sum, cats' responses to human attention-eliciting behavior "show markedly unique features": cats' "highly developed social skills" and their ability to "form attachment with their owners" were offset by the "limited duration of [their] memory for disappearing objects" (689). In the end, only the unfamiliar human making ostensive verbal signals reliably led these 38 subjects to their food cup over the course of the two to four experimental episodes. Perhaps the clearest result of this research is stated in its abstract, which highlights "the need of conducting further thorough experiments on the social cognition of cats, based on their own right beside the traditional cat-dog comparative approach" (681).

All scientists call for more studies in their areas of predilection, of course, and research on cat cognition is flourishing, with more than 13 million entries on a recent Google search. But my quick review demonstrates a scientific tendency, even a seeming drive, *not* to understand cats and to emphasize how little is known or how unusual they are—particularly in relation to dogs. This stubborn pursuit of ignorance reaches a peak when it comes to my own discipline, social-cultural anthropology, where a Google search for the term "anthropology of cats" comes up with only one, yes one, very unlikely result: a two-page 1963 entry by Yamamoto Kenkichi titled "Folklore and the Anthropology of Cats" in the short-lived *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*. This comes in contradistinction to two well-explored areas in the discipline, the long history of domestication and the more recent anthropology of dogs,[13] the popularity of which may reflect the extraordinary success of Donna Haraway's intriguing *When Species Meet* (2008).

12 After the subject made its choice, both cups were removed shortly, to prevent the cat from visiting the other cup [. . .]. In the experimenter non-ostensive and the owner non-ostensive contexts, the experimenter and the owner recited a short poem in a non-ostensive manner during the hiding process.

(Pongrácz and Onofer 2020, 684)

13 A Google search for "anthropology of dogs" brings up more than 63,000 entries.

Traditionally, the anthropology of domesticated animals is marked by functionalism of both the materialist and symbolic persuasions, with classic analyses such as E.E. Evans-Pritchard's (1940) discussion of Nuer relations to their cattle combining these approaches. These studies were frankly anthropocentric, interested only in what animals tell us about humans and not in animals themselves. As one author put it: "like the study of women [sic!], which has provided corrective and sometimes alternative views of how societies operate at many levels, the study of animal-human interaction now offers a stimulating and specific view of how humans operate at many levels" (Shanklin 1985, 377).

Spurred on by Clifton Bryant's rallying cry to study "the zoological connection" (1979), sociologists became interested in the question of animal "culture" only in the 1980s. Still, the paradigm remained similarly centered on "animal-related human behavior" (the subtitle of Bryant's 1979 article). Janet and Steven Alger (1999) produced promising work in the interactionist paradigm with their ethnographic study of a cat shelter, which argued that the culture and social structure of the shelter reflected "choices made by the cats" and stressed "affection, friendship, and social cohesion among the cats rather than territoriality and conflict" (199). Yet, in most of these efforts, the researchers' inability to get into the heads of the animals they study figures as a central problem that is either tiptoed around, as in Alger and Alger's (1999) glib reference to cats' "choices," or overemphasized, as in the persistent fascination with the question of whether animals have things that are variously called "minds" (Sanders and Arluke 1993), "conscious inner lives" (Nimmo 2012), or a "self" who also "gazes back" (White 2013, 95).

In sum, like other disciplines reviewed above, early social science research on domestic animals tended to remain within the internalist-communicational paradigm I have identified: that in order to study and "relate to" animals, we need to know what goes on within them and this is difficult at best—perhaps impossible. The new and flourishing multidisciplinary field of multispecies ethnography provides an interesting, although not entirely convincing, response to these limitations. Multispecies ethnography can be defined as the study of "contact zones where lines separating nature from culture have broken down, when encounters between *Homo sapiens* and other beings generate mutual ecologies and coproduced niches" (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010, 546). Inspired by concepts of "becoming" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) and the ontological turn (Kohn 2015), multispecies ethnography looks beyond minds, and even beyond such bounded entities as species, to study the entanglements of material, technological, regulatory, territorial, and affective dynamics that jointly create the conditions for life on earth. Communication is conceived of through the image of the rhizome, an acentric model proposed by Deleuze and Guattari in order to highlight the forms of non-hierarchical, dynamic organization that they wished to promote. Dogged by a good deal of fluff (see Hertz 2016), these studies often point to ways to move beyond internalist-communicational conceptions of human–cat communication without actually doing the work. Specifically, they fail to build on previous anthropological insights into kinesic and proxemic analysis (Farnell 1999), which I have drawn on for inspiration here.

6.2 Cats in popular culture: *les nobles attitudes*

> *Ils prennent en songeant les nobles attitudes*
> *Des grands sphinx allongés au fond des solitudes,*
> *Qui semblent s'endormir dans un rêve sans fin.*
> Charles Baudelaire, *Les fleurs du mal*, "Les Chats"

So much, then, for the science of cats. As summed up in the words of one commercially driven pet website with the mission "to make the life of you and your pets [. . .] even more enjoyable":

> cats are extremely mysterious creatures. Although they've been around a long time, we don't really know a ton about them. Many times, we wonder what they're thinking, or why they swat at everything that moves. Not many sufficient studies [sic] have been done on cat behavior, probably because they just won't let you![14]

To advance our inquiry, perhaps we might take a detour by way of less academic reflections. Following the lead of popular cultural accounts, I have found it fruitful to shift the focus from understanding to enjoyment. Could it be that the mystery surrounding cats is linked to pleasure? But how does this work, exactly?

Take this unusually boisterous example of a hooman observing and enjoying his cat. In "Let Us Praise and Honor Cats," Nick Slater (2021), a frequent contributor to the confidential-but-classy magazine *Current Affairs*, recounts a scene that should feel familiar to cat lovers the world round:

> Nothing's as startling as a magnificent black longhair cat flying into your kitchen with claws stabbing down like an angel's switchblades, 12 pounds of murderous grace pouncing on a piece of lettuce before losing interest in an instant and retreating to a corner to solemnly lick her anus.

14 https://petkeen.com/how-much-of-the-internet-is-cats/

> What the—?! It scrambles the brains to see so much life unfold so fast. This most ordinary of scenes—person standing at counter, listening to podcast, chopping leafy greens—has been injected with a dose of chaos. At once there is drama, then comedy, then a befuddled tenderness as the tiny predator stares up at you with her weird glowing yellow eyes. (56)

This account focuses on feline unpredictability, a common trope in popular cultural accounts about cats, but with an accent on movement and speed that seems promising. Note, however, that Slater stops describing too quickly: rather than continuing to observe what his cat *does*, he tries to interpret what these movements and poses *mean*—a testimony to the stronghold that the internalist-communicational scientific paradigm has placed on our understanding. "At once there is drama," says Slater, "Then comedy, then a befuddled tenderness." Really? Did the magnificent black longhair come flying into the kitchen? Yes. Did she then move to the corner and lick her anus? Again, yes! Are her "weird glowing yellow eyes" turned in our direction? If you say so. Are they staring up at us with "tenderness"? Nothing could be more uncertain.

Watching cats run, jump, pounce, bat, claw, hide, stalk, sleep, and "swat at everything that moves"—in sum, witnessing cats in action freed from the internalist-communicational gloss of a commentator like Slater—is what the mass digital phenomenon of cats on the Internet is all about. I shall call it cat-based Mass Enjoyment through Online Witnessing, or cat-based MEOW. Procuring an accurate measurement of cat-based MEOW is difficult not because of lack of interest on the part of analysts, but because cat content (like 90% of user-driven content on the Internet) is "unstructured," which means that it is difficult to classify even for those who track and quantify digital data.[15] Nonetheless, images and videos of cats are among the digital world's most viewed materials,[16] accounting for as much as 15% of all Internet traffic.[17] As of 2014, an estimated 2 million cat videos had been posted on YouTube alone, with a total of nearly 26 billion views;[18] in 2020, during the pandemic, searches for "cat" on Google were

15 https://blog.purestorage.com/perspectives/how-much-of-the-worlds-data-is-cat-content/

16 See notes 6 and 7 above; see also www.bbc.com/culture/article/20150918-how-did-cats-win-the-internet. This assessment is reinforced by the existence of a Wikipedia page solely devoted to "cats on the Internet": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cats_and_the_Internet. Hilariously, the search for the analogous page for dogs sends one to a famous *New Yorker* cartoon with the caption: "on the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog" (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Internet,_nobody_knows_you%27re_a_dog). Non-ontological opposition strikes again!

17 www.smallbizlabs.com/2015/02/cats-drive-15-of-all-internet-traffic.html

18 www.sciencealert.com/watching-cat-videos-lowers-stress-and-makes-you-happy-study-reveals

reported to have reached 50 million per month (up by 20 million from 2015).[19] As for photos, there are an estimated 6.5 billion pictures available on the world's servers. (Just for the record, this means that cats not only have devastating effects on biodiversity, but are also a significant cause of global warming via carbon emissions linked to digital data storage.[20]) As one of the most popular subjects of memes, cats are regularly surveyed on YouTube and in popular magazines.[21] Furthermore, specific cats (Grumpy Cat, Lil Bub, Maru) have become Internet stars or influencers with effects that go beyond the virtual world: owners of famous cats are approached with offers for advertising and invited to cat-influencer events and conferences, such as CatCon[22] or the Walker Arts Center's Internet cat video festival.[23] Their houses become pilgrimage sites for fans eager to catch a glimpse of the beloved animal IRL ("in real life").[24]

Online articles trying to understand the popularity of cat videos are, proportionally, almost as popular as cat videos themselves. These articles advance various arguments to explore and explain cat-based MEOW, many of which are tautological. The most seemingly serious is a conclusion widely cited in the media:[25] that viewing online cat content reduces stress. This theory represents the general-audience translation of a survey performed by professor of media studies Jessica Gall Myrick, with slightly more ambiguous results. Drawing on mood management theory Myrick (2015) surveyed 6795 Internet users in the United States to explore the "guilty pleasure" that surrounds viewing online cat content. Positing that "enjoyment [is] a function of the relationships between procrastination, guilt, and happiness," (168) the study attempts to tease out relative proportions of positive energy and engagement on the one hand, procrastination or "cyberslacking" on the other. It comes to the timid conclusion—onto which the media immediately glommed—that "positive emotions and increased energy after viewing online cat media promotes [sic] the idea that viewing Internet cats may actually function as a form of digital pet therapy and/or stress relief for Internet users" (174). But for our purposes, this conclusion merely begs the question: "why?"

19 See note 15.
20 See note 15.
21 See, for example: www.rd.com/list/hilarious-cat-memes-youll-laugh-at-every-time/
22 www.catconworldwide.com/
23 https://walkerart.org/magazine/internet-cat-video-festival, last held in 2015.
24 www.lamag.com/culturefiles/influencer-cats-catcon/; www.catster.com/lifestyle/how-to-make-your-cat-into-an-internet-star; www.theawl.com/2012/03/my-quest-to-get-rich-from-viral-cat-videos/
25 See, for example, www.verywellmind.com/stress-relieving-benefits-of-watching-cute-animal-videos-4150074

Other common explanations for cat-based MEOW hold up equally poorly under scrutiny. Cat videos are said to be “inherently entertaining” because cats “are playful, curious, and often unpredictable, which makes for great video content.”[26] The same article (which, given its repetitive and circular qualities, was probably written by CatGPT) asserts that cats “make us laugh and feel good” because they are “relatable”: “watching them do silly things on camera can make us feel closer to them.” To the question of why cats and not some other animal, the article responds that “the answer is simple: cats are unique. They have a personality and a charm that is all their own, and they have a way of capturing our hearts like no other animal.” A similar line of argument focuses on the idea that cats are naturally cute. As one article put it: “why cats? That’s a silly question. Cats are adorable” (Yothment 2022). Yes, psychologists have found evidence that the feeling that cats are adorable correlates to changes in brain chemistry, and it seems that people who interact with cats IRL often have lower blood pressure and experience the release of “feel-good” neuromodulatory substances such as dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin (Amodeo 2015). But this argument only brings us back to the question of why so many people own cats, and fails to engage with the specificities of audio-visuality.

One intriguing study, however, carries cuteness from the real to the virtual world by investigating the relationship between viewing images of kittens and subsequent “careful behavior” (Nittono et al. 2012). Led by experimental psychologist Hiroshi Nittono, currently also General Advisor to the Research Society for Cute Things under a regional bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry,[27] this experiment found that “cuteness-triggered positive emotion” improved the experimental human subjects’ performance of visual searching-and-matching tasks and, more generally, their fine motor dexterity. The explanation for this resides in what famous ethologist-zoologist Konrad Lorenz identifies as “baby releasers,” “physical traits that remind us of human young and set off a hormonal cascade,” as Abigail Tucker (2016) explains in her authoritative popular account *The Lion in the Living Room* (52). Cats, and even more so kittens, are said to possess baby releaser traits in large quantities because cats, as it turns out, look like us! Unlike the long-nosed dog or the long-nosed, side-eyed goat, horse, and sheep, cats (and to some extent puppies) are characterized by a round face, big cheeks, small nose, and large, forward-facing eyes. Faced with these triggers, humans experience enhanced attention and focus—reactions that represent evolutionary

26 “A history of cat videos and why we’re still obsessed with them in 2023,” https://upsocial.com/history-of-cat-videos-2023/.

27 https://acp.iafor.org/dvteam/professor-hiroshi-nittono/.

advantages in that they encourage mindful care of young children. Tucker (2016) quotes biologist Stephen Jay Gould as saying that pet-keeping is proof we are "fooled by an evolved response to our own babies and we transfer our reaction to the same set of features in other animals" (53). It would seem that cat-based MEOW boils down to human hardwiring gone astray.

Be that as it may, when considering the popularity of cats on the Internet, we still need to engage with the medium itself—largely amateur audiovisual content, the availability of which often requires high degrees of creativity and know-how (not to mention hours and hours of free labor). In "Do Cats Know They Rule YouTube? Surveillance and the Pleasures of Cat Videos," Radha O'Meara (2014) does just this. The film and media scholar identifies what she calls the "distinguishing features of contemporary cat videos," focusing on narrative structure and the videos' relations to their audiences.[28] Comparing cat videos with the aesthetic of astonishment in early film history, she hones in on what she considers unique to cats in audiovisual form: their unselfconsciousness before the camera. This leads her to the strong (in my view, too strong) hypothesis that we enjoy online cat content because feline unselfconsciousness allows us to imagine the possibility of freedom from surveillance. She concludes on an ironic note, pointing out that clicks on cat videos are, to the contrary, a hotspot for surveillance capitalism (Zuboff 2019), an arrangement we participate in "with the gleeful abandon of a kitten jumping in a tissue box" (O'Meara 2014, para. 2).

We need not embrace O'Meara's conclusion to learn a great deal from this article. In particular, we learn that cat videos have their "canon," three categories of which she lists as "dancing cats, surprised cat, and cat falling off counter."[29] If we add to this the popular genre of "cats pushing things off surfaces," we have ourselves a promising dataset for kinesic analysis. Let us begin with kinetics or, in the words of Bolens (2022), "the laws of physics relative to movement in general" (2). In "Embodied Cognition, Kinaesthetic Knowledge, and Kinesic Imagination in Literature and Visual Arts," Bolens analyzes images of fallen angels to show kinesic imagination at work in masterpieces of Late Medieval to Early Renaissance art, focusing on how artists used realistic depiction (along with the vertical canvas) to illustrate the force of gravity that brought hubristic angels literally to their downfall. A dominant category of cat videos I shall call

28 As the article is available online only, I cannot cite specific pages, but it is short. See https://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/794.

29 Respectively (my choice of illustrations) www.youtube.com/shorts/bkUrx-8yWXg, www.youtube.com/watch?v=6U_XREUMOAU and www.youtube.com/watch?v=57G--pkrebI

"cats and the Fall" features cats seemingly fascinated by the same forces of gravity. One family favorite, entitled "Funny Cat Gets Rid of Donald Trump," pictures a determined cat taking an exasperated swipe at an impeached president.[30] Other classics include "Gato Malo: Thug Life" with 11 million views[31] and the numerous medleys made by devoted compilers, such as "Cats Knocking Things Over."[32] There are also well-known videos attempting to explain *why* cats knock things off things. *Pets Central*'s YouTube channel Ask the Vet features a veterinarian explaining that this hilarious habit is simply cats training to hunt and play with their prey.[33] The GradyVet YouTube channel attributes this behavior to cat curiosity,[34] while Facts About Cats explores the possibility that cats are simply "jerks."[35] However, nothing captures the foundational nature of the "Cats and the Fall" genre like the Flat Earth cat meme pictured in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 This meme can be located on the Internet with the search "Flat Earth Cat Meme." Like all memes, it has no identifiable author, and exists in many versions, some of which appear to have been invented to troll flat-earthers.

30 www.youtube.com/shorts/yzvZviUAEYE
31 www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoUEQYjYgf4
32 www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6QPOUgbS6c
33 www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9PWCj9CeIU
34 www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjDwvfqQSDE
35 www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TxM1tak0CQ

Kinesthesia is the second of Bolens's concepts for analyzing movement via the body's sensory relation to space. It focuses on how viewers transfer the sensory memory of movement to the image or scene viewed, creating empathetic embodied cognition. Numerous cat videos make conscious use of the viewer's kinesthetic knowledge to suggest embodied experiences both familiar and odd—but no cat has activated kinesic intelligence like the Japanese Internet star Maru, who holds a Guinness world record for the most views of a single animal on YouTube (over 325 million).[36] Maru is a plump Scottish Fold who loves to get into small places (see Figure 6.2), a quality his owner calls "meltability."[37]

Maru's shaky descent of a short slope on a pink sled has garnered 2.4 million views,[38] while his afternoon swing session earned 2.1 million.[39] Part of the pleasure of these videos probably comes from Maru's owner's excellent editing and production choices. The videos use calming silence

Figure 6.2 The video titled "Meltability of Cats," on the website *I am Maru*, shows how easily Maru slides in and out of a bowl. It begins with two other cats, the first being unsuccessful, the second succeeding but with efforts, in contrast to Maru, a real star in matters of meltability. Available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbPDCikAXBA

36 www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCofdZITUEY
37 www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbPDCikAXBA
38 www.youtube.com/watch?v=7z9KPTI5ixI
39 www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnj6cnlIjM4

(there is rarely added music or voiceovers) and steady, real-time pace (the camera is virtually always stabilized while the sequences are long and uninterrupted). However, the rest is due to Maru and the affordances and constraints of bodies, containers, and movement.

The related analytical angle of kinesis is Bolens's third term: audience perception of movement and of movement's relation to tempo, timing, and momentum. A prime example of the kinesic enjoyment of cats on the Internet is provided by one of the early viral cat videos "Surprised Kitty,"[40] which has inspired human imitations such as "Re: Surprised Kitty" on the YouTube channel 1Click2Fame.[41] A second Japanese cat with star potential combines kinesthetics and kinesis to produce a version of "melting" that is both painful and hilarious, racking up over 21 million views.[42] And the many thousands of videos of what has been called "cat slapstick"[43] activate all of the possibilities of "movement-based communication" (Bolens 2022, 1), beginning with what *Wikipedia* reports as the "precursor to cat videos popular on the Internet":[44] "The Boxing Cats (Prof. Welton's)," filmed in Thomas Edison's Black Maria studio in 1894.[45] The contemporary version of this, found on the French channel *Parole de chat*, is "*Dansons la Capucine*," which includes an elaborate voiceover that calls attention to the fighting/dancing cats' sense of rhythm and coordination.[46] Finally, the viral "Stalking Cat" provides a surprising illustration of a cat playing the children's game of statues (*un, deux, trois soleil* in French), mastering the relational codes of motion and stillness—a fancy way of saying that it knows how to stalk prey.[47]

A sub-genre of kinesic cat videos could be labeled "the gaze." O'Meara (2014) theorizes eye-camera relations in cat videos, arguing that:

> The activity of the human creator seems to contrast with the behaviour of the cat in these videos, who appears unaware of being watched. The cats' apparent uninhibited behaviour gives the viewer the illusion of voyeuristically catching a glimpse of a self-sufficient world. [. . .] Interestingly, one of the reasons that audiences may find this mode of observation so accessible and engaging, is because it heeds the conventions of the fourth wall in the dominant style of fiction film and

40 www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ltYuVvBLa8
41 www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Tj9S8mU2t4
42 www.youtube.com/shorts/iOYQOicacYo
43 https://mashable.com/archive/why-does-the-web-love-cats
44 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Boxing_Cats_(Prof._Welton%27s)
45 www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qre61opE_g
46 www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIePsbJSS04
47 www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzzjgBAaWZw

> television, which presents an hermetically sealed diegesis . . . This projection is enabled by discourse, which constructs cats as independent and aloof, a libertarian ideal.
>
> (paragraphs 22 and 26)[48]

IRL, it seems that cats do indeed avert their gaze more frequently than, for example, dogs (Koyasu et al. 2020) and thus could pass for "unself-conscious" in videos. Yet, in many of these they seem to be using their gaze, or at least the direction in which they turn their heads, almost consciously as a basis for embodied communication. This gives rise to contrasting expressions of cat content: the classic looking away (a movement of the head that humans frequently interpret as an expression of contempt or disinterest)[49] and the stare (an example of which, called "Surveillance Cat II," recently went viral with more than 10 million views).[50]

The final category of embodied cognition in Bolens's 4Ks is kinematics, that is, "the physiological configurations and biomechanical constraints" of bodies, such as limb flexibility and orientation. Cats, of course, excel at doing things with their skeletons and joints that we cannot do and we seem to enjoy watching this, as attested by the 2 million viewers of the video of cat paws[51] or "The Ultimate Compilation of Stretching Cats."[52] "Cats Who Crab Walk!"[53] also seems to fit into the category of kinematics, as does Indy, the Goalkeeper Cat in Figure 6.3.[54]

Finally, Maru also stars in this category as he becomes liquid again with back compressed, paws folded, and only his tail waving in apparent discontent.[55]

48 She goes on to draw an analogy to Derrida's conception of animal nakedness, concluding that:

> Cat videos offer the illusion of watching the other without disturbing it, brandishing the weapon without acknowledging the violence of its impact. There is a logical tension between these dual pleasures of cat videos: we want to escape surveillance, while exerting it.

This interesting reflection takes us rather too far afield for this chapter.

49 www.youtube.com/shorts/bGF90P2aG8c

50 www.youtube.com/shorts/cCJd1jCwUGQ

51 www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwU2GcohJZA

52 www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5k1q0YUoYQ

53 www.youtube.com/watch?v=WePW0rAG2lQ

54 www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-6Ljyp3HuQ

55 www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeiDdPrVmf4

Figure 6.3 Cropped screen shot of the cover photo of the online video "Goalkeeper Cat ready for the new season!! Impossible saves in Slow Motion!!." Available at https://yewtu.be/watch?v=v-6Ljyp3HuQ

6.3 Conclusion: What you see is what you get

Online cat content is notoriously frivolous or lighthearted, and those who study it often excuse themselves while insisting that its immense popularity "should encourage [. . .] researchers to take note" (Myrick 2015, 175). I am no exception to this rule, but with a caveat. My original question was "why love a cat?" I have argued that the popularity of cats on the Internet tells us a great deal about the popularity of cats full stop, but the two inquiries should not be conflated. Every cat lover knows that we love cats not only because of the way they move, but also for their feel, their smell, and their sounds: they're soft and sometimes fluffy, they're clean, they meow and purr, and these qualities cannot be experienced online.[56] However, I would argue that the detour by online adoration is useful precisely for

56 Correction! See here (www.youtube.com/watch?v=CY7t8ow2gOM) for a two-hour, 59-minute video called "Happy Cat Purring Smoothly–Comforting Sounds for Sleep, Relaxation, Learning, Concentration, ASMR" that takes cat purring to the next level. Cats' links with music on the Internet is profound and would merit a separate study. For instance, see the super-viral "Cat Vibing to Ieavan Polkka" with 87 million views (www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUYvbT6vTPs) and enjoy one of its many spinoffs, "The Kiffness X NumNum Cat" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP9r6UjCA7I).

this reason. It is because we cannot enjoy cats multisensorily online that we can focus on the forms of kinesic enjoyment that audiovisual material provides. And here, I follow O'Meara in arguing that cats are relatable in a very particular way: their inattention to the camera, combined with their fundamentally underdetermined relationship to communication and social relations, takes us outside the internalist-communicational paradigm. This allows us to focus on movement and form in space and time—our most primordial form of embodied cognition.

As Bolens (2022) argues, this shift in focus has epistemological as well as ethical implications:

> while a movement-based meaning must unquestionably be situated in its historical and cultural context, kinesic imagination and kinesthetic knowledge may not only help us delve deeper into an artwork, but also find in it the source of novel and more discerning relations with our own sensorimotor and interpersonal reality.
>
> (14)

For the study of cats and animals more broadly, we can draw similar ethical conclusions, although these must be situated within late modernity and principally in countries where many people are wealthy enough to keep animals as pets. In a premonitory paper from 1990 titled "Understanding Dogs Through Kinesthetic Empathy, Social Construction, and History," psychologist Kenneth Shapiro (1990) proposes that serious engagement with dog research requires "kinesthetic empathy through which the investigator attempts to directly sense the motor intention or attitude or project of the animal" (186). He is arguing against what he considers the unethical practice of restraining or manipulating animals in order to understand them, as well as against the conceptual limits of these experimental research designs that neglect what he calls "the space of place" (190). Drawing on the method of kinesthetic empathy as applied to his own dog Sabaka, he concludes:

> invitations to move and bodily sensibility are the basis of meaning in Sabaka's experience. For him, meaning does not occur in or consist of a semantic field of, say, differences, similarities, and associations. Rather, meaning occurs in and is the contexts of possible moves; of possible ways of living and maintaining space; and, as the last reflection suggests, of forms of relationship with other.
>
> (194)

This all seems headed in the right direction, but my demonstration is intended to be more modest: love for cats is best understood when not too much is read into it and them. Returning to my cat Maggie, I'm OK with not having access to what's "inside" her. Simply watching and interacting with her "from the outside" is good enough for me.

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7 Material scent

Textiles beyond touch

Jessica Hemmings

Kretek is my Proust's madeleine. Marcel Proust's evocative passage from the first volume of *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (1913), in which he describes the vivid nostalgic memories evoked by a madeleine cake dipped in lime-flower tea, has become one of the best cited examples of sensory information evoking involuntary memory in literature.[1] My experience relates to the power that scent has to evoke an embodied sense of familiarity that is separate from the original context. My early childhood was spent in Indonesia. While I have no particular childhood memories of kretek, the clove cigarettes popular throughout the region, later in life, when smoking clove cigarettes was a passing fashion with friends at art school, I admitted with confusion to my mother the comfort I found in the smell. She told me of the ubiquity of kretek in Indonesia—a buried scent I had first experienced in early childhood.

Compared to the acuity of sight or hearing, our sense of smell is more frequently a source of self-consciousness rather than pride (Winter 1976, 14). Anosmia—the loss of one's sense of smell—is recognized by the World Health Organization as a symptom of Covid-19 (2022). As someone who is acutely aware of smells, the obligation to wear a medical mask at the height of the pandemic held some unexpected benefits (as a vegetarian passing the fish counter while food shopping), as well as drawbacks (the day I saw orange blossom and realized I had not smelled the season). This combination of experiences has informed my attempt to write about textiles through the least documented of all the senses: smell.

Michel Serres observes, "Many philosophies refer to sight; few to hearing; fewer still place their trust in the tactile, or olfactory" (2016, 26). Recent decades have welcomed a sensory turn in both the humanities

1 Early drafts of the novel confirm that the madeleine was far from Proust's first thought: see Kim Willsher " 'In Search of Lost Toast': Paris Show Reveals Origins of Proust's Madeleines," *The Guardian*, October 10, 2022, www.theguardian.com/books/2022/oct/10/in-search-of-lost-toast-paris-show-reveals-origins-of-prousts-madeleines?CMP=share_btn_link

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and the arts, joined more recently by an increased interest in somatic knowledge—the information that we carry in our bodies. For textiles, touch is often emphasized as the sense connected to greater bodily understanding. Considering how visceral our sensory reactions can be, it is surprising that smell "is often not mentioned in expanding notions of embodied knowledge and being" (Zou and Morrison 2022, 1). Scent, while unquestionably a smaller aspect of our understanding of textiles, has arguably been overlooked in historical accounts and underestimated in contemporary practice.

Touch is fundamental to how we understand textiles. On one level, the knowledge touch provides is far from specialized: we discard clothing that itches in favor of textiles that feel comfortable without necessarily knowing the names of the fabrics or how the fibers have been processed. Even fashion and textile archives, repositories that prioritize preservation, have come to recognize the importance of touch. Fashion curator Claire Wilcox offers an evocative description of how protocols have changed in recognition of the knowledge possible to glean through touch:

> At one time, we wore surgical gloves to avoid inflicting further damage through sweat or the snagging of a thread on [a] wedding ring. But these blotted our feelings and made us clumsy. Now, we revert to bare skin, accepting that we will leave particles of DNA like invisible calling cards. We trust the thousand sensors in our fingertips to authenticate and explore the dresses through touch: the tiny ridge where a dressmaker's pin has been left in the hem; the slightest textural change where a seam has been altered; the presence of dirt trapped in a cuff that will damage (for dirt particles are sharp); the weight of quality in a dress that spurs us on to keep searching for an haute couture label (often hidden in the folds to avoid export tax).
>
> (Wilcox 2021, 12)

Beyond our own clothing, we are often forbidden to touch the textiles we experience in museums or art galleries. Although some efforts are made to provide touch samples, these can be alarmingly grubby by the time an exhibition has closed and are often poor substitutes for understanding the materials exhibited.

In this chapter, I consider our kinesic understanding of textiles beyond their visual and tactile properties to include scent. I draw my examples from textile design, textile art, literature, and performance, to emphasize not the meanings of these categories but rather the presence of scent and its contribution to the embodied experiences of works that share an emphasis on material and pattern. Admittedly, my approach poses certain ironies. If sight, as Classen, Howes, and Synnott note, "increasingly became associated with men, who—as explorers, scientists, politicians or industrialists—were perceived as discovering and dominating the world through their keen gaze" (1994, 84), then the inclusion of smell in our understanding of textiles compounds associations that have long caused the discipline to be dismissed as non-serious. "Smell, in turn, was now considered the sense of intuition and sentiment, of home-making and seduction, all of which were associated with women" and cloth (84). Rather than seek distance from such associations in an effort to ensure that textile scholarship is taken seriously, this exploration moves even closer, recognizing that intuition and sentiment merit consideration within academic discourse.

In recent years, new materialism has gained traction as a popular reference in textile and craft discourse, despite the claim of "new" occupying a position textile discourse has long understood implicitly. Hsuan L. Hsu's astute reference to Dana Luciano in *The Smell of Risk* is useful:

> The most compelling contribution of the new materialisms is not conceptual or analytic, strictly speaking, but sensory. The attempt to attend to the force of liveliness of matter will entail not just reawakening or redirection of critical attention, but a reorganization of the senses.
> (Luciano quoted in Hsu 2020, 21)

In a conversation with Cécile Roudeau, Luciano explains:

> Sensual thinking, embodied cognition, has long been central to feminist and queer critical thought. Consider, for instance, Audre Lorde [. . .] when she speaks of "the considered phrase, 'it feels right to me' " as the foundation of all understanding. I don't read this invocation of "feeling right" as about sentimentality or some kind of mystified intuition, but something closer to corporeal cognition, where the intellect is neither dismissed nor disembodied. She [Lorde] notes specifically that this is not possible within "an exclusively European-American male tradition," which I take to mean the form of rationalism that dismisses emotion and sensation as legitimate forms of knowledge.
> (Roudeau 2015, 3)

Where kinesic intelligence acknowledges the non-verbal communication that particular body movements and gestures can convey, textile discourse has tended to use the vocabulary of tacit knowledge or embodied thinking, drawn from phenomenology and cognitive science. Michael Polanyi, often credited as being the first to attempt to define tacit knowledge, recognized that "we can know more than we can tell" (Polanyi 1966, 4). Polanyi situated tacit knowledge firmly within the body, "the ultimate instrument of all our external knowledge, whether intellectual or practical"

(1966, 15), but beyond what language can capture. While tacit knowledge includes the familiar example of learning to ride a bicycle, it also extends to what business studies terms the "soft skills" of interpersonal communication. Sophisticated interpersonal communication is often informed by a nuanced awareness of body language—perceived beyond (or even in contrast to) what is said. Anthropologist Tim Ingold has observed that one of the difficulties with Polanyi's observation

> is that the term 'tacit' has many shades of meaning, ranging from the silent through the unspoken or implicit. What remains unspoken need not be left unvoiced; nor need what remains unwritten be left without any inscriptive trace. Moreover, what is not explicated may still find expression in spoken or written words.
>
> (2013, 109)

Embodied knowledge, commonly thought of as held within the body and typically described as difficult (if not impossible) to articulate verbally, emerges from the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. As Shogo Tanaka notes, "Embodied knowledge is a type of knowledge where the *body* knows how to act" (2011, 149), and "One of the important features of this knowledge is that the body, not the mind, is the knowing subject" (Tanaka 2011, 149). The sociologist Richard Sennett somewhat unfairly describes the term "embodiment" as an "ugly word," but usefully acknowledges that "Craftsmen [sic] who become good at making things develop physical skills which apply to social life. The process happens in the craftsmen's body" (2012, 199). Much of the above thinking omits to mention precisely what types of bodies are in question here, defaulting to the male, white, heterosexual, and able-bodied perspective that is now the subject of increasing criticism. Somatic knowledge is also generally presumed to be useful, with philosopher Richard Shusterman consideration of bad habit formation, such as slouching in front of the computer screen, as a rare counter-example (2011, 5).

Craft researchers have acknowledged the challenges of incorporating tacit or embodied knowledge into conventional academic research. As Kristina Niedderer and Katherine Townsend observe, "Being largely tacit, craft knowledge (experiential knowledge) is often perceived to be at odds with the traditional understanding of research and its contribution, which requires justification and evidence to be seen as rigorous" (2015, 624–47). Ingold expresses the sentiment with considerably more frustration: "In the academic pantheon, reason is predestined to trump intuition, expertise to trump common sense, and conclusions based on the facts to trump what people know from ordinary experience or from the wisdom of their forebears" (2013, 2).

Despite the recognition of the challenges faced, research approaches have expanded to include greater awareness of, and interest in, incorporating forms of knowledge held by the body into academic discussions. This shift has brought practitioners' experience to the fore, whereas earlier research tended to focus on the artifact with little consideration of its maker, or speak on the maker's behalf through the eyes of the historian or curator. A growing area of academic craft research is increasingly interested in stepping away from written language in favor of other forms of communication, such as the material artifact and, more recently, the scholarly video article.[2] Rather than move away from written language, I share with this volume's editor an interest in literature that captures a sense of embodied knowledge (Hemmings 2023). This stance originates not from a denial of what the body knows and can communicate, but rather from an interest in the reality that this knowledge is profound and its traces, at least, alive in literature. Ironically, these discussions share an interest in what cannot comprehensively be expressed in words, a challenge also faced in discussions of smell:

> Smell, however, is a highly elusive phenomenon. Odours, unlike colours, for instance, cannot be named—at least not in European languages. "It smells like . . . ," we have to say when describing an odour, groping to express our olfactory experience by means of metaphors. Nor can odors be recorded: there is no effective way of either capturing scents or storing them over time. In the realm of olfaction, we must make do with descriptions and recollections.
>
> (Classen, Howes, and Synnott 1994, 3)

The English language includes only a few words considered exceptions: " 'musty,' 'acrid,' 'dank' . . . [. . .] but in general, we do not have words for smells" (Cobb 2020, 2).

7.1 Historical examples

Textiles can carry scent in two ways. First, an individual's perfume or body odor may be transferred (intentionally or unintentionally) to the cloth.[3] Second, the material of the textile or the dyes used to color the cloth may

2 Launched in 2010, the *Journal for Artistic Research* publishes online articles that support a greater variety of text, image, and moving image: see https://jar-online.net/en. More recently, the *Journal of Embodied Research*, launched in 2017, exclusively publishes the video article format: see https://jer.openlibhums.org/news/.

3 While the transfer of scent onto cloth is arguably often accidental, design researchers, such as Jennifer Tillotson, have taken this further with the investigation of "new interactive communication system[s], by 're-cabling' fabrics for releasing fragrances in 21st century fashion design" (Tillotson 1997, i).

also carry specific smells. If, as Hsu notes of olfactory scholarship, "[t]he critical tendency has been to focus on the semiotic dimensions of smell while downplaying its material dimensions" (2020, 19), in this chapter, I return to the material, focusing on examples that can, in the broadest of terms, be understood as textile.

To date, textile discourse has predominantly used touch and scent to evoke the absent, often deceased, body. For instance, Wilcox writes of the information that may be gleaned from the body's imprint inside a historical garment:

> Most of the wearers are dead now, so we work out their proportions by emulating every particularity (for no one is symmetrical) based on the interior indentations of the gowns; a pressing of flesh on fabric here, a seam taken out there, the rubbing and the pulling. It's just wear and tear, the friction of age, but it leaves us with vital clues for our ghost bodies.
>
> (Wilcox 2021, 103)

Peter Stallybrass also writes about clothing, but the poignant example he cites is far from unfamiliar to him. Wearing his deceased friend Allon's jacket while giving a public lecture, Stallybrass realizes:

> Like the paper, Allon was dead. And then, as I began to read, I was inhabited by his presence, taken over. If I wore the jacket, Allon wore me. He was there in the wrinkles of the elbows, wrinkles which in the technical jargon of sewing are called "memory"; he was there in the stains at the very bottom of the jacket; he was there in the smell of the armpits. Above all, he was there in the smell.
>
> (Stallybrass 1993, 36)

Cloth carries scent, as Stallybrass so evocatively writes, of bodies or perfume. Beyond touch, "smelling an article of clothing belonging to a person will often give a much stronger impression of that person's presence than seeing the piece of clothing would" (Classen, Howes, and Synnott 1994, 116).

However, cloth can also carry a scent that comes from its very material, from the processes that create the textile, the substances used to dye the cloth, or the ways the textile is cared for and stored. Cedar chests, for example, not only offer a pleasant aroma but also deter moth infestation (Classen, Howes, and Synnott 1994, 19). However, long before the textile is stored and its longevity protected, scent emerges in the production of cloth—for example, linen thread from the flax plant requires intensive processing of the plant fiber. This may be achieved in several ways, but retting—water soaking to soften the fiber's outer shell—is known to produce particularly potent smells because bacteria are encouraged to cause the decay of the fiber's outer portion. Cotton sizing, the addition of starch to strengthen individual fibers, has also historically been associated with foul odors:

> the sizing rooms of cotton mills were described as particularly objectionable environments. Occasionally this was perceived by the operatives themselves, as evidenced by the fact that few of the girls employed in these spaces remained in their post for more than a few weeks at a time. (Reinarz 2014, 155)

Textile dye offers one of the most evocative examples of scent emanating from the textile. During the Roman empire, the fashionable imperial purple was regulated by sumptuary laws dictating that only members of royalty or the aristocracy could wear the color (Classen 1994, 20). Purple textile dye was expensive and rare, but also smelly. In fact, the smell was acknowledged to be so objectionable that "the hands of the dyers who created this material were said to stink of rotting fish—the Talmud generously granted the right of divorce to any married woman whose husband became a dyer" (Cobb 2020, 102). Unlike flax retting and cotton sizing, which produce odors during textile production, the shellfish that provided the source of the purple dye brought with them a strong and unpleasant odor perceptible not only during the dyeing process but also remained with the cloth when worn (Classen 1994, 20; Cobb 2020, 102; Finlay 2002, 354–55, 360; Reinarz 2014, 64).

Historically, scent has also been used to authenticate the type of production process used to make cloth. Centuries after the Roman taste for imperial purple, imitation muslin branded as "Imperial muslin" was infused with scents in an effort to evoke the "authentic" production of Dhaka Muslin, which by the 1780s, was being produced not only in Bengal, but also by the factories of John Lean & Sons of Glasgow, Scotland (Slaven 1969). As Saiful Islam explained in an interview in November 2022, "The manufacturer would insert traditional spices such as cardamon and cinnamon inside the folds of the cloth, so that when the English public opened the cloth they'd think it was from India."

Batik cloth typically uses wax as a resist in the dyeing process. During Dutch trade, and later colonization of the islands of present-day Indonesia, industrial manufacturers in Europe sought more efficient batik production methods. The scent of wax became a marker of authenticity—an indication that the cloth had been produced by hand. During the second half of the 1800s, the Belgian textile manufacturer J.B.T. Prévinaire developed *La Javanaise*, a textile printing machine that used a blend of resin and wax to mimic some of the qualities of hand-produced batik and even carried "a 'real' batik smell" (Legêne and Waaldijk 2001, 41). The gesture of smelling batik to verify that it is handmade continues today. As Fiona Kerlogue notes, "Indonesian women looking to buy commonly press the cloth to their faces to breath in the fragrant aroma of the wax, which is usually still strong in a piece of batik waxed by hand" (Kerlogue 2004, 12).

A further historical example of the importance of scent in textiles appears in the American author Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892). Gilman offers a thinly disguised critique of the "rest cure"[4] prescribed to women in the late 1800s through an evocative interaction with the sensory qualities of wallpaper; historically, printed wallpaper was developed to provide an economical alternative to textile wall coverings. Written in the first person, the story's narrator inhabits the attic of a colonial mansion that her husband, a medical doctor, has rented for the summer, a room wallpapered with "one of those sprawling flamboyant patterns committing every artistic sin" (Gilman 13).

The main character in Gilman's story is arguably the wallpaper itself, which the narrator describes visually as

> dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough to constantly irritate and provoke study, and when you follow the lame uncertain curves for a little distance they suddenly commit suicide—plunge off at outrageous angles, destroy themselves in unheard of contradictions.
>
> The color is repellent, almost revolting; a smouldering unclean yellow, strangely faded by the slow-turning sunlight.
>
> It is a dull yet lurid orange in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others.
>
> (13)

However, the narrator also observes qualities that go beyond the visual frustrations she has with the pattern:

> But there is something else about that paper—the smell! I noticed it the moment we came into the room, but with so much air and sun it

4 Several decades after publishing the story, Gilman wrote a short article entitled "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper" (1913) explaining that she had sought help for "a severe and continuous nervous breakdown tending to melancholia—and beyond". In 1887, the rest cure was advised: "to live a domestic life as far as possible" and "have but two hours' intellectual life day" and "never to touch a pen, brush, or pencil again". Gilman credits the cure with having been far more damaging to her mental health than anything else she had experienced. Choosing instead to follow the advice of a friend, she returned to work, "ultimately recovering some measure of power".

> was not bad. Now we had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here.
>
> It creeps all over the house.
>
> I find it hovering in the dining-room, skulking in the parlor, hiding in the hall, lying in wait for me on the stairs.
>
> It gets in my hair.
>
> Even when I go to ride, if I turn my head suddenly and surprise it—there is that smell!
>
> Such a peculiar odor, too! I have spent hours trying to analyze it, to find what it smelled like.
>
> It is not bad—at first, and very gentle, but quite the subtlest, most enduring odor I ever met.
>
> In this damp weather it is awful, I wake up in the night and find it hanging over me.
>
> It used to disturb me at first. I thought seriously of burning the house—to reach the smell.
>
> But now I am used to it. The only thing I can think of that it is like is the *color* of the paper! A yellow smell.
>
> (25–6)

Gilman's yellow smell is an example of synesthesia, the experience where the senses cross over. More telling, however, is the scent's pervasiveness—which is potentially caused by arsenic dust from the pigment used to color the wallpaper (Hus 2020, 61, 127).

Focusing on the trans-corporeal risks associated with toxic smells, Hsu suggests that smell is something "to which we become habituated: the more we're entangled with it—the more a smell enters our bodies and sticks to our clothing—the less we notice it" (2020, 59). This is not entirely the case for Gilman's character: the longer she lives in the presence of the wallpaper's color and smell, the more intent she becomes on releasing a female figure she believes to be trapped behind the confines of the pattern. As the story progresses, the narrator makes ever greater efforts to release the figures she sees from her place of entrapment by tearing away the wallpaper. By the end of the story, she is triumphant, proclaiming to her husband, "'I've got out at last', said I, 'in spite of you and Jane. And I've pulled off most of the paper, so you can't put me back!'" (30). Whether the narrator's outlook moves further from reality the longer she is kept in the attic, or quite the opposite, remains open to the reader's interpretation. Gilman's writing makes clear that the environment her character endures as part of her rest cure is not rehabilitative, and scent contributes viscerally to her character's distress.

7.2 Contemporary practice

As historical examples, such as imperial purple, illustrate, the silence surrounding the place of scent in our understanding of textiles leaves us with an incomplete record of an embodied knowledge of textiles. Researchers have begun to consider scent in historical projects but tend to focus on literature or visual culture.[5] Where buyers of muslin and batik use(d) scent to authenticate the textile's production, the artist Meekyoung Shin's *Translation* series (2002–2011) offers a contemporary example of the ways in which scent and expectations of an artifact's authenticity are often inextricably linked. Shin creates museum-quality replicas of Chinese ceramics and Greek sculptures. The visually arresting objects are often presented on shipping boxes to suggest their fragility. Rather than porcelain or ceramic, Shin's chosen material is soap, and it is the scent of soap that permeates the gallery space (Hemmings 2013), providing the first indication that the artifacts on display might not be what they initially seem.

Shin's sculptures are typically exhibited in conventional museum and gallery settings where touch is forbidden. While permission to touch the pieces' surfaces would allow the viewer to confirm the material Shin uses, the contexts in which viewers have experienced museum-quality ceramics are typically also settings that prohibit touch, leaving little opportunity for prior tactile experience. Shin does place small soaps cast in the shape of Buddha in the bathrooms at her exhibition venues—an active invitation to touch, wear down, and rub away the same material that viewers encounter in the exhibition. Inside the gallery, Shin's seemingly perfect replicas pose challenging questions about precisely what it is we appreciate when we believe we are viewing priceless museum artifacts and the limitations to understanding an object through sight alone.

Linda Florence's *Sugar Dance* (2008) also inverts expectations—in this case, through the use of patterns found in commercial and industrial flooring that are designed to conceal its use. Florence instead constructs an intentionally ephemeral floor pattern made from icing sugar that has been sieved in an ornate repeating pattern. Professional ballroom dancers move

5 In 2015, the Prado Museum in Madrid, Spain brought scents created by the Puig perfume house together with Brueghel's 1617–18 painting *The Sense of Smell*. Currently, the Odeuropa research project, "Multimodal Understandings of Smells in Texts and Images" "bundles expertise in sensory mining and olfactory heritage. We develop novel methods to collect information about smell from (digital) text and image collections" https://odeuropa.eu/2022/10/musti-challenge-multimodal-understanding-of-smells-in-texts-and-images/.

in a traditional Viennese waltz (another pattern based on repetition) across the floor, scuffing the icing sugar pattern with their own precise pattern of movement. Their dance disrupts the original pattern and replaces it with a second layer of equally transient marks. Florence's performance drew inspiration from traditional English afternoon tea dances. Victorian advice for those hosting afternoon dances "seldom thought necessary to have a drawing-room carpet taken up and the floor prepared for dancing," instead recommending that "a dancing cloth strained over the drawing-room carpet is considered preparation enough in the way of a floor for an afternoon dance" (Anon 1880, 33). *Sugar Dance* does not invite the public to join the professional dancers on the floor; rather, the embodied experience of the event experienced by the public is activated "as the scent of the sugar permeates the air when disturbed."[6]

South African artist Berni Searle's earliest photographic series *Colour Me* (1998) depicts the artist's body covered in various spices, a gesture that Searle explains as a reference to the trade of commodities around the Cape of Good Hope, as well as an "attempt to take back and represent myself [. . .] to counter the imposition of racial categories that I grew up with" (Searle 2019). Searle was classified as "colored" under the apartheid regime—neither black nor white but with ancestors likely to have arrived in the Cape enslaved from the Spice Islands—present-day Indonesia. *Comfort* (*Variation*) (1997/2019) includes the spice paprika placed on the floor in the shape of Cape Town's Castle of Good Hope. While land reclamation has meant that today the Castle is no longer on the coast, when the building was completed in 1679, the Castle was positioned on the shore of Table Bay, where the Dutch East India Company's ships containing spices for trade stopped on the long voyage from East Asia to Europe. Searle's work creates the Castle's pentagram footprint in paprika powder, joined by a cheaply produced blanket at the center in acknowledgment of both the building's colonial past and contemporary homelessness in the area.

My final two examples are works that I have experienced in person, something I now realize when writing about scent makes a considerable difference to my memory of the works. I first experienced the work of Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto at the downtown site of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD), California in 2007. More recently, I visited a smaller installation of Neto's work as part of a group exhibition at the Centre Pompidou Málaga, Spain in 2022. On the second occasion, I was a pandemic-era visitor, in search of his work in a group show. Institutions have handled viewer access to Neto's work differently,

6 *Sugar Dance*. By Linda Florence. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. 2008. Performance. https://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/id/eprint/6497/

Figure 7.1 Ernesto Neto, installation view 2015. Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.

often permitting free movement around the hanging forms (Figure 7.1). However, the installation in Málaga was cordoned off, making it impossible to walk among the suspended spices as I had done years earlier. Despite this difference, my first instinct when seeing the work was to briefly remove my medical mask.

Neto's suspended installations invite visitors to use more than sight to experience his work. As an early review notes, "The visitor is no longer a spectator, but an active participant, able to touch, smell, walk through and experience the work, encountering various material configurations, which trigger multiple formal and conceptual associations" (Pedrosa 1998). Spices such as ginger, cloves, and turmeric leave a strong scent in the gallery space, but also color and shape the cloth that holds them. The artist humorously speaks of experimenting with condoms, socks, and his mother's stockings, which he filled first with lead shot and later clove and pepper (Neto and Obrist 2018) when his practice first began. By the time he exhibited *Nave* (1997), the cloves were held in stocking-like stretch fabric. While the scents in Neto's work are far from unfamiliar, the memory that they have left with me is acute. Moving through the San Diego installation, I recall attempting to discern the source of different smells and, eventually, seeking some respite from their pervasiveness.

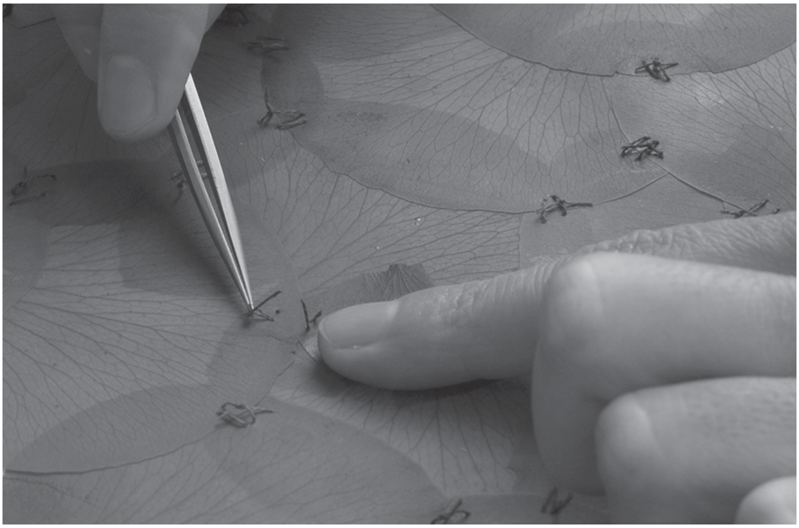

Figure 7.2 Doris Salcedo, *A Flor de Piel II*, 2013–2014, Rose petals and thread. Dimensions variable. © The artist. Photo © White Cube (Ingrid Raymond).

Colombian artist Doris Salcedo's sculptures are made from everyday materials that function as memory keepers for her country's *disappeared*. In *A Flor de Piel* (2013–2014) (Figures 7.2 and 7.3), hundreds of rose petals were sutured together to make shroud for "a nurse who was tortured to death after a long captivity in Colombia [. . .], a ritualistic covering that would reinstate the nurturing care of her subject's profession that had been so brutally inverted in her treatment by her captors" (Brinson 2015, 210). Salcedo describes the work as a search for "the most fragile way of touching the untouchable, and the process of making this piece pushed me to find the limits of the fragile and the most delicate within the frame of sculpture. It was at the outer limits of fragility that I encountered a vulnerable body" (2015, 216).

The fourteen-minute video that White Cube Gallery produced to capture the material challenges of making *A Flor de Piel* makes no mention of scent. Rather, the extraordinary material challenge that the idea posed is captured in great detail, from the embalming of the petals to the medical sutures sewn with wax-covered needles. "We are not trying to embroider but to join," Salcedo explains of the painstaking work that caused her to question the material viability of her idea:

> Even worse than failure was the feeling of finding yourself so awkwardly inept. I was never subtle enough; I was never delicate enough;

Figure 7.3 Doris Salcedo, *A Flor de Piel II*, 2013–2014, Rose petals and thread. Dimensions variable. © The artist. Photo © White Cube (Patrizia Tocci).

> never intelligent enough to deal with it. So it kept tearing apart and destroying itself. The piece was confronting me with all my inabilities [. . .]. It demands extraordinary care and I think that is a beautiful part of the piece [. . .]. The way we move, even the way we breath around the piece is crucial for its survival.
>
> (Salcedo 2012)

Reviewers have described the scent of *A Flor de Piel* as "earthy" (Dayal 2017); "faint honey floral" (Formanek 2017); a smell "that doesn't make sense unless you've been in the presence of the dead" (Sultzer 2017). My own memory is of something far less familiar and more disconcerting. This difference may in part be explained by the timing of each individual visit and the scent's changes over time. However, the challenge is compounded by the fact that our personal experiences of smell, already difficult to put into words, also vary.

7.3 Conclusion

Embodied experiences that are difficult to capture in language are also difficult—though not impossible—to bring into academic discourse. The sheer volume of information accessed online today limits our tactile understanding of cloth, but it also makes access to smell impossible. This does not mean that scent is not present. Attention to these difficult-to-capture but real qualities offers some protection against the loss not only of scent's significance from our collective historical knowledge, but also of our contemporary understanding of the influence that kinesic experience provides in our formation of knowledge.

Just as the use of scent to determine a textile's authenticity has played a significant role in textile history, so too has the manipulation of expectations. In the past, I have written about the emphasis I have placed on writing about textiles that I have been able to see in person (Hemmings 2019, 415), an approach that was particularly fraught with challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic (Hemmings 2021, 270). In writing this chapter, I have found that writing about textiles that I have not smelled is an even greater challenge. Admittedly, when the scent is familiar (such as that of sugar), the gap narrows, but in the case of unfamiliar scents, such as Salcedo's embalmed roses, communicating the experience becomes more precarious. Curator Jim Drobnick notes that one of the many challenges encountered when curating olfactory artworks "is the variability of smell itself, which occurs on several levels. Scents are famously subjective, to the point of being highly idiosyncratic" (2014, 188). Underwhelmed reviews of Anicka Yi's *In Love with the World* at Tate Modern Turbine Hall (October 2021–February 2022), an installation of floating machines exuding scents that some reviewers reported they could not smell, present a recent example of this vulnerability (Searle 2021).

While my recollection of the scent exuded by Doris Salcedo's *A Flor de Piel* verges on intolerable, the artist does not mention the work's scent. Admittedly, scent may have been a byproduct rather than a priority in producing the work, or perhaps it could not be fully experienced until the work was installed in a confined gallery space. While reviewers associated the scent of *A Flor de Piel* with vastly different things, none captured my experience. Drobnick again offers the following:

> Two fundamental motives drive artists to work with smell. On the one hand, scent provides a raw, primal sensation that is new to the visual art context. Instead of representing an object or experience, odor provides a seemingly direct and unmediated access to the real. On the other hand, the second motive recognizes that smells are redolent with personal and social significance.
>
> (2014, 182–3)

In addition to personal and social significance, I would add acknowledgment of the incredible variability of reactions that scent presents.

While I have advocated in the past for a greater trust in our bodily knowledge to be brought into arts education from domains where physical risk is present (Hemmings 2023), I am confronted in this writing with the doubt that my olfactory experience is pertinent to others. This is not because it is an experience that transcends language, but rather because the registration of scent differs considerably between individuals. Awareness of and attention to the value of kinesic knowledge continues to be crucial in expanding the types of knowledge that are considered legitimate in academic discourse. Scent offers perhaps one of the most extreme variables in this search—bodily experience that is undeniably valid and real, but acutely subjective. If we are now entering a period of the “reorganization of the senses” (Luciano quoted in Hsu 2020, 21), then tackling the arguably most ephemeral and subjective of the senses cannot be overlooked, despite the difficulties posed. To shy away from the challenge risks ignoring yet another source of powerful bodily knowledge.

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