



Affect

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A number of developments over the last two decades or so make it timely for *Body & Society* to host a Special Issue on the theme of affect. A number of concepts have appeared in the social and human sciences, as well as in the natural sciences, that emphasize the fact that social and natural phenomena are complex, processual, indeterminate, relational and constantly open to effects from contiguous processes.

Additionally, interest in the theme of 'affective labour' and the capitalization or economization of affect and emotion through teletechnologies and a multitude of therapies have drawn attention to affect as a phenomenon in need of fresh study.¹ Advances in the fields of genetics and biological sciences, mathematics, quantum physics/the physics of small particles, neurosciences, narrative analysis, media and information theory have contributed to this epistemological shift. In its wake, a common ontology linking the social and the natural, the mind and body, the cognitive and affective is beginning to appear, grounded in such concepts as assemblage, flow, turbulence, emergence, becoming, compossibility, relationality, the machinic, the inventive, the event, the virtual, temporality, autopoiesis, heterogeneity and the informational, for example. One important focus of this Special Issue is to spark interest and ongoing engagement in questions of method and experimentation in light of the common ontologies emerging across the humanities, and the natural, social and human sciences.

The 'turn to affect' across the humanities and social sciences has particular importance for the field of body-studies. One consequence of the heightened interest in the non-verbal, non-conscious dimensions of experience is a re-engagement with sensation, memory, perception, attention and listening. If much of what passes as experience occurs in this realm, how then can we model the psychic and sensory apparatuses that afford specific kinds of embodied knowing? If bodies are characterized by their intercorporeality and trans-subjectivity then how can we decouple such experiences from a singular, bounded and distinctly human body and what kinds of theoretical and methodological innovation will make this possible? This is one aspect of work organizing this Special Issue that connects the themes of body, affect and life, and that directs our attention to the question of what kinds of trans-disciplinary collaboration and engagement are possible and realizable. These questions do not originate within the turn to affect, as similar concerns have appeared and appear across feminist theories of the body, as well as in various psychoanalytic approaches that appeared prior to the 'affective turn'. Indeed, the genealogies of these various concerns, and how they might be put into dialogue with each other, reveal how different approaches address similar problematics. As we see in this Special Issue, the affective turn specifically encourages engagements with subjects that foreground the question of what do we mean when we invoke, examine and enact the *body* in *body-studies*. These include an engagement within this Special Issue with collective forms of intelligence, such as swarming or decisions made on the stock market floor; with community regeneration among a former South Wales steelworker community; with the multivalent rhythmic constitution of the dancehall scene in Jamaica; with technologies of listening and attention such as telepathy, suggestion and voice-hearing; with a body-without-an-image, rather than the concept of body-image that we are so habituated to; with the idea that bodies are always more-than-one; and with a cautious reflection on the neurosciences and their increasing authorization within the humanities as knowledge-practices ripe to be plundered for concepts to substantiate certain explanatory concepts (such as affect). The turn to affect is therefore one which helps us to complicate bodily matters, but equally, as Clare Hemmings (2005) reminds us, is one which should also be approached by considering the ethics of the conceptual and analytic apparatuses that are becoming associated with the affective turn.

One of the functions of an editorial framing of an issue is to provide clarity and offer definitions of some of the key concepts and issues being explored. For those new to this area, or perhaps only beginning to encounter the importance of affect in your own work, this might entail a response to an imagined and perceived question, 'What is affect?' However, a more cautious response might

be to consider what different versions of affect *do* in our theorizing. Bruno Latour (2004) has linked the problem of affect to a reformulation of bodies as processes rather than entities, and invites us to consider not 'What is a body?' (as if the body can be reified as a thing or an entity), but rather 'What can a body do?' This shifts our focus to consider how bodies are always thoroughly entangled processes, and importantly defined by their capacities to affect and be affected. These capacities are mediated and afforded by practices and technologies which modulate and augment the body's potential for mediation (see Wegenstein, 2006). This invites us to consider how practices might 'work' or operate without the reification or invoking of bodies as 'dumb matter', or relying on understandings of embodiment which are rationalist, cognitivist and, importantly, thoroughly disembodied. Therefore, a turn to affect also entails a rethinking of the concept of embodiment, and places work within body-studies in an important position in en fleshing and embodying affect as a particular kind of process-in-practice. Studies of the body and practices such as architecture, dance, performance, art and technologies, as well as work which can engage with affect as both material and immaterial, will extend this concept and provide a range of analytics which take us beyond discourse and the social construction of bodily matters. As Patricia Clough (2000: 106) asks: 'How are "differential" relations of human and machine, nature and technology, the real and the virtual embodied, and what can these bodies do?'

It is clear in the shift to bodies as processes (rather than fixed or unchanging objects or entities) that affect is invoked to gesture towards something that perhaps escapes or remains in excess of the practices of the 'speaking subject'. This means that some established methods for studying bodies may not do justice to, or, importantly, may perform an exclusion of processes which might be characterized as less visible to the particular technologies of observation, seeing and listening that characterize the humanities, and particularly the reliance of many of our qualitative methodologies on language and sight. This is characterized as a form of 'representational thinking' (Stewart, 2007; Thrift, 2007), which assumes that narrative, and producing a discursive representation of our research object(s), is enough to illustrate the mediated nature of matter, or what we might also call the 'matter of mediation'. However, this could be likened to a particular academic and analytic training in *attention*, which excludes other ways of 'noticing' and attending within our research endeavours (see Stewart, 2007). Two examples of a different kind of 'noticing' previously published in *Body & Society* have begun to introduce to body-studies some rather different analytics of attention, and capture something of what we are gesturing towards in this Special Issue. Both of the examples that are recounted take horse-human relationships as case-studies

of relationality. 'Relationality' is another term that has become part of a different analytic for examining the relationships between what previously might have been thought of as separate entities which interact. This includes the relationships between nature and culture, body and culture, individual and society, animal and human, and mind and body, for example. If we start from an assumption of singularity and separation, then this frames the question of relationship as an 'interaction effect' between pre-existing entities, rather than the conjoining of thoroughly entangled processes (see Haraway, 2004, 2007; Varela et al., 1993).

This paradigm of co-enactment, co-emergence and co-evolution assumes from the outset that we are dealing with thoroughly entangled processes that require a different analytic and conceptual language to examine. This includes the seminal work of Donna Haraway, a biologist by training, who has introduced a rich conceptual vocabulary which rejects the assumption of interaction. This includes the concepts of *natureculture*, the cyborg and companion species, which all point towards the co-constitutive and co-evolving relationships which produce what might become recognizable as particular kinds of entities; dogs and humans for example. The weaving together of two terms, such as *natureculture*, that are usually considered separate entities, nature and culture, displaces the concept of social influence, and moves towards theories and concepts that can explore the co-constitutive processes that produce and enact bodies in all their diverse materialities. Like affect, relationality is a term that is produced differently depending upon the particular theoretical position being enacted. It is a starting point for analyses that question the very notion that we can divide the world into homogeneous entities such as the social, the natural, the human, the animal and so on (see Latour, 2005). The idea of simply adding a social explanation to a natural explanation should, according to Latour, be considered a problem, rather than a resource for body-studies. In other words, work on the body and embodiment across perspectives from the humanities, as opposed to the natural, biological or even psychological sciences, should not be framed as simply 'adding' a social explanation to pre-existing biological or psychological explanations of our materialities. Studies of embodiment in different ways start from these pre-suppositions, and reject the assumption that there is an unmediated entity called the 'natural' or 'authentic' body. But often the prioritization of language and discourse do inadvertently end up reinstating different kinds of separation and occlusion. The cross-disciplinary approach that body-studies invites us to develop would indeed alter these disciplines themselves and change the way they speak about or conceptualize 'the body'.

Ann Game's work on horse-human relationships and relationality was published in *Body & Society*² in 2001 and is an interesting forerunner to some of the

issues that are being highlighted in this Special Issue. Game recounts her own experience of helping her horse, KP, to regain the ability to trot and canter following the horse's paralysis. She describes how her eventual successful attempt, after much hard work and struggle, came about through *forgetting* that she was separate from the animal. This was nothing to do with *will-power* (the idea of mind over matter), but rather she equates this forgetting to a letting go of self-consciousness. In this state she was able to mount KP, and to try and connect with subtle movements that the horse was making in order to help her to remember what it felt like to canter and trot with a rider. In this sense, memory was plural, co-constituted and co-enacted through attuning to subtle movements which involved the development of a shared kinaesthetic modality of attention. This kinaesthetic modality involved the entraining of horse and human through rhythmic forms of communication; a kind of 'kinetic melody' (see Sheets-Johnstone, 2009), which through movement allowed a re-memorialization of proprioception to emerge. As Game suggests (2001: 1):

... connectings between human and animal are creative processes of coming to be. Putting into question humanist assumptions, I propose that we are always already part horse, and horses, part human; there is no such thing as pure horse or pure human. The human body is not simply human.

(See Blackman, 2008a, for a development of these arguments.)

There is also a developmental aspect of the becoming horse of human beings and vice versa, or the becoming dog in Haraway, i.e. that it is a result of a history of co-action or experiential choreography that produces the horshuman or humandog; the humandog entity is not the same as the humanhorse. This is an important aspect of becoming that demands further attention. Game's reflections take what might be equated to an experience of the ordinariness of affect (see Stewart, 2007), where although the experiences are palpable they do not operate through the structures of language, discourse and meaning. They are equated to different forms of knowing that disclose the tangle of connections that exert a pull on us and that can be felt, particularly through the development or attuning to more non-conscious modalities of attention, memory and perception. Importantly, as we can see in this example, these modalities of knowing decouple memory, perception, listening and attention from a singularly bounded and distinctly human body and reveal the connections, co-production and co-evolution of different life forms.

Another example that discloses the intimate connectings and co-production of the human and animal can be found in Vincianne Despret's (2004) reflections on a case of an animal's capacity for intelligent thinking that confounded the scientific community in the 19th century. Hans was a horse who appeared to be able

to tell the time and solve complex multiplication puzzles by stamping his hooves. Two explanations were given for Hans's apparent prodigious talents; either the horse had psychic capabilities or he was a genius. Despret re-visits the psychologist Pfungst's re/visioning of this anomalous event and comes to some rather different conclusions about the basis of Hans's unusual capacities. Pfungst suggests that Hans was indeed disclosing a capacity for intelligent thinking, but the modalities of intelligent thinking being enacted by Hans *with* an experimenter were due to Hans's ability to 'read' minimal bodily communications. Despret argues that 'not only could he read bodies, but he could make human bodies be moved and affected, and move and affect other beings and perform things without their owners' knowledge' (2004: 113). As long as Hans could see the experimenter he was able to attune to minimal forms of bodily communication that the experimenter was not aware they were exhibiting. For example, if the experimenter knew the answer was six, just before Hans stamped his hooves for the sixth time the experimenter would make a very subtle and minute movement that the horse would respond to. When the experimenter did not know the answer, Hans was not able to perform his amazing feat. Despret suggests that this example of an unusual experience or perception which could not be integrated into the knowledge practices of psychology challenges the assumption that the human subject is separate, bounded and can be clearly differentiated from the animal. Indeed, if evolutionary biology is founded on the idea that the human and animal are linked through the sharing of ancestral genetic processual systems, then this example shows that continuities and differences can be made and re-made in different practices, revealing the creative evolution at play in our co-constitutive inter-relationships of being and becoming: animal and human. As Despret proposes; 'Who influences and who is influenced, in this story, are questions that can no longer receive a clear answer' (2004: 115).

It is important to stress that although this example is very interesting, it leaves out an examination of the associated milieu that allowed the 'intelligent behaviour' to take form, i.e. what was the human-animal-environment set-up, what amount of prior learning had gone on (admitted or hidden), what level of reliability to attribute to the account and what disciplined methods were used to gather the evidence, etc.? The importance of the milieu in analyses of affective relations is taken up by a number of articles in this Special Issue and is an important aspect of examining co-constitution and co-enaction (see the articles by Henriques, Manning, Venn).

In more recent work Despret (2008) has turned her attention to attempts to teach animals to speak using the signs and symbols of human language making. This has long been a preoccupation of psychologists, biologists and primatologists

driven by a desire to communicate across species borders and to really ‘know’ the continuities and differences that differentiate humans from animals. Referring to the work of the psychologist Irene Pepperberg, she proposes that the learning and development of language is aligned to ‘a constant movement of *attunement*’ (2008: 125), which is not tied to the animal’s capacity for language but rather the capacity or affordance(s) of the experimental apparatus to be sensitive to what is meaningful to the animal-species in question, in this case a parrot. Thus, the co-production of meaningful communication across species borders is dependent upon the success of the apparatus in redistributing the parameters and terms of what is meaningful for the species in question. This success produces surprising results regarding the animal’s ‘capacity to accomplish tasks that were hitherto considered as exceeding the capacities of non-humans’ (2008: 125). There is abundant evidence now that animals show what humans call intelligent behaviour: tool-making, counting, learning, problem-solving, etc.; not just the ape family, but crows, dolphins and other mammalian aquatic creatures who all show the capacity to make tools, show creative thinking to solve problems, learn and pass on knowledge, draw out cause and effect inferences, etc. These examples importantly direct our attention back to method and to a consideration of what different methodologies and apparatuses of creative experimentation afford in terms of the production of particular kinds of ‘effects’ and ‘affects’. This question of the efficacy of particular kinds of method and creative experimentation is one that we hope body-studies will continue to extend and augment in its development across the humanities and social sciences.

The question of method also directs our attention to the trans-disciplinarity of body-studies, and how we manage the potential blurring of boundaries between different disciplines and disciplinary perspectives. Constantina Papoulias and Felicity Callard cogently argue in their article, ‘Biology’s Gift: Interrogating the Turn to Affect’, that the plundering of concepts from the neurological and psychological sciences by humanities scholars to substantiate the concept of affect should be approached with some hesitation and caution. The authors focus upon the neuroscientists, LeDoux and Damasio and the developmental psychologist, Daniel Stern, all of whom have been taken up in cultural theory to ground particular claims about affective processes. They importantly characterize the ‘turn to affect’ across the humanities as one which makes certain assumptions about materiality. It is assumed, they argue, that a ‘good theory’ is one that no longer keeps a distance from biology as a set of explanations and as a knowledge-practice. This is opposed to social constructionism or discursive approaches to bodily matters that are characterized as being hostile to the biological either as a competing set of explanations or as a disciplinary apparatus. They illustrate how scholars

interested in affect have turned to the neurosciences to authorize their own epistemological and ontological claims, and often rely upon the reiteration of a particular set of references and citations to the neuroscientific literatures. They argue that these citations are part of what they term 'a strange and partial (mis)translation of complex scientific models into the epistemologically distinct space of the humanities and social sciences'. Thus, importantly, the trans-disciplinarity of theory and method that affect theory foregrounds (see Clough, 2007) also makes visible the difficulties in selectively appropriating particular kinds of scientific concepts and explanatory structures, divorcing and abstracting them from their complex and often contested circuits of debate, legitimacy and authorization. Furthermore, scientific findings or explanations are constantly being revised, while borrowings by humanities scholars are often attached to what in effect are provisional explanations. A similar point is also taken up by Lisa Blackman in her article, 'Embodying Affect: Voice-hearing, Telepathy, Suggestion and Modelling the Non-conscious', where she argues that an engagement with experiences, theories and concepts marginal to the mainstream of the neurological and psychological sciences might yield more inventive models of affective processes. She focuses upon experiences such as voice-hearing, suggestion and telepathic modes of affective transfer, which breach the boundaries between the material and the immaterial, the inside and the outside, the self and the other, and the sane and the insane, for example. She suggests that an engagement with neuroscientific work marginal to the neurosciences (such as work linked by the concept of the bicameral mind) might re-invent and recuperate histories of the occult, the ethereal, the enchanted and the immaterial which have been occluded and excluded from the mainstream psychological and neurological sciences.

Papoulias and Callard convincingly engage and interrogate the new forms of materiality that are being enacted and performed across affect theory in tandem with the neurosciences; one characterized as a 'vision of nature with no fixity'. The emphasis on movement, on the dynamism and plasticity of matter, and particularly on the subindividual, cellular self-organizing properties of matter, define the focus on bodily affectivity (particularly the argument that bodies should be defined by their capacities to affect and be affected),³ as an inherently political project organized around an ethics of hope and optimism for change. Paradoxically, the particular kind of 'conversation' that is taking place between the humanities and neurosciences, filtered through affect theory, is one that tends to rely upon a language of verification; 'see this is how affect works', which occludes the complex procedures of contestation, from critical psychologists for example, who have done much to undermine and trouble the practices and habits of positivist science. As Papoulias and Callard argue, it is through the old foun-

dational language that the a-foundational biology is appropriated. This is clearly an important argument staged by the authors through their close critique of the traffic between the neurosciences, neurobiology and affect theory found in the writings of key humanities scholars such as Brian Massumi, William Connolly, Mark Hansen, Elizabeth Grosz and Elspeth Probyn, for example. It is also one that has been made in different ways by theorists who wish to pay attention to fixity; to understand the affective basis of practices and, on the basis of this, how practices mobilize, connect up and distribute relations of entanglement among people, places, entities and objects which might be characterized more by fixity than movement (see Ahmed, 2004; Blackman, forthcoming; Hemmings, 2005). The aligning of a particular vision of movement with the body's creative potential for change and transformation is one that perhaps misses the complex inter-relationships between becoming and becoming-stuck that we might witness in trauma for example (see Blackman, this issue; Clough, 2009; Walkerdine, this issue).

The question of movement and becoming (or even becoming-stuck) is also an important theme in affect theory that this Special Issue extends and develops in various ways. Julian Henriques' article, 'The Vibrations of Affect and their Propagation on a Night Out on Kingston's Dancehall Scene', offers a groundbreaking analysis of a Kingston dancehall scene through the development of an innovative method which draws together strands of work across affect theory and body-studies. Henriques draws from the seminal work of Brian Massumi (2002), where affect is produced as intensities that are located outside the discourse of emotions or representation of feelings. These intensities, Henriques suggests, can be propagated and embodied through vibrations. The concentration on vibrations is far from a focus on the immaterial or ethereal, on that which perhaps can't be seen even if it can be intensely felt. Rather, the attention to vibration entails an engagement with what he terms *rhythmic* materialism. Henriques develops an understanding of wave propagation for analysing the dynamic and energetic character of affective processes. Wave propagation requires a medium, such as the gaseous medium of air, to transmit longitudinal sound waves. Henriques examines the complex mediums (corporeal and socio-cultural) which propagate sound that he organizes through the concept of milieu (see Venn, this issue). These include the bodies of the crowd, the sound system equipment and the dancehall session and dancehall scene. The value of this work for body-studies and affect theory is its careful attention to method; to the ways in which a study of vibrations might enrich our analyses of embodiment. As we have already recounted, one of the important dimensions of affect studies is the attention to that which remains as an excess to the practices of the 'speaking subject'.

Henriques develops Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory (1967), moving the research object to repetition (of frequencies) as opposed to the focus on representation usual for this qualitative methodology. This is organized through distinct categories, including counting, measuring and listening, where the act of listening combines all the senses and is oriented towards the 'event' of the scene. The three elements of vibrations that Henriques identifies, frequencies, amplitudes and timbres, provide the methodological basis for understanding affect in the analysis that follows.

Henriques provides an interesting visualization of these elements in his Frequency Spectrogram, which plays on the cataloguing so dear to scientific archiving but which includes elements that are not usually brought into dialogue, interdependence and interrelationship with each other. These might include the blood and lymphatic system, heart rate, pulse rate and synaptic activity in the brain, being brought into relation with the circadian rhythms of day and night, the materiality of the turntables and records, the longitudinal soundwaves, rhythms and beats, the light waves, calendars of events, the motility of the crowd between sessions and the role of the MC with his or her call and response, to name just some of the elements brought into exchange and interchange. This ecology of elements, Henriques suggests, is part of the complex apparatus which allows or affords affect *to move*. However, the question of how these processes of movement might be modelled is still part of the problematic that confronts scholars regarding how we understand, analyse and enact affective processes in our own analyses. Henriques provides a really useful mapping of some of the assumptions about *movement* that have entered into studies of affective processes. One that has been central to the humanities is the idea that what moves are objects, even if these objects are molecular entities such as pheromones in the work of Teresa Brennan for example (2004). One version of movement that has been developed in the discipline of dance studies that has had an important purchase within body-studies is that of bodily kinetics. This has been taken up by Erin Manning in her study of tango (2007, see also Manning, this issue) and emphasizes bodily movement as being central to embodied experience. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2009) has emphasized the primacy of movement in her own philosophy of subjectivity, and this replaces, or extends and problematizes, what is understood as the cogito in cognitivist or epistemological discourses; it also challenges the dualisms inscribed in such discourses with more kinaesthetic modalities of knowing and thinking. This work is hugely important in replacing the inert mass or dumb materiality of corporeality that has been a symptom of some discursive approaches, with what we might term a 'somatically felt' body (see Blackman, 2008a, for a development of this).

One of the most popular ways of conceiving of the dynamics of movement across the humanities, particularly in relation to affect, is that of the *flow*. As Henriques argues, the concept of flow derives in part from the pressures and drives of dynamic fluids, where intensities are seen to pass and circulate, as with Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) BwO (Body Without Organs). Henriques introduces a conception of movement where what is transmitted is not an object or a diffuse and vague intensity, but rather a repeating frequency or energy pattern. This materializes affective transmission through analysing the specific conducting channel or frequency, as well as emphasizing that it is not movement per se but the movement *relationship* between processes that should be the focus. As Henriques suggests: 'it is the dynamic pattern that moves, not a thing'. The specificity in Henriques' use of intensity makes us question the blanket use of the term in some literature on affect. There are, after all, intensities relating to a wide range of phenomena – for example, pressure, heat, light – and equations to establish how these intensities vary in relation to conditions, that is, how there are differential intensities which can be scaled and so on. This might include the thermometer as instrument to indicate degrees of intensities of heat. Should one try to measure affective intensities? Would that instrumentalize affect? Do we already judge intensities of affect through feelings, whether expressed in some way, verbally or through body language or changes in bodily states, or suppressed, or not? These issues suggest a move towards more rigorous and theorized approaches than might be found in some of the more Deleuzian-inspired literature. Henriques' fascinating analysis also takes us well beyond some of the re-iterative cycles of citation that characterize work on affect (see Papoulias and Callard, this issue) to develop an energetic patterning of vibrations that offers a way of understanding meaning that is not tied to representation, inscription or encoding. Henriques' article develops a conceptual language and vocabulary that we find in the articles by Venn and Manning in this issue, in particular the work of the French philosopher, Gilbert Simondon, and particularly Simondon's concept of transduction (see Manning, Venn, both in this issue). Henriques importantly ties this philosophical abstraction to embodied ways of knowing, such as tacit knowledge, introducing a logos organized around sound and movement. This article raises important questions on the status and typology of the unconscious, suggesting that it is patterned like a vibration (rather than structured like a language). While Lacan's view of the unconscious has led down some blind structuralist alleys, the unconscious in psychoanalysis generally is more varied and confused, so that the theorization is in need of a serious rethink. However, the extent to which the unconscious should be replaced by vibration or rhythm or some other privileged element, rather than viewed as a matrix, to get closer

to Bracha Ettinger's (2006) metaphor, is a debate that affect and body-studies might engage.

The status of the unconscious in studies of the relationships between bodies, affect and life is taken up in Valerie Walkerdine's article, 'Communal Beingness and Affect: An Exploration of Trauma in an Ex-industrial Community'. Work on affect often eschews the concept of the unconscious for a notion of the non-conscious that is tied to a bodily unconscious understood through the concept of *habit* (see Blackman, this issue). These are forms of bodily memory which lie outside of a subject's conscious reflections and deliberations and are often enfolded within the processes of the central nervous system or proprioception (see Massumi, 2002). Walkerdine's article removes this reliance on the singular body to consider how an unconscious can be shared, is plural, and can exist and circulate between subjects. This approach to affective processes draws in part from work on intergenerational memory and explores how trauma can be transmitted across generations and enacted through bodily forms of knowing (see Cho, 2008; Clough, 2009). Walkerdine's study focuses upon the practices which allow an ex-industrial community in South Wales to retain a sense of togetherness in the face of the decimation of the industrial modes of working that historically brought the community together as a particular kind of collective entity. Walkerdine uses a method for examining the more hidden aspects of this 'holding together' which is used within psychosocial studies. This method, although based on the practices of the 'speaking subject' (i.e. it is reliant on the technique of interviewing), aims to engage the registers of affect and feeling. The method invites the interviewer to examine their visceral and affective responses to an interview. This might entail paying attention to feelings that are incongruous when examined alongside the content of an interviewee's account, or that direct the interviewer to the gaps in an interviewee's account; what is left unsaid but that is communicated through other forms of bodily knowing. This method extends processes usually particular to an analytic session between a therapist and analysand, and suggests that defensive and unconscious processes such as projection, introjection and transference are as much part and parcel of the research process as they are of a therapeutic relationship (see Hollway, 2008a, 2008b; Hollway and Jefferson, 2008; Walkerdine et al., 2001). In this sense, affective processes or dynamics are seen as ordinary (see Stewart, 2007) and the researcher is placed not as a neutral observer but rather as somebody who interferes and helps to orient the interviewee to that which might usually remain unsaid.

This extension, or proposed extension, of the clinical or therapeutic situation to ethnographic research raises further issues: ethical, methodological and theoretical. One objection is that the discourse produced in the research situation can

be equated to the intercourse between analysand and analyst/therapist. There is of course an ethical contract involved in the analysand/analyst relationship, which might include explicit agreement about what the relationship involves, what the limits and responsibilities are for both parties, what the therapeutic set-up is – i.e. place, time, space, their disposition in the room, etc. Arguably, the ‘data’ are not the same kind as in an interview situation in the social sciences, even if the researcher may attend to bodily gestures and changes. The issue of transference brings this out, since it is supposed only to take place in a clinical situation or analytic scene (see Redman, 2009; see also Campbell, 2009, for an objection to this view). There are clearly questions that need to be asked of this method, which involves differential production of discourse and different methods for obtaining analysands’ or clients’ speech, as opposed to the respondent’s answers or questions.⁴ The question of how data of a more embodied kind might be collected is one that is raised by Walkerdine, and is one that the editors hope will stimulate discussion and creative experimentation by body-studies scholars.

This method did produce some interesting results in Walkerdine’s study of a South Wales ex-steelworker community, however, and the practices they had engaged in order to deal with the aftermath of its decimation. Walkerdine turns to work within object relations psychoanalysis, particularly work on the skin-ego (Anzieu, 1989) and the matrixial (Ettinger, 2006), to understand what circulates between members of the community which can’t easily be seen, and which is often characterized by silence. She suggests that what is important to an infant is a feeling of being held and that this holding is embodied through the co-constitutive and co-evolving relational dynamic produced between caregiver and infant. Early relational dynamics are very much embodied, in that they are experienced through the senses and operate within a pre-verbal register, and they form the bedrock for the later important capacity of the subject to differentiate between inside and outside, and self and other. This sense of integration is seen to be central to the emergence of a psychic sense of holding and being held (what Anzieu terms the skin ego), which provides an affective sense of our boundaries (Bion, 1984; Winnicott, 1958). The concept of the skin ego was taken up in *Body & Society* 15(3), where Lisa Blackman and Mike Featherstone invited Erin Manning and Dee Reynolds to respond to an article, ‘Skin and the Self: Cultural Theory and Anglo-American Psychoanalysis’, written by Marc LaFrance. LaFrance is a Canadian psychoanalytic scholar who has argued that the skin ego is a useful concept to extend body-studies. Walkerdine develops this concept to explore some of the anxieties which were communicated through the interview method and which, perhaps, point to the difficulty the community members had in holding and feeling held now the closing of the steelworks had left a rupture

in the life of the town. This work suggests that material objects, such as the steel-works, can also be thought of as psychic objects containing the projections of the townspeople, where the material and immaterial are linked through the circulation of particular affective dynamics and processes. The reading of the material as engaged in a complex psychic geography arguably has been central to different psychoanalytic approaches. Thus affective dynamics can be spatialized in terms of the particular geography and spacing of the town (including terraced houses with low fences); and particular spatial configurations can amplify particular affective dynamics and modulate, augment or even destroy dynamics that have been an important part of what makes a community 'tight-knit'. Walkerdine weaves together extracts from her interview data to illustrate aspects of these affective dynamics with an engagement with and development of work on trauma (Ettinger, 2006), which emphasizes an understanding of the unconscious that is always partial, plural, shared and co-emergent between subjects. As Ettinger suggests:

A matrixial encounter engenders shared traces, traumas, pictograms, and fantasies in *several* partners conjointly but differently, accepted and partly created by diffuse matrixial affects; it engenders nonconscious readjustments of their connectivity and reattunements of trans-subjectivity. (2006: 65)

The focus on trans-subjectivity is developed in the articles by Erin Manning and Couze Venn in this issue. Erin Manning's article, 'Always More than One: The Collectivity of *a Life*', reformulates the body as always being 'more than one', stressing that the body is always 'more assemblage than form, more associated milieu than being'. This takes the focus away from a distinctly human and bounded body, instead exploring bodies as processes which are more aligned to forces that take form as much defined by pre-individual tendencies, where the virtual and actual coincide, as by the relational connections which are immanent to such taking-form (i.e. the associated milieu). The language of the virtual and actual is derived from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and is put to work in the context of Simondon's concept of individuation. The virtual is taken to refer to a pre-individual or even trans-individual register of *life* which produces the affective tone of experience. Thus the informational in Manning's account (as energies, intensities, qualities, affects) is identified as potentialities in determination of the actual taking-form of bodiliness. Individuation is a concept developed by Simondon that offers a reformulation of the problematic of subjectivity; it radically decentres the individual in that it considers the individual to be the product of a process of becoming rather than a starting point from which everything else is accounted for. The model of the subject as a unitary, autonomous,

self-sufficient entity persists in much social science research in spite of the critique of Cartesianism and unitary subjectivity in contemporary philosophy and critical thought (Hollway et al., 1998 [1984]). Because there is always an excess to becoming (expressed in Deleuzian terms as the realm of the virtual), then taking form is always a dynamic process that never stands still, as it were.

Indeed, the concept of individuation, rather than the individual, refers to the creative evolution at the heart of becoming. In this sense, bodies are always being ‘undone’ and re-made in the context of ‘actual occasions’ (Whitehead, 1978). As Manning suggests: ‘Actual occasions are micro-events in a larger process of becoming, themselves absolutely and only what they are.’ In this sense a body is never separate from its milieu, which provides, as we see with Henriques’ article in this issue, the medium and practices (corporeal and socio-cultural) which allow or afford the potential for bodies (individual and collective) to take form or *move*. In this sense, Manning argues that ‘the body is always more than human’ and affect is always collective. As she goes on to argue: ‘Affect is a chorus of feelings barely felt through which events begin to take form. A body is an event for affective resonance.’ This takes affect outside of the confines of a bounded, singular body and asks us to re-think some of our inherited concepts that are at the heart of how we might think affective relations. This work is complicated and challenging, and requires contextualization and elaboration in relation to actual or ‘real’ practices (as we see in the work of Henriques, this issue), but offers much in obliging us to rethink what it means to be human and what it means to ‘have a body’.

Couze Venn’s article, ‘Individuation, Relationality, Affect: Rethinking the Human in Relation to the Living’, takes the themes we find in Manning’s work further by putting them to work in relation to experiences that we all may have witnessed, experienced or found ourselves perplexed by. Venn starts his article with a beguiling description of the choreography of ‘swarming’ among birds, that discloses the patterns in movement afforded by the turbulence of air currents and the birds’ capacities to fly. What is interesting about this phenomenon is precisely the patterns rather than randomness of the displays, revealing, Venn suggests, the forms of collective intelligence that animate the movement. Venn’s problematic is precisely the ‘more than one’ of bodies that Manning draws our attention to, revealed in collective forms of action that appear to operate below the threshold of conscious, rational experience. These forms of collective intelligence are precisely those that are shared across different life forms and which Venn also identifies in the behaviour of financial dealers and agents on the stock market floor. This draws our attention both to the milieu of the ‘dealer–technology complex’, which includes the range of technologies that allow or afford the dealer

to concentrate or become attuned to the 'feel of the market', and which paradoxically disappear from view when this feel for the market is described. Venn suggests that developing a 'feel for the market' involves the conjoining of 'cognitive and affective sensing and thinking, the integration of feeling and calculating such that body-mind-world meld into one organism'. As we know, with the global recession and financial collapse of the world markets in 2008, economic activity is far from rational. Venn extends the notion of information as code, to explore the relational connections between:

... facts, signals, rumours, news, mixed in with moods and emotional energies, enabling agents to participate in an activity in which all behave as an individual and as an element of a collectivity. One begins to wonder what the differences are, at the level of mechanisms, separating the flock of birds and the traders on the market floor.

He suggests that 'brain-body-world couplings' cross disciplinary boundaries and the anthropocentric divide between the human and animal. This invites us to rethink categories such as the human, the subject, the individual, the group and the body in new ways, paying attention perhaps to common mechanisms. Venn develops the work of Simondon to open the problematics of affect, cognition and embodiment to theorizations that have a purchase on issues concerning the dynamic co-constitution of creatures and bodies. This is an important and careful introduction of Simondon's work to the field of body-studies, and particularly in offering an engagement with work that has not, to date, been translated for an English-speaking audience. Simondon stresses that being is relation, and Venn finds much in this ontology that speaks to the problem of the 'one and the many' (see Blackman, 2008b), where the primacy of relation and co-production is central to the processes through which an individual emerges. Venn takes us through a variety of perspectives that share a common ontology to try to get to grips with the phenomenon of collective intelligence (in all its varied and diverse forms), and pays particular attention to how affect might operate in such models. What becomes important in Venn's exposition is how to think the psychic dimension of being, particularly when the concept of the individual is thought within the framework of Simondon's concept of individuation. The importance of relation to others, human and non-human (see Walkerdine, this issue), is central to object-relations psychoanalysis and is primarily expressed through 'non-conscious corporeal communication'. The concept of relationality, developed through Venn's close engagement with Simondon, offers a rather different theorization of the psychic-social milieu than we might find across psychoanalytic theory (found in the concept of the skin ego for example). One can see an emergent research programme developing from this work that is thoroughly trans-disciplinary and

would require engagements across the neurosciences, physiology, study of narrative and discourse, artwork, performance and so on (of course the nature of these engagements must be carefully enacted; see Papoulis and Callard, this issue). What is clear is that the problems of memory and trauma (at the biographical and historical, individual and trans-individual levels), remain as central ‘nagging residues’ (see Blackman, this issue) in any such programme and must be carefully attended to.

Blackman’s article, ‘Embodying Affect: Voice-hearing, Telepathy, Suggestion and Modelling the Non-conscious’, identifies some of the central problematics that are important in rethinking affect, relationality and embodiment. She takes a genealogical approach to the problem of affective communication that we find coalescing around the phenomenon of affective transfer identified in experiences such as voice-hearing, telepathy and hypnotic suggestion. She uses these as examples that take us back to arguments and theories of affective transfer that became marginalized and excluded with the rise of the psychological sciences and the foundational model of autonomous subjectivity enacted within these practices. She uses this as a platform to consider the connections between what is occluded or excluded from the psychological sciences and what is being silenced within work on affect taking form across the humanities. Taking us back to both the practice of telepathy in the 19th century and the problem of hypnotic suggestion in the mid 20th century (the Macy conferences), she discloses how both function as carriers of what is being overlooked in the engagement by many affect scholars within the psychological and neurosciences. Both hypnotic suggestion and modalities of listening and attention such as voice-hearing, which operate by ‘affective or telepathic transfer’, shift our focus to the relationship between bodies, affect and *trauma*. This requires a decoupling of memory, perception, the senses and the psyche from a bounded, singular and distinctly human body, and the development of an analytic that can engage with the intergenerational and intercorporeal transmission of trauma, the status of the non-knowing or non-conscious in our theorizations, and the importance of attending to experiences and practices which challenge the foundational model of autonomous subjectivity at the heart of the psychological sciences. Blackman suggests that work at the margins of the neuro and psychological sciences which deals with forms of knowing that exceed rational conscious experience is crucial to such a project. This includes work often subsumed within the ‘psychology of anomalous experience’, such as the placebo effect, the practice of suggestion as it might be enacted in particular brain-body-technology couplings (energy medicine, for example) and in studies of voice-hearing that enact the concept of the bi-cameral mind (Jaynes, 1976). This is a post-psychological project that takes experiences that

offer a 'puzzling challenge' to the psychological sciences, and relocates them within the complex brain-body-world couplings that produce particular kinds of 'psychological' affects and effects.

Lastly, Mike Featherstone's important article, 'Body, Image and Affect in Consumer Culture', asks us to consider how images (of the body beautiful and the good life, for example) that endlessly circulate across consumer and celebrity culture actually work. It is almost a truism that these images have effects (on young girls' disordered eating for example) and affects (on the kinds of fantasies and desires that might propel our investments, financial and corporeal), but Featherstone suggests that our thinking on these matters is hampered by our habitual reliance on the concept of body-image. Our image-centred thinking has been shaped through photographic technologies which produce the static images to which we are so accustomed (think of the seduction of the before and after images which dominate the transformational logic of a variety of body-projects, including the 'make-over' and cosmetic surgery). As Featherstone cogently argues, it is clear that these images do complex work, but this work cannot be explained through the exercise of rational choice or judgement. Indeed, Featherstone suggests that images work primarily in an affective register and that there is a language that exceeds the image that captures this operation. Featherstone gives the example of images of stars in Hollywood cinema that were seen to exude an aura, charisma or presence. This was considered an ineffable quality that was felt rather than seen. 'It is the sense of energy, of a force, of a change of register – an *intensity*. It is an unstructured non-conscious experience transmitted between bodies, which has the capacity to create affective resonances below the threshold of articulated meaning.' Featherstone suggests this points towards an 'affective body'; a body without an image which structures our encounters (including our trust in political leaders for example) in all kinds of complex ways. These affects are multiplied through technologies of attention such as video, television and cinema, or teletechnologies (see Clough 2000; Stiegler, 1998), which amplify, modulate and augment these intensities. As Featherstone argues, in relation to digital technologies of the new media, they:

... have the capacity to record, capture and slow down the body moving image. They enable us to view in slow-motion the ways in which affects are communicated by the face, gestures and body movements, to observe the affect thresholds which cannot be perceived in the normal choreography of face-to-face interactions but can be felt – e.g. the 'gut feeling'.

Featherstone equates the focus on body-image, which as we have seen does not capture the ineffable yet deeply redolent aspects of experience, to mirror-vision (Massumi, 2002). This is a gaze which is primarily vision-oriented to the

exclusion of the other senses and which captures bodies in a series of static, frozen poses. This is contrasted with movement-vision which is aligned to proprioception or muscular memory. This focus on the 'whole body' in movement couples a visceral sensibility with vision and allows the registering of affect to inform experience. This allows the intensity of an image, its affect, to be decoupled from its content – the image. In this sense (new) media are seen to work primarily through affectivity (rather than through the interpretation of meaning for example), and move us beyond representational thinking towards an engagement with embodiment as we see in the work of Mark Hansen (2004), for example. This shift to bodily affectivity is hugely important for work across body-studies that is currently tied to the concept of body-image. This concept is endlessly invoked to make sense of the often devastating impact of certain celebrity images overlaid by the transformational logic of consumer culture. We need to rethink the role of affect and body in relation to the image, and import the body-without-an-image into our analyses so that we can pay attention to these ineffable qualities transmitted through celebrity and consumer culture. As Featherstone suggests, the old adage, 'it's not what you wear, but the way you wear it' may have far more scope for studying the relationship of the body to consumer culture than our current obsession and fascination with image.

As we close this editorial article, it is clear that what this selection of articles does is to open up and present an alternative discursive formation which offers various challenges to the dominant hegemonic paradigms that have become central to body-studies (this includes work on body-image and discursive approaches to bodily matters, for example). While these paradigms remain important, we should like to ask instead, what can different versions of bodily affectivity *do* in our theorizing? This Special Issue stages that challenge as one that is very much trans-disciplinary in spirit and that requires a creative and innovative development of method. Some of the articles in this collection begin the important task of taking this methodological innovation forward, or offering the parameters of what might be important in shaping this task. It is left to our readers and contributors to respond to the challenge, and we look forward to taking these debates further in future and subsequent issues of the journal.

Notes

1. See *TCS Annual Review*, special section on 'Precarity', for a discussion of the concept of 'affective labour' (*Theory, Culture & Society*, December 2008, vol. 25 – particularly the article by Gill and Pratt). Also see the discussion of affect in the UMAT Special Issue of *TCS* (December 2007, vol. 24 – particularly, Alison, Hansen, Boothroyd). Also see Lazzarato (2007) and Toscano (2007) for discussions of affective labour and new vitalism.

2. The use of the ampersand in *Body & Society* refers to the both/and relationships between what are often understood as separate entities, body and society. The editors understand these 'entities' as always already thoroughly entangled processes.

3. This definition does some work, but one task that this Special Issue sets up is to see it as a starting point for analysis and to begin to search beyond this hypothesis. The view of bodies as being defined by their capacities to affect and be affected is broad enough to include magnets or heat which are affected by other bodies. Affect of course is being used here in a different sense than simply having an effect, but the definition – used by Massumi among others – appears not specific enough. It could also be interpreted as some 'thing' that bodies have: a quality, a vital element – a capacity existing independently of relationality, that is expressed through affect, or is a substratum for it.

4. In the case of an analysis or therapy situation, apart from the question of the staging or production of the discourse, there is a translation of the analysand's speech into the discourse of the analyst. The translation in most perspectives is viewed as central to the curative process. The translated speech is directed at the analysand, who is the beneficiary as well as the addressee. In the case of the processes of translation being enacted with interviewer's speech, this translation into an ethnographic or psychological/sociological vocabulary/register is for the benefit of the researcher; it is not addressed to the interviewer/respondent, who generally does not see the translated product, or respond to it, or have a say in it. The beneficiary is the researcher and the academic community. This raises important ethical and methodological issues.

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