Exploring Academic Reading:
Mediumship, Intuition and the Academy

By

Julia Moore

Canterbury Christ Church University

Thesis submitted
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2021

Abstract

The thesis is concerned with experiences of reading academically, and explores ways in which intuitive techniques, including ones derived from practices of mediumship, can be used as tools to experience reading. The thesis is rooted in my experiences of reading and writing in the academic context, but it is hoped that the theoretical discussion and empirical explorations will have wider resonances.

The thesis has two parts. In the first, theoretical section I look at attempts to understand mediumship and, more generally, experiences of the paranormal, and aim to develop a theoretical understanding of intuition which both underpins the empirical part of the thesis and offers methods to use empirically. My theoretical understanding of intuition evolves from dissatisfaction with some attempts to explain mediumship, which appear to be based on a binary division between the objective and subjective. I use theories from Husserlian phenomenology, particularly Gendlin's ideas, to develop a body-based phenomenological approach to intuition. Ideas from recent discussions of free association and psychoanalysis, specifically Bollas, Barrett, Lothane and (particularly) Totton also contribute, as does Lecercle's notion, rooted in Deleuze's philosophy of language, of *délire.*

In the empirical part of the thesis I explore intuitive (understood in the theoretical context briefly outlined above) practices as applied to reading academic texts. Material was collected during six research groups, each themed around a different aspect of intuition and each underpinned theoretically and shaped practically by the literature I explored. In these groups participants took part in a number of exercises designed to use creative and embodied methods to connect with the unconscious and intuition, and to explore different approaches to reading, including relaxation and body awareness, free association, psychometry ('blind' reading of texts), focusing and the felt sense, and collaborative drawing and creative writing.

These results are explained, and the implications of the results considered in terms of the theoretical material.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors Angela Voss, Simon Wilson and Wilma Fraser, and also all the people who participated in my research group. Thanks also to my colleagues at Canterbury Christ Church University for their suggestions and support.

Table of Contents

Abstract 2

Acknowledgements 3

Chapter One: Introduction 11

1.1 What this thesis does 11

1.2 Autobiographical perspectives 12

1.3 Some backgrounds to the thesis, and a note about methods 15

1.3.a Auto/Biography as method 15

1.3.b Starting points and developments 16

1.3.c Methodological tensions and a change of direction 18

1.4 Rationale: Why is this important and what purpose does it serve? 24

1.5 Theoretical underpinnings 27

1.6 Scope of study 31

1.7 Thesis structure (and a note about referencing) 31

Chapter Two: Literature Review: Starting Points and Explanations from a Scientific / Materialist Perspective 33

2.1 Overview 33

2.2 Batcheldor, The Owens and the ‘experimental’ séance 37

2.2.a Batcheldor 37

2.2.b The Owens 39

2.3 Mediumship and its study 41

2.3.a Laboratory studies 43

2.3.b Other studies with a scientific approach 47

2.3.c The drawbacks of the scientific approach, and a note about enchantment 49

Chapter Three: Philosophical and Theoretical Approaches and a Theory of Intuition 54

3.1 Philosophical and theoretical approaches: Husserl, phenomenology, objectivity and subjectivity. 58

3.2 Gendlin, embodiment and intuition 66

3.2.a Gendlin and philosophy 69

3.2.a.1 Gendlin’s relationship with a dominant philosophical tradition 69

3.2.a.2 The Notion of experience, and the relationship between experience and language .. 71

3.2.a.3 Critique of notion of perception 76

3.2.a.4 The notion of perception and the nature of the body 78

3.2.a.5 A new conception of the ‘body’ 80

3.2.a.6 Concluding remarks about Gendlin’s philosophies 81

    - 3.2.b Gendlin’s techniques: focusing, dipping and the felt sense. 83
        - 3.2.b.1 The Felt Sense 84
        - 3.2.b.2 Dipping.. 86
        - 3.2.b.3 Focusing 88
        - 3.2.b.4 Relevance and use of Gendlin’s ideas in this study.. 89
- 3.3 Theories of free association 90
    - 3.3.a What is free association? Two questions 94
        - 3.3.a.1 Is free association cognitive? What is the relationship of free association to language? 95
        - 3.3.a.2 Is free association personal?.. 102
    - 3.3.b Free association: moving beyond the cognitive and the personal? 104
    - 3.3.c Free association as telepathic 109
    - 3.3.d Free association as telepathic and embodied: Totton and Barratt 111
        - 3.3.d.1 Free association: Barratt’s synthesis and a way forward 111
        - 3.3.d.2 Totton: beyond the ineffable to embodiment... 114
        - 3.3.d.3 Summary: Free association, intuition and mediumship 118
- 3.4 Lecercle, language and délire 121
    - 3.4.a *Délire*: introduction 121
    - 3.4.b *Délire*: The concept and its roots 125
    - 3.4.c Lecercle on *délire* 131
        - 3.4.c.1 Délire, language and the subject 133
        - 3.4.c.2 Délire and myth 134
        - 3.4.c.3 Délire and the body 136
        - 3.4.c.4 Délire and power structures / the ego and its loss.. 138
    - 3.4.d Summary of Lecercle’s material: délire as method 139
- 3.5 Chapter conclusion 140

Chapter Four: Consideration of Feminist Approaches... 144

- 4.1 Introduction.. 144
- 4.2 Cixous, Irigaray and Others 144
    - 4.2.a Irigaray: When the Goods Get Together 145
    - 4.2.b Two Essays by Cixous 149
    - 4.2.c Le Guin’s California as a Cold Place to Be 152
    - 4.2.d Lauren Richardson’s Fields of Play: Poetry as method 153
- 4.3. Summary 157

Chapter Five: Methodology... 159

5.1 Introduction ... 159
  5.1.a Structure of this chapter ... 160
5.2 Research Questions ... 161
5.3 Rationale: why is this important and what purpose does it serve? ... 162
5.4 Research paradigm, research approach, models of practice ... 164
  5.4.a Research paradigm ... 164
  5.4.b Research approach ... 168
  5.4.c Models of practice ... 169
  5.4.d Reader response theory ... 171
  5.4.e Auto/biographical methods in research ... 176
5.5 Design of research groups ... 181
5.6 Running the research groups ... 182
5.7 Data analysis and interpretation of results ... 184
5.8 Ethical issues ... 187
5.9 Summary ... 190
Chapter Six: Results and Discussion ... 191
6.1 Introduction ... 191
6.2 Participants ... 193
W6.3 Session one: 'I Associate Thus' ... 194
  6.3.a Participants ... 194
  6.3.b Background theory summary ... 194
  6.3.c Structure of session one ... 195
  6.3.d Results of session one and discussion, individual exercises ... 197
    6.3.d.1 Processes of conventional reading (understanding of abstracts) ... 198
    6.3.d.2 Processes of free association: gap between my expectations and results ... 199
    6.3.d.3 Freeing the associations: a progress from synonyms (session one, exercise one) ... 200
    6.3.d.4 If not free association, then what? (session one, exercise two) ... 202
  6.3.e Discussion of emerging themes from session one ... 204
    6.3.e.1 Whether any 'unconscious' themes emerged from the free association ... 204
    6.3.e.2 The enjoyment of making and telling stories ... 205
    6.3.e.3 Working best in solitude ... 205
    6.3.e.4 Understandings of free association and therapeutic relationships ... 209
    6.3.e.5 Reading, understanding, the body and location ... 210
    6.3.e.6 Free association, reading and imagination. ... 214
    6.3.e.7 Reading and the academy ... 216

6.3.f Session one: conclusion 219

6.4 Session two: 'Reading with the Body' 220

66.4.a Session two: participants 220

6.4.b Session two: introduction and background theory summary 220

6.4.c Session two: structure 222

6.4.d Session two: results 223

6.4.d.1 Gaps between expectations and results 223

6.4.d.2 Role of the 'Body Maps' 225

6.4.d.3 Bodily and emotional feelings in response to academic reading 226

6.4.d.4 Struggles with the idea of a 'felt sense' and with doing the exercises 228

6.4.d.5 Academic inadequacy 230

6.4.d.6 Thoughts about the techniques used 232

6.4.d.7 Technique's impact lasted beyond session itself: subsequent reflections 234

6.5 Session three: 'Psychometry of Texts' 236

6.5.a Session three: participants 236

6.5.b Session three: background theory summary 236

6.5.c Session three: structure 237

6.5.d Session three: results and discussion 239

6.5.d.1 Links between text and 'readings' 240

6.5.d.2 Thoughts about process 242

6.5.d.3 The role played by imagination 244

6.5.d.4 Group versus individual experiences 245

6.5.d.5 Relationship of 'reading' to other practices 246

6.5.e Session three: summary 247

6.6 Session four: 'Text into Image' 248

6.6.a Session four: participants 248

6.6.b Session four: background theory summary 248

6.6.c session four: structure 250

6.6.d session four: results and discussion 251

6.6.d.1 Transformations 252

6.6.d.2 Links between collage and original abstract 256

6.6.d.3 Thoughts about process 257

6.6.d.4 Reflections on the abstracts 259

6.6.d.5 Different kinds of 'reading' 259

6.6.e Session four: summary 260

6.7 Session five: ‘Reading with all the Senses’ 261
6.7.a Session five participants 261
6.7.b Session five: background theory summary 262
6.7.c Session five: structure 263
6.7.d Session five: results and discussion 264
6.7.d.1 Process of getting to the book 265
6.7.d.2 Touch 266
6.7.d.3 Hearing 268
6.7.d.4 Taste and smell 270
6.7.d.5 A ‘sixth’ sense 271
6.7.d.6 Non-reading sight to explore object and environment 272
6.7.d.7 Experiences of the process 273
6.7.d.8 Other comments 274
5.7.e Session five: summary 274
6.8 Session six: ’Character Co-Creation’ 275
6.8.a. Session six: introduction 275
6.8.b Session six: participants 277
6.8.c Session six: background theory summary 277
6.8.d Session six: structure 278
6.8.e Session six: results and discussion 280
6.8.f Session six: summary 284
6.9 Chapter conclusion 286
Chapter Seven: Conclusion 290
7.1 Introduction 290
7.2 Discussion of findings 293
7.3 Transformative learning and the impact of findings 303
7.4 Potential uses of this thesis 310
Chapter Eight: References 315
Chapter Nine: Appendices 349
Appendix One: Invitations 349
A1.1 Initial invitation circulated by email 349
A1.2 Information sheet 350
Appendix Two: Consent form 352
Appendix Three: Information sheets 353
A3.1 Information sheet for session one 353

A3.2 Information sheet for session two ... 357

A3.3 Information sheet for session three ... 361

A3.4 Information sheet for session four ... 364

Appendix Four: Samples of transcripts and written material from sessions ... 367

A4.1 Session one transcripts ... 367

A4.2 Session two transcripts samples ... 374

A4.3 Session three transcripts samples ... 385

A4.4 ... 390

A4.4.a Abstracts, selected images, questions for image ... 390

A4.4.b Transcript of final discussion ... 392

A4.5 Session five transcripts samples ... 395

A.4.5.a Section 1: Answers to the worksheet / exercises. ... 395

A4.6 Session six transcript samples (character sheets) ... 410

Appendix Five: Journal articles and other texts used ... 412

A5.1 Session one ... 412

A5.2 Session two ... 414

A5.3 Session three ... 416

A5.4 Session four ... 422

Appendix Six: Post-session questionnaires samples ... 428

A6.1 Session one questionnaires by question and participant (samples) ... 428

A6.2 Session two questionnaires (samples) ... 434

A6.3 Session three questionnaires ... 436

A6.4 Session four questionnaires ... 438

A6.5 Session five questionnaires ... 442

Appendix Seven: Other Material from Sessions (samples) ... 444

A7.1 Session One ... 444

A7.3 Session Two Body Map (blank) ... 444

A7.4 Session Two Individual drawings samples ... 444

A7.4 Session four ... 447

A7.4.b Example sentence ... 447

A7.4.c Collage images samples ... 447

A7.5 Session Five ... 450

A7.5.a Worksheet ... 450

A7.6 Session Six ... 454

A7.6a Drawing Stage Instructions ... 454

A7.6.b Acting Stage Instructions 454

Word Count: 123,972

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 What this thesis does

In this thesis I draw upon worlds outside academia, specifically contemporary practices of intuition, including psychic mediumship and psychic development, to explore experiences of reading within academic contexts, and by so doing to reveal new and transformative ways of approaching university education. In so doing I work within the limits of some elements of Western European theory (particularly 20th century philosophy and theories of psychoanalysis) to both develop a framework in which intuition can be understood and to point beyond the acknowledged limitations of this framework towards potentially more enchanted new ways of working academically with texts, ways which are rooted in practices of intuition.

I work by stealth in this thesis, and work with contradictions in my source material. To some extent, the theorists which I base my argument on can be seen as exemplars of that which they criticise. Each of the main voices included in the literature review chapters of this thesis suggest a way of understanding texts, experience, consciousness which allows the forbidden, the unconscious, the inexpressible to speak, whilst also embodying the logos-bound, rationality and scientific perspective which they each, in different ways, criticise. To all appearances, I am complicit in this suppression of the unspoken, as I use my theorists as providers of tools to develop a theory of intuition. I look at issues with each of the theorists (Gendlin, Bollas, Totton, Lecercle) but only to hone the position I'm developing: I chisel away at the edges, I don't overturn. At least, that's what I do at first glance. In fact, I think, I show the ways in which the theorists undermine themselves, in part by showing the impact they and others have had on what it feels like to work within the academies they have mastered: academies which are still, largely, constituted within the structures of binary logic and within a positivistic, science-dominated paradigm. This is also done by giving space to the emotional, intuitive and co-creative experiences which have been side-lined, and also by facilitating the kinds of discourse – open ended, irrational, nonsensical, anti-authoritarian – which have been suppressed. I have tried to bring the séance to academia, to see what is upturned.

1.2 Autobiographical perspectives

This thesis was motivated by my complex and ambiguous relationship with the academic worlds I have encountered, by the lack of enchantment many models of academia seem to offer, and by the fascination I have for some aspects of paranormal experiences. I started this thesis feeling very interested in what I came to think of as 'experimental' séances, carried out and documented by people, for example Kenneth Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1968; 1969) and George and Iris Owen (1964, 1974, 1976, 1979), who were open-minded about the nature of the processes they experienced and the ontologies of the entities they encountered. In such séances, I also thought, events which were apparently inexplicable by reason occurred, which had the potential to evoke a sense of wonder.

I began my PhD work, then, researching the experimental séance. However, through the process of doing what I thought of as the necessary academic work, I was brought up against some of the things I had always found problematic about academia. The Google definition of 'academia', provided by Oxford University Press, is "the environment or community concerned with the pursuit of research, education and scholarship" (OUP 2021). While acknowledging that there are likely to be debates about this definition, it is the one I will use in the following discussions. When I use the term 'academy' or 'academies' in the following, I simply mean the place, or places, geographical or otherwise, within which academia is located. Thus defined, experiences of academia will be localised and personal, refined by an individual's particular experiences which are in turn located geographically and temporally within a particular place and culture. So, of course, the problematic aspects of academia I discuss are problematic *for me.* But I believe – and as I hope this thesis makes clear – they are not unique to me.

Academia has often disappointed me, at the same time as offering the promise of enchantment. It has also bored me and driven me away, only to tantalise me and call me back when away. So the PhD process soon made me face what seemed like a brick wall of *ennui*, because I was doing academic research activities in the way in which I thought they needed to be done, but which also excluded some other types of research which, on reflection, also needed to be part of the picture. In this set of ‘other types of research’ I include: intuition (but what is that?), the body (but what is that?), and the roles played by language, collaboration and creativity (but what are they, and is language unproblematic?). This dissatisfaction with the processes of developing the PhD led to a reframing of my research in terms of an interest in academic reading and study, and an interest in how techniques of intuition, as taught in mediumship development, might enrich academic practices. In this introduction I explain the areas I investigate in this thesis, with reference to these personal starting points, and with a slightly more auto biographical and reflexive stance than I take in the rest of this thesis. Although this study has its starting point in a relationship with academic literature and the processes of reading that are personal to me, it is hoped that as the scope widens, it will also resonate with others.

Thus, the starting point for this thesis links my perspective to a wider social and theoretical context, which relates to Roth’s understanding of the work of auto/biography: not merely concerned with sifting personal material, but in linking such material to a broader set of concerns (Roth 2005). When I wrote the proposal for this thesis in 2014, I imagined that I would be writing in what I considered to be ‘standard’ academic style, doing what I thought of as a very long literature review, exploring the theoretical material and empirical studies, and analysing these strands according to some or other meta-theory. Indeed, while I started to work on the material I found, this is the approach I took, and this is how I imagined I would continue to work until the thesis was complete. However, I soon reminded myself why I had disengaged from the academic world in my twenties, preferring the world of the artist. When I finished my first degree, in philosophy, I had hoped to have an academic career. I certainly could not think of anything else I much wanted to do. I studied at Manchester, which was an agreeable place in the early eighties; dark, and rather romantic, with an interesting nightlife. I then went to Oxford, to do a BPhil. Being at Oxford entirely put me off philosophy and academia. I much preferred making art and the lifestyle that went with it. But things are rarely so straightforward, and I was not entirely sure whether I had rejected the form of academia I had found at Oxford, or whether it had rejected me. Nor was the nature of that rejected (or rejecting) academia entirely clear. I am not sure exactly what it was that I found lacking, nor why being in Oxford made me realise that it was missing. In any case, I kept on courting the traditional form of academia in different ways, for a long time, and thus kept it alive so I could reject it, and it could reject me, for a long time.

I was reminded of some of the reasons for rejecting the traditional academic mode of writing and research, as I experienced it, when I started to write for the PhD thesis. With enthusiasm I started a review of the literature, looking at experimental séances, mediumship and attitudes to these. I had worked on literature reviews before, so this really should not have been a problem. But it was, and some strange economics of the psyche began to emerge. I had briefly mapped out the territory: different approaches to the phenomena of mediumship, and particularly the generation of 'fictional' disembodied entities like the Owen's 'Philip' (Owen & Sparrow 1974, 1976; Owen 1976, 1977). I had looked at approaches in parapsychology, in different flavours of psychology, and in anthropology. Somewhere around this point, trying to map out where I would go next and what role qualitative research and phenomenology would play, I began to get irritated and dissatisfied, and to get much more interested in other, hands-on, less institutionalised, un-academic and more playful activities. In purely intellectual terms, through the review of literature I *was* finding a way forward: I had become interested again in Husserlian phenomenological inquiry, and whether the methods of bracketing and reduction (Husserl 1913) offer a way of understanding the co-existent nature of subjectivity and objectivity that is also a way to understand the notion of an imaginative entity such as 'Philip', which appears to have an existence independent of the entities' creators (Owen 1964, 1974, 1976, 1977). But I was also dissatisfied, somehow, with the process of reading and writing, and what it left out. This thing that had been left out, it seemed to me, was something to do with *creative processes and intuitive acts*, a mysterious sort of 'embodiment' and what artists do. For the researcher – that is, for me – something was missing. This thesis is thus about my exploration of what this missing something was, and what understanding it might possibly offer to others.

The rest of this introduction explores this starting point in a bit more detail, demonstrating how this dissatisfaction with what I was doing fed into a wider critical exploration of some of the conventions of prevalent forms of academic life.

1.3 Some backgrounds to the thesis, and a note about methods

1.3.a Auto/Biography as method

This main concern of this research is to consider the implications of bringing intuitive skills, such as the ones used in mediumship, to a process not generally thought of an intuitive one: reading and understanding academic texts. It does so with an aim of exploring people's full range of reactions to reading academic texts and looking at the ways in which using non-conventional approaches to reading might re-engage people with these texts. It does this within a theoretical framework in which 'intuition' is understood within phenomenological and psychoanalytical lenses as a process best understood from 'within', a process which is embodied, and a process which can be accessed through techniques such as free association, and in which, following Lecercle (1985), language is seen as having two functions: as straightforward vehicle of communication on one hand, and as *délire* on the other (Lecercle 1985). This thesis thus develops an understanding of intuition which is used both to frame the empirical investigations and as a source of tools used during the empirical investigations. This thesis also works with an understanding that academic reading need not solely be an individual process of understanding an abstract content but can equally be a creative and collaborative process in which meaning is *created and co-created* as much as understood.

As such, in the main body of this thesis I attempt to understand the nature of intuition and how it might inform reading practices and examine how people struggle with reading abstract and difficult texts. However, while this main body takes a general and impersonal stance, the thesis is, at the same time, firmly rooted in *my* experiences: *my* difficulties with reading, *my* history and life, and *my* experiences of collaboration, play, and creativity. It is also an inquiry that arose out of my personal exploration of psychic and mediumship techniques, and of some artwork I made inspired by these explorations. As such, this study's starting point is personal, and I will explore this starting point in this introduction. Before I start, it is worth noting the now-respected role the personal and the autobiographical have in research. Within research, autobiography is a legitimate manner of enquiry within the social sciences. It can be seen as a process of "finding the generalised other in the self", expressing ways in which the individual is figured in the social, and the social in the individual (Roth 2005, p.3). The method has its history in fields as diverse as anthropology, feminism and interpretive research. The specific field of auto/biography (the role of the slash is key) is both a way of expressing the interconnections between society and the self, but also an "important means of critiquing other forms of representing the generalized other, individuals and their culture" (Roth 2005, p. 4). Part of the attraction of this method, and of particular interest for this thesis, is this possibility of reflexive critique: as Roth suggests it offers "legitimate ways of establishing intersubjectivity that escapes the false dichotomy opposing objectivism and subjectivism" (2005, p. 6). That is, it offers a way of justification of knowledge that is rooted in Husserlian phenomenology (Husserl 1913) and with roots also in the body-phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1945) and Bourdieu (1979). After all, from a phenomenological perspective, “the very condition of having experiences at all is that as body amongst bodies" (Roth 2005, p. 8). I explore the theoretical bases of autobiographical perspectives in more detail in Chapter Five. I embrace this methodology as a starting point for my theoretical and empirical discussions, and have included a number of autobiographical passages within the rest of the thesis. These short passages each link to the theoretical discussions which surround them. Although I include these extracts, the bulk of the autobiographical material I wrote in the course of this thesis did not make it into the final version. Perhaps ‘stepping stone’ should be added to ‘starting point’: without working through the autobiographical material, the thesis would have taken a very different form – had it emerged at all. While the bulk of the material has been removed, its traces remain, both in the form my investigation has taken, and, as whispers, in this introduction. The passages that do remain hopefully ensure that the starting points of the thesis are not entirely hidden, and hopefully illustrate some origin points for the theoretical discussions.

1.3.b Starting points and developments

The core theme of this thesis has developed into a concern with the role of intuition in explorations of reading. However, as articulated above, the starting point was my interest in what I think of as ‘experimental’ séances and mediumship. This starting point developed into a very different concern, as personal and autobiographical material emerged through the early progression of the thesis, but my initial interest has remained central to this thesis, albeit taking a very different form. I now briefly visit this starting point (it will be considered in a little more detail in subsequent chapters).

In the 1970s, in Canada, retired academics Iris Owen and her husband George experimented with the séance format. With other members of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research they created a character, ‘Philip’, and gave him a biography (Owen and Sparrow 1976). Philip had lived in England in the 17th Century, had enjoyed a life of considerable wealth, and had suffered with a complicated emotional life. Influenced by Batcheldor, another ex-academic who had experimented with the séance format (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968), the Owens’ group used the séance vehicle to communicate with Philip, who responded with codified raps and table movements (Owen and Sparrow 1976). Although created by the group, Philip took on a life of his own, and his story started to deviate from the one the group decided upon. The Owens and their group thought that the Philip ‘experiment’ illustrated their idea that unconscious forces are responsible for the phenomena witnessed in séances (table tappings and rappings, communication with seemingly disincarnate entities, and physical manifestations including levitation and lights) (Owen & Sparrow 1976).

The starting point for my research was a fascination with these phenomena. How can the experience of the Owens and their groups be understood? To suggest, as the Owen’s group seemed to, that Philip was a manifestation of the group unconscious raises as many questions as it answers (Owen and Sparrow 1976). It seemed to me that there are many possible ways to approach this ‘experiment’, from ways rooted in the psychology of fraud and deception, to anthropological or phenomenological views in which the experience of the participants is paramount, to ways associated with religious and spiritual traditions. It also seemed to me that the Owens’ experiment was about the imagination, what it is and how it works, and the nature of the ‘reality’ we can ascribe to imaginative entities. As an artist who works frequently with other people, co-creating fictions, it also struck me that what was going on also related, somehow, to processes of artistic creation. I thought also of the Tibetan concept of the Tulpa, as explored by Alexandra David-Neel (1929), an entity created through active imagination through visualisation and concentration. Tulpas have been described as being like a novelist's fictional creations but without being mediated by written text (Campbell and Brennan 1994). Subsequently, the role of intuition in this and other mediumistic experiences became more important. In later chapters I trace the workings out of this starting point in various theoretical contexts, and these initial contexts develop into a study of intuition filtered through phenomenological, embodied and psychoanalytical lenses.

1.3.c Methodological tensions and a change of direction

My initial interests, as outlined above, prompted a course of study looking for material to throw light on the 'experimental' séances of Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1968) and the Owens (1974, 1976, 1977). I approached this in what I felt to be a conventionally academic way: carrying out searches of the relevant literature, trying to understand the various contexts in which such séances had been understood, and developing a new understanding (as a side note, at the time of this early exploration, and to some extent today, there had been little academic interest in the types of séances Batcheldor and the Owens had carried out, and not a great deal in more conventional séances[1]). I brought to this study an interest in the starting point, and a desire to understand the starting point in a wider way, but I also brought a deeply felt tension in myself between possible different approaches to the material, and also a deeply ambivalent attitude towards academic contexts. In the course of study, the tension came to the surface, leading to new approaches to the material, and the ambivalence towards academic contexts became more evident and fed into the decision to work with a research group to produce material rooted in the experiential and embodied senses. I want to briefly describe the tension and the ambivalence before moving on to an example of this tension first emerging and then working itself out, and finally leading to the new approach. This also further illustrates the extent to which, and the ways in which this thesis is rooted in autobiographical perspectives.

---

[1] Those serious academic studies that did exist tended to look at the much wider area of the paranormal and seemingly psychic skills, predominantly from a scientific perspective. These were often focused on laboratory experiments (for example Rhine 1934, Rhine 1937) and their statistical significance (most notably the controversy surrounding Bem's results, see Radin 2010 for a good overview of this area). Some researchers did look specifically at mediumship, particularly from the 1980s onwards, but the approach often focused on explaining mediumship as a deficit, for example in inferential thought process (Tobacyk and Milford 1983), or as a means of performative demonstration (Wooffitt and Gilbert 2008). This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two below.

At the start of my PhD I felt a troubling conflict between two modes of thought. On the one hand, a very sceptical, dogmatic, referential-language-bound, practical and academic brain-mind set seemed to dominate. On the other hand, I was also aware that a more intuitive, creative, open, paranormal-experiencing body-mind awareness was possible and desirable. I could trace this tension in my daily life, in my history and also in society more generally, but it came to particular prominence as I started working on my PhD topic. This tension could be characterised as one between the 'head' and the 'heart', between scepticism and belief, between the rational and the irrational, between the conscious and the unconscious, between the Symbolic and the Real (Lacan 1977a, 1977b), between the dissociated and the embodied, and in other ways, some of which will be explored later. I experienced it as a very sceptical and rational voice which inserted itself in a negative and dismissive way into any experiences beyond its scope (the mystical, the magical, the enchanted), downplaying their significance and sometimes even pretending they did not happen. The sceptical voice was a bully: dismissing experience beyond its own, using criticality and analysis to downplay those things it did not understand. In terms of the PhD, I found myself both enchanted by the material I found in Batcheldor and the Owens, but also very invested in the critical literature about mediumship (as will be explored later, many studies of mediumship, particularly from a psychological or social sciences perspective, take a dismissive or reductive stance), finding myself at a loss to defend mediums against charges that their experiences were a result of some other factor they did not adequately understand. Each dismissive study started to feel like a blow to a more transcendent meaning or heart-felt significance, yet some part of me sided with what felt like the 'voice of reason'.

I use the past tense to talk about the tension: Over the years it has taken to write this thesis, the sceptical and rational voice has become in some ways less insistent, less dominant, and less controlling: it better knows its place, perhaps as a result of working through it all during the PhD, perhaps also as a result of working with practices of embodiment and intuition, or perhaps a complex mixture of all these different things.

However, perhaps paradoxically, I find myself in a position where I have to take on this 'voice' in my working life in a way I did not do at the start of the thesis. I have become aware that the sceptical and rational voice has another side, that of complex managerial processes and protocol no-one quite understands but which work against easy expressiveness, the felt sense and creativity. While the sceptical and rational elements have stepped aside, they have been replaced by a feeling of 'must do' and 'should not say' and administrative busy-ness which have equally effectively squashed any real sense of embodiment and creative 'feelings-in-to'. Scepticism and rigid rationality have handed over their reins to a deadening bureaucracy, and creativity (which as I write it feels like a dirty word) emerges tentatively in my rare moments of escape. So, there is still a tension.

This tension, in its different forms, (as I briefly describe above, and described in more detail in the first couple of pieces of writing I did at the start of this PhD), was particularly associated with, and fed into, an ambivalence towards academic contexts and materials. One way in which the tension has played out is in the love-hate relationship I have had with academia as defined at the start of this section, a relationship which can be discussed through Weber's (1920) concept of disenchantment, the process whereby the magic of the world is lost as it becomes quantifiable and open to manipulation and mastery (Germain 1993). Weber famously claimed, "the fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world'" (Weber 1946), and this can be used as a way to frame my dissatisfaction.

When I studied philosophy at Manchester University, particularly interested in phenomenology and Wittgenstein, something about the academic and wider context 'worked' for me. This was an intense, heady and all-engaging time. I wanted to go into academia when I finished my degree. I was perhaps naïve to assume that all academic philosophy is created equal: my experience at Oxford, where I went to do a B.Phil., was very different and I found the town dull and the way philosophy was taught off-puttingly dry. Of course, this is not to suggest that everyone's experiences were similar, rather to say that *for me,* Oxford was just too middle-class, and somehow passionless (or perhaps the passion was too carefully concealed for me). In discussions, the enchantment that had characterised academic talk was missing: It felt like we were arguing for argument's sake, picking over the fine details of language-use in a few refined contexts, not to work out why we are here in life and what we should be doing. Certainly, the academic enchantment I had hoped for was not there. At the very least, Oxford was wrong for me. I stopped working, pretty much, after the second term, and made films and art instead. Since then, I have dipped in and out of academia in different ways, primarily through doing first a B.A. and then an M.A. in art, again feeling the tension I have mentioned above, this time played out as a tension between a pre-verbal, playful, mercurial creativity and the authority that I found unfailingly in most institutions, even the most free-spirited and eclectic[2].

It is unsurprising, perhaps, that the tension and feelings of ambiguity resurfaced soon after I started the PhD. This is not to reflect on this university in terms of enchantment, or disenchantment, but rather to explore my reactions to the university setting. A pivotal example of this took place in September 2015 when I prepared a presentation for a conference at my University. The first version of my presentation took the form of a lecture in which I explained an area of my research, tying non-embodied entities experienced in experimental séances (Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976, Owen 1976, 1977; Ullman 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1995) to theories of the trickster and liminality (Hansen 2001). While I was writing the presentation, I realised that I was uncomfortable with the 'lecture' model as a way of presenting knowledge, depending, as it seems, to assume an 'expert' who communicates 'knowledge' to an audience of listeners who (mostly) lack this knowledge, and who are consumers of the information they are lectured about. The associated and perhaps unarticulated set of assumptions about the nature of power, education and knowledge seemed to me to be problematic and rather unpalatable. I felt I could not use this conventional format in a way which felt in tune with 'myself', as it failed to acknowledge the assumptions I found troubling.

I felt this lack of harmony between myself and the form I was encouraging myself to use strongly and immediately, however in terms of rational understanding it was complicated and tricky to unpick. The conventional lecture, I felt, facilitates a lack of reflection about the physical and other conditions associated with it, and therefore fails to promote any reflection about the conditions of the knowledge therein passed from lecturer to student. The conventional lecture also, it seemed to me, hides the conditions of its performance and theatricality, as well as its embodiment, while relying upon these elements to exist. At the same time, I felt that the conventional lecture format also depended on a view of language which assumes language is a straightforward vehicle of communication in which knowledge can be passed from expert to novice in an unproblematic move. This is not to say that individual experts might adhere to this view of language, rather that the lecture format, taken on without reflexivity, somehow encapsulates this view.

---

[2] The art schools I have attended encouraged more free-ranging work and a different, more individualistic attitude towards academic texts.

There were, therefore, I thought, problems with the language, the form and the physicality of the conventional lecture. I now connect these two problems with Lecercle's discussions of *délire*, with the role of embodiment and the body in learning, and with what might lie on the 'other side' of language (including intuition) (Lecercle 1985). I further unpick some of the relevant theories which can be used to throw light on these problems in the literature review (Chapters Two and Three). The starting point for thinking about these problems, and the theoretical context which I used to understand my reaction at the time, was understandings of language, and in particular it struck me at the time that the lecture format seems to exemplify the traditional view of language discussed by Lecercle, which he associates with contemporary Anglo-American linguistic philosophy: "language as an instrument (of expression or of communication)" (Lecercle 1985, p. 49). This feeling of discomfort made me wonder how one might gently question the conventions of the lecture, or at least side-step the model of knowledge it seemed to express.

The performance lecture format has emerged in contemporary art, in which the performative potential of the lecture format is made explicit. This art form has been seen as a form of institutional reflexivity, a critique of knowledge, an engagement with new forms of approaches to teaching and learning (Milder 2011), and a way of thinking about social processes and the self (Frank 2013). However, I felt that the performance lecture still maintained the power imbalance of the speaker over the audience. The second problem I noted was a problem with the physical instantiation of the conventional lecture format. It seemed to me that the communication-type exemplified by the conventional lecture format avoids the question of physical embodiment: language's "workings, on its dark, frightening origins in the human body… the material existence of words as produced by certain organs of the body" (Lecercle 1985, p. 16). I would add also that the conventional format seemed to ignore the other physical manifestations which underpin communication, and the relationships between expert and novice. Although Lecercle's theories were those that I first explored in reference to this particular problem, in later explorations, as set out in Chapters Two and Three, I focused more on theories of embodiment and free association as a way to understand intuition, which I now see as the missing factor in the conventional lecture format.

Because of the two problems I found with the 'traditional' lecture format, I wanted to explore other ways in which people can be invited to participate in knowledge creation. I therefore decided, with the support and encouragement of my supervisors, to use a format in which knowledge is co-created in an exploratory, participative process, through a workshop. I am aware, of course, that many other forms of sharing knowledge are available for use in academic contexts: indeed, the MA programme where I shared my research is one in which a huge range of different ways of learning and teaching are explored (Voss 2019). This raises questions regarding whether the perceived need to use the 'lecture' format reflects primarily on my own agendas and set of mental constraints, whether it rather reflects a set of social norms associated with academic practice, or whether it reflects a complicated interplay of cultural and social environments interplaying with my personal belief sets. Regardless of the answer to this, it remains true, I think, that the lecture format *is* a widely used one, and an accepted way of passing knowledge from an expert to a group of non-experts.

In the workshop I offered at the conference, I invited participants to use 'blind reading' (a method used for example in psychical research and mediumship development groups, where objects or images are read in terms of their emotional and personal content), to read texts sealed inside envelopes. It seemed that by using participative methods, and inviting those who took part to reflect on the processes both theoretically and emotionally, and by offering ideas to consider together, I was certainly able to sidestep some of the discomfort I felt about the traditional format. This experience was instrumental in shaping the precise nature of this thesis, prompting me to develop a data-collecting mechanism in the shape of a research group, within which I could address questions of the nature of reading, the role played by intuition and engaging with texts in an academic context through a collaborative and participative process. This alternative, participative and experiential model, however, does raise some issues about the extent to which power-sharing is taking place, the nature of audience and expert, and other questions, which I will consider elsewhere in this thesis.

However, despite issues with the nature of participation, sharing of ideas and collaborative processes, it certainly seemed at the point of developing the presentation that this alternative method might yield insights into reading and learning in an academic context. In addition to my discomfort with the standard lecture format, I started to explore the potential of using more arts-based and participative research methods as a way of looking at my research questions.

1.4 Rationale: Why is this important and what purpose does it serve?

On the basis of the above, it might be reasonable to conclude that my thesis is entirely an exercise in self-exploration, and, arguably, indulgence. Certainly, my starting point is my own reaction to being re-immersed in academic experiences, and while I expand outwards from this starting point to a wider consideration of the nature of intuition and how it might be defined in theoretical terms, this might be of little interest if my experiences are unique to myself. However, based on the reactions of people in the research group I organised, and based on a wider literature investigating student retention and engagement, it would seem that my concerns are shared by others. A recent systematic review of this literature finds that issues of student retention and engagement have been considered for some sixty years: prior to this lack of engagement was viewed as a failing of individual students and studied primarily by psychology (Tight 2020). Typically, even into the 1960s, students who left midway through a course were regarded as mentally ill (Ryle 1969). Subsequently, views changed to acknowledge the larger role played by the environment and institution. A new view in which factors including the role of the institution in organising learning activities and encouraging students to take advantage of opportunities started to emerge (Tight 2020). Tight’s study discusses many different understandings of why engagement fails, for example linking lower levels of student retention with certain demographic categories of students, and different approaches to how engagement might be better facilitated, with different models being proposed, including models based on mentoring, relationship marketing or identification of students at risk of leaving (Tight 2020). However, no approaches using intuitive and creative methods to look at students' relationships with academic texts seem to have been used to date. For this reason, and after further empirical investigation, it is possible that this research might feed into contemporary discussions about student retention and engagement. The results from the research group, described in Chapter Five, indicate that my experience of reading in academic contexts is not unique to me, but shared by at least some others. Others have clearly found academic experiences difficult, and the methods used in my research have the potential to transform readers' relationships with texts, and perhaps also students' experiences within academia, in a positive way.

There are a number of other reasons why the data generated by the group might be interesting. First, there are implications for our concepts of knowledge. What is it to 'know' something? How do we come to know things, and how can we be sure we know them? How are the processes of reading linked to knowing? As such, experiential insights throwing additional light on problems of knowledge may be generated. Chapters Two and Three set out an understanding of intuition based in theories from psychoanalysis, phenomenological philosophy, embodiment studies and literary theory, combined together to understand intuition in a new way. This in turn offers a new theoretical perspective on forms of intuition including mediumship, and a way to understand mediumship which breaks away from the approaches which explain such activities as functions of some personal or social deficit (for example Royalty 1995; Smith *et al.* 1998; Persinger 2001). While there are some new approaches within academia to intuition and mediumship, (for example Hunter 2015; Hunter and Luke 2014; Roxburgh and Roe 2014), the reductive approach is still prominent (for example Woffitt *et. al.* 2013).

The results may also throw light on reading, and prompt further investigations into experiential and theoretical understandings. Reading, although frequent in academic contexts, is, in my experience, sometimes done un-reflexively. In the seven years I have spent so far doing the PhD (including breaks), I have, naturally, attended a number of lectures, seminars and research groups. While these rely heavily on reading in various ways, my experience is that reading as such is somewhat taken for granted. No seminars I have attended, for example, have started with a consideration of *how* we read, the experiential aspects of reading, what is included and what is ignored in the process of reading, and how it leads to other outputs of thought (discussion, debate, theory). I am not claiming that these sorts of considerations need to be introduced into seminars, but I *am* suggesting that it might be interesting to look at what happens if we do. The results from my research group, described in Chapter Six, also indicate that my experience of reading in academic contexts is not unique to me, but shared by at least some others. My exploration of reading is also about the extent to which contemporary academia is still – despite attempts to loosen the grip of rationality and logocentricism – deeply bound by a logical and scientific approach to reading, and an approach which is largely unreflexive. Psychic mediumship and tools of developing intuition are used to uncover ways in which ways of reading and understanding can be freed, by rejecting the implicit rigidity of truth v. fiction in order to explore not whether the texts work by what they say about an objective world but what impacts they have on the reader, and particularly impacts which are embodied, cognitive and emotional rather than wordy, worldly and rational. In so doing, this thesis has some parallels with, and implications for reader response theory, which I discuss in more detail in the methodology chapter.

Finally, the research set out in this thesis may also contribute to existing discussions on transformative learning and intuitive and embodied research methods: this is discussed in more detail in the conclusion. Transformative learning, arising from Freire's socially-informed position on transformation in education (Freire 1970), has developed rapidly in the years since, with two distinct strands, both of which focus on the need of education to transform the participant, but with a different emphasis on the political and social on one hand and the personal and soul work on the other[3]. I would suggest that the methods I use in the research groups described below, and the theory I develop to understand these methods both have implications for transformative learning (in terms of soul-work and reflexivity, rather than social and political change) as I suggest later. I also look later at the implications for research methods: Rosemarie Anderson has pioneered intuitive approaches to research which prioritise embodiment and the body as vehicles for transformation (Anderson 2001; Anderson and Braud 2011), and I find synergies between my findings and her work[4]. The methods I used for data collection in the research group, as described below, are unique to this study, and I hope might be developed as a new contribution to the methodological toolkit utilised by intuitive and embodied research.

---

[3] Mezirow (1995, 1997, 2000) is a good example of someone who takes a more social approach; Dirkx (1998, 2001, 2006) of someone writing from a soul-based perspective. An interesting dialogue between them exists (Dirkx and Mezirow 2006).

In order to address the rationales outlined immediately above, my research prompts reflection on the following questions:

- What is 'intuition' (understood in terms of mediumship) and what philosophical and psychoanalytical theories can be used to understand it?
- What is the role of the body and embodiment in intuition?
- What is the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language?
- How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
- How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and *délire,* be used to explore experiences of reading?
- What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
- What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

1.5 Theoretical underpinnings

In Chapters Two, Three and Four I first look at attempts to understand my starting point – séances and mediumship – before moving on to an approach to understanding these as intuitive activities and to develop a theory of intuition based in three main areas: phenomenological philosophies of embodiment, primarily those set out by Eugene Gendlin (1978); discussions of free association in the psychoanalytic context, particularly Bollas

---

[4] Others work somatically, for example Clark (2012) who uses an embodied, narrative approach, and Kapdocha (2020) who outlines somatic methodologies as way of approaching the research process within performance and voice.

(1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018) and Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018); and Lecercle's (1979) discussions of *délire.* These ideas will be explored in a great deal more depth below, but I briefly indicate the trajectory of the discussion here. In Chapter Two I summarise some attempts to explain my starting point, the phenomenon of certain types of séance and mediumship, as articulated above (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1969; Owen 1974, 1976, 1979). Finding these accounts inadequate, I turn to a different approach rooted in philosophy, and particularly in ways to understand the dichotomy between subjective and objective experience, and the consequent value placed on each type of experience. As such, my starting point is phenomenological philosophy as a basis for understanding intuition, particularly Husserlian phenomenology and his concept of experience, which is not to be equated with subjective experience Husserl 1900, 1913). Husserl developed (in the *Logical Investigations* of 1900/01) a philosophical method he felt would ensure that bodies of knowledge, including mathematics, would be given a secure ontological foundation and not be reduced to psychological functions. His system sets out a method to investigate the precise nature of intentional consciousness and through it the nature of the world (Husserl 1900/1901). Subsequently, he refined this method into his 'transcendental phenomenology', drawing upon Descartes, Hume and Kant (Husserl 1936).

Husserl saw his method as a way to start with the 'given', that is, with the fact of experience (the flow of consciousness), and make a science, in the sense of a reliable body of knowledge, from it (Husserl 1900, 1913). Husserl's later writing, particularly *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, is also relevant to this thesis (Husserl 1936). However, the main focus is on Gendlin's exploration of phenomenology in its embodied aspects, and as applicable to therapeutic contexts (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995). Gendlin develops a nuanced concept of embodied experience which feeds into the theoretical position held by this thesis, and also suggests practical methods (focusing, dipping, the felt sense) to work with the body in an intuitive way that side-steps cognitive and rational processes (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995). Thus, Gendlin's position is useful both for fleshing out a concept of intuition rooted in an understanding of the body as felt from 'inside' and which is not mechanical or seen as quantified, and as a source of methods used in the research group (and which, by extension, may be useful for better understanding people's reactions to academic texts).

The concept of intuition developed by this thesis is also rooted in a discussion within the psychoanalytic literature of free association, specifically a recent discussion of Freud's (1900, 1901, 1913) concept of free association, particularly as discussed by Christopher Bollas (1999,2002), Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018) and Barratt (2014, 2018). I also draw extensively upon Nick Totton's work (2003), who brings a Reichian perspective to this area with an emphasis on embodiment and the extent to which free association overlaps with processes considered telepathic. Free association has been somewhat neglected in the psychoanalytic literature, possibly because a distinction was made, post-Freud, between psychoanalysis as theory and as practice (Bollas 2002). Followers have concentrated on the theories of psychoanalysis, rather than its methods, which may be because the methods are deeply radical and unsettling (Bollas 2002). The argument in this section of the thesis links this unsettling nature to free association as a process for accessing areas of intuition which disrupts emotionally, shakes rational and conceptual understandings and also displays elements of the paranormal. Free association as a method was widely used by artists including the Dadaists and Surrealists, illustrating its values as a creative method for uncovering intuitive material (Elder, 2015). In Chapter Three I examine several accounts of free association, developing a version of free association which both offers a method for exploring reading and which allows an understanding of intuitive processes as mediumistic and telepathic. In this account, close attention is also paid to the relationship of embodiment to free association. Whilst embodied contexts for free association are not particularly highlighted in neither Freud's original accounts of free association (1900, 1901, 1913) nor in the contemporary discussions I focus on in Chapter Three, such contexts are extensively discussed by Totton and, indeed, form a cornerstone of his conception of the role of telepathy in psychoanalytic practice (Totton 2003). By extension, I suggest the *embodied* nature of intuition.

A final theoretical frame for the thesis emerges from the focus on experiences of reading, and what might be left out of accounts of them. The research groups, which looked at participants' experiences of academic reading and different ways in which reading academic texts might be approached, involved close contact with written texts (abstracts). This means that it was necessary to look at questions about reading, language and communication. What is the process whereby material marks are associated with an abstract sense, and can be used to communicate? There are associated questions about the *nature* of communication. All these areas relate to the philosophy of language, and ideas about the text. This is a vast area, the full exploration of which is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is important to acknowledge that the mechanics of written communication are not simple and straightforward, and that it is necessary to look at the role of language. The way I do this is through ideas from the philosopher Jean-Jacques Lecercle. Lecercle (1985, 1994) posits a theory of language in which the abstract, meaning-communicating, expressive elements are sometimes surpassed by language's material underbelly. Lecercle's theories are useful both as a way of acknowledging the role of written language in this thesis, and in exploring the dual nature of language. His theories also posit the material underbelly of language as embodied, and thus relate to both Gendlin's (1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995) phenomenological explorations and Totton's (2003) discussions of the role of embodiment in psychoanalysis, in which he makes very clear the complex relationship of language, embodiment and telepathy: "telepathy is both an escape *from* and an aspiration *of language;* in exactly the same way, it is both an escape from and an aspiration of the body (Totton 2003, p. 198-199).

Of course, I am not suggesting that I have been the first person to feel suffocated by aspects of academic life, nor that I am the first person to attempt new ways of being, and writing, within the academy. It is arguable that others have already tried to create new academic languages and modes of being. In Chapter Four, I look at some attempts to do this, particularly from feminist perspectives. In this chapter, for example, I look at Cixous' (1976, 1986) and Irigarary's (1977) positions, where a philosophical stance merges into acts of radical discourse. I also look at Richardson's (1997) experiences within the contemporary academy, and her ways of attempting to circumvent some of the constraints, as well as Le Guin's (1983) ideas. I look at the ways in which these theorists, arguably, offer an alternative way of 'being' within the academy.

1.6 Scope of study

The research study looks at the practices of reading in academic contexts, at ways of understanding intuition, and investigates what happens if methods designed to incubate intuitive and creative experiences are used to explore reading. It investigates the ways in which intuitive practices, including some developed from practices used in séances and psychic development circles might be understood theoretically, and looks at how such practices throw light on experiences of reading. The results of the empirical investigations are considered in terms of the literature mentioned above, and also, briefly, in terms of ideas about transformative learning and embodied and intuitive research methods. The thesis sets forward a model for understanding intuition, based in phenomenology, Gendlin's concepts of the felt sense and focusing (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995), psychoanalytic accounts of free association (Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Bollas 2002; Totton 2003, 2008) and Lecercle's analyses of *délire* (1985, 1994). The study consists of two components: first, an extended literature review which develops out of themes explored in the researcher's autobiographical experiences, and a primary research phase in which intuitive methods were used to explore practices of reading in academic contexts.

1.7 Thesis structure (and a note about referencing)

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter Two and Three consider the literature relevant to this study. Chapter Two is focused on attempts to explain intuitive phenomena, particularly ones related to the séance and mediumship, from a predominantly empirical and scientific viewpoint. The clear limitations of this sort of approach are outlined. Chapter Three explains issues with the approaches considered in Chapter Two and sets out a new theoretical approach drawing on theories from embodied phenomenology, psychoanalysis and the philosophy of literature. In Chapter Four I consider some existing attempts to subvert the conventions of some forms of academia, particularly attempts from feminist perspectives. Chapter Five lays out the methodology, which sets out the background to the methods used in the empirical section of the study, why I wanted to do the research groups, what purpose they serve, what research philosophy and approach lies behinds the methods used, how I found participants, the rationale for the exercises used in the research groups, how the research groups were ran (data collection) and how the results were analysed. I also look at the theories behind autobiographical approaches, and at reader response theory, acknowledging the ways in which each have fed into the thesis. In Chapter Six I consider the results from the groups, explaining what happened in each, and relating the results back to wider theories of intuition and the ideas developed in Chapter Three. In Chapter Seven, the conclusion, the main elements of the study are summarised, and some pointers are set out for further developing the research in terms of a framework of transformative learning and embodied research methods.

Before moving to the main discussion in the subsequent chapters, I want to mention an issue with referencing. I wrote the thesis believing that the referencing style I was using (Harvard) required page numbers in citations be given only for direct quotes. My supervisor subsequently suggested that all citations required page numbers, except where the citation referred to a book or article as a whole. The guides we checked were ambiguous about this point. I have found a pragmatic solution by using page numbers only where direct quotes are used, or where the argument requires identification of the precise part of the text referred to in the citation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review: Starting Points and Explanations from a Scientific / Materialist Perspective

2.1 Overview

Chapters Two and Three set out a theoretical background for the empirical work of the study, first (Chapter Two) looking at texts dealing with my initial starting point, the phenomena of experimental séances, and at some attempts to explain these (and other) phenomena rooted within certain experimental, scientific or materialist perspectives. I start with a discussion of writers who explored the 'experimental' séance including the Owens (1974, 1976, 1977) and Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1970), then look at attempts to explain mediumship and the séance (and the paranormal[5]). In Chapter Three, having critically analysed the methods of explanation discussed in Chapter Two, I develop a concept of intuition rooted in ideas drawn from philosophy and psychoanalysis as well as other disciplines. While the current chapter explores some of the more scientific perspectives, it is not a definitive study of all such research.

As well as an interest in the 'experimental' séance, another starting point, as I indicated in Chapter One, is my dissatisfaction with some aspects of academic reading and academic contexts. As described previously, in the course of working on the PhD I started to become very resistant to a particular way of working and reading academically and relating to texts, feeling that there was a gap between a lived engagement with the subject matter, the way that subject matter was expressed and the options available for engaging with the subject. I started thinking about this, as also explained above, as a loss of enchantment. As Patrick Curry points out, enchantment is a deeply personal affair and is not linked to one particular category of things or subject area: "far from being a matter of psychology, a purely subjective state of mind, enchantment can reveal profound truths, leading to deep values and become central to a life well-lived" (Curry 2019, p.3). Wondering what really interested me, and whether there was any enchantment to be found in reading academically, I started to think about the work of the Owens and Batcheldor (as referenced above), as a kind of starting point for developing a model of what enchantment might look and feel like. This chapter and the next are firstly a working out and wondering 'why' this work so fascinates me, secondly an account of how some people have tried to explain similar phenomena, and thirdly an investigation of how we might articulate that which is missing from academic reading, where this 'missing' is understood as the kind of intuition which is found in mediumistic and other practices relating to the séance. In short, this chapter is a kind of theorising about what might underpin an academic séance, and how we might use the model of an academic séance as a blueprint for a new approach to reading academically, through looking at the relevant literature and drawing upon my experimental work, as well as considering and rejecting some attempts to explain what is going on.

---

[5] By 'paranormal', following the Oxford University Press definition (2021), I mean events or phenomena which lie outside the scope of the understanding of science.

In this chapter, then, I first look at the explorations of Kenneth Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1968, 1970) and George and Iris Owen (Owen 1974, 1976, 1977). These have a common connection with academia (Batcheldor was a clinical psychologist and George Owen taught in academia) and both had a pragmatic interest in exploring mediumship (Moore 2017). Both Batcheldor and the Owens worked with others in a séance format (see, for example Batcheldor 1968 for a full description of his séances), and in the following I will refer to Batcheldor and the Owens rather than their groups. Both also have in common an approach to mediumship which is exploratory, experimental, and open-minded and which integrates creative methods at its heart (Batcheldor 1968; Owen and Sparrow 1974, pp 6-13). They bring a considered intelligence to the ways in which mediumship manifested itself for them, rather than a concern to fit their findings into a particular explanatory framework. Their explorations are, therefore, a sort of practice: one in which they work with the mysterious and in which their pre-conceptions are, at least to some extent, set to one side. As such, and in terms of the frameworks I will explore in more detail in Chapter Three, they allow a 'space' for the unconscious[6] as well as the conscious; they become more embodied; they explore the *delirious* underbelly of language, they immerse themselves in the phenomenology of what happens[7]. Because each of these authors has this openness to a sort of mystery, I would argue they act as exemplars of how one might allow the enchanted into academia, and offer a model of a way in which one might engage with academic material which overlaps with, but is not the same as, 'conventional' acts of reading. I believe that the methods suggested by these authors offer new possibilities (for enchantment and a different way of working with academic materials). These possibilities involve working with texts in a different way, one which prioritises the intuitive and embodied, in line with Totton's views about the embodied nature of the free associative process (Totton 2003). In these more intuitive and embodied ways of working, it becomes possible to set the everyday 'self' to one side in order to explore other parts of self-experience and the light they throw on acts of academic reading. The kind of embodied working suggested in Reichian therapy, with its focus on bodily rather than cognitive processes, Totton claims "tends to open one up to experiences of the sort generally defined as "paranormal" …. This happens at one end of a spectrum of new experiences set off by the focus on subliminal body sensation which is central to Reichian bodywork" (Totton 2003, p. 189).

---

[6] I define the term 'unconscious' experientially, to denote that which is hidden from conscious awareness, but which can be brought to such awareness, but which always escapes easy translation into concepts and words. I recognise that the term is highly contested, originating in Freud's (1915) concept of a highly organised and structured process that is repressed by the ego as its contents are unacceptable in some way.

Batcheldor and the Owens focus primarily on what they did, rather than on a theoretical understanding of what happened when they did what they did (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977). They do not particularly consider what this practice might mean philosophically, or what philosophy might make of their activities. In response to this, and feeling that a wider philosophical framework *is* necessary to provide a broader context, I develop, in Chapter Three, a theoretical understanding of the kind of experiences which are evidenced in Batcheldor's and the Owen's mediumship (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977), and of the associated notions of 'intuitive' and 'intuition', which seem to be implicit in practices of mediumship. The concern in this chapter is to expand and better understand this notion of intuition and elucidate some thoughts about how to work intuitively and imaginatively with areas that might be termed 'intuitive' or 'unconscious'. The theoretical work in Chapter Three is therefore based on, particularly, phenomenological conceptions of embodiment, particularly those expressed by Eugene Gendlin (1978, 1990, 1994, 1996); concepts of free association found in contemporary psychoanalysis (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003), and Lecercle's notion of *délire (*1985, 1994). The discussion aims to underpin, theoretically, concepts of mediumship and particularly the 'experimental' forms practiced by Batcheldor and the Owens (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977), through developing a robust concept of mediumistic intuition. It also offers both a theoretical underpinning for, and a source of, the methods I used to explore experiences of reading in the research groups.

---

[7] Batcheldor discusses the relationship of his groups' séance work to the conscious and unconscious processes, firmly suggesting that psi in general is associated with unconscious states (Batcheldor 1968, pp. 64-67).

However, before I discuss these theories in Chapter Three, in the current chapter, as well as presenting the 'core' material itself I also broadly survey some other ways to understand the experiences of Batcheldor and the Owens (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977). These framings of mediumship and, in some cases, the wider category of paranormal experience, are primarily from empirical, scientific or materialist viewpoints, and many of these texts can feel like an attempt to 'explain away' the phenomena they are investigating. While such explanations are popular, I feel they are inadequate, and my attempt to understand their inadequacies, particularly the model of the relationship between 'subjective' and 'objective' they assume, offers a path to an exploration of other theorists which is more useful for my purposes.

It should be acknowledged that there has been an increase in the last ten years of studies looking at mediumship from a less reductive perspective, for example Jack Hunter's work, which looks at changing academic attitudes towards mediumship, arguing for a non-reductive anthropological approach (Hunter, 2013, 2020). Work has also been done on the ethnography of mediumship by Fiona Bowie (2013), and work by Julie Beischel, director of the Windbridge Research Centre, describes experimental studies about mediums and mediumship (Beischel 2007; Beischel and Schwartz 2007; Rock, Beischel and Schwartz 2008; Rock and Beischel 2008; Beischel and Rock 2009; Rock, Beischel and Cott 2009; Rock, Beischel, Boccuzzi and Biuso 2014; Beischel, Boccuzzi, Biuso and Rock 2015; Beischel, Mosher and Boccuzzi 2014-2015; Beischel, Mosher and Boccuzzi 2017; Beischel 2019; Beischel, Tassone and Boccuzzi 2019). These more recent approaches offer new, refreshing perspectives.

2.2 Batcheldor, The Owens and the 'experimental' séance

2.2.a Batcheldor

Kenneth J Batcheldor (1921-1988) was a clinical psychologist who worked in UK hospitals. He became interested in investigating séances after a dinner party in 1964 when the guests decided to try a séance, experiencing puzzling phenomena such as loud bangs. Batcheldor became fascinated by the phenomena and went on to hold over 200 sitter group sessions between 1964 and 1965, devoting more time to his investigations after his retirement in 1976. The group experienced a range of macro-psychokinesis (macro-PK) events including table turning, noises (raps, bangs) and apports (objects which appear, apparently out of nowhere) (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984, Batcheldor and Hunt 1966, Batcheldor and Brookes-Smith 1970).

Batcheldor seems to have been more interested in *how* his group produced table tipping, noises, raps, bangs and apports than he was interested in *what* they were. He came to believe that no special mediumship ability was needed, but rather that anyone, given the right circumstances and patience, could experience such things. Indeed, he talks about the "possible universality" of the capacity to elicit mediumistic phenomena (Batcheldor 1968, p. 18), and discusses the "hypothesis of universality of the capacity for producing macro-PK (Batcheldor 1968, p. 28). His interest was primarily in how to create the right circumstances to produce macro-PK events. This involved, for example, cultivating the right atmosphere (open-minded and playful, but also confident and expectant that phenomena could be produced), keeping the same conditions for each group meeting and developing the appropriate mental attitude (curious, flexible, neither too sceptical nor too firmly a believer, light-hearted, patient, interested) (Batcheldor 1968, pp.72-78). Certain attitudes should be avoided: doubt, a resistant overly scientific mind set, the idea that testing of hypotheses was taking place, the expectation of failure and the need to explain what was witnessed. Batcheldor analyses what he calls '" resistance" to identification with séance phenomena: a reluctance to acknowledge that the phenomena occurred, or that they were personally responsible for them (Batcheldor 1968, pp 32-33). Interestingly, Batcheldor also thought that fraud, trickery and deception were necessary to elicit genuine phenomena, talking about the value of deliberately deceptive techniques (Batcheldor 1968, pp.22-28). So, he, or a designated person, would produce a "pseudo" levitation of objects, and this would subsequently lead to genuine levitation (Batcheldor 1968, p.20-21).

While Batcheldor's main interest was in how the production of phenomena could be facilitated, and his theorising tended to be about what was effective in producing the phenomena the group produced, he did theorise to some extent beyond this (see, for example, Batcheldor 1968). For example, he seemed to think that the phenomena were in some way a function of the people present in the sitter group (a capacity of a person, rather than of a supernatural agent), and that there was some sort of causal relationship between the group and the phenomena (Batcheldor 1968 pp. 17-36). He also speculated about other factors, noting that famous mediums are sometimes 'outsiders', linking this to his observation that in his group there was a tendency to 'scapegoat' one member of the group as responsible for the phenomena (Batcheldor 1968, pp. 33-36). Batcheldor's theory, to the extent he has one, arguably stands at odds with the method of scientific experiment, as it rejects the stance of the detached observer, rejects the position of doubt, and uses fraud and lies at the heart of investigation; although he also draws upon the scientific method (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984; Batcheldor and Hunt 1966; Batcheldor and Brookes-Smith 1970). Batcheldor had considerable influence over subsequent sitter groups, including the Owens' (Owen 1974, 1976). It is worth noting in passing that Batchelor's ideas bear relationship to Hansen's (2001) ideas about the trickster and the extent to which duplicity, fraud and deception are at the heart of paranormal phenomena. There is also a synergy with ideas expressed by Geoffrey Cornelius about the role of deception and double thinking in divination carried out by witch doctors (Cornelius 2010).[8]

---

[8] Cornelius discusses divination in the lives of witch doctors, suggesting that their practices "present our modern rational understanding with an impasse" (Cornelius 2010, p. 119) as their methods have no seeming empirical value, are obscure and elusive. But to treat these methods as a fault in logical processing or a failure to properly understand facts is misguided: rather divination involves a specific intellectual process in which play, the manipulation of symbol and dissemblance pay key roles. Indeed, "the seeming-so of semblance and dissemblance are determinative in securing success in divination" (Cornelius 2010, p. 120).

2.2.b The Owens

George Owen (1919-2003) was a lecturer in genetics and mathematics at Cambridge. His wife, Iris (1916-2009), was a nurse. In 1970 the Owens moved to Canada, where George had been invited to direct parapsychology research at the New Horizons Research Foundation, in Toronto. George Owen was interested in poltergeist phenomena, particularly in the ontological status of the poltergeist. He felt that at least some of the phenomena had what he thought of as objective reality. The activity for which the Owens were perhaps best known was the 'Philip' experiment (Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976; Owen and Sparrow 1977). The Owens thought that paranormal phenomena could be created by the unconscious mind. Wanting to test this idea, they decided, with other members of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, to create a fictional character called Philip, who had lived in the seventeenth century in England, and used séances to communicate with him. They worked as a group to imagine Philip, giving him a personality, deciding on his appearance, when he lived and what happened to him when he was alive. The process of developing 'Philip' was elaborate: taking months it involved drawing and developing stories about the character until he took on an imaginative life of his own. The group experimented for a year, meeting once a week (Stage 1), placing their hands on a table and concentrating on developing a force of energy through meditation. They believed that their group would produce a physical manifestation of Philip, but this did not happen immediately. Owen and Sparrow (1976) suggest that the initial method made it difficult to see Philip as an entity that belonged to the group as a whole, whilst the later method meant the group owned Philip as a character. The Owens then used some of Batcheldor's recommended methods (particularly creating a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere) as a way of overcoming their failures (Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976; Owen and Sparrow 1977).

The change in method was successful. Soon there were rappings, communications and noise. The group also experienced table movements (the table started flinging itself around the room and developing what they thought of as its own personality). The group reported a sense that Philip had a definite personality, which mostly matched the personality they had created together, but sometimes extended beyond it, giving a sense that the co-created character had a life of his own. The Owens had a number of ideas about what they were doing and the best way to achieve results like this, although they did not theorise extensively, as Batcheldor did (Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976; Owen and Sparrow 1977). For example, the Owens felt that the results they achieved should be repeatable by any group determined enough. They also felt that a group with between six and eight people was the optimum number for groups. There is some ambiguity about what the Owens thought about the ontology of Philip. On the one hand, their starting point was that poltergeist phenomena, for example, were a product of the unconscious mind and did not relate to anything beyond the psychology of the individual person. At the same time, and by contrast, they were members of the United Church of Canada and believed in an afterlife, which might on the face of it point to an explanation of Philip as a deceased person (Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976; Owen and Sparrow 1977).

In Philip, the Owens created a fictional character who communicated with them (Owen and Sparrow 1974). On face value, this seems to question a sharp distinction between fiction and fact, subjectivity and objectivity. Philip was a fictional person but developed a life beyond that assigned to him by the group, and experiences which might be downplayed as subjective demanded to be taken seriously.[9] As such, their experiments provoke a theoretical reflection on these distinctions, and this will be explored in more detail in the next chapter, using phenomenological approaches such as Gendlin's (1978, 1990, 1994, 1996), ideas about free association (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003) and Lecercle's distinction between two functions of language (Lecercle 1985, 1994). Their methods were also designed to facilitate intuition: relaxation, a sense of kinship with others in the group, and a suspension of attitude of scepticism. The writers considered below, as well as offering a way to outline a new theoretical understanding of intuition in terms of phenomenological, psychoanalytical and literary models, also offer a toolkit of ways to further explore intuition as a practice. Indeed, ideas from the discussion in Chapter Three are used to develop empirical tools for the research groups described later in the thesis.

---

[9] It is worth noting in passing that the 'Philip' phenomenon, in which an imaginary entity is given life, relates to the concept of the Tulpa, originating in Tibetan Buddhism (David-Néel 1929), but also re-emerging in internet forums and social media, and studied in the new academic area of Tulpamancy (see, for example, Isler, 2017).

2.3 Mediumship and its study

Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984) and the Owens (Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976; Owen and Sparrow 1977) practised a kind of mediumship I call ‘experimental’. They focused on mediumistic practice, tried to refine that practice to produce best results, and were open about the theoretical implications of what they were doing (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984; Owen and Sparrow 1974; Owen 1974; Owen and Sparrow 1976, Owen and Sparrow 1977). While both sets of practitioners had a loosely psychological approach to the phenomena they witnessed, holding them to be an unexplored and under-defined human capacity, in my understanding they did not adhere strongly to a psychological explanation, nor was accepting such an explanation necessary to participate in their work or use their methods. Rather, they focused on their practice and how to make it as efficient as possible. By contrast, there exists a much wider history and experience of mediumship and its study, in which the practice is firmly placed, by practitioners, in a religious or spiritual context (Leonard 2005). That is, mediumship is understood as talking to the dead. There is also a third approach (considered below), in which mediumship is considered as a phenomenon to be explained. This more ‘scientific’ approach developed out of the early history of mediumship.

It is worth giving a very brief history of psychical research in the UK, although a fuller exploration is regretfully outside the scope of this thesis. The first organization aiming to study claims of psychic phenomena was the London Society for Psychical Research (SPR), founded in 1882, at a time when intellectuals were seeking to reconcile very different worldviews, particularly the scientific and religious. Mediumship was one of the areas studied, although the Society’s remit was much wider, and included investigations into telepathy, apparitions, hauntings, trance states and automatic writing. Mediums were the focus of their investigations until the 1930s (West 2015). The Society was made up of individuals with varying views of the nature of psychic phenomena, but while a few members believed that non-paranormal explanations were possible for all the events they investigated, the general view was that something was going on that could not be accounted for by science. The SPR had a number of notable members, including Henry Sidgwick and Frederic Myers, both fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Edmund Gurney as well as Charles Dodgson, JB Priestly and Aldous Huxley. William Barratt was a founding member and also went on to establish a psychical research society in America in 1885, within which the psychologist William James played a prominent role (West 2015).

Despite some tensions between members interested in spiritualism and non-spiritualists, the SPR carried out considerable research in its early years, taking a critical and practical approach to claims of the paranormal. Committees were formed to look at specific areas of interest including telepathy, apparitions and mediumship (the Physical Phenomena Committee) (West 2015). The latter investigated a number of mediums, although found little of value. Later the SPR continued to examine mediums including William Eglinton, DD Home and Eusapia Pallidino with mixed results: an investigation of Pallidino in 1895 concluded she had a strong tendency to cheat, however in 1908 a second investigation found evidence of genuine phenomena (West 2015). Mental mediums, who give information verbally or in writing, were also tested, including Leonora Piper and other mediums (West 2015).

There were many highly talented individuals working for the SPR at various times; perhaps the most prolific was Frederic Myers whose collection of survival reports and theories about these were published posthumously (Myers 1903). The cross-correspondence research, carried out by a group of SPR researchers working 'automatically', were allegedly guided by Myers after his death. In these 'cross-correspondences', a number of different texts were produced by individual researchers, each alluding to words or phrases from the classics. Considered individually, the texts meant little, however when considered as a whole the messages made sense. Testing of psychics by members considered into the first half of the 20th century, with the focus shifting to statistical testing in the 1930s (West 2015). There was a corresponding shift in methods: the early 'case study' approach, which will be discussed below, gave way to a quantitative focus (Radin 2010). The next section looks briefly at the trajectory since the 1930s, and more recent investigations. As laboratory, and indeed other scientific, empirical studies of mediumship itself are rather limited, the following sections take a slightly wider focus, looking at studies of and explanations for paranormal events in general.

2.3.a Laboratory studies

In my experience, mediumship is context-driven and thus hard to translate into the laboratory setting. Darkness is favoured, participants generally have an emotional reason for taking part in a séance, and a particular state of mind is required, particularly for the medium, to facilitate trance. Of course, some séances have attracted the presence of scientists (for example the Scole Group in the UK) but by its nature the séance is a one-off event, and hard to replicate (Solomon 2006). Thus, in the early to mid-20th century, there was a move away from the 'case study' approach of the SPR to laboratory studies (Radin 2010). At the same time, the focus moved away from mediumship in particular to paranormal phenomena in general. The 'case study' approach involved the critical study of documents, which Noakes describes as "midway between that of the historian and that of the magistrate" (Noakes 2008, p.65), utilising a version of enquiry in which documents are treated like witnesses, statements checked for coherence and cohesion, and sources of possible error established. This judicial approach gradually gave way, as the SPR developed, to that of the experimental scientist with concerns including replication, testability of hypotheses and visibility (Radin 2010).

As the time-consuming and labour-intensive case study approach was dropped in favour of testing and replication, so the volume of studies increased, and from the 1930s a substantial body of empirical studies was developed (Radin 2010), some of which will be discussed below. Some of the areas investigated, e.g. clairvoyance, have crossovers with mediumship, but the focus is on tests which can be made, and repeated, in a laboratory setting. There is much debate about the significance of the results thus generated, and this will also be indicated below. In the following I am particularly indebted to Radin (2010) who looks at the evidence for paranormal phenomena. As Radin points out, the evidence can be divided into categories, each looking at a different type of psychic phenomenon, including telepathy (“direct communication between two minds”) (Radin 2010, p.59), remote perception (clairvoyance, or being aware of something far distant in space), Perception across time, mind-matter interaction (psychokinesis), mind interaction with living organisms and field consciousness (Radin 2010, p.59). Whilst the separate terms, and the ‘laboratory’ approach which emphasises gathering empirical evidence, suggest phenomena rigidly distinct from each other, in fact there is considerable cross over, with debate concerning, for example, whether evidence for telepathy might equally be evidence for clairvoyance (Radin 2010).

As the case study approach gave way to a more ‘scientific’ approach, Rhine (Rhine 1934, 1937; Rhine *et al.* 1940) pioneered a new approach using symbol cards to test telepathy in the laboratory setting, subjecting the results to statistical analysis. Many other researchers have followed Rhine in trying to provide statistically suggestive evidence for telepathy: Radin suggests the evidence is “increasingly persuasive” (Radin 2010, p. 66). The extent to which boredom and other aspects of participant intention and lived participation were directly relevant to the results obtained became clear very early on: experiments in dream telepathy carried by Ullman and Krippner at Maimonides Research Center in New York were an attempt to re-engage with the subjectivity of participants (see Krippner 1993 for further details), as were the Ganzfeld experiments in the 70s onwards (Honorton 1977; Honorton *et al.* 1990; Honorton and Harper 1974; Braud *et al.* 1975; Braud and Anderson 1978; Parker 1975; Parker 2000; Parker 2001; Parker 2005; Krippner and Friedman 2010).

There is no scope within this thesis to look in full detail at other studies of mediumship and the more general area of the paranormal. However, the following very briefly indicates some of the areas which have been investigated. One approach which has been used in relation to laboratory studies are meta-analyses and systematic reviews. These approaches, both of which gather together large groups of independent studies, are particularly appropriate due to the contentious nature of what is acceptable as evidence in this area (Radin 2010). Systematic reviews collect together the results of a number of empirical studies on a particular topic, whereas meta-analyses analyse data from different quantitative studies (Littell *et al*. 2008). Meta-analysis in particular addresses the criticism sometimes made of laboratory studies in this area, that the experiments are insufficiently controlled and / or safeguarded, as meta-analysis can offer a way for evaluating the extent to which flaws in methodology have contributed to false positive outcomes of studies (Radin 2010). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses of mediumship and the paranormal include Bosch *et al.*'s assessment of correlations between random number generator (RNG) output with human intention (Bosch *et al.* 2006). Interestingly, the authors of this assessment explicitly suggest that "séance-room and other large-scale psychokinetic phenomena" can be entirely translated, in terms of their significance, into experiments with dice and RNG, that is, that it is possible to both carry out experiments that replicate what happens in séance settings, and also to translate what happens in these macro settings to phenomena occurring on the micro level (Bosch *et al.* 2006, p. 497). Bem's investigations have generated considerable controversy (Bem 1994, 2011, 2016). Bem and Honorton claimed, in a meta-analysis of Ganzfeld studies, that statistical analysis suggests that anomalous phenomena inexplicable by standard models were generated in these studies (Bem and Honorton 1994). Subsequently, others have tried and failed to replicate Bem's results, while still others have supported the authors in their conclusions. Other of Bem's meta-analyses, (for example one carried out in 2016, looking at predictions of future events) have generated similar controversies (Bem *et al.* 2016), particularly around the approach to statistics used by Bem and colleagues, regarding whether Bayesian statistics, which involves considering other information surrounding an event rather than just the information generated by the experiment, offers a better approach (see Storm 2010; Lakens 2019 [online]).

Additionally, the controversy surrounding Bem's research has extended beyond a discussion of whether Bem was correct in drawing the conclusions he did, and the role of statistics (Bem 1994, 2011, 2016). Commentators who are open to the idea of the paranormal, for example Leary (2011), have used Bem's work as a starting point. Leary, explores scientific reactions from scientists to the paranormal, suggesting that these are primarily antagonistic (Leary 2011). Leary further claims that scientific scepticism is dogmatic rather than healthy, as it is based on a number of assumptions including the idea that parapsychology cannot be a real science (that is, it cannot display scientific reasoning and methods); that parapsychological research does not meet the required standards; that the mechanisms behind paranormal phenomena are not clear, and that the phenomena are over-associated with uncertainty (Leary 2011, pp. 275-277). Others have questioned the assumptions of anti-paranormal perspectives in research, for example Schwartz (2013). Coyle discusses the extent to which psychology, throughout the history of its discipline, has felt it necessary to defend itself as a ‘scientific’ endeavour, and further suggests that this may explain some of the discipline’s reluctance to accept the results of experiments designed to test paranormality (Coyle 2010, pp. 79-83). Coyle moves beyond critique to suggest that a qualitative approach which is pluralistic and recognizes the irreducibility of the individual’s experiential world is best (Coyle 2010, pp. 79-83). This is reinforced by Cardeña who questions the view of reality as a complete abstraction, stating that this is a fictional idea, which hides a bias towards quantitative methodologies (Cardeña 2010, pp. 73-78). Coyle’s stance also has parallels with the position, mentioned earlier and discussed below, of Hunter (2020).

The enterprise of trying to test paranormal phenomena in a laboratory setting raises a number of questions. Is this sort of testing the most appropriate for serious investigation of mediumship activities and related abilities? These, particularly mediumship, arguably occur primarily in a field setting. Additionally, effects can tail off as boredom sets in with laboratory tests, and the attitude of relaxed engagement which Batcheldor claims to be needed for effective séance activity is hardly facilitated by the neutral laboratory atmosphere (Batcheldor 1968). The darkness which is generally a feature of the séance in field may, I suggest, offer something essential to the production of paranormal material through the relaxing of the gaze and heightened awareness of other senses, rather than offering a cover for deception. There is also, as I see it, a related question: to what extent does the laboratory setting live up to its reputation as a value-free place in which to test: is this space in fact as neutral as it seems? Indeed, some theorists have contested the claims of science to be objective and neutral, for example Spanier, in the context of a more general point about the gender biases present in science (Spanier 1995). Whilst objectivity, as a feature of science, is perhaps naively assumed to be a necessary part of the scientific endeavour and required for epistemic authority, claims to objectivity are associated with a number of metaphysical and epistemological assumptions, and can also be used as a way of downplaying and marginalising the ‘subjective’ (Radin 2008, p. 25). As Radin points out, in some paradigms of science, intuition is disregarded as a way of gaining knowledge, with rational knowing and physicalism preferred (Radin 2008, p. 25). Intuitive knowledge and other non-rational forms “have been regarded as an inferior epistemology at best and a vestige of superstitious nonsense at worse" (Radin 2008, p.25). This, Radin claims, is complexly intertwined with a dismissal of the subjective in general, and is, he further claims, why the field of parapsychology has been ill-received, as it provides strong evidence for unconventional forms of knowledge (Radin 2008, p. 25). However, it might be further argued that the main problem here is the uncontested distinction between objective and subjective knowledge, which will be returned to later in this thesis. Overall, philosophical perspectives on objectivity unpack a complex concept that may in practice be particularly applied to scientific theories and measurements, but which masks hidden philosophical assumptions, for example that an epistemic authority is conferred by objectivity, and denied to positions considered subjective (see Colombo *et al.* 2017).

2.3.b Other studies with a scientific approach

It should be acknowledged that not all studies of mediumship are concerned with hypothesis testing or require a laboratory setting. As mentioned above, early investigations by the Society for Psychical Research adopted a meticulous case study approach. There was a move away from this to studies involving larger numbers of participants and an attempt to test hypotheses (Radin 2010). It should also be acknowledged that some of the studies briefly discussed below seem problematic. In different ways, each of the studies mentioned can be read as dismissive of experiences of paranormality, and some seem to link beliefs in paranormality with particular demographics, particularly ones subject historically to discrimination and suppression (see, for example Wuthnow 1976; Emmons and Sobal 1981; Tobacyk *et al.* 1988; Randall 1990). I have not critically examined these studies, and make no comment about the appropriateness of their methods, nor about the robustness of the conclusions they draw. These are all, it should be noted, relatively 'old' studies in terms of the disciplines in which they are situated (primarily experimental psychology). Considered individually, each of the studies might well 'work' on their own terms, and within the discipline in which they are situated, at the time they were carried out. However, considered as a group and from a later historical perspective, the conclusions they seem to reach are troubling. I include them as an overview of some academic voices in the field, not because I in any way support or endorse their content.

As also indicated above, until 2010 or so, few studies have looked at mediumship, and those that exist (typically in psychology) tend to be reductive in approach, explaining mediumistic activities (and more generally, paranormal abilities) in terms of other, underlying and more basic mechanisms, for example gender or ethnicity (Tobacyk *et al.* 1988; Randall 1990). There are comparatively few scientific studies of mediumship before 2010, for this reason I also include studies of paranormal abilities in the short discussion in this section. Post-2010, there has been an increase in studies in mediumship, and these tend to have a less reductive stance: see, for example Beischel (2007) and Roxburgh (2014), but there is much scope for more work in this area.

Whilst the pre-2010 studies differ from the laboratory studies briefly indicated in the previous section, as they focus on examining phenomena in the settings in which they occur, they do also operate within parameters of a rigidly separated objectivity and subjectivity. For example, many studies of mediumship prior to 2010 attempt to explain subjective attributes, e.g. a belief in mediumship, in terms of objective demographic, neurological or biological variables (for example Clancy *et al.* 2002; Royalty 1995; Tobacyk and Milford 1983). Cognitive deficits are a common way to theorise paranormal beliefs: Clancy *et al.* suggest that reports of abduction by aliens is a form of memory bias (Clancy *et al.* 2002); they found that participants in their small study were more likely to report recovered memories of abduction if they also had a higher tendency to exhibit false recall and recognition. Royalty suggests that paranormal belief is associated with defects in critical thinking (Royalty 1995), and Tobacyk and Milford suggest that there is an association with a tendency to make uncritical inferences, being dogmatic and holding irrational beliefs (Tobacyk and Milford 1983). Tobackyk also claimed that paranormal belief is associated with lower grades in college (Tobackyk 1984), and Smith *et al.* and Otis and Alcock also made associations with lower levels of intelligence (Smith *et al.* 1998; Otis and Alcock 1982). Blakemore, Brugger and Graves and Persinger suggest that there is a link with delusion and misinterpretation of stimuli (Blakemore 1992; Brugger and Graves 1998; Persinger 2001). Benassi *et al.* suggest that participants' estimation of their success carrying out a task involving PK is independent of how well they actually did perform, and in particular the attitude (positive, negative or neutral) of the people organising the experiments (the 'authority' figures) is instrumental in forming participants' opinions of their ability Benassi *et al.* 1979). Tobacyk *et al.* theorise that paranormal belief is due to an individual's inability to think of herself as having control over their selves, others and wider events (Tobacyk *et al.* 1988), while Tobacyk and Shrader suggest that there is also a link with lower levels of self-efficacy (Tobacyk and Shrader 1991). Fantasy-proneness has been posited to have a causal link with belief in the paranormal (Wilson and Barber 1981; Irwin 1990, 1991, 1993, 2009). Other studies link belief in the paranormal with a set of wider, more social and cultural causes. For example, Wuthnow suggests that poverty is associated with paranormal belief, Emmons and Sobal that being older is associated with such beliefs, Tobacyk *et al.* that ethnic minorities are more likely to believe and Randall that women are more likely to hold paranormal beliefs (Wuthnow 1976; Emmons and Sobal 1981; Tobacyk *et al.* 1988; Randall 1990).

Others take a linguistic perspective, drawing upon discourse analysis. Lamont for example looks at the way statements about belief in the paranormal function in conversational contexts and argues that avowals of paranormal belief need to be seen in the context of previous avowals, for example prior scepticism (Lamont 2007, 2009). Wales looks at four different types of speech present in interactions between professional mediums and clients, presenting the encounters as a form of theatrical encounter (Wales 2009). Wooffitt uses discourse analysis, social identity theory and performance theory to characterise stage mediumship as a particular type of performance (2007, 2009, 2013). While Wooffitt's approach is primarily reductive, the authors do link mediumship to the concepts of liminality, performance and trickery, thus echoing Hansen's position (Hansen 2001).

2.3.c The drawbacks of the scientific approach, and a note about enchantment

So far, I have considered studies which either involve hypothesis testing or which aim to explain beliefs in the paranormal in terms of some other framework. In the latter case, the explanation is generally reductive: the 'other framework' offers a more robust, logical or scientific way to explain the belief, and this framework generally involves discounting the viewpoints of people taking part in the activities under investigation. The explanations in question are always generally causal: the scientific, rational framework also generally offers a causal explanatory mechanism for the phenomena studied, a way to understand how some other factor may be the cause of a paranormal belief. In both types of studies, a broadly scientific context prevails. Both, arguably, minimise the experiential aspects of the paranormal in favour of either proving or disproving hypotheses about the existence of paranormal events or explaining experiences as functions of some type of deficit. Both approaches seem to imply that belief in the paranormal is something that needs to be understood in terms of another, more ‘basic’ framework, developed by an ‘expert’, the academic, the authority on this subject. The approaches seem to rule out a framework which welcomes and incorporates the experiences of the person who holds the beliefs, and the complex frameworks in which these beliefs are intertwined.

Both sets of explanation inhabit a distinctively post-enlightenment world from which the concept of enchantment, first set out by Weber (1920, 1930), is missing. I have briefly discussed enchantment and its role in this thesis above, but it is worth looking a bit more closely at its origins and development. The notions of enchantment and disenchantment were themes to which Weber returned throughout his work (see, for example, Weber 1920, 1930, 1946, 1963). Setting aside the nuances of his account, Weber saw Western, post-enlightenment society as one in which wonder, magic and a sense of the mystical had been removed from everyday experience. Intertwined with the loss of a mystical sense is the rise of scientific rationality, legal systems, the development of policies to manage human behaviour, and increased bureaucracy (Weber 1920, 1930, 1946, 1963). As Weber states “our age is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization, and above all, by the disenchantment of the world. Its resulting fate is that precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have withdrawn from public life” (Weber 2004, p. 30).

As scientific knowledge has increased, and as technology has boosted some human capacities, so has impersonality, repression and control arguably also grown. Scientific knowledge is inherently reliant on the notion of causality, concerned with relationships directed towards useful ends, and inherently logical and interconnected. In addition, it is an activity which seems to discount the anecdotal, the personally meaningful, the incidental. As intellectualisation has grown, modes of knowledge prevalent in the past including metaphysics and religion, seem to have faded in prominence (Kim 2012). Within this context, and in my interpretation, studies which attempt to explain the paranormal in terms of one or more psychological or sociological frameworks can be seen as part of a wider movement of general disenchantment. The concept of enchantment, after all, has a dual nature. On the one hand, it can be seen as good to be enchanted: the world is made magical and more alive. On the other, enchantment can be seen as a taking ourselves away from our reason, from good common sense, a bewitchment which works by throwing a kind of fairy dust in our eyes. This can lead to the kind of polarisation Weber describes, following on from the quotation immediately above. The result of the disenchantment of the world which characterises our age is, he says "that precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have withdrawn from public life. They have retreated either into the abstract realm of mystical life or into the fraternal feelings of personal relations between individuals" (Weber 2004, p. 30).

Of course, there is no simple bifurcation between enchantment and disenchantment. Writing in the field of organisational theory, Suddaby *et al.* make an argument that disenchantment is the only outcome of the growth of rationality in modern life, but also find strong evidence of a re-enchantment at play in the world (Suddaby *et al.* 2017). They provide a wide range of evidence in support of this, from a return to craft modes of production, the resilience of aesthetics and reflexivity, the return of tribalism and populism and they also argue that it is impossible to reduce society and culture to quantification and rationality (Suddaby *et al.* 2017). They theorise these signs in terms of a challenge to the "teleological assumptions of progress that is implicit in neo-institutionism, i.e. that humanity is engaged in a civilising project of rationality that will, ultimately erase the influence of myth, magic and mystery in social and organizational life" (Suddaby *et al.* 2017, p. 286). However, as they also point out, theorising has been slow to catch up with the signs of 'grass roots' enchantment they notice. The "hyperrationality of the modern world – the prominence of science, the spread of secularism and the expansion of rationality" have had a notable impact on studies of, for example, institutional life, which tend also to be guided by a similar hyperrationality (Suddaby *et al.* 2017, p. 286).

Curry's concern with enchantment and the forms it takes have already been noted above. Curry critiques modernist attempts to downplay or reduce enchantment, pointing out the value it holds to both individuals and society in general, linking the need to enchant with ecological perspectives (Curry 2019). Curry also: "enchantment is not some off-planet heaven, or hell. It is transcendence in immanence, in which embodiment and embeddedness are absolutely integral: the place where we started, to coin a phrase, but known for the first time. Simultaneously 'concrete' –this place, this person, this music, this food – and 'magic': ineffably spiritual, unplumbable and mysterious. This Earth itself, for example, in all its complex and subtle particulars, and ourselves, when we are enchanted" (Curry 2016, p. 111).

A more open attitude towards enchantment is also displayed by some anthropologists: above I have mentioned Hunter's approach to the paranormal: although Hunter does not explicitly discuss enchantment, it is implicit in his openness to non-ordinary experiences, particularly mediumship as it occurs outside so-called primitive cultures, linking this to a breakdown between the distinction between the observed and the observer in anthropology (Hunter 2020). Interestingly Hunter suggests the value of using phenomenology, particularly bracketing, as a useful approach to paranormal investigations, underlining the value of this methodology for research methods (Hunter 2016 pp. 170-178). Indeed, a recent paper by Stainova explicitly embraces enchantment by proposing it as a research method: a method which has the potential to connect the researcher to dreams and the imagination through a sense of wonder (Stainova 2019, pp. 214-230). This method, Stainova suggests, allows a renewed connection to the social and political as well as a personal reaction, and integrates play, imaginative work and creativity into research (Stainova 2019, pp. 214-230).

Returning to the main topic, any one of the studies discussed above can be seen as taking an experiential event which has a meaning and context for an experiencer, and re-interpreting that event in a rationalist framework which denies any meaning that experiencer might find: the event is just a sign of low intelligence, or of performative machinations; or of being poor, or female. Any emotional content is either ignored or pathologised; the wider ways in which the experiencer might explain why the event is significant are downplayed. Thus, is experiential enchantment reduced to someone else’s theoretical framing. While Weber’s ideas are useful to understand the deadening, emotionally flattening impact of someone else’s theory, there are other ways of reframing questions of mediumship which are also fruitful, and which return the experiential, the significant, the intuitive and the embodied into our understandings. These ways will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Philosophical and Theoretical Approaches and a Theory of Intuition

The aim of the previous chapter was to look at some of the core material that inspired this thesis, and to briefly indicate the nature of the existing material on mediumship and the paranormal. Some ways to consider this area from a scientific perspective have been discussed. The aim of this chapter, building upon the last, is to develop a notion of intuition which embraces experiential and embodied perspectives, and which also embraces styles of language outside the purely referential and descriptive. This notion of intuition provides a useful way of understanding the nature of mediumship by avoiding the need to explain it as a function of other variables (age, intelligence or ethnicity) and by avoiding the idea that mediumship and other paranormal skills can be, or should be tested under laboratory conditions. The aim of this chapter is also to suggest tools which can be used to better understand reading and to approach reading from a more intuitive perspective. Each of the approaches considered below generate useful tools for reading intuitively. This is not, of course, to suggest the following account is the only useful framework within which to understand intuition. The notion of intuition, as elaborated below, also offers a way to sidestep the binary opposition between ‘subjectivity’ and ‘objectivity’, and thus to dismantle claims that knowledge is primarily based on objective (or subjective) experience at the expense of the other binary.

The more ‘scientific’ accounts discussed in Chapter Two function at the ‘objective’ end of the axis which joins ‘subjective’ to ‘objective’. Claims about the nature of objectivity in science are highly debatable, but one interpretation, setting aside truth to 'nature', is that scientific activity is a "struggle against subjectivity", carried out impersonally in a laboratory and aiming to produce knowledge which is public and communicable, and generally quantified (Porter 1996, p.ix). As such, the attempts to prove the existence of events like mediumship described in Chapter Two above are attempts to be objective. From the perspective of objectivity as opposed to subjectivity, paranormal phenomena in general, and mediumship in particular, are likely to be seen as subjective, that is particular to the individual and due to illusion, fantasy or hallucination. Taking a different perspective, for example that embraced by the different forms of qualitative research, subjectivity is important, and the perspectives of people who have experiences of mediumship are taken very seriously, regardless of whether any 'objective' truth has been established (see, for example, Beischel and Rock 2009; Beischel *et al.* 2017). However, taking either a 'subjective' or 'objective' stance seems to involve accepting a number of assumptions about the nature of the world and knowledge. For example, that the distinction between objective (in the 'real' world, measurable, valid and reliable) phenomena and subjective (in the 'mind', not 'true', not reliable) ones is a valid one. In the following, I will question this distinction.

This distinction, as will be explained below, was first questioned by phenomenological philosophy, particularly Husserl and a Husserlian perspective (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960), filtered through Gendlin's body focused approach, is key to the theoretical position developed in this thesis (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2000). These influential thinkers offer ways of undermining the polarity between subjective experience and objective reality. In philosophy the nature of subjectivity and objectivity has always been open to question. In Husserlian phenomenology, for example, experience is the first given, within which objectivity and subjectivity are constructs, not features of a 'real' world existing independently of our points of view (Husserl 1900, 1913, 1936, 1960; Jennings 1986). The following discussion arises from a rejection of the polarity between objective and subjective perspectives, framed through a phenomenological viewpoint, and particularly embracing Eugene Gendlin's) distinct flavour of phenomenology (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978), as well as insights from psychoanalytic theory and literary theory Bollas 1999,2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Barratt 2014, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015; Lecercle 1985, 1994). It will also integrate theories of embodiment into this perspective (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2000; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015). As such, the understanding of mediumship developed in this thesis is of an embodied, experiential utilisation of intuition which embraces the poetic and symbolic rather than the rational and referential.

Before turning to the main sections of this chapter, I want to briefly look at a possible objection that the material contained in this section represents a very narrow range of ‘voices’. In order to address this objection in more detail, I have also considered a different cohort of perspectives in the next chapter, but it is worth also considering here, in a brief note about the reasons I selected these particular authors. Of course, a PhD is – like any written text – limited by its nature. Any discussion on any theme will be limited, as it is impossible to consider all possible perspectives on any given subject. In some ways, indeed, I suggest that this particular PhD is fairly eclectic in content, taking a cross-disciplinary perspective, and attempting to marry these into a new approach to intuition which has implications for our understandings of reading in academic contexts. On reflection, I also feel that each of the main authors, or sets of authors, I draw upon in this thesis offers the best approach for the purpose I have. Gendlin (1963, 1973, 1978, 1996), I feel, offers a unique perspective on embodiment, using a background in phenomenology to develop a way of working with the body as it is understood, and experienced, by the embodied person. Rather than assuming a common understanding of ‘body’ and ‘embodiment’, Gendlin (1963, 1973, 1978, 1996) gives a detailed, considered analysis of what ‘body’ might mean, and how ‘embodiment’ feels, and also offers a useful tool for others to work with embodiment.

I also drew upon a discussion of free association. As I describe later in this chapter, free association as technique, although offering a radical potential to work with unconscious material, has been overshadowed in the psychoanalytic literature by a concentration on theory. For this reason, there is only a very limited set of theoretical texts which deal with free association (Bollas 2002). Additionally, I have concentrated on a discussion of free association by three particular theorists: Bollas (1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018) and Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018). I focused on this particular discussion because these three writers have differing perspectives on free association, and in Barratt (or more specifically Barratt’s reactions against differing perspectives (Barratt 2014, 2018)) a view of free association which links it more closely to aspects of paranormality is developed. I feel this is important for my purposes, as it allows my notion of intuition to embrace the paranormal. I also draw upon Totton (2003, 2008, 2015) for the same reason. Although Totton concentrates particularly on free association as telepathic, rather than its links with other aspects of the paranormal, he makes this connection via a theory of embodiment in which individual experience is inextricably linked to the experiences of others. Although other writers in psychoanalysis have talked about the extent to which extra-ordinary experiences occur in therapeutic contexts, no one has theorised this in terms of a developing concept of embodiment as much as Totton (2003, 2008, 2015). Finally, I also use Lecercle's (1985, 1994) concept of *délire.* To some extent, as Lecercle draws heavily upon Deleuze (1969) (and less heavily on Lacan 1977a, 1977b), it could be argued that other theorists aside from the ones I have looked at looked at have relevance here. But Lecercle, I feel, offers a unique perspective from a particular position in the philosophy of language which is useful for my purposes. Through his elucidation of the consequences of Deleuze's theory of sense, and particularly of the idea that fact and fiction intermingle at the heart of the mechanism that makes sense possible, Lecercle (1985, 1994) develops a distinction between language in its referential, neutral function and the 'other side' of language (*délire)* which is more poetic, more embodied, more passionate and more suppressed. This distinction between *délire* and what might be called rational language is one of particular use for my thesis, as it allows me to understand the ways in which two sides of academic communications co-exist side by side, and allows me to ask questions about what happens if we encourage the production of *déliric* responses to academic texts. In summary, therefore, I have included these authors as I feel they each delineate an area of particular concern to this thesis, with each also contributing in a specific way to the picture of intuition I develop below.

There is also another way of approaching the question of 'why these areas', however. Each of the three areas of concern - embodiment, free association and *délire* - feeds into a definition of intuition with a personal resonance. In this chapter I am concerned with fleshing out a concept of intuition based on free association, *délire* and a phenomenologically understood notion of embodiment, but at the same time I am also asking how academic reading could be more meaningful (more 'enchanted' might be another way of asking this). I answer this in terms of the concept of intuition I draw upon, but another way of giving a sense of why I felt these theoretical areas are relevant is to look at why they are meaningful *to me.* As well as discussing each position theoretically in the chapter below, I also attempt to show the connection with my life and the circumstances leading to this thesis by including short autobiographical sections in the introductions to 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 to follow. I will indicate these by italics.

3.1 Philosophical and theoretical approaches: Husserl, phenomenology, objectivity and subjectivity.

As Husserlian phenomenology offers a way to undercut the binary distinction between objective and subjective perspectives, and also offers an approach which is able to embrace all aspects of experience as potential forms of knowledge (Jennings 1986), I start with a brief overview of this subject area, relating Husserlian perspectives to perspectives on mediumship and the paranormal. As well as undercutting the distinction between subjective and objective, Husserl's later writings also cast doubt on the nature of the scientific enterprise, considered as an enterprise which has a privileged position on knowledge (Husserl 1936, 1960). Husserl critiques the positivist assumptions of science, suggesting that these assumptions get in the way of practicing scientifically without making unacknowledged metaphysical claims, and he also suggests that the world posited by science is meaningless in any deep sense: ”can the world, and human existence within it, truthfully have a meaning if the sciences recognize as true only what is objectively established ..., and if history has nothing more to teach us than that all the shapes of the spiritual world, all the conditions of life, ideals, norms upon which man relies, form and dissolve themselves like fleeting waves?” (Husserl 1936, pp.6-7). Science, Husserl claims, has moved from searching for truth to an assumption that such a search for truth must be predicated upon objectivity: "the specifically human questions were not always banned from the realm of science" (Husserl 1936, p.7). Rather, "there occurred an essential change, a positivistic restriction of the idea of science" (Husserl 1936, p.7). Metaphysics and philosophical questioning have been removed from the scientific enterprise, "the positivistic concept of science in our time... has dropped all the questions which had been considered under the... concepts of metaphysics, including all questions vaguely termed "ultimate and highest" (Husserl 1936, p.9). Thus, an interest in the philosophical grounding of science has been lost, rather science focuses on establishing objective truths about an objective world (Husserl 1936).

The impact of Husserl's perspective on science can be understood most fully from his final book, *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An*

Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy (henceforth *Crisis*) (Husserl 1936), from which the quotations above are taken. Here, as well as critiquing the position of science in society at the time, Husserl's thoughts can also be related to ideas about enchantment and our place in the wider world. In the *Crisis* Husserl critiques the role he saw science as playing from a phenomenological perspective, using ideas he had developed earlier in his career. Husserl's belief is that European styles of thinking and the sciences in particular are in crisis. Europe, Husserl says, is dominated by an ideal of rationality and the idea that rational knowledge is a universal standard (Husserl 1936). Husserl also advances his argument through the articulation and critique of a notion of 'Galilean science', a standpoint which sees nature as objective and subject to mathematical laws, and which, he alleges, is present in our society so all-pervasively that we are hardly aware there might be an alternative (Husserl 1936). As Husserl explains, “"for Galilean natural science, mathematical-physical nature is objective-true nature; it is this nature that is supposed to manifest itself in the merely subjective appearances. It is thus clear... that nature, in exact natural science, is not the actually experienced nature, that of the lifeworld. It is an idea that has arisen out of idealization and has been hypothetically substituted for actually intuited nature" (Husserl 1936, p.221).

Although written in the 1930s, Husserl's position still seems important and relevant. For Husserl, the crisis in the sciences can be solved by his concept of the 'lifeworld' (*Lebenswelt*), the world given through perception (as opposed to the world studied by science which is abstracted from lifeworld experiences). The lifeworld is the forgotten layer which underpins, and is prior to, the world studied by science (Husserl 1936). Husserl, in an essay published after his death, further explains that people:

> belonging to one and the same world live in a loose cultural community - or even none at all - and accordingly constitute different surrounding worlds of culture, as concrete life worlds in which the relatively or absolutely separate communities live their passive and active lives. Each man understands first of all, in respect of a core and as having its unrevealed horizon, *his* concrete surrounding world or *his* culture, and he does so precisely as a man who belongs to the community fashioning it historically. (Husserl 1960, p.133, italics in original).

Thus, the lifeworld is individual to each person, but overlap in the various cultures in which they live. The lifeworld, importantly for this thesis, is lived and embodied (Husserl 1936; Zelic 2008). Husserl also emphasises that the sciences are a product of history and culture (Husserl 1936; Hyder and Rheinberger 2010). In this idea he seems to anticipate theories later made popular by Kuhn (1962).

Husserl's ideas about the failings of science are not the primary focus here, but they do help contextualise phenomenology, and his idea of the lifeworld as embodied is important for this chapter (Husserl 1913, 1936, 1960). What is particularly useful for this thesis is his phenomenological method. In terms of background to the development of this method, Husserl was taught by, amongst others, Wilhelm Wundt, who was considered the father of experimental psychology, and Franz Brentano (Kockelmans 2012). Brentano was the first proponent of the idea that intentionality (the property of thoughts as directed towards an object) is the defining characteristic of mental events (Brentano 1874), which strongly influenced Husserl. Although phenomenology was influenced by the birth of psychology, it is not reducible to psychology. Indeed, Husserl was led to develop phenomenology after his first work, looking at the foundations of arithmetic, was criticised for 'psychologism', the idea that mathematics and mathematical objects can be explained as a function of human psychology (Moran 2005, pp.20-25). By seeing arithmetic (or, indeed, any discipline) as rooted in psychology, there is a sense in which that discipline is explained by, and can be reduced to, the workings of the human mind, perhaps conceived of as functionally dependent upon the human brain (Beyer 2013). As such, the issues concerning the viability of psychologism are still relevant today, and to this thesis. Indeed, Kusch points out that the philosophical debate about psychologism has transformed in present times to become part of a wider standpoint of philosophical naturalism (the idea that everything that exists is part of the natural (not supernatural) world (Kusch 1995).

Associated with the naturalistic standpoint is the idea that the scientific method is the only appropriate way of investigating all aspects of reality (Papineau 2009). That all disciplines are ultimately rooted in psychology is a pleasing idea, as it allows a more austere ontology, in which the basic building blocks of reality are fewer, but Husserl opposed it, wanting to preserve the distinct ontological status of mathematics and it still seems relevant today

(Husserl 1936, 1960). Husserl develops his anti-psychologistic stance in the *Logical Investigations,* where he is concerned to develop a view of logic (understood as underpinning science) which does not reduce it to a matter of psychology. There are, he suggests, two possible ways of thinking about logic: either it is a “theoretical discipline, formal and demonstrative, and independent of psychology”, or it is a “technology dependent on psychology” (Husserl 1900/1901, p.56). Investigating the nature of logic has a wider importance: deciding which of the two alternative views is correct will “lead on to the question of the theoretical foundations of this discipline, and of its relations, in particular, to psychology. This question coincides in essence, in the main if not entirely, with the cardinal question of epistemology, that of the objectivity of knowledge” (Husserl 1900/1901, p.56). Thus, arguing against the notion that logic is rooted in psychology has wider implications for our understanding of the world and knowledge. Through working out his position in the *Logical Investigations,* Husserl establishes the main tenets of his phenomenological framework, with repercussions for understandings of objectivity, subjectivity, epistemology and ontology (Husserl 1900/1901).

In the *Logical Investigations* Husserl therefore develops a philosophical method he felt would ensure that bodies of knowledge, including mathematics, would be given a secure ontological foundation, and not be reduced to psychological functions (Husserl 1900/01). His system sets out a method to investigate the precise nature of intentional consciousness and through it the nature of the world (Husserl 1900/1901). Using Brentano’s concept of intentionality as one of his starting points (Brentano 1874), Husserl states: “We take intentional relation, understood in purely descriptive fashion as an inward peculiarity of certain experiences, to be the essential feature of ‘psychical phenomena’ or ‘acts’” (Husserl 1900/1901, p.555). He further explains: ideation performed in exemplary cases of such experiences – and so performed as to leave empirical-psychological conception and existential affirmation of being out of account, and to deal only with the real phenomenological content of these experiences – yields us the pure, phenomenological generic Idea of *intentional experience* or *act,* and of its various pure species” (Husserl 1900/1901, p.556, italics in original). Thus, the concept of intentionality provides both a way out of reducing logic (and with it epistemology) to psychology, and a way of questioning the division between objective and subjective.

Subsequently, Husserl refined this method into his ‘transcendental phenomenology’, drawing upon Descartes, Hume and Kant (Husserl 1913; Beyer 2013). That is, through transcendental phenomenology Husserl saw his method as a way to start with the ‘given’, meaning, within his system, starting with the fact of experience (the flow of consciousness). From this ‘given’ he developed a science, in the sense of a reliable body of knowledge (Husserl 1913, 1936). This process is not about starting with subjectivity rather than the objective world of science (which is how phenomenology is sometimes interpreted), but is far more radical than that: it is about starting with what is there (given) in experience without labelling it as either subjective or objective, and seeing how we abstract that into notions of ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ (Beyer 2013).

Relating this to understandings of mediumship, as I mentioned above the idea that paranormal phenomena are in some sense ‘subjective’ and as such are less ‘real’ than things in the ‘objective’ world underpins some of the existing research in the area, for example Drinkwater *et al.* (2017). Even if this assumption is not made, there still exists, as evidenced above, an idea that the scientific method offers the best, if not the only, way to investigate such phenomena. For example, Bastos *et al.* reviewed quantitative studies of mediumship in an attempt to provide objective information both for scientists and the general public (Bastos *et al.* 2015). But another way of approaching the phenomena is to use radically different research methods. This does not mean simply taking a qualitative perspective, as many forms of qualitative research have been associated with taking a subjective approach, by, for example, including personal perspectives in research (see, for example, Allen 2007). Although phenomenological methods are sometimes taken as a qualitative tool and hence as a way of investigating subjectivities (Koopman 2015), Husserl’s approach is not really a form of subjectivity-focused qualitative research however but offers something radically different.

As mentioned above, for Husserl, science as practiced in Europe is fatally flawed, particularly in its insistence on the primacy of rationality and abstract thought and the lack of reflexivity with which science is practiced (Husserl 1936). Scientists carry out their investigations while in what Husserl called the ‘natural attitude’: in which the ontological status of any object of consciousness goes unquestioned, and they are taken, for example, as factual items, or figments of the imagination (Husserl 1936; Sawicki 2014). That is, in the natural attitude, it is taken for granted that the world is full of objective things, which we can find out things about with a high degree of certainty using scientific methods. But for Husserl the natural attitude is inherently flawed. Husserl's analysis of the natural attitude, and his idea of bracketing, offer a way out of the tangle of subjectivity, objectivity, and the relationship between the two (Husserl 1936).

In the *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 1900/1901), as discussed above, Husserl set out the basics of the phenomenological method which he continued to develop for the rest of his life (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936). Husserl saw his method as a drawing back from, in order to reflect upon, the 'natural attitude' which characterises not only science but everyday life as well. In the natural attitude, one is oriented towards objects. In the natural attitude, one just gets on with things, and is not reflexive (or reflexive only sporadically and incompletely, reflecting on the objects encountered in the natural attitude without understanding the way thought and object actually relate) (Husserl 1913, 1936). That there is a consciousness which is aware of the objects in the world is not part of the everyday awareness of those objects. We just see the objects, not our awareness of them. In other words, Husserl says, as the scientist practices within the natural attitude, she or he works with what is experienced as the objects of scientific thought and experiment, and fails to take into account the role played by thought in the constitution of these objects. "Natural cognition begins with experience and remains *within* experience. In the theoretical attitude which we call the *natural attitude* the collective horizon of possible investigations is therefore designated with *one* word: it is the *world*". (Husserl 1913, p.5, italics in original).

In the natural attitude, it is assumed that the things in the world are 'objective' and separate from subjectivities. As Russell puts it, "the natural attitude... is built around a... 'belief in' the world as an independent horizon of being" (Russell 2006, p.61). For science, within the natural attitude, subjectivity is downgraded to incidental, localised experience, while the 'real' objective world is seen as ontologically prior (Carroll and Tafoya 2000). The subjective is seen as pretty much irrelevant in terms of our knowledge of the world. The natural attitude, in focusing primarily on quantifiable objects rather than the experience of subjectivity in which these objects are given, first separates out the objective from the subjective and then has the problem of how they are to be reconciled: "to the person remaining in the natural attitude, the problem of objective versus subjective meaning... remains unknown or inadequately clarified" (Tymieniecka 2006, p.383). As a counter to the assumptions made in the 'natural attitude', Husserl suggests becoming aware, through reflection, of the natural attitudes and the set of suppositions about the objects it takes for granted, and through this process starting to become aware of how intentional consciousness is inherently involved in the formation of the 'real' things in the 'objective' world (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913). As Husserl explains in the *Cartesian Meditations:*

> this "inhibiting" or "putting out of play" of all positions taken toward the already-given Objective world... or, as it is also called, this "phenomenological epoché" and "parenthesizing" of the Objective world - thereby does not leave us confronting nothing. On the contrary, we gain possession of something by it; and what we... acquire by it is my pure living, with all the pure subjective processes making this up, and everything meant in them *purely* as meant in them: the universe of "phenomena" in the... phenomenological sense. The epoché can also be said to be the radical and universal method by which I apprehend myself purely: as Ego and with my own pure conscious life, in and by which the entire Objective world exists for me and is precisely as it is for me... Descartes, as we know, indicated all that by the name *cogito*. (Husserl 1960, pp.20-21, italics in original).

The means whereby one moves beyond the natural attitude is *epoché* ('bracketing'), the process of becoming aware of, in order to set aside, the assumptions we make about the ontology (reality) of the objects we experience (Husserl 1900/1901; 1913). By bracketing, Husserl argues, the nature of our consciousness of the object is clarified, as our focus can move to the consciousness, not its object. Additionally, we can be certain of our consciousness (experience) in a way we cannot be certain about what we are conscious of. As Descartes made us aware, while we can doubt the veracity of our experience (are we seeing a dog, or are we dreaming or hallucinating the dog?), we cannot doubt that we are having an experience of seeing a dog (Descartes 1639). As Beyer puts it: "From a first-person point of view, there is no difference to be made out between the veridical and the non-veridical case" (Beyer 2013, [online]). From the first-person point of view, we have no way of knowing whether what we think we see is 'actual' or 'imaginary'. In order, therefore, to investigate what this experience might be like, Husserl suggests we 'bracket' out assumptions about the ontological status of the dog or other object of thought. The aim is to look at the experience itself, not at the intentional object that is its content (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960). By thus refusing to make assumptions about the existence of the objects in our thoughts, the distinction between subjective and objective is questioned: it is not that the world consists of subjects having experiences of objects, but rather of experiences, which are (after bracketing) exposed as experiences of subjects seeing, hearing, imagining, thinking about objects (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936; Beyer 2013). The aim of bracketing is to allow us to better study our experiences without getting tangled up in thoughts about the ontological status of what we experience, but the practice is also useful for uncovering the assumptions we make about objects in our realities, as evidence din the quotation immediately above (Husserl 1960). The practice of bracketing relates to Lecercle's questioning of the polarised distinction between fact and fiction (Lecercle 1985), which I will look at later.

Phenomenology has been widely embraced as a basis for research particularly in qualitative research (Mills and Berks 2014). However, in these contexts it is frequently assumed to be a method which starts with subjective experience (for example Mastropieri and Scruggs 2018). However, the aim of Husserl's phenomenology was not to provide a tool to investigate subjectivity, but to point out that assumptions about subjective and objective are a feature of a naive world view, and to offer a way to investigate the ways in which subjectivity and objectivity are experienced and inextricably linked (Husserl 1936).

To return to the thesis topic, Husserl's methods, as briefly explained above, seem to offer a way to analyse experiences we call extra-ordinary, extra-sensible or supernatural. Particularly, the idea of *epoché* (bracketing) seems to offer a way to side-step the temptation to try and prove the existence of the paranormal scientifically. Examined using Husserlian tools, there would be little interest in whether an experience is real, or a hallucination, but in how it appears in the act of experiencing it. Husserl developed a further set of tools to facilitate such an analysis: the concepts of the perceptual *noema* (intentional object of consciousness), *"hýle*" (sensory content), the constitution of time-consciousness, the role of empathy and intersubjectivity in creating the objective world. In terms of this thesis, these fascinating tools are, however, not necessary (Husserl 1913). The main insight taken from Husserl's perspective is a way of thinking about experiences of mediumship and the paranormal which does not involve reducing them to subjectivity (and somehow, by sleight of hand, also thus making them transient, ephemeral and unimportant compared with objective things) (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960).

There have been attempts to use phenomenological methods to understand the paranormal, for example Jenzen and Munt in the *Ashgate Research Companion to Paranormal Cultures* suggest a phenomenological approach, but explain it as the study of subjective experience, which seems incorrect (Jenzen and Munt 2013, pp.1-38). Laughlin and Rock (2014), influenced by anthropological approaches, suggests that phenomenology offers a powerful tool to explore this area, and usefully explains how phenomenology offers a way to acknowledge the role of participation and experience in meaning making (Laughlin and Rock 2014, p.84), although there are some issues with his description of phenomenological method. Other uses of the phenomenological method to study mediumship and the paranormal exist, but the method is generally not well explained and as indicated above sometimes seems to be synonymous with 'taking subjective experience into account'.

3.2 Gendlin, embodiment and intuition

One approach within the phenomenological tradition is, however, useful. Eugene Gendlin's theories and practical techniques offer a way to understand mediumship and intuition through a particular type of phenomenological method which focuses on embodiment (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2006). This section will explain Gendlin's theories and techniques, and in subsequent sections I will further develop, using concepts from psychoanalysis (particularly free association and *délire*) (Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Bollas 2002; Totton 2003, 2008), a working concept of intuition which can be used to understand mediumship, as well as lay the ground for extracting techniques used in the research groups to explore reading.

Gendlin's background was in phenomenological philosophy. He subsequently moved into psychotherapy, where he developed a set of ideas about the body, body awareness and knowledge, what the body is and how all this relates to our understanding of ourselves and the world. He also developed a set of techniques about how one can learn more about the body. However, Gendlin's concept of the body is not a mechanised entity which is separated from mind, spirit or soul, but is rather an interactive, ambiguous experience which is known intuitively, not primarily through abstract schemata and concepts (Gendlin 1996). For Gendlin the body is "not the body reduced to physiology, not the body-as-machine, but rather the body from out of which you are living. This body is not one thing while you are another, a second thing. Your body enacts your situations and constitutes them largely before you can think how. When your attention joins this living, you can pursue many more possibilities and choices than when you merely drive the body as if it were a machine like the car" (Gendlin 1996, p.304). Gendlin's ideas about the body are very helpful in understanding intuition and how it works. Gendlin's philosophical background is equally important in this exploration of intuition, as his theoretical explanations not only help understand where his more practical concepts (focusing, the felt sense, dipping) come from, but also help to justify (in the sense of providing a philosophical basis for) his practical techniques (Gendlin 1963, 1973). His philosophical ideas also help to provide a basis for others who, like Clements have suggested the use of intuitive methods in research (Clements 2004).

I will therefore start with a consideration of Gendlin's philosophical ideas, relating them to the phenomenological and wider philosophical traditions. I will later look at Gendlin's more practical ideas. But first, autobiography.

There are a lot of ways to answer the question 'why, for me, for this thesis, embodiment'. But it's in my experiences in a psychic development group that I find one particularly compelling answer. I attended this group some 8 years ago, just overlapping with the start of my PhD. I didn't know what to expect of the group, and, thus going with something of an open mind, found I reacted in a variety of different ways: I was partly irritated, partly fascinated, partly soothed, partly surprised. Afterwards, when changes of circumstances dictated I couldn't go any more, I was sad: despite my *mixed feelings I'd got something out of it, perhaps a sort of comfort, perhaps a hope, perhaps a sense of being with people who were open to things that aren't there.*

We did a lot of things in that group, and some of the methods we used fed into the methods I used for the research group: psychometry for example, when we each brought an object (sentimental, significant, with personal associations) and, swapping our objects 'blind' by putting them into a bag and drawing out someone else's object, 'reading' their histories and checking with the owner whether what we said was correct or not. We read each other's auras, we made drawings of spirits. The leader of the group would sometimes slip into trance and channel his spirit guide, a native Indian: or, if not his spirit guide, others of the dead. I kept a diary of each session carefully detailing what we did every week, and the notes as I read them now seem to mix cynicism and suspicion (of motives, of apparent results) with a certain wonder.

But of particular interest to me now, as I write this thesis is the different ways in which we brought our bodies to the processes. What I'd thought of before as a process involving a special, more open form of thinking cognition, as thoughts passed from one to another apparently telepathically, or perhaps as involving a form of vision (the ability to see what's not there), turned out to be a process that was also, and perhaps just as much, rooted in bodily awareness. One Tuesday in May, noted in the diary I kept of the group sessions, we did the usual guided meditation to open the session, and I'd felt an "awareness of tension in head, throat" I also felt a "feeling down one side of body, like pain or nausea". A week later, I was aware – somehow, with no detail specified and I now can't remember how - of a "distinct 'flow' from the meditation room when I waited outside". In the same session, I felt teary and "choked". Other sessions brought a sense of flying (as part of a meditation); unexpected temperature changes like chills or heat; feelings of energy movement, and other bodily experiences somehow beyond representation in words. We did healing through the laying on of hands, which made me feel like some part of me was being lifted upwards. One memorable session we practiced mediumship by inviting someone close by to enter our bodies. Initially rather nervous of letting some stranger – albeit a dead stranger – into my closest sense of me, I overcame the initial anxiety and realised that the host – me – has control over the process, one isn't just taken over but is host to a second, distinctive but controllable set of other sensations that are experienced as being, or belonging to, someone else.

Perhaps what impressed me most about the experience as a whole wasn't the correct or incorrect content of the thoughts, or whether the things we learned to see where veridical or not, and in what *way, but the discovery of a new way of being in the body, a sensing of things not limited to proprioception or an inner exploration of what's visible in the mirror, but an awareness of what might loosely be called energy, or spirit, or the astral or ethereal body. And in this way, I learned, there's more to the body than meets the eye.*

3.2.a Gendlin and philosophy

Gendlin, then, is a phenomenologist. The section on Husserl above has given a brief background of some aspects of phenomenology. Different notions of phenomenology exist, but I will be taking the term in the sense of a: "a philosophical movement based on a self-critical methodology for reflectively (reflexively or introspectively) examining and describing … lived experience (the phenomena)", as a basis for a revised understanding of the world and our place in it" (Reeder, 1986, p.21). The following section will look at different aspects of Gendlin's philosophical thought. It will start with an examination of his relationship with what he thought of as one dominant tradition in philosophy, move on to his discussion of the relationship between experience and language, and finish by looking at Gendlin's critique of the notion of perception, as this critique is instrumental in providing a support for Gendlin's more practical ideas (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2006). While the discussion is detailed, it is necessary to understand how his approach offers a way to sidestep the polarity of 'objective' v. 'subjective', and hence supply a robust approach to intuition and mediumship that is not reductive but allows deep exploration. Understanding the philosophical basis for his practical ideas offers a way to defend intuition against charges of subjectivity, fancy, and triviality.

3.2.a.1 Gendlin's relationship with a dominant philosophical tradition

Gendlin's ideas emerge from a dissatisfaction with a dominant tradition in Western philosophy, that is, the tendency to interpret experience, and reality "as basically a formal or logic-like system" (Gendlin 1973, p.281). Gendlin's critique of this echoes Lecercle's later discussion of two views of language, explored below (Lecercle 1985). The tendency includes, but is not limited to, attempts to privilege science as a system capable of fully explaining reality. Under this dominant tradition, experience mirrors nature, and nature is assumed to possess a formal, abstract and structured system. Correspondingly, within this tradition, a scientific or mathematical approach is assumed to be the best way of understanding the nature of reality. While different philosophies have emphasised different interpretations of this, in most cases, the "needs of knowledge (as analyzed) governed what was said of experience or nature" (Gendlin 1973, p.282). Thus, direct experience of the world, under this tradition, will always play a very second-hand role compared with the world science postulates. Gendlin questions various aspects of this dominant tradition, using tools developed by phenomenology. This leads him to develop his own philosophical approach, which both provides a theoretical basis for and inspires the tools he develops (Gendlin 1973). Gendlin's approach is useful for this thesis, as it provides a way to better understand intuitive processes and also a method for exploring them empirically.

The critique of the dominant tradition in philosophy is thus an important starting point for Gendlin (Gendlin 1973), and it is important to understand what it involves and what Gendlin is criticising. As well as the idea that experience merely reflects mathematically structured reality, the tradition also involves a particular understanding of the nature and role of perception in knowledge and experience, and of what the body is and how it relates to the mind (Gendlin 1973). In the following I will look in turn at the two areas which Gendlin critiques: first the relationship between experience and reality, as mediated (or not) by language and conceptual systems, and second the role of perception and the body.

Before I move to the main body of this discussion, I want to point out that Gendlin is by no means the first to identify and interrogate this dominant tradition. The dominant approach was rejected by a number of thinkers, including the phenomenologists Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty (Husserl 1913, 1936, 1960; Heidegger 1927; Sartre 1943; Merleau-Ponty 1945), but also by philosophers of language including Wittgenstein and Ryle (Wittgenstein 1922, 1953; Ryle 1949). Gendlin's ideas are heavily influenced by these thinkers, particularly Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Gendlin's dissatisfaction with this 'dominant tradition' also echoes Lecercle's discussion of two language types (Lecercle 1985), which will be discussed later.

3.2.a.2 The Notion of experience, and the relationship between experience and language

Gendlin's conception of the body, particularly set within the context of his rejection of a 'dominant' model, relates directly to this thesis, as it provides a way of understanding intuition and mediumship (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1996). However, in order to understand Gendlin's thought here, it is necessary to look first at his understanding of the relationship between experience and language. This is particularly pertinent given the focus of other parts of this literature review, and indeed this thesis, on language: Lecercle's ideas are rooted in two understandings of language (Lecercle 1985, 1994), and free association is expressed through an analysand talking to the analyst (Freud 1900, 1901, 1913, 1915).

Gendlin's discussion is informed by a curiousity about how it is that we are able to talk about experience (Gendlin 1973). As mentioned above, one dominant tradition in Western thought assumes that reality is effectively a formal system bound by logic, that experience mirrors this, and that science, together with mathematics, are the most appropriate ways of understanding reality (Gendlin 1973). This idea is also associated with the notion that language simply and straightforwardly also mirrors the formal structure of reality as it obeys the mathematical rules it does. Gendlin's phenomenology offers a way to transcend the idea that experience has a structure imposed on it by a prior, and ontologically separate, scientifically understood reality, and correspondingly involves a different understanding of language to the one associated with the dominant tradition (Gendlin 1973). In contrast with the idea that human experience is a poor copy of reality, for the phenomenologist, experience is the most basic unit from which abstract systems are constructed: "language and living developed together" (Gendlin 1973, p.286). In Heidegger's term, human experience is that of 'Being-in-the-world', that is, the experiential subject is always understood as situated within her world (Heidegger 1927), and this is the basis upon which systems of knowledge are constructed. (Gendlin was strongly influenced by Heidegger.) It is not that the world science and mathematics describe is ontologically prior, and experience is experience *of* this world: rather human being-in-the-world is ontologically prior, and the scientifically postulated world an abstraction from this. Thus, language is an experience of being in the world, as it happens (Gendlin 1973).

This understanding of experience leads to a conception of the role of language: for Heidegger, the differentiation of experience through language is part of the nature of experience. Language is not something separate from the reality it references (Heidegger 1927). However, while language is part of the nature of experience, 'being-in-the-world' is not structured in the way language or concepts are structured. So, it is an error to impose linguistic schemes on experience (Heidegger 1927). The problem of the extent to which any philosophy is a process of attempting to impose a scheme on reality is one that was thoroughly investigated by Heidegger. He saw his hermeneutical approach as a replacement for traditional ontology and postulated a hermeneutic circle in which understanding becomes an endless process of projection into a text, assimilation, reflection and new projections (Heidegger 1927). The concept of hermeneutics is interesting: although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to draw it out, Gendlin's method and the methods of psychoanalysis and Lecercle can also be seen as a kind of hermeneutics (Gendlin 1978, 1996; Lecercle 1985, 1994). Heidegger's approach can be seen as a way of sidestepping the inevitability of any philosophy being yet another conceptual, schematic imposition on a reality (experience) which always escapes such categorisation, as it situates the person doing the understanding at the heart of the process of understanding, and thus this person has a central role in constituting everything that makes up 'reality' (Heidegger 1927). Equally, through hermeneutics, it might be argued, understanding becomes a drawn-out process which necessarily unfolds over time, rather than an immediate glimpse of a reality outside the process of unfolding. Thus, the phenomenological notion that we should start with experience as the basic unit of ontology contrasts with the idea that experience, for example through perception, is a way of coming to awareness of a logically structured, independent reality (Gendlin 1973). The nature of 'experience' thus expands ontologically, becoming something within which knowledge can be grounded, and which is, by its very nature, in interaction with the world, not interpreting it. This expanded notion is central in Gendlin's thought and paves the way for his subsequent exploration of the role of inner sense in human knowing (Gendlin 1973).

Gendlin bases his critique of the traditional notions of experience and reality on ideas such as these, particularly the notion, developed by Husserl and further expanded by Heidegger (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913; Heidegger 1927), that philosophy should be based on a close examination of experience, including both the thoughts, feelings, sensations and other 'inner' experiences and also Husserl's later concept of the 'life world' in which we live, work and connect with others (Husserl 1936). This expanded notion of experience becomes the grounding for more abstract conceptual schemes, rather than simply reflecting a more ontologically basic reality, or offering evidence for such a reality. As Gendlin puts it, experience is not "imposed upon by the requirements of one view of science" (Gendlin 1973, p.287). Thus, Gendlin made an arguably useful move in attempting to root reality in experience, rather than assume that reality is independent of experience (Gendlin 1973). This means, for the purposes of this thesis, that we need to take paranormal experiences, including those of mediumship, seriously on their own terms, rather than seeking for either a causal explanation or an ontologically prior grounding in *something else that's physical,* for example in neurological disorders and malfunctioning brain chemistry. For the phenomenologist, in my interpretation of Gendlin and Husserl, the meaning is presented in the experience; we can't explain experiences away as a by-product of left-, right- or other parts of the brain functioning, as the brain we are using to provide a causal explanation of the meaning is something which (at least in the functions attributed to it) is abstracted from experience itself. However, the phenomenological project of recasting experience *qua* experience, and not as a function of something else is not unproblematic. As Gendlin points out Husserl struggled to reconcile experience with conceptualisation: although he "resisted schemes that have been read into experience, how could he himself organize his own analysis of experience?" (Gendlin 1973, p.287). The only way Gendlin suggests, is by using schemes and language. However, this project was doomed to failure: "on the one hand, he wanted to study the structure of experience without importing a scheme, and yet, on the other hand, any studying, describing, laying out in words and distinctions must, after all, employ some scheme and some organizing parameters" (Gendlin 1973, p.287). This is indeed a problem.

Indeed, others have wrestled with the problem of how seemingly private, subjective experience relates to the world of abstractions and concepts expressed in language (Moore

1913). Perhaps the ‘problem’ is in fact several problems: how can anything be said about a domain which stands ‘outside’, separate from language and schemata? How can we build up a picture of an objective world and communicate about it, basing that picture upon private sensations and what philosophers sometimes refer to as sense data (Moore 1913). Wittgenstein’s ‘private language argument’ seems to address this issue not by denying that private experience is possible, but by arguing that the meaning of linguistic terms cannot be explained in terms of people’s private experiences (for example, the meaning of the colour red is not an inner experience we associate with the term ‘red’) (Wittgenstein 1953). That is, a philosophical understanding of how language works in practice needs to make no reference to private experience: "if we construe the grammar of the expression of sensation on the model of "object and designation" the object drops out of consideration as irrelevant" (Wittgenstein 1953, para 293). What are the implications of this for a phenomenological approach like Gendlin’s which seems to start with personal experience? The answer might be that Wittgenstein and Gendlin are not, in fact, opposed. Wittgenstein is talking about an explanation of language and communication couched in terms of subjective experience (Wittgenstein 1953): Gendlin is suggesting that if we start with the given – experience – we move beyond the distinction between subjective and objective (Gendlin 1973). However, there is clearly something problematic about starting, as Gendlin does, with experience. Given these problems, how can we think about the relationship between experience, our expression of it and the conceptual (mathematical, scientific) schemes we build upon it? As well as mathematical and scientific schemes, this also has impact on other theoretical schemes and indeed for any of our everyday notions of the world which ultimately derive from philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality and our knowledge of it. In order to answer this, and provide a philosophical basis for his subsequent more practical notions, Gendlin draws upon later ideas from Husserl (1913), particularly his separation of linguistic expression and that which it expresses into two congruent layers (thus replacing the idea that experience is prior to and more ontologically basic than conceptual schemes) (Gendlin 1973). As described by Gendlin, Husserl wrestles with the best way to express this relationship, and seems to come to the conclusion that the relationship between what we say and the thing we are talking about is essentially metaphorical, rather than denotional (a process of a sign denoting its object) (Husserl 1913; Gendlin 1973). That is, Husserl characterises the relationship as language *covering* that which it talks about, elsewhere saying that there is a *congruence* between language and that which is expressed. With both these ways of understanding the relationship, that which is talked about or schematised (experience) is altered by the process of talking in and through language. Thus, there is more than the linguistic schematising which is separate from, but which points to and describes experience, there is also an intentional under layer, with the two elements in a complex relationship of mutual dependency (Husserl 1913; Gendlin 1973).

It is this mutually-dependant relationship between experience and its expression as schemata that Gendlin takes as the philosophical foundation for his subsequent concepts of e.g. focusing and dipping (Gendlin 1973). We have seen above that Gendlin, through a close study of Husserl, has taken different stances on the relationship between experience and linguistic expression (Gendlin 1973). The difficulties of understanding this relationship has also fed reflexively into Gendlin's thought processes, as he follows Husserl's difficulties in solving the question of how lived experience can be the basis for linguistic conceptualisation, how it can lead to our conceptions of an 'objective' world, and how abstract schemata can be true of the lived world (Gendlin 1973). Thus, following later Husserl (Husserl 1913), Gendlin believes the way to approach this problem is through trying to understand how language and experience work together (Gendlin 1973). Husserl hints that this process is interactive and collaborative. As expressed by Gendlin: "we study both experience and statement as they occur in the process of affecting each other" (Gendlin 1973, p.291). Thus, experience and statement, experience and schemata, experience and language should be investigated as a symbiotic entity, mutually influencing each other, curled up together (Husserl 1913; Gendlin 1973). This can be also be seen as a Heideggerian strategy, and indeed Gendlin refers frequently to Heidegger as a way of understanding this relationship (Heidegger 1927; Gendlin 1973).

However, Gendlin does not always make this link between his and Heidegger's strategy clear, and at other times his own attempts at explaining the relationship between experience and language seem confused. For example, he sometimes attempts a descriptive strategy, simply stating that language and experience are already related, and this relationship takes place in, and within, the situation in which they are used (Gendlin 1973).

At other times he seems to rely upon explanatory mechanisms that, strictly speaking, are ruled out by phenomenology, for example in his discussion of how experience is "always organized by the evolutionary history of the body, and also by culture and situations organized partly by language" (Gendlin 1973, p.292). This explanation is not wholly in the spirit of Husserlian phenomenology, as it suggests that experience is not in fact the starting point, and that concepts from, for example, evolution, history and culture, explain experience. In other places, Gendlin's solution is more avowedly Heideggerian: experiences are inherently rooted in that experience being in-the-world: "when one states (or corrects) a feeling, one states aspects of the situation in which one has the feelings" (Gendlin 1973, p.293). At the same time, situations themselves are complex and interwoven with experience: "experience is already organised in part linguistically and situationally" (Gendlin 1973, p.293). The two sides of the relation are already connected. This may, in part, be due to the nature of language, and the extent to which the idea that language is transparent is already lodged in the terms of, and our use of, language itself. It is relatively easy to advocate for, or accept, a more hermeneutical viewpoint in which understanding is complex, occurs over an extended period of time, and reveals itself mysteriously (Gendlin 1973). It is arguably more difficult to adhere 100% to hermeneutics in practice, when habits of understanding and discourse are rooted in older models.

Thus, in summary of the discussion so far, for Gendlin, experience and language (meaning both how we talk about experience and the system of abstract concepts and schemata which make up bodies of knowledge) are related. Although Gendlin struggled to fully articulate the relationship in a straightforward way, it is clear that he felt experience and language are in a mutually dependant relationship, language is rooted in experience and experience is already partly organised linguistically (Gendlin 1973).

3.2.a.3 Critique of notion of perception

I now turn to an analysis of Gendlin's critique of some ideas about perception, what it is, what it is for and how it functions. This critique leads on to his formulation of some positive ideas, particularly concerned with the nature of the body and its role (Gendlin 1992). These ideas are useful for grounding the notion of intuition upon which this thesis relies. Although I discuss Gendlin's ideas about the relationship of experience and language on the one hand, and his critique of the notion of perception on the other, separately below, in fact these two strands of his philosophical thought are closely connected, and it is tricky to fully separate them (Gendlin 1963, 1973). Similarly, both strands also relate to his critique, discussed earlier, of what he refers to as one of the dominant modes of philosophy.

Within philosophy, perception has been defined as involving "the presentation (as) of ordinary mind-independent objects to a subject, and such objects are experienced as present or there such that the character of experience is immediately responsive to the character of its objects" (Crane and French 2017 [online]). That is, it is commonly understood as the processes through which a subject becomes aware of an objective world. Perception, thus understood, can be broken down into two constituent elements: independence of mind on the one hand, and presence on the other. That is, perception is understood to be first a perception of entities which are separate from (ontologically distinct from) mind, and second a presentation of those entities to a subject in each act of perception (Crane and French 2017 [online]). Thus, there are two elements required if 'perception' is said to take place; someone doing the perception, and something that is perceived. The above definition was taken from a respected source, the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, however Gendlin has a deep-rooted objection to the idea that perception mediates between people and the objective world. As he explains, in this commonly accepted idea: "perception inherently involves a datum, clear or unclear, something that exists *for* someone, happens *to* someone, or is present *before* someone" (Gendlin 1992, p.343: italics in original). Thus, perception, in the traditional view, becomes a means by which people are divided from the world, a process in which we sit in our heads interpreting data that is coming to us through our senses. Thinking about perception as a screen that divides subject from object means that "when philosophy considers perception it cannot help but consider a percept, something presented, an object constituted *between* the body and the environment" (Gendlin 1992, p.343, italics in original). But this way of considering it separates the perceiver from the percept from the thing the percept is a representation of. This can be related to the idea, also critiqued by Gendlin and discussed above, that experience and language (abstract schemata) are separate (Gendlin 1973).

3.2.a.4 The notion of perception and the nature of the body

Thinking about perception in the way articulated above (the ‘traditional’ view) arguably offers a new perspective on certain understandings of the world, particularly ones where it is assumed that perception mediates between experiencer and reality. As Gendlin explains, “the scientific construction of the universe consists of percepts and percept-like patterns *presented* before us (Gendlin 1992, p.341). That is, in this viewpoint, other things in the world, including humans and animals, do not interact directly with us, as we might naively assume, but are mediated through perceptual presentation in a space that is equally mediated. ‘I’, as the perceiver of the world in the scientific world view, cannot find *myself* within this world view, only the rest of the world, which is presented to me as objective observer… we seem to be only the perceivers of or constructors-of the picture, as if we were outside the universe, the perceiver who does not appear in the percept” (Gendlin 1992, p.341, italics in original). Thus, conceiving of the world scientifically can mean ascribing greater ontological importance to objective reality, and less to subjectivity, as the perceiver counts for little in the matter: “traditionally the perceiver added nearly noting, just the having-of, the consciousness-of” (p.344).

Against this, Gendlin suggests that living things are already directly in contact with reality, and that this contact is not mediated through perceptions or sense data. “Our own living bodies also *are* interactions with their environments, and that is not lost just because ours also have perception” (Gendlin 1992, p.344). Our living bodies interact with other bodies, and the rest of the world, *as* bodies, and this interaction is not based solely on information that comes through our five senses. As Gendlin puts it: “Our bodies don’t lurk in isolation behind the five peepholes of perception” (Gendlin 1992, p.344). Thus, the body, understood in a very specific way, is at the centre of Gendlin’s philosophical model. Here we see clearly the connection with Husserl’s concept of the lifeworld in which a subject is always located in her body, place and culture (Husserl 1936).

As with his concept of experience and language, Gendlin’s ideas about the body and its role are rooted in work by previous philosophers in the phenomenological tradition. For example, the break Gendlin describes with the traditional viewpoint is a legacy of Husserlian phenomenology, which prioritises the experientially given (Husserl 1913, 1936). Husserl contrasts the natural world as postulated by Galilean physics (and contemporary science) with nature as experienced: the scientific viewpoint Husserl critiques is essentially an abstraction from experience (Husserl 1936, p.30). The experienced natural world is, by contrast a world with "concreteness of sensibly intuitable bodies” (Husserl 1936, p.30). Moreover, the bodies experienced in nature are bodies experienced as related to each other: "their changes of spatiotemporal position, or of form- or plenum- characteristics, are not accidental and arbitrary but depend on one another in sensibly typical ways. Such types of relatedness between bodily occurrences are themselves moments of “everyday experiencing intuition” (Husserl 1936, p.30).

Of all the phenomenologists, Merleau-Ponty was most concerned with the body and embodiment. As Gendlin states, Merleau-Ponty: “says that the body is our first opening to the world and only so is perception possible” (Gendlin 1992, p.344). Merleau-Ponty examines embodiment from the perspective of the philosophical problem of the relationship of mind (or consciousness) to the body, a problem he attempts to solve via the notion of *Gestalt (*pattern). At a pre-reflexive level, mind is not separated from the world in which it finds itself (Merleau-Ponty 1945). This pre-reflexive view has something in common with the so-called primitive mentality and the notion of *participation mystique* described by Levy-Bruhl (1923). At this level, there is no mind-body problem to solve: “the soul remains coextensive with nature” (Merleau-Ponty 1945, p.203). Rational reflection, prompted by awareness of illusion for example, separates out the mind from the body, subject from object. However, this post-reflexive position cannot make adequate account of the pre-reflexive position upon which it is based. Merleau-Ponty attempts to solve this problem through *Gestalt* theory and a phenomenology rooted in one’s own body, a body which is not experienced as an objective thing in the world (Merleau-Ponty 1945). For him, experience is a lived whole that takes place in and through the body: and this body is not the objectified body of, for example, medical science, but a self-experienced body that exists in and for a world (or, as Merleau-Ponty has it, “being-towards-the-world”) (Merleau-Ponty, 1945).

Unfortunately, further study of the role played by Merleau-Ponty in recontextualising the body is outside the scope of this thesis, but it is worth noting the influence he had on Gendlin (1963, 1973).

3.2.a.5 A new conception of the 'body'

For Gendlin, drawing upon Merleau Ponty, it is interaction – the human being in the world - which replaces the philosophical notion of perception. Gendlin states: "I propose that [Merleau-Ponty] mastered the fact that we are bodies, and that the body is not a philosophical precondition of perception". Bodies, for Gendlin, are "earlier than language" (Gendlin 1999, p.80). But just as this necessitates changing our ideas about perception, reality and experience, so there is a need to reformulate our understanding of the term 'body', as has been hinted at above (Gendlin 1999). For Gendlin, 'body' is not the 'body' of, for example, the 'mind-body distinction', a spacio-temporal entity separate (yet somehow intimately connected with the self), nor is it the body which is worked upon, quantified and objectified in medical science (Gendlin 1999). Rather, Gendlin explains:

> so we have to both use, respect and also change the notion that we have of the body. It's *not* a structure that fills space and time. We need to *consider* it that way, so we can analyse it and have medicine and chemistry and neurology and all these very important things. But the body is *not* a structure that just "is" in the environment, in space, like you see me sit here". (Gendlin 2007 p.2, italics in original)

What is missing in these 'objectivist' accounts is any sense of the body as experienced. For Gendlin, the body is rather something that is lived, as it were from the 'inside' (although phenomenological viewpoints tend to reject any clear-cut distinction between 'inside' and 'outside') (Gendlin 2007).

Having a body involves more than being a lived body. There is also an emotional aspect to consider. Philosophy, it has been suggested, has downplayed the emotions (Solomon 2008), and Gendlin attempts to redress this (Gendlin 1999, 2007). Gendlin draws upon Merleau-Ponty (1945) and Husserl (1913; 1936) in his further characterisation of the body, and any felt sense of the body, as having an *emotional* sense (Gendlin 1999, 2007). However, for

Gendlin, understanding the body as in part emotional does not draw upon emotions as they are generally understood, that is, as defined concepts such as sorrow and happiness. Gendlin's emotions are inherently complex and cannot be easily categorised: they are more akin to a subtle yet distinct feeling (Gendlin 1999, 2007). These feelings, as was pointed out above, elude easy relationship with language.

3.2.a.6 Concluding remarks about Gendlin's philosophies

Gendlin's ideas have implications for psychology and psychotherapy, particularly the way in which, for Gendlin, the rich complexity of lived experience always undercuts creating theories about such experience. As he puts it: "the individual in psychotherapy does not find within himself the conceptually defined factors the theories propose. What he finds instead are *felt meanings* which he differentiates as a mass of extremely specific and finely textured meanings" (Gendlin 1963, p.247, italics in original). This landscape of felt meaning is hard to navigate as we are often primarily used to focusing outside and deploying abstract concepts to minimise our experiences, however, these felt meanings change and become more differentiated over time as they are worked with, further aspects appear requiring further expression in words (Gendlin 1963). This concept of felt meaning and associated ideas will be important in the next section, where Gendlin's techniques are discussed.

Despite its richness, there are some issues with Gendlin's philosophical ideas. One is that Gendlin sometimes gives the impression that he is the first person to think about the problems inherent in one 'traditional' perspective in philosophy (and the associated 'traditional' perspective in some flavours of science). In fact, these issues have been much discussed elsewhere, by others, for example Husserl, in his reflections on the drawbacks of scientific perspectives, and remaining unquestioningly in the natural attitude (Husserl 1936, 1960)... The problem of how we think about experience and how it relates to concepts, language and schemata has been widely considered, both by the phenomenologists, as Gendlin acknowledges, but also by various types of philosophy of language. Wittgenstein in particular, in his later philosophy, and as briefly mentioned above, gives consideration to this (Wittgenstein 1953). Indeed, it could be argued that this problem, as exemplified in the private language argument, is at the core of his thought in the *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein 1953). In Gendlin's defence, in none of his works is he attempting to write a history of philosophy. Rather, he is working within a particular discipline, and no doubt his rallying against the traditional notions is born from encountering these notions and finding them inadequate (Gendlin 1963, 1973). However, it should be acknowledged that others have explored this dichotomy in different ways.

Another issue concerns apparent inconsistencies in Gendlin's position. He sometimes seems to assume that the 'traditional' conception of the body as quantified, mechanical, external and measureable is the correct one, to which we have to add a 'felt sense' (Gendlin 1992). That is, at times he seems to assume the truth of that which he criticises the traditional view for. At other times, and when he is being, perhaps, more authentically phenomenological, he seems to *start with* the felt sense and reject the mechanical, quantified, external body (Gendlin 1992). These ideas are arguably incompatible. For example, on the one hand, he talks about the body sense as just being in a situation: the body "*is* your situation. It is not a perceived object before you or even behind you. The body-sense *is* the situation, inherently an interaction, not a mix of two things." (Gendlin 1992, p.347, italics in original). On the other he can say things like: "The body urges and implies exhaling after we exhale. It implies feeding when hungry and defecating when digestion is done" (Gendlin 1992, p.349). So there is, in Gendlin, both an awareness of the primacy of the experienced, interactive body, but at the same time an ongoing interest in the *functional* and *physical* side of the body: the systematic things it is assumed to do in what Husserl would call the attitude of natural science (Husserl 1936). This smuggled-in scientism is also visible in some other of the languages Gendlin uses: he says we shouldn't think of the lived body as "a piece of merely perceived machinery" but rather as "interaction with its environment" (Gendlin 1992, p.349). The problem with this is that just imports another conceptual map rooted in a certain sort of naïve scientific attitude – it is the language of biology, or engineering (or other science) in which things have environments. When he says, "animals' bodies are complex interactions with their environments" (Gendlin 1992, p.349), this seems to import a terminology that is not naturally used in everyday life. When I wake up in the morning, I don't think of myself as interacting with my *environments* (except perhaps in a jokey or metaphorical way). Nor do I think of myself talking to whoever I am talking to as me having a complex interaction.

Despite these critiques, Gendlin does seem to have done useful work in redefining the role of the body in felt meaning, the relationship between experience and language, and how these things work together to provide a basis for understanding how we can work with felt experience and bodily sensation (Gendlin 1992).

3.2.b Gendlin’s techniques: focusing, dipping and the felt sense.

We have seen that, for Gendlin, the body plays an important role in his understanding of knowledge and experience. This understanding of the body is a central facet of the techniques Gendlin develops. To recap, for Gendlin, the body is known from ‘inside’: it is not “a fixed piece of biological machinery”, which, like a car, works in a way that is “fixed and obeying certain laws” (Gendlin 1990, p.214). It is out of this revised conception of the body, through the notion of ‘sentient bodily interaction’ (SBI), that Gendlin transforms a phenomenology of bodily experience into a model for working with intuitive experiences. Sentient bodily interaction means the way we exist in the world. It replaces the philosophical notion of perception in which sense datum mediate between consciousness and the world. Just as it is not equated with perception, nor is it one (or more than one) of the five senses: “it is rather a direct bodily sense that you have and use all the time” (Gendlin 1992, p.346). It is a type of ‘perception’, but this would be to vastly extend perception as the term is normally used.

Indeed, following on from Gendlin’s remarks, it is counterproductive to use the term ‘perception’, simply because it is so philosophically loaded: it assumes a separation between perceiving subject (where the perception is particularly biased towards the visual) and a perceived object. While it would serve Gendlin better to introduce new terms, he does sometimes use the term ‘perception’ for this newly understood, different type of sensing. What Gendlin says about this sensing is complex and, in some places, mysterious. Sometimes it seems as if he is trying to articulate a notion of extra-sensory perception, a ‘sixth’ sense (although this is not a comparison he makes explicitly). For instance, Gendlin discusses SBI as the ability to “sense the space behind your back…. You sense behind you not just the space, nor just space-filling visible things. You sense behind you the people to whom you could turn and speak” (Gendlin 1992, p.346). Gendlin struggles to articulate this expanded notion of the body, however despite some inconsistencies and ambiguities in his notion of the body, Gendlin’s body is very different to the body as conceived of in some ‘traditions’ in philosophy, psychology and psychoanalysis. It is through this notion of the body that Gendlin’s notions of focusing and dipping are made coherent, and his notion of the felt sense further elaborated (Gendlin 1992). It also offers a way to understand intuition and mediumship which suits the purposes of this thesis.

3.2.b.1 The Felt Sense

Gendlin’s notion of the ‘felt sense’ closely relates to his idea of sentient bodily interaction, as outlined above. Put simply, it is the body feeling of what it is like to be here, now. It is important for Gendlin that this felt sense is something that is process-based: it can be made clearer, through a process of self-dialogue or paying attention to what is going on (Gendlin 1992). As such, it requires input from an agent: the person experiencing that sense. It is also a hermeneutic enterprise: the meaning of what is revealed in the felt sense is revealed gradually, as part of a developing understanding. The felt sense is also the experience of being in a situation and interacting with an environment, and it is not limited to input from the five senses (although includes them), nor can it be described as perception (though it relates to perception) (Gendlin 1992). That is, you do not simply perceive the people around you, you do not just hear, see, or smell them, rather there is a felt sense of them, an intuitive body sense that includes a lot of other things: “more than we can list, more than you can think by thinking one thing at a time. And it includes not only what is there. It also implies a next move to cope with the situation” (Gendlin 1992, p.343). Thus, the felt sense is inherently situated in a sense of temporality, a past and future.

It seems part of its nature that the felt sense is elusive, perhaps mysterious. Indeed, Gendlin struggles to describe it: it is not just a perception; it includes feelings but is not limited to feelings (Gendlin 1992). However, although it is difficult to describe, at the same time it is not mysterious and unfamiliar because we always have such a bodily sense. It is more than what one is already aware of, it includes a sense of future possibilities. It is not indeterminate, though we struggle to articulate it. It is an *interaction.* Part of the problem is that there is no obvious word in our language to refer to it in its entirety. (Part of the problem might also be that a tendency to escape description is part of its nature.) At times Gendlin talks about it as a 'body' sense (Gendlin 1992, p.344), but as briefly discussed above, this sometimes serves to flatten the notion and force it into a set of associations we normally have about what a body is, inherited from the scientific perspective he criticises.

While the notion has intuitive appeal as a way to capture what being in the world feels like, it is, as demonstrated immediately above, hard to execute and describe, and Gendlin certainly struggles to articulate it. The inherent ambiguities of the notion mean it is tempting to describe it as 'indeterminate', but Gendlin rejects this idea: "rather it is *more determinate* than anything that is already formed" (Gendlin 1992, p.347, italics in original). As he also comments: "isn't it odd that no word or phrase in our language as yet says this? "Kinaesthetic" refers only to movement; "proprioceptive" refers to muscles. "Sense" has many uses. So, there is no common word for this utterly familiar bodily sense of the intricacy of our situations." (Gendlin 1992, p.346)

Elsewhere, Gendlin explains that the felt sense is not private, nor is it subjective. "A **felt sense** can implicitly contain arguments – about the world. It is not just private, because we live – sentiently, bodily – in the world… the subjective, bodily sense is not private… your felt sense is your body's interaction with your situations" (Gendlin 1995, p.552, bold in original). This insistence that the felt sense is not a private or subjective sense can be linked first with Husserlian phenomenology, which escaped being trapped in subjectivity through positing that experience is first, with subjectivity and objectivity abstractions based on this experience (Husserl 1900-1901). It also links to Wittgenstein's private language argument, which argues against the idea that language makes sense through pointing to inner experience, and thus, correspondingly, suggests that the notion of inner experience is a conceptual mistake (Wittgenstein 1953).

The ‘felt sense’, then, is the experience of being oneself in a situation, which is not the same as understanding the contents of one’s mind, but involves, but is not limited to, sensory experience. It is not fixed, but changing, and its mutability comes as a consequence of attention (Gendlin 1992, 1996). This mutability is an important element of the felt sense: it can be cultivated and changed through attention: “the body responds to attention. With a little training, people can learn to put their attention inside their bodies and let a *physical quality* come there (Gendlin 1996, p.1, underlining in original). Then, “if the person thinks of something else, the quality changes. The body responds with a uniquely different quality to anything, whether large or tiny” and “if one attends in the body and awaits a unique quality until it actually comes, then little steps come *from it.* They can answer questions” (Gendlin 1996, p.1, underlining and italics in original). The ‘felt sense’, therefore, is both a characteristic of one’s ‘body’, understood in the expanded sense of being in close relationship with self, and also a way of getting to know self better. It is, in addition, something that changes with increased awareness. Thus, Gendlin’s body-self is in reflexive relationship with, and to, itself. It is also in reflexive relationship to the world of which it is a closely connected part. Indeed, the very reason the felt sense contains more than one might be aware of knowing is because “our bodies *interact directly* in our situations in many intricate ways that we don’t (aren’t able to) think about separately” (Gendlin 1996, p.1-2, underlining and italics in original).

3.2.b.2 Dipping

Gendlin’s concept of ‘dipping’ relates closely to that of the felt sense, offering a way in which one can become more aware of the self in the world and to relate to the felt sense. As such, ‘dipping’ is a tool to investigate the ‘felt sense’, which in turn is an experience (although one which needs tools such as dipping to be experienced, so the relationship between the two is symbiotic). Gendlin gives numerous examples of how dipping can be carried out, for example:

> let your attention refer inside, directly, physically, to the comfort or discomfort in the middle of your body. I want to ask you just about my talk so far (not about your other situations). About my talk, in the middle of your body, **there** –

> what comes **there –** about what I am saying? Is it all neutral and at ease there about that? Or is there some excitement, or some unease. Perhaps there is a sense of much that seems not quite right in what I am saying. Whatever body-sense **is** there, are there not many arguments explicit in it, which you could explicate if you had a few moments' peace? (Gendlin 1995, p.551, bold in original).

So, dipping is a process of becoming more aware of the felt sense through careful attention, particularly to the belly and heart regions. Gendlin conveys, in this brief extract, some of the sense of what the process of dipping feels like: uncertain, tentative, exploring a developing relationship. Gendlin contrasts dipping, a 'natural' form of knowledge with logical systems of knowledge: "we must constantly **dip** into subjective or natural knowing … it is not a good idea to pretend that all understanding is already in logical terms" (Gendlin 1995, p.549, bold in original). It is a process of bringing careful, respectful attention to what is going on in the body, as felt sense: dipping "brings one's attention, not to new clarities, but rather to something muddy, a murky body-state – a **felt sense.** It may seem as if it were something private, merely an inner feeling-tone. But the subjective side is not private. When explication comes, it shows that a felt sense is all about the world" (Gendlin 1995, p.549, bold in original). In other words, although this process might seem like one of uncovering the extremes of subjectivity, which are utterly private and which have no import in the objective world, in fact the place in which this dipping occurs is in the world, as it is about the world in a way which is immediate, direct, and unchallengeable (Gendlin 1995). Any difficulties in using Gendlin's techniques, like the ones I had, might therefore be part of the process. This process is not a matter of trying to understand something, of seeking that 'oh yes' of understanding where everything falls into place. This is a process which is "muddy" and "murky", it is more a matter of digging deep into something that just is not clear and doing so repeatedly and with commitment (Gendlin 1995).

Gendlin repeatedly distinguishes the process of 'dipping' from cognition and what is going on in one's articulated thought processes (Gendlin 1995). As such, the techniques seem particularly appropriate to use in an exploration of what is going on in experiences of reading outside the act of understanding the conceptual sense of what appears on the page. In addition to attempts to understand the content of the words on the page – a process which, it might be assumed, uses head-based activities – one can ask, with Gendlin's help, about what else is going on, in other parts of the body. Just as, in his example, he asks his audience what visceral reactions they are having to his words, so the reader can ask themselves what embodied perspectives are going on as they read (Gendlin 1995). And, following Gendlin, this felt sense of the activity of reading is likely to be a changing process, as the experiences centred in the belly and heart react to the attention they are being paid (Gendlin 1995). These techniques were used in the research group to explore participants' experiences of reading, as will be described later.

3.2.b.3 Focusing

Focusing, like dipping, is a way of relating to the felt sense. As Gendlin explains it:

> Focusing starts with a concrete feeling in your body – in your stomach or in your chest. It is a kind of inward bodily attention that a few people have naturally but which most people don't yet know. Focusing is not being in touch with emotions or feelings and isn't guessing or figuring things out in your head about yourself. It is a way of getting a bodily sense – I call it a felt sense – of how you are in a particular life situation (Gendlin 1999, p. 85).

Gendlin's focusing and dipping have many similarities, however with dipping the emphasis seems to be on the more theoretical aspects of the process, or how the process might be systematised. Focusing is thus a more pragmatic concept than that of dipping. Gendlin developed a 5-step process for focusing, while acknowledging that this is a fluid and mutating technique:

> **F1: Clearing a space.** The focuser relaxes and pays attention "inwardly, in your body, perhaps in your stomach or chest", seeing what arises in that place as a response to particular questions. "Sense within your body. Let the answers come slowly from this sensing. When some concern comes, DO NOT GO INSIDE IT". Stand back, give it space, acknowledge it.
> **F2: Handle.** "What is the quality of this unclear felt space"? The focuser sees if any word image or phrase comes to mind, staying with the felt sense until the thing that comes up seems 'right'.

> **F3: Resonating.** The focuser goes back and forth between felt sense and word/phrase/image, checking for resonances and bodily signals.
> **F4: Asking.** The focuser dialogues with the felt sense: “what is it, about this whole problem that makes this quality (which you have just named or pictured)?” Questions can be asked. Gendlin suggests there will be some sort of acknowledgement when something happens: “a shift, a slight “give” or release”.
> **F5: Receiving.** “Receive whatever comes with a shift in a friendly way. Stay with it a while, even if it is only a slight release”. There may be numerous shifts. (Gendlin 1999, p. 85, bold in original).

The above illustrates the ways in which the ‘felt sense’, ‘focusing’ and ‘dipping’ are inter-related.

3.2.b.4 Relevance and use of Gendlin’s ideas in this study

The value of Gendlin’s work is two-fold. Firstly, through his extensive discussions of the felt sense and dipping, where he relates his ideas back to broader philosophical ideas, particularly those in phenomenology, he offers a way to underpin ideas of intuition which are solidly rooted in a respected theoretical tradition (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1990, 1992, 1995, 2006, 2007. It is possible to trace aspects of his thought beyond phenomenology, for example to Wittgenstein (1953), particularly in the way Gendlin compares one traditional way of thinking theoretically with his own perspectives - although Gendlin himself does not make such a link. The connectedness of Gendlin’s ideas to other theories allows the current thesis to be situated in a broader philosophical context. Another idea of Gendlin’s which has been influential in this thesis is his rejection of a simple dichotomy between objective and subjective, and between the body conceived of as a spatio-temporal entity which is best understood by medical sciences and the mind conceived of as a computer for crunching concepts (Gendlin 1963, 1973). By rejecting this distinction, it is possible to define intuition as more than a subjective, fleeting experience.

Secondly, Gendlin, particularly in his discussion of focusing, develops a strong model for the applications of his ideas to practice (Gendlin 1978, 1996). As he became a psychotherapist, after training as a philosopher, this is perhaps what might be expected. Psychotherapy, as will be explored later, is as much a practice as it is a set of theoretical considerations. As mentioned above, while the research group sessions included in this study used a range of different techniques, and while only one session used Gendlin's techniques specifically, other sessions were influenced by his careful attention to the body, and approach to being embodied. However, Gendlin's theories and practical ideas as a way to elucidate and work with intuition form only part of the theoretical context for this thesis. The next chapter will look at ideas from psychoanalysis and philosophical literary theory to continue to build a practical and theoretical working structure.

3.3 Theories of free association

In order to further develop a working conception of intuition which is useful for the purposes of this thesis, I am going to draw on two further sets of ideas. The first is a contemporary interpretation of Freud's concept of free association (Freud 1900, 1901, 1913), particularly as discussed by Christopher Bollas (1999, 2002), Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018) and Barratt (2014, 2018), and also by Nick Totton (2003, 2008, 2015), who brings a Reichian perspective to this area. The second is the concept of *délire,* postulated by Lecercle (1985), who draws upon ideas from Deleuze (1969). Each of these theoretical frameworks both elucidates the notion of intuition, particularly as it relates to this thesis, but both also provide input into the methods I use in the research groups, and a way of understanding the results of these groups. In this section I will look at free association.

As well as helping to develop a theoretical concept of intuition, these ideas, like those of Gendlin's, were used in the research groups (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2006, 2007). One session in particular, and as described later, involved techniques designed to elicit free associations around texts from participants. In general, the role of this chapter is two-fold. As described above, it helps develop a concept of intuition as practiced in mediumship which is theoretically robust. But it also generates ideas for techniques which can be used practically for facilitating intuitive, rather than cognitive, relationships with academic texts. In the next chapter I talk about what happens when these techniques were used in a research group, but I would also suggest that these techniques can be used in wider contexts, to help people understand their experiences of academic reading, and perhaps approach academic texts in a new way.

Although the notion of free association was most clearly defined by Freud (1900, 1901, 1913), my focus in this section is less on Freud's ideas than it is on the interpretations of free association formed later by others, particularly Christopher Bollas (1999, 2002), Zvi Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018) and Barnaby Barrett (2014; 2018). Bollas suggests that free association has been somewhat neglected by theorists and psychoanalytic practitioners after Freud (Bollas 2002), perhaps because a distinction was made, post-Freud, between psychoanalysis as theory and as practice. Followers have concentrated on the theories of psychoanalysis, rather than its methods, which may be because the methods are deeply radical and unsettling (Bollas 2002). Lothane also highlights a distinction between theory and practice in Freudian psychoanalysis, suggesting that this has resulted in a confusion of the nature and role of free association (Lothane 2018, p.412). Barratt suggests that Freud's earlier focus on his discipline as a "methodological discourse radically different from the instrumental application of a theory" was superseded, after the First World War, by an interest in promoting psychoanalysis as "an objectivistic theory or set of theories of mental functioning" (Barratt 2018, p.478), and that Freud thus shifted from advocating a method to investigating a theory (Barratt 2018). For both Barratt and Bollas, the lack of interest, post-Freud, in free association lies in the potential of the technique to unsettle emotionally and to de-structure our conceptual understandings (Barratt 2018, Bollas 2002). Bollas states that "Freud's method was so disturbing that even his followers could not adhere to his explicit instructions and their implications" (Bollas 2002, p.13). Barratt suggests that many theorists display a "resistance to any discourse that opens one to the incessant dynamics of the repressed" and a "longing for an authorial centrepoint to psychic life" (Barratt 2018, p.479). By extension, theorists may prefer to hold on to a conceptual schema which has similar authority, rather than risk their understandings being undermined (Barratt 2018). This parallels Lecercle's *délire,* considered later, which Lecercle suggests has the power to unsettle and undermine epistemological frameworks (Lecercle 1985).

Although, free association has been relatively under-explored by Freudian and post-Freudian theorists, perhaps because of its ability to unsettle (Bollas 2002), it was used enthusiastically by artists and writers, particularly the Dadaists and Surrealists, as a way of incubating creativity (Elder 2015). This seems to suggest that free association is a deeply important practical method for accessing unconscious processes. Freud himself saw free association as a creative process (Freud 1900), offering freedom from constraints and self-criticism. However, free association is different for each of the writers considered in this section, and, additionally, each of the writers' accounts is at times ambiguous. By examining the different accounts and selecting aspects from them, I will attempt to develop a version of free association which, theoretically, is linked to telepathy and offers a way to understand intuition, and which can be used, practically, to look at the role intuition can play in acts of academic reading.

The main starting point in the following discussion is the extent to which free association is, on the one hand, a cognitive and verbal activity, or, on the other, an activity which escapes full verbalisation and cognitive understanding. This is important because a free association which escapes full verbalisation and is primarily non-linguistic seems to fit better with the idea of free association as a process useful in working with the intuitive. The conflicting idea of free association is explored in the discussion of Bollas (1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018) and Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018). A secondary issue, also relating to questions of mediumship and intuition, is regarding whether free association is primarily a personal activity or one which is primarily collaborative or co-creative, and what makes it one or the other. The latter issue, perhaps controversially, may be linked to ideas about telepathy and the privacy of our thoughts and personal experiences, and, by extension to mediumship. Telepathy posits that our thoughts and experiences are not private but are accessible by others gifted with abilities to read the minds of others. Implicit in some accounts of free association is a view of free association as accessing the kind of unconscious material which may, on occasion, be telepathically obtained. This is explored particularly in the discussion of Totton (2003), though is also implicit in some aspects of Bollas' (1999; 2002) position and allows a closer link between free association and mediumship. The extent to which free association is a telepathic, collaborative process also has implications for how we approach reading in academic contexts and our understandings of education and learning. By unpicking these two polarities in understandings of free association, I set out the roots of a concept of intuition rooted in a free association understood as primarily non-linguisitic and collaborative.

Before this, though, another autobiographical fragment:

In my 30s I went back to school: art school. I spent several happy years doing first a foundation course, then a degree in fine art, and finally an M.A. I also spent these happy years making artwork, having exhibitions, going to galleries and going to exhibition openings. I found the process of an art school education both rewarding and odd. At times I wondered if the main thing one learned was to defend one's work in front of an audience: to be able to stand physically next to one's work and listen to different types of feedback, including suggestions about what one was and wasn't doing, and respond to it. At other times I thought the main thing was just being in a context where people were doing things: odd things, things that didn't make a great deal of sense, things to provoke, bore or stimulate a response from others. People were doing things, calling them art, and putting them in front of others. Regardless of what the main thing I learned was, and setting aside all the many things I remember from that time, I still think often about some feedback I got from a tutor when I was doing my B.A. "Julia" she said (I'm paraphrasing) "rejects the idea of providing a rationale for her work". I resented that a bit – it sounded like a criticism, it made me rather defensive – but I've thought about it a lot in the subsequent years, and I think it's pretty true. I've also, in the intervening years, learned to interpret it differently. I've shrugged off the implied criticism and what I took at the time as a mean-spirited negativity, and built from it a sense of myself as artist that embraces this rejection of theory and rationale. In art, I thought, unlike philosophy, I wanted to just do things, and think about theoretical 'whys' after – or better still, let someone else think about my 'whys' for me. I came to think of this as a sort of carving out of a place that felt like freedom, against an encroaching tide of understanding.

I made different types of work, which can be roughly divided into 'games with other people' and 'the other stuff'. The 'other stuff' can be disregarded, for the purposes of this brief discussion. But the 'games with other people' – so many of them, over so many years – are relevant. I can see them, now I write this, as a way of free associating and getting under the surface to – something else. If not the roots, then a something which isn't always expected. Many of the games were games with text. There was the one where, working with one other person, you randomly circle words in whatever written document you can find to hand (in the café, the bar – most of the games were best played in public places designed for leisure). Three words, circled. This document goes to the next person, who makes from the words a sentence. The sentence is the start of a story, and goes back to the originator, who writes the next sentence, and so on – or the sentences are questions, and the *questions get answered and generate new ones. And thus is created a narrative. Or there was* ***Rum Blazer:*** *another game with text, and also starting with the random selection of words, this time turned into a book title, and passed back to the game partner, who has to write the back book blurb – a 200 word description selling the book of the generated title – in a limited space of time. The Rum Blazers which emerged were usually quite funny. There was also a set of experimental séance games, based around mediumship, some of which had at least as much in common with Surrealist games as they did with mediumship. One example: the generation of fictional characters through a group of people together, in turn, answering a set of questions and, having spent time imagining the person who fits the generated descriptions, then using the séance to communicate with this character. A version of the latter became one of the research group activities. Not all the games involved writing: others were drawing games, for example the one in which we laced ourselves to another person in the group, and worked out a way to draw thus tied together. But all the games, I'm thinking now, from the perspective of this thesis, let people step away from their sense of themselves, and away from their rationales, from their theories about things, from their understandings, to get in touch with – what? – something else. What this something else was, was left undefined: perhaps nothing much, perhaps nonsense, perhaps something important, perhaps none of this, or everything.*

Now, reflecting on this thesis, I wonder if what I'm doing – or what I did in the research groups – wasn't another version of what I tried to do in some of my art work – to free people from having to understand, but in a way that allows them still to engage with the theoretical. My interest in free association I see as a way of finding new tools to adapt, which can be used to help people engage in new ways which sidestep the burden of needing to understand, the burden of making sense.

3.3.a What is free association? Two questions

These issues will be explored in the following sections. The way I will explore these is to briefly look at the two questions about free association expressed above: *is it personal?* And *is it cognitive?* For each question, I will start with different ways in which Bollas (1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018) and Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018) answer each question, or imply answers to each question. Then I will move on to a positive account of free association which emerges from asking these questions, drawing particularly upon Totton and notions of embodiment (Totton 2003). Answers to these questions are not made explicitly by the author's considered, but the following teases out these authors' positions.

3.3.a.1 Is free association cognitive? What is the relationship of free association to language?

In Bollas and Lothane there is an ambiguity between free association as a primarily cognitive (and linguistic) activity and as an activity which is something primarily non-cognitive (Bollas 2002, Lothane 2018). Here, I am using 'cognitive' in a way which expresses a necessary relationship with language and assumes that language can straightforwardly function as a vehicle of communication. Cognition, as a process, is deeply linked with language, although philosophers debate whether processes of cognition can be understood as foundational for all varieties of human intelligence including language, or whether there is no overarching theory of cognition which can account for language in all its manifestations (see Harris 2006). Both Bollas' and Lothane's versions of free association seem to understand it as primarily cognitive (Bollas 2002, Lothane 2018). Looking first at Lothane's (2018) ideas about free association, he traces the historical genesis of the notion to concepts of 'associative' thinking, considered by philosophers since Aristotle but also by psychologists such as Pierce and James (Pierce 1902, James 1890). In this type of thought, "similarity, contiguity and contrariety" are the glue that link ideas together (Lothane 2018, p.411). Free association, according to Lothane, *is* associative thinking which takes place in "interchanges between the analysand and analyst in a special state of mind called free floating attention" (Lothane 2018, p.411). However, this says much about the ways in which associations are made, but less about the ideas which are associated. Lothane states that the ability to free associate is the ability to "make mental connections in acts of cognizing, imagining, remembering, thinking and emoting" (Lothane 2010, p.155). Here, free association encompasses relationships to cognitive associations, but these are mixed with (possibly) non-linguistic mental acts of imagining and emoting. The emphasis, however, is on free association as linking *active* processes of thinking which are expressible in words. That is, Lothane seems to assume that there is a straightforward relationship between what is uncovered by the process of free association and the expression of this content in language (Lothane 2010, 2018). Any repression of content is not because it is inarticulable but because articulation of it is frightening. The psychoanalytic relationship offers an unparalleled opportunity for the analysand to take part in a situation where they can overcome this fear, enjoying "the privilege to speak freely, without fear of criticized by the analyst, a right accord available in no other social situation" (Lothane 2018, p.412). For Lothane, the relationship between this free speech and what is spoken of is unproblematic: free association can be used to access "dreams, recurrent daydreams or fantasies, hallucinations, delusions and enactments", regardless of any consideration of match or mis-match between word and dream, daydream etc. (Lothane 2018, p.412). Lothane's account is thus seemingly dependent upon a transparency between the words used to express the associations and the associations themselves.

This transparency mirrors the position taken by the early Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus,* and by associated philosophers including the Logical Positivists. For example, in his early work, Wittgenstein thought language functioned like a picture, which straightforwardly represents that of which it is a picture. Thus, language models (pictures) reality: "The picture presents the facts in logical space, the existence and non-existence of atomic facts" (Wittgenstein 1926 2.11). He also explains "that the elements of the picture are combined with one another in a definite way, represents that the things are so combined with one another" (Wittgenstein 1926, 2.15). Thus language, as picture, is both capable of clear representation of how things are, or might be in reality and is made up of elements which can be transparently linked to their referents: "what the picture must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it after its manner – rightly or falsely – is its form of representation") (Wittgenstein 1926, 2.17). The form of representation, thus, is what allows the picture to be a picture of reality.

Thus, in Lothane, like the early Wittgenstein, there is an assumption that the words used to express the associations can function unproblematically as a representation of those associations (Lothane 2010, 2018; Wittgenstein 1926, 2.11-2.17). This has implications for Lothane's account of how analyst and analysand communicate: "in speaking, we evoke in the hearer images and feelings we experience within ourselves; in listening, we re-enact in our own mind the other person’s thoughts and feeling and communicate them to the speaker” (Lothane 2010, p.155). Thus, a set of images and feelings – the free association – in the analysand is expressed directly and clearly through the analysand’s words, spoken to the analyst. The analyst hears the words, and these evoke in the analyst a similar set of images and feelings to those originally expressed by the analysand (Lothane 2010). This alleged process of connecting with the feelings and thoughts of another, Lothane suggests, is what is meant by empathy and intuition, and the concept of free association offers a way to link unconscious material to this process. In other words, linguistic expression is at the heart of the communication between analyst and analysand (Lothane 2010). This seems problematic, for two reasons. On the one hand, I suspect that there is something radically (linguistically) uncommunicable in that which is free associated. On the other hand, I believe that the process of empathic listening is more direct and immediate than the explanation given above by Lothane.

In Bollas, free association is ambiguously described. To some extent, he emphasises free association as a process which is both cognitive and which expresses its objects linguistically (Bollas 2002). For example, he uses the metaphor of a train ride to illustrate the process: someone free associating is like someone travelling on a train, looking out of the window at the changing scenery. Thus, “each location evokes sets of associations”: the airport reminds you of summer and holidays, planes, airports, flight (Bollas 2002, p.3). The canal evokes thoughts of trips on canal, song and folklore associated with it. In Bollas’ example, the associations are utterly personal, linked with memories and dispositions. The metaphor posits free association as being something like looking at a film, or series of pictures, and all the associations made are easily expressed in words (Bollas 2002, p.3). Freud also uses the metaphor of train travel to describe free association but does so in a very different way to Bollas. For example in 1913 in the essay ‘On Beginning the Treatment’ he explains that in order to free associate one should “act as though, for instance, you were a traveller sitting next to a window of a railway carriage and describing to someone inside the carriage the changing views which you see outside” (Freud 1913, p.135). While using the same metaphor as Bollas, each uses the metaphor in a very different way. For Bollas the process of train travel is something that leads to one seeing certain objects – the airport, the canal – out of the window. These objects *then* provoke thoughts, memories etc.: the free associations.

Bollas asks us to imagine we are travelling by train, but this is not, in fact, essential to his metaphor: equally we could be walking about or sitting in a room. The train travel element of the imaginative journey, in Bollas, is not an essential element in the metaphorical work (Bollas 2002). By contrast Freud uses the image of a train in a very different way, properly metaphorically. That is, for Freud, the objects seen out of the window *are* the associations: they don't provoke them (Freud 2013). Freud's use of the idea of the train traveller allows for a much freer understanding of free association than does Bollas (2002). For instance, there is no order imposed on the thoughts that pass through the window of consciousness in Freud's image (Freud 1913). However, in Bollas' use of the metaphor, an order is already imposed, in the links he explains between the cause-object (canal) and the association (Bollas 2002). Bollas says "the method of free association was designed to reveal a 'train of thought'. By just talking freely, any person reveals a line of thought… linked by some hidden logic that connects seemingly disconnected ideas" (Bollas 2002, p.5). This idea of an already-present connection is not in Freud's metaphor (Freud 1913). Thus Bollas' free association, as he explains it by analogy here, is not the free association described by Freud. Bollas later quotes Freud saying that the analysand, in free associating, acts as an "attentive and dispassionate self-observer, merely to read off all the time the surface of his consciousness", but this sense of truth to the association is less obvious in Bollas's metaphor than in Freud's (Bollas 2002, p.7).

As is illustrated by the in-depth examination of the differences between the two train metaphors, Bollas suggest a particular interpretation of free association to the reader, one which is closely linked to an "ordinary way of thinking" (Bollas 2002, p.7), but which, Bollas claims, offers "a new technique for thinking" which allows the unconscious to speak, as well as a new way to relate to the self, a way which involves a new relationship with the unconscious (Bollas 2002, p.34). In this version of free association, the associations are primarily cognitive, easy to understand and easy to express in language. But we could also understand free association as a process distinct from everyday conscious cognitive thinking, involving cultivating a different attitude. That is, free associating could be seen as a process which takes the consciousness of the analysand away from their everyday consciousness. This movement away from the everyday is present in Freud's use of the metaphor of train travel, and largely absent from Bollas' use (Freud 1913; Bollas 2002). Free association, then, might be closer to a state of hypnosis than Bollas seems to express - loose, mutable and dreamy.

To reinforce that Bollas' free association is rooted in cognition, language and the everyday, he also appears to assume that the unconscious revealed in free association has a good grasp of dates. That is, not just times of year, but specific dates: "The analysand's birthday, the date of the mother or father's death… all occur at regular intervals and will bring up sets of associations" (Bollas 2002, p.9). Additionally, "it is unlikely that these dates will be consciously remembered by the analysand, but they will have been stored in the unconscious". Thus, the unconscious, for Bollas, is a place organised around calendars (Bollas 2002, p9). Here again, the process of free association, as well as the parts of the psyche it reveals, feel close to everyday cognition, logical and thought coherently organised and expressible in language. Free association, for Bollas, is inextricably linked with expressive, communicative speech. For example, he defines free association as: "*free talking,* as nothing more than talking about what is on the mind, moving from one topic to another" (Bollas 2002, p.9). This offers little to distinguish free association from a conversation between close friends. It also moves the focus away from the state of free association to its expression. Communication with the unconscious is possible, through free association defined as speech acts: "patients find a discourse that allows them both to free the unconscious mind and to hear from it" (Bollas 2002, p.34). Certainly, free association involves a particular type of speech, one in which the analysand feels free to speak whatever crosses the mind, moving from one topic to another and mingling accounts of the previous day or weeks activities with dreams, memories and observations, but apparently, for Bollas (2002), there is always an irreducible link with language and speech. He occasionally hints at the co-presence of "deep associative thought" (Bollas 2002, p.42), and at that which is not expressed, but the focus is primarily on the expressible (Bollas 2002).

Bollas's picture of free association, and what it reveals thus sometimes seems muddled, particularly in regard to expressiblity and language. It vacillates between a process that seems largely cognitive, easily understood in language and expressed through a process of talking, and something other than this. At times his position seems to straddle these two, for example where he states:

> free association produces further ‘spoken objects’, over time establishes a ‘meshwork’ for the Freudian Pair, and eventually creates an unconsciously comprehensible language of the analysand. … The to-and-fro implicit in this method becomes a new form of thinking, and both gathers together the psychic intensities of the patient’s life – from dreams, clusters of associations, images, memories – and breaks them apart as these momentary organisation disseminate upon further association. (Bollas 2002, p.65)

There seems something deathly and utterly, banally personal in Bollas’ conception of free association, and I would contend that this, disappointing version of free association is disappointing precisely because Bollas makes of free association a process that seldom escapes the linguistic and cognitive. There is also something utterly banal and desperately dreary about Bollas’ conceptions of the inner worlds revealed in free association. This is evidenced by the metaphor of train travel mentioned above: for Bollas, the passenger never escapes the limits of their thoughts. The free associations linked with the objects seen from the train, which Bollas gives as examples are dull. Later in the same text, Bollas (2002) describes a patient working on issues to do with colour and light – following the thread of the patient’s associations leads to that patient’s mother, and a disinclination to follow things associated with her beauty. Bollas specifically mentions the opacity of French bread, different types of indigenous plant and animal life, and dreams of skin colour (Bollas 2002). These details have a sort of pellucid charm as Bollas describes them, emerging from his text like highlights in a painting, or brief images in a film. But this charm is quickly flattened as Bollas relates them firmly back to how his patient’s mother has made him feel.

As a reader, I am deadened, flattened, and disheartened by Bollas’s reductionism. In the same way, Bollas talks of the sort of reflections a person might explore, asking herself how the pleasure felt can be regained, and how pain might be avoided (Bollas 2002). Human experience is reduced to a button-pressing exercise: seeking pleasure, avoiding pain, and organising the psyche around desire. The intricacies of the experience are thus reduced to relationships between a few simple variables. The banality is also, always, closely linked with the easily expressible in words. There is little sense of struggle to articulate something below the surface, little sense of that which threatens to escape conceptualisation, little sense of material that isn’t utterly personal as well. And little sense of any sort of spiritual or transcendent meaningfulness.

Another example of Bollas's well-trodden trajectory from the banal to the depressing along carefully followed clear tracks set out by language appears later, where he starts with a patient's possible statement: "'I hate it when people don't respond to traffic signals'" (Bollas 2002, p.52). This is analysed into individual words, which are linked with, for example "the patient's anxiety about his daughter spending time with people trafficking in drugs" while, Bollas claims, "what began as a statement quite naturally leads to diverse questions, which in turn metamorphose into other questions, into the mutative spell of free associations" (Bollas 2002, p.53) and that "patients often surprise themselves" when they reveal their own answer. Thus, the possibilities of free association as a tool to work with a world richer and fuller than the world met every day are unexplored, and the result is irredeemably mundane and somewhat depressing. Perhaps Bollas picks up the dreariness from Freud: as Deleuze and Guattari point out, the fixation on the linguisitic and reduction of complexity to a fixed set of variables and the mechanical relationships between them is found in Freud's analysis of the Wolf-Man: "no sooner does Freud discover the greatest art of the unconscious, this art of molecular multiplicities, than we find him tirelessly at work bringing back molar unities, reverting to his familiar themes of *the* father, *the* penis, *the* vagina, Castration with a capital C" (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, p.31, italics in original).

Bollas, like Deleuze and Guattari's Freud (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, p.31), has seemingly little interest in spending time in the world of the unconscious revealed by free association, rather he wants to bring back his own "molar unities", the meaning revealed by free association, expressed in language (Bollas 2002). Despite his claims that free association has the potential to undermine Western epistemologies (Bollas 2002), Bollas seems firmly committed to a Freudian ontology in which a limited number of forces are the explanatory mechanism presented as fundamental and the free associative material, capable of an ephemeral beauty, nothing more than froth produced by these few basic forces (Freud 1913). As such, Bollas is in some ways a Freudian's Freudian. However, this is at times at odds with how Bollas himself saw free association: as "a form of personal creativity in which patients are released to speak unrelated impressions without a clear idea of where they are going, revealing surprising patterns of thought both conscious and unconscious" (Bollas

2002, p.67). While Bollas thus sees free association as a form of creativity, this is a tempered creativity: one which reveals an unconscious in which material personal to the patient is structured in ways set down in accordance with universal rules of childhood influence. In the same essay as mentioned above, Deleuze and Guattari consider the *multiplicity* of that which Freud tries to reduce to unity, and how such a multiplicity escapes this unity: “this is not an easy position to stay in, it is even very difficult to hold, for these beings are in constant motion and their movements are unpredictable and follow no rhythm. They swirl, go north then suddenly east; none of the individuals in the crowd remains in the same place in relation to the others” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, p.33). And, later: “what does psychoanalysis have to say about all of this? Oedipus, nothing but Oedipus, because it hears nothing and listens to nobody. It flattens everything, masses and packs, molecular and molar machines, multiplicities of every variety” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, p.39). This same flattening can arguably be found in Bollas (2002).

3.3.a.2 Is free association personal?

Thus, the question of whether free association is a cognitive, linguistic process reveals limitations and ambiguities in Bollas’ account (Bollas 2002). Similarly, the question of whether free association is entirely a function of the individual psyche raises interesting further issues. It is useful here, as immediately above, to explore these questions through Bollas’ work (Bollas 2002). While I have separated out the two questions, in fact they are closely linked by the role played by language in mediating between free association as an act, and what it reveals.

Bollas at times describes free association as an expression, to another person (the analyst), of a normally lonely interior dialogue: “by asking the person to think out loud [Freud] referred the monolgic nature of solitary inner speech to the dialogic structure of a two-person relation” (Bollas 2002, p.11). Thus, free association is seen as a type of discourse, in which things previously held secret by the analysand are revealed to the analyst. This produces a seemingly one-sided relationship, rather than a collaborative one or co-creative one: the analysand holds the secrets, the analyst is entrusted with them (Bollas 2002, p.11).

The analyst encourages the patient to reveal their secrets. As such, the relationship is not one between equals: the analyst holds the power. Yet, Bollas also describes a form of work between analyst and analysand, or more particularly a form of listening by analyst to analysand, in which power is more equally shared, and in which a new form of communication takes place: “by surrendering to his or her own unconscious, the analyst is able to use it to ‘catch the drift’ of the patient unconscious” (Bollas 2002, p.12). This is far from being a playing out of an authoritative, hierarchical relationship in which the analyst yields the power, interpreting statements and reports by the patient which make little or no sense to that patient. Indeed, Bollas claims, analysts may not know, for long periods of time, what their patients mean and what the unconscious material they reveal in free association means (Bollas 2002, p.11-12). There is, thus, an ambiguity in Bollas. Additionally, even Bollas’s first position is one in which dialogue is present: the free association (or rather, what it reveals) is expressed by the analysand to the analyst (Bollas 2002). However, despite this, there is a difference between expressing something which is ultimately the contents of an individual psyche to another, and a process (which Bollas sometimes hints at) where that which is expressed is co-created, where both parties are equally vulnerable and open, and where the contents of individual psyches become (arguably) intermingled.

For Freud, also, free association was primarily an individual process, in which the balance of power was between the free associating analysand and the interpreting analyst (Freud 1913). Bollas, of the four theorists discussed here, is arguably closest to Freud. However, Freud at times also describes the psychoanalyst as having an important, perhaps co-creative role in this process. While Freudian free association reveals material, which is primarily associated with the psyche of the individual producing it, it is, at the same time, revealed through intrapersonal work. There is work on both sides: the analysand follows, as best as s/he is able, a particular method of saying whatever comes into the mind, and does so attempting always to be honest about what comes to mind, and not omitting anything. The analyst “must put himself in a position to make use of everything he is told… and of recognizing the concealed unconscious material without substituting a censorship of his own” (Freud 1913, 115-16). That is “he must turn his own unconscious towards the transmitting unconscious of the patient” like a “telephone receiver” (Freud 1913, pp.116).

A rather different model of free association is put forward by Lothane who states: “both members of the analytic team engage in free association and a reciprocal communication of words and images to each other”, and this act of listening is active, rather than passive (Lothane 2010 p.158). In the same article Lothane describes free association (which he in fact terms “reciprocal free association”) as a “conjoint” activity in which analyst and analysand engage in a “joint historical quest” (Lothane 2010, p.158). Thus, free association is also, for Lothane, characterised by surprise: as a product of analyst and analysand working together, both parties are liable to be surprised by the material that emerges: “in the course of reciprocal free association, both analysand and analyst are taken by surprise by the ideas and emotions that emerge in their interpersonal processes and reaction” (Lothane 2010, p.159). Thus, Lothane’s interpretation is more useful for the purposes of this thesis, as, through this co-creative relationship the freely associated material moves beyond the limits of the entirely personal. The next section will explore a more creative, less restrictive model of free association than the one developed by Bollas (2002). It is arguable that the radical functions Bollas suggests for free association – particularly that it has the power to break down the predominant epistemology of Western thinking – can only be brought about through a concept of free association other than the one Bollas posits (Bollas 2002). This will become particularly clear in the discussion of Totton’s thought (Totton 2003).

3.3.b Free association: moving beyond the cognitive and the personal?

In order to move beyond the limits of free association as thus conceived by Bollas (2002), it is necessary to abandon the sense of it as limited to near-cognitive processes, as closely bound to, if not identified with, language, and as a sort of free ranging conversation one has with an analyst. Free association as conceived of by Lothane (2007,2010, 2018), Barratt (2014, 2018), and Totton (2003, 2008) offers something richer to explore, and this dichotomy between the two interpretations of free association can be used to interrogate the material uncovered in the research groups. This second interpretation is predicated upon a turning away from cognitive understanding. If we reject Bollas’ picture of free association as inherently linguistic, end-driven and conversational (Bollas 2002), what do we put in its place? Perhaps a picture in which free association is a radically different experience from waking consciousness, more like dreams and hypnosis, operating by different rules and requiring a kind of immersion in a radically different world. Freud himself notes the need for the patient to be psychically prepared, to lie restfully and close eyes, to surrender a sense of self criticism and to turn away from outward stimuli, thus focusing instead upon internal processes (Freud 1900). Freud likens this calm state to daydreaming, hypnosis and the state between sleep and wakefulness (Freud 1900, p.102). Thus described, the state of psychic preparation sounds rather similar to entering into a mediumistic trance. These states are also characterised by a certain inexpressibility: they are difficult to express cognitively and resist easy capture in language, perhaps because the logic by which the unconscious operates differs substantially from the binary logic which marks everyday language.

Arguably, these states are also markedly more embodied than those of everyday consciousness. It is beneficial to reflect on the possible meanings of ‘embodiment’, as the term is often used, but lacks clear definition: as Cisek states of the term: states "its meaning is not generally agreed upon, and what is implied by embodiments in one context does not always apply to another" (Cisek 2008). Kiverstein (2012), drawing heavily upon Clark (1997, 2008), suggests three ways in which embodiment is understood: first, as a model which draws upon body morphology and biomechanics to feed into problem solving in computational contexts, second, as a way of including new sources of information and data from the senses to wider forms of problem solving, and finally, to describe contexts in which external tools are incorporated into its problem-solving, so the tools augment bodily capabilities. This range of definitions, however, seems narrow. None of Clark’s / Kiverstein’s three definitions seem to incorporate any phenomenological sense of bodily being, that is, what it feels like to be embodied (Clark 1997, 2008; Kiverstein 2012). As such, Gendlin’s perspective, outlined above, seems to offer a radically different definition than that found within philosophy drawing upon cognitive science (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996). Kiverstein does discuss what he refers to as an “opposing line of thought in the philosophy of embodied cognition”, which directly opposes the idea that human experience can be accounted for in terms of computational systems (Kiverstein 2012, p.744). Rather, the body is a “source of meaning”, understood as *an internally experienced* sense of meaning, rather than one ascribed by an external observer (Kiverstein 2012). However, Kiverstein’s exposition of this position seems to assume that experiences of embodiment have a certain, very mechanical nature: a “body” is the host to an “agent”, which leads to Cartesian questions of the sort “how does the body equip an agent for dealing competently with specific situations” (Kiverstein 2012, p.749). That is, a dualism between body and agent seems already assumed, and this already frames the discussion of embodiment in such a way as to force a sense of embodiment as mind / psyche / ego inside a physical structure: “body affect plays a crucial role in the skilled agent’s ability to tailor her actions to a dynamically changing environment” (Kiverstein 2012, p.747). For Gendlin by contrast, embodiment starts with the experience of being embodied, and makes fewer assumptions about the nature of what ‘agent’ and ‘body’ are (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1978, 1996, 2006). The debate about the meaning of ‘embodiment’, with some views being more closely aligned with a computational view of the mind, and others more phenomenological, parallels the different models of free association under discussion.

Returning to the discussion of free association, Lothane considers Freud’s understanding of how the state is facilitated (Lothane 2010): through a process of relaxation akin to hypnotism, leading to a kind of sleep. Bollas, it should be noted, pays little attention to how the state is reached, which may feed into his focus on its cognitive and linguistic aspects (Bollas 1999; 2002). Lothane, by contrast, discusses the way in which, for Freud, the relaxed state in which free association takes place encourages the appearance of supressed material, translated into “visual and acoustic images” (Lothane 2010, p.102). Thus, the process of free association, as found in Freud and interpreted by Lothane, releases material that has non-verbal elements (Freud 1913, Lothane 2010). This raises a further question regarding the role played by verbalisation. Of course, it is necessary to distinguish verbalisation in the psychoanalytic context – the process of speaking aloud the material revealed in free association – from forming thoughts about this material in language (as we have seen above, for Bollas (2002), the process of forming thoughts in free association *is* equated with free association). For Lothane, however, the psychoanalytic work around free association is to retranslate associative material into speech (Lothane 2010). However, in Lothane, as in Bollas, there are ambiguities: it is sometimes unclear for example what role verbalisation plays in the process of free association, and its relationship to the material uncovered (Lothane 2010, Bollas 2002). For example, Lothane comments: “The method of interpreting the emerging ideas and images is not based on the analyst decoding symbols or translating metaphors… it is a specifically analytic, causal, and retrospective method of connecting the actual emerging thoughts and emotions with previous thoughts and emotions that the person has experienced in past historical situations" (Lothane 2010, p.157). Here there is an ambiguity: the interpretation works with verbalised thoughts and emotions, but it is unclear if the freely associated material is something other than their expression in words. The quotation above is also ambiguous in other ways. For example, does the free association involve awareness of the suppressed material, or of visual and acoustic images which are its translation? Returning to Deleuze and Guattari's essay discussed above (Deleuze and Guattari 1980), by postulating that suppressed material is presupposed by the content uncovered in free association, Lothane, like Bollas seems to be forcing a 'molar unity' on something that is darkly complex, ever-changing and multiple (Lothane 2010, Bollas 2002). This may of course be a function of an inherent ambiguity in the process of free association and its subject.

To summarise the above, for Lothane the material produced in free association may well be bodily, sensed, non-verbal, or it may not be (Lothane 2010): it is simply not clear. In either case, regardless of its nature at origin, for Lothane the material is immediately translated into the verbal. At the same time, and perhaps in a way that is linked to the process of verbalisation, the material revealed is revealed as intrinsically personal, the private made available to another through conversation (Lothane 2010). Lothane says that "the key to the meaning of [the free associated material] is not one read into the patient's productions by the analyst, but one that is found in the *person's own spontaneous* associations... traced to antecedent and variously repressed thoughts and emotions" (Lothane 2010, p.157, italics in original). Lothane further describes this as "Freud's Copernican revolution", but it could also be seen as a reduction of the material produced by free association to the entirely personal (Lothane 2010, p.157). Any possibility of there being revealed material which transcends the personal and explores things unknown (consciously or unconsciously) to the free-associating individual is removed by this reduction.

I want to look at this very personal unconscious, present in Bollas but also to some extent in Lothane (Bollas 2002, Lothane 2010), in more detail as it is one of the key differences between the two versions of free association. This emphasis on the personal feels to me to be oppressive, heavy and confining, particularly when coupled with a model (implicit as much as articulated) of the processes involved, in which these processes are seemingly entirely rule bound and mechanical. This is clear, for example, in Bollas' account of the development of which the unconscious is capable, through a process he calls 'meshwork': a branching out within the psychoanalytic space which occurs in the analysis process as free association takes place. In meshwork the analysand's associations develop into a network of thoughts which make up a matrix of the unconscious (Bollas 2002). Through mirroring work, as the therapist's unconscious responds to that of the patient, psychoanalysis increases the network of knowledge through this meshwork (Bollas 2002). This is arguably a process in which the personal material revealed is shaped by another (the analyst), and thus becomes more than personal. However, at the same time the process remains rooted in the individual histories of the patient, and structured according to a model which to me appears unnecessarily repressive and mechanical, conceived of by Bollas as quasi-physical forces acting and reacting on and against each other (Bollas 2002). Bollas describes the psychic realm revealed by free association as a place of nodes which, although dynamic, are organised according to a set of clearly defined rules relating to early experience (particularly the "infant's exploration of the mother's body… and the child's oedipal lusts" (Bollas 2002, p.49). Bollas contrasts the forces of reception on the one hand, described as positive and creative, and moving towards deeper experiences of life's pleasures and repression with the role placed by anxiety on the other: "which banishes impressions disagreeable to consciousness" (Bollas 2002, p.49).

However, as I understand it, both forces simply play out a drama first enacted in childhood, in which the protagonist is thrown about by lust and desire. There is, in my reading, something deeply depressing about this. 'Lust', as a term, is already laden with connotations of biblical sin, and 'desire' is not much better – deadly serious, thundering, heavyweight. There is little sense of play, of lightness, of creativity for the fun of it. The liberating power of free association seems, at times, when one reads Bollas, to be rather a carefully disguised power play in which the analysand gets enjoyment from the act of revealing, to the analyst, what is really going on behind her associations (Bollas 2002). Elsewhere, Bollas distinguished between Freud's method, which includes free association, and Freud's body of theory, favourably contrasting the productive method with the deadening body of theory (Bollas 2002). But this conflation of theory and method looks to be exactly what Bollas is doing here.

3.3.c Free association as telepathic

I am contrasting two views of free association, as developed variously by Bollas (1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018) and Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018). One view posits free association as being a primarily linguistic process. The other view more strongly emphasises the ineffable, non-verbal elements of both free association as process and what it uncovers, and free association as embodied (Barratt 2014, 2018; Totton 2003). The alternative version of free association is most developed in Barratt and Totton (see particularly Barratt 2014, Totton 2003), although there are hints of this in the ambiguous accounts of both Bollas and Lothane (Bollas 2002, Lothane 2010). In this latter version, free association also becomes a strongly interpersonal process, and one in which the sharing of material can sound telepathic, as the analyst's unconscious adjusts to that of the analsand, and the analyst somehow reads what is going on in her patient's unconscious. Thus, free association starts to look rather like telepathy. The relationship of telepathy to psychoanalytic processes has been explored in the literature, particularly in terms of the transference between analyst and analysand in therapeutic relationships. Its apparent occurrence has been noted (Chaperot 2011; Papazian 2017; and numerous others including those mentioned below). This section explores what a telepathic free association might look like. This version of free association thus starts to develop links with mediumship and other aspects of paranormality.

Earlier, laboratory studies of mediumship and other aspects of the paranormal were considered. A frequent criticism of such studies is that the laboratory setting is inherently inhibiting to paranormal activities, which are generally associated with one off, highly emotionally charged situations (Radin 2010). The psychoanalytic arena, in contrast to the laboratory, is perhaps much better suited to facilitate paranormal phenomena, concerned as it is with emotions and difficult materials. While some have noted the occurrence of events that appear telepathic in psychoanalytic settings, it has been generally under-researched until the last 10 to 15 years or so, when more attention has been turned to telepathic processes in psychoanalysis. For example, Campbell and Pile underline the role played by telepathy as unconscious thought transference for Freud, although acknowledging that Freud was deeply ambiguous about telepathy (Campbell and Pile 2010). They claim a notion of telepathy is necessary to fully understand the concept of transference, particularly as telepathy blurs the boundaries between the non-repressed and repressed (Campbell and Pile 2010). Rabeyron *et al.* suggest that telepathy, understood as thought transference, has been under explored and under integrated with psychoanalytic practice and theory, despite playing an important role in the constitution of psychoanalytic work (Rabeyron *et al.* 2019). Sánchez-Medina also suggests a key role in psychoanalytic theory for telepathy: he examines work by Freud on telepathic dreams and uncovers concepts relating to theories of intersubjectivity, particularly the idea that the process of identification and counter-identification played out through dream analysis in which telepathic communication of unconscious content plays a part, are the oneiric basis for communication (Sánchez-Medina 2018). Others have been open to notions of telepathy. Sándor Ferenczi, of the Budapest School of Psychoanalysis, was generally interested in psychic phenomena, and particularly interested in telepathy. Although he did not formulate a definitive theory, his ideas influenced his wider psychoanalytic writings (Gyimesi 2012). While these writers do not explicitly mention free association, it is clear from the above that the dream-like state in which free association takes place facilitates telepathic phenomena.

These more recent attempts to look at telepathy are in the minority however: more generally, there is a reluctance to engage with apparently telepathic events in the psychoanalytic community (De Peyer 2016). Brottman argues that the paranormal has more or less vanished from the psychoanalytic process, despite Freud's (generally ambivalent) interest (Brottman 2011). Brottman also suggests, however, that residues remain in contemporary psychoanalysis, particularly the Kleinian notion of projective identification, often used to suggest a variety of transference-type phenomena between analyst and analysand which seem to side-step normal sensory communications (Brottman 2011). By contrast, Wooffitt holds that interest in telepathy in psychoanalysis has been constant from its start (Wooffitt 2017). He turns particularly to relational psychoanalysis, an approach popular in the USA which prioritises relationships between real and imagined others and which is influenced by a mix of different theories from within psychoanalysis (Freud, Klein, Winnicott, Bion, Lacan and others) and beyond (Wooffitt 2017). Within relational psychoanalysis, Wooffitt claims, “telepathic-like experiences are openly presented and seriously considered” (Wooffitt 2017, p.1118).

Thus, it is becoming more widely acknowledged that some psychoanalytic processes appear telepathic, although historically there has been a widespread reluctance to look at this, and so far, few have linked the apparent telepathic phenomena with free association as a method. I am now going to spend some time looking at Nick Totton’s ideas about telepathic in psycho-therapeutic contexts (Totton 2003), as his approach, while also not focusing on free association particularly, offers a way to link free association, telepathy, mediumship and intuition through the vehicle of the body and embodiment. I also look at Barratt’s approach (Barratt 2018).

3.3.d Free association as telepathic and embodied: Totton and Barratt

3.3.d.1 Free association: Barratt’s synthesis and a way forward

I turn now to Barratt’s account of free association, and subsequently Totton’s account of telepathy in psychoanalysis as a way forward (Barratt 2018, Totton 2003). To look first at Barratt, he roots his version in a consideration of Bollas’ notion of free association as ‘free talking’ (Bollas 2002, p.9, Barratt 2018). By thus defining free association, Bollas is, as Barratt points out, positioning it in the realm of the linguistic, and cognition (Barratt 2018): Bollas indeed says “by the middle portion of a psychoanalysis the patient will have a substantially increased ability to think the unconscious” (Bollas 2002, p.65). However, Barratt offers a new interpretation of free association, which minimises translation into expression and emphasises the ineffable (Barratt 2018). Totton’s input is to emphasise the role of the body in this turn away from cognition and the linguistic (Totton 2003). Barratt’s interpretation of the free associative process also characterises free association as desire (Barratt 2018). Interestingly Bollas also locates his interpretation of free association in terms of desire Bollas 2002), but Bollas’ conception (Bollas 2002), in my opinion and as expressed above, is mechanical and draining: Barratt's 'desire' moves beyond Bollas' conception.

It is worth unpicking what Barratt means by 'desire'. Barratt's starting point is Lothane's definition of free association as a type of thinking, one in which one representation and another are connected together in a stream of consciousness, and which both refer to unconscious content (Lothane 2007, 2010; Barratt 2018). Thus, for Lothane, according to Barratt, free association is closely interlinked both with conscious thought and unconscious content (Barratt 2018). Barratt's suggestion about what free association is, seems, however, more radical than Lothane's. That is, for Barratt, not only do acts of speaking free associatively reveal thoughts which happen not to be presently conscious, rather free association is "a way of giving voice to the meaningfulness of repressed energies that are *otherwise* than that which can be thought" (Barratt 2018, p.479). In other words, for Barratt, free association's power is in its potential to allow us to encounter the unrepresentable, and, in some sense, the unthinkable. As such, free association is not "unexpurgated conversation or unchecked story-telling" (Barratt 2018, p.479). Rather, free association may be, Barratt suggests, "more like an indecorous *dis-association* that relinquishes the law and order of "making sense" – a process of relinquishing that takes one beyond more lack of censorship of whatever is potentially conscious, to give voice to something that speaks more anarchically" (Barratt 2018, p.479). This feels like a very important point. Bollas talks about free association as a method of undermining Western epistemologies (Bolllas 2002): perhaps in order for this to happen it needs to be the radically understood free association postulated by Barratt here (2018). Barratt's understanding of free association can also be linked to Lecercle's ideas about language as *délire,* although in separating free associated material from its linguistic expression (Lecercle 1985), Barratt arguably goes beyond Lecercle (Barratt 2018). It is also interesting to note Barratt's relationship with Totton's ideas, particularly the idea that apparently telepathic communication necessarily takes place in embodied contexts (Totton 2003). For Barratt, free association allows us to encounter the unrepresentable, and, in some sense, the unthinkable (Barratt 2018). Totton allows a further investigation into what this unthinkable is: embodiment and a re-balance of power (Totton 1999, 2003). For Totton, as we will see below, telepathy points to a new understanding in which a set of activities generally repressed by the power structures of the psychoanalytic relationship are given new prominence. The realm of the non-verbal returns, through telepathy, as a return of the body, understood as a wider sort of consciousness which is fluid, felt, and intrinsically connected to others (Totton 1999, 2003). However, Totton's account is complex, and leaves space for language, although for a particular conception of language not as the clear concepts and ego-driven straightforward communications of everyday but as puns, jokes, surreal flights of fancy, thus acting as a bridge between Barratt and Lecercle's concept of *délire* (Barratt 2018, Lecercle 1985).

Barratt's account thus seems to offer a more expansive and optimistic version of free association (Barratt 2018) which also links to the positions of Totton (1999; 2003) and Lecercle (1985). However, Barratt's position is not without problems. For example, at times, Barratt seems to express his more radical concept of free association somewhat ambiguously, sometimes apparently conflating free association as expression with free associative content. As an example, in the following quotation he focuses upon free association as expressed linguistically, talking of: "the moments in which the patient does not make sense, babbles or speaks nonsense" (Barratt 2018, p.479), and at others upon that which is free associated, which the patient is attempting to express: "those moments that go behind, beneath or beyond" (Barratt 2018, p.480). There are in fact two ambiguities here, first between the expression in words of what is associated and that which is associated, and second between the nature of what is expressed in free association as linguistically structured and the nature of what is expressed in free association as not linguistically structured (ineffable). This ambiguity is perhaps understandable: the areas he is trying to unpick are complex, and the unpicking has necessarily to happen in words (or at least, if Barratt is to communicate it in writing).

Setting aside such ambiguities, it is clear that Barratt's concept of 'desire', which is closely entangled in the concept of free association, is a progression from Bollas' mechanical understanding of desire as one of the forces that shape psychic life (Barratt 2018, Bollas 2002). Reading Bollas on free association at times gives one the impression of lifting a large stone and finding something very unpleasant (though highly predictable and mechanical) underneath. By contrast, Barratt's account gives the impression that working with free association can be enjoyable and a mechanism for growth: the expansion of thinking facilitated by free association "is a positive adventure" which "*uniquely* empowers people to listen to the unthinkable energies of *desire*" (Barratt 2018, p.480, italics in original). It is difficult, initially, to think of what Barratt might mean by 'desire': certainly not, he explains, "any wishes or motives that can potentially be repressed" (Barratt 2018, p.480). Rather, *desire* here seems to mean transformed psychic energies. Elsewhere he further explains that free association is a process of deconstruction which is not epistemological – that is, not a process of dredging up suppressed representations to consciousness, but *ontic, "*mobilizing energies – making one more *alive!* – even if these energies remain in the darkness of unrepresentability" (Barratt 2018, p.481, italics in original). Thus, the potential for personal change is at the heart of Barratt's concept of free association. Free association, he also adds, is a process of transformation of individuals, which takes place despite the material emerging being deeply and radically unknown and (indeed) unknowable. "it opens our being to mysteries within our psychic life that we do not want to know and will never comprehend" (Barratt 2018, p.481). Thus, psychoanalytic free association is not a process of elaborating meanings associated with representations but is rather concerned with that which is "most alive *between* thoughts" (Barratt 2018, p.482, italics in original). "The energies of the repressed cannot be translated back into the conventions of representationality, yet they remain within us (desirous, embodied, anarchic and demanding that they be listened to" (Barratt 2018, p.484).

3.3.d.2 Totton: beyond the ineffable to embodiment

In order to expand on Barratt's version of free association, and the role played by the ineffable, unrepresentable, and unthinkable, I draw upon Totton's understanding of the nature of telepathy in psychotherapies (Totton 2003). Totton's body-based approach relates to Gendlin's theories and techniques (1963, 1973, 1978, 1996, 2006), but also links to Lecercle's understanding of two traditions of language (Lecercle 1985). Totton, a body psychotherapist with a Reichian background, has written about the role played by the paranormal in general, and telepathy in particular, in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy (Totton 2003). Totton holds that it is important to recognise the paranormal status of telepathy within psychotherapeutic contexts, which also recognising that they exist on a continuum with 'normal' experiences (Totton 2003). I will look at Totton's account in some detail, as it offers a key to understanding notions of intuition, mediumship and paranormality which are important in this thesis. Reichian therapy, Totton notes, particularly engenders experiences of the sort called paranormal, because undergoing Reichian therapy (and other body-based approaches) involves a focus on subliminal bodily sensations which may pass un-noticed in other therapeutic modalities (Totton 2003). Free association, as Barratt has pointed out, bypasses the strictures of everyday language and reveals what he thinks of as the ineffable (Barratt 2018), but this can also be seen as an ineffability rooted in the body (Totton 2003) For Totton, the link to the body is also a link through language. For Totton, telepathy is both an escape from language and a repressed aspiration of language which is always struggling to emerge at the surface: a complete transparency between two people or "an untranslated passage of information between subjects" (Totton 2003, p.195), which creates shock and excitement verging on trauma, and ultimately a hysterical response.

Totton's interpretation of what is going on in seemingly telepathic therapeutic encounters hinges on his rejection of a common definition of telepathy as "the communication of information by non-physical means" (Totton 2003, p.199). Rather, "the road to the paranormal is through the body", where the body is conceived of in a non-dualistic way, as a body-mind unity (Totton 2003, p.199). For Totton, paranormal events such as telepathy demonstrates both the continuity between 'mental' and 'material' and 'normal' and 'paranormal' and "exemplifies the intense anxiety which can occur when "mind" is confronted directly by "body"" (Totton 2003, p.199). (This provides interesting parallels with Gendlin's approach, but also to the psychoanalytic idea that one's ego resists awareness of the unconscious.) Resistance to the idea of telepathy is an ego-driven defence against the involuntary living done by the body: "The ego, we might say, misunderstands the mobility of life, and in particular of sexuality, as the threat of slipping apart into death: a threat to which it responds with a frozen, monolithic rigor" (Totton 2003, p.200). Totton holds that paranormality live in the realm of the body-mind, rather than conscious ego. But in this realm, we are not individuals in the way the ego supposes: "our bodies are not isolated one from another, or from the material and energetic world which gives birth to them. Information, in every sense, is the substance of our being; and information flows constantly through the world's networks…" (Totton 2003, p.200). However, this information, available to the body-mind, is intolerable to the ego, as it means death to a self which is predicated on separation from others. So, apparently, for Totton, the primary body-mind reality, which is seemingly related to the unconscious, is through and through telepathic by its nature. Being in the body-mind – being embodied – means being in a state with more permeable boundaries, where other and outside are felt as connected to self and inside. The distinction can be made "in a secure but not over-rigid way: we can allow a "translation" between the two which does not overwhelm the borders" (Totton 2003, p.201).

For Totton, then, the denial of telepathy within psychoanalysis and other therapeutic situations, which leads to the therapeutic process as a thought reading and re-presentation is only feasible if one utterly separates mind and body. The kind of mishandled mistranslation described immediately above makes sense only if one conceives of the therapeutic process as one which acts upon minds, not bodies. In such a context, apparently telepathic phenomena are seen as mysterious, disembodied occurrences: "events, real or imagined, on the "mental" side of the supposed mind-body divide" (Totton 2003, p.198). Such a separation sets up a polarity between inner and outer realities and bolsters the idea of a sovereign ego utterly separate from others. If one starts – as Totton does – with an Reichian perspective, in which the soma and psyche are understood as a unity, then, as the self is understood as already immersed in communication and relationship and not an ego utterly distinct from others, there is less problem in acknowledging telepathy. Totton argues that focusing, in the therapeutic situation, on the body-mind (rather than the mind) "tends to open one up to experiences of the sort generally defined as "paranormal"" (Totton 2003, p.189). Thus, from the body therapy perspective, there is less impetus to reduce such experiences to mistakes or misunderstandings. Indeed, there is a continuum between 'normal' and 'paranormal' experiences. Telepathic experiences happen to the body-mind, and their problematic status becomes less problematic, the "intense anxiety which can occur when "mind" is confronted directly by "body"" is soothed (Totton 2003, p.198). The body-mind, unlike the separately conceived of mind, is fluid and defies easy categorisation. "The ego finds it hard to permit the body to live" (Totton 2003, p.198), misunderstanding the essential mobility of life as a journey into death, precisely because the sort of living it resists means the death of the defensive structures it builds around itself. The paranormal, "the unheimlich, the unrepresentable, the real, all "relate to and derive from the body", telepathy thus represents a confused understanding of Reich's biophysical sensations, a realm in which information flows continuously as bodies are not isolated from each other (Totton 2003, p.198). The sort of embodiment envisaged by Totton is fluid and free from control and careful delineation. The purpose of analysis, for Totton, is to embrace the telepathic, to "endure our connectedness through the unconscious with the rest of existence, including other people, to endure the actual uncontrollability of our experience, the actual impossibility of exclusive possession of our "selves"" (Totton 2003, p.200). However, this is in fact rare in analysis: usually the possibility of telepathy is denied, perhaps through an explanation of what it is which through an interpretation which forcibly equates it with either Lacan's symbolic or imaginary, rather than the real. Lacan understood subjectivity in terms of three parts, the real, the symbolic and the imaginary (Lacan 1977a; 1977b). In this three-part model, the imaginary is processed material and dream and other imaged-based material, and the symbolic those aspects of experience which are part of the signifying order, linking to society and cultural understandings, while the real is that which falls outside these two categories and which is outside the domain in which psychoanalysis operates (Lacan 1977a; 1977b). A further examination of the details of Lacanian theory is outside the domain of this thesis.

In terms of understanding telepathy in terms of the body-mind, Totton's position is broadly mirrored by that of Dana Birksted-Breen who picks up on recent use of the notion of 'somatic countertransference' has been used to designate situations "in which the body of the analyst is the recipient of the unconscious event" (Birksted-Breen 2019, p.1117). She links this to a wider movement towards acknowledging inter-subjectivity in psychoanalysis. Similarly, within literary theory, Casticano develops these ideas further, in terms of how the notions of telepathy and clairvoyance lead to a reconsidering of subjectivity and an idea of the unconscious as a singular entity possessed by one individual, thus supporting the idea that psychoanalysis needs to move away from the individualistic basis it has been predicated on, and that it points to a similar movement beyond psychoanalysis (Casticano 2005).

Totton also suggests that the body makes itself known through language as well, but "not by language's 'familiar means of communication', more through puns, buried associations, what Kristeva calls “the semiotic” (Kristeva 1974, p.393) and what Lacan calls “resonance in the communicating networks of discourse” (Lacan 1953, p.56). As such, Totton’s view of how language functions in telepathy closely relates to Lecercle’s views of language, which will be explored below in relation to the subject of this thesis (though Lecercle does not explicitly discuss telepathy) (Totton 2003, Lecercle 1985). Totton also explicitly links the experience of telepathy to intuition. This is the sort of language which has the ability to undermine established power relationships, both in the analyst’s studio and beyond. As will become clear in chapters below, some of the discomfort felt with academic reading was explicitly linked, by people who took part in the research groups, with a resentment of the power structures experienced as inherent in the academic situations they recalled influencing their feelings. Thus, exploring a kind of language which has such an ability to undermine and question these power relationships would seem to be a useful tool to explore in trying different ways of engaging with academic reading. This will be explored in more detail later.

3.3.d.3 Summary: Free association, intuition and mediumship

The concern of this thesis is with intuition. But this is a widely used and ambiguously defined concept. This thesis is concerned specifically with intuition as evidenced in mediumistic contexts, and what applying this sort of intuition, as practice, to the academic context might yield. So far, the discussions of free association above seem to offer a way of understanding intuition which has theoretical weight. In particular, Barratt’s version of free association, with its potential for transformation and non-mechanistic understanding, provides the most useful way of understanding what free association might bring to processes of reading (Barratt 2018). However, despite its advantages, there remains a question whether Barratt’s account of free association and his connected notion of desire is entirely useful in developing an account of intuition which ‘works’ in the context I want it to work, and in the way I want it to work. That is, for Barratt, free association is still a primarily personal process, which is an expression of individual desire, albeit desire conceived of as a source of growth (Barratt 2018). For people involved in mediumship, few would articulate what they are doing as a process like free association as conceived of by Barratt. Typically mediumship, for the medium, is understood as a process of putting the individual ego to one side, and listening to another distinct identity: often a person who, having once lived on the earth, is now dead (see Roxburgh and Roe 2014; Osborne and Bacon 2015; Wilde *et al.* 2019). There are other differences as well. For Barratt, as discussed above, free association does not involve listening to a discourse from an 'other' (albeit a dead other) and making sense of it through interpreting it. Rather the process is "more about the salubrity of listening to a momentum of desirous *non*-sense that renders one more *alive!"* and learning to listen "to the *ineffable flow of desire* that resides animatively – enigmatically and extraordinarily – within one's embodied experience" (Barratt 2018, p.485, italics in original). Here, the emphasis is entirely on the personal, and while Barratt's concept of desire seems to offer a possibility for the transcendence of the mechanical and materialistic, there is no corresponding offer of a way to transcend the personal (Barratt 2018). In order to develop a notion of free association consistent with the model of intuition I want to build for the purposes of this thesis, Totton's ideas offer a way to move beyond Barratt's conception of free association as a way of understanding mediumship and intuition (Totton 2003). Aspects of Bollas' account also play a part (Bollas 2002). As noted above, Bollas' 2002) account is rich and often ambiguous. While his descriptions of free association can, at times, make it sound like a mechanical and reductive process, at other time his version of free association opens the possibility of a communication between analyst and client that sounds almost telepathic (Bollas 2002). The analyst's task is a radical kind of listening in which "his or her own consciousness [is dissolved] by not concentrating on anything, looking for anything, or remembering anything" (Bollas 2002, p.12). Bollas, perhaps rightly, describes this way of listening as "revolutionary" (Bollas 2002, p.12). He also unequivocally states "we communicate with each other unconsciously… the psychoanalyst's unconscious recognises [the hidden order of thought displayed by the analysand's free associations] this as its own form of thinning and assumes the task of apprehending patterns of thought, some of which can be brought into consciousness" (Bollas 2002, p.17). Bollas equivocates between two positions, in one the relationship between analyst and analysand is telepathic, in the other it is entirely facilitated by referential language and the expressibility of unconscious content.

Totton's (2003) account seems to offer away to utilise the insights of Barratt (2018) *and*

Bollas (2002). In both Barratt and Bollas, the idea of free association seems at time to be a telepathic or mediumistic process (Barratt 2018, Bollas 2002). However, in both authors, the notion that free association might at times be telepathic has to be extracted from their accounts: it is not stated explicitly, nor is it the main focus of their discussions (Barratt 2018, Bollas 2002). By contract, although Totton focuses on the psycho-analytic situation as a whole and doesn't explicitly consider free association, he starts explicitly from an awareness of the occurrence of apparently paranormal incidences, and, acknowledging that these do occur, sets out to understand them better (Totton 2003). Totton's account, in which telepathy exists within a context marked out by Reichian body therapy (Reich 1976), thus allows us to understand the paranormalities of free association as embodied processes. The means employed in telepathic communication include the realm of the somatic and unspoken: feelings, emotions, interpretations of the body of another and what it might say in addition to or despite what their words are saying. As Totton puts it "or through those quietly mysterious phenomena which we call ``empathy'' and ``intuition''; or through intonation, body language, vitality affect, pheromones, subtle energy, or any other known or unknown channel" (Totton 2003, p.192).

However, for Totton, telepathic communication can also take place through language: setting aside the formal means of communication by which words designate commonly agreed states of affairs, language also communicates in a *delirious* way (Lecercle 1985): the unconscious, telepathic content is both an always-present "aspiration of language" (Totton 2003, p.193), and that which lurks behind the boundaries imposed by language, against which it exercises a kind of "frontier control" (Totton 2003, p.193). Telepathy, for Totton, is not a type of thought control, where the unconscious, telepathic content is *re-presented* to consciousness and made acceptable to the ego's expectations: this would be a translation of telepathic content into a normality, by which it would lose that which makes it ineffable, liminal, paranormal. We are wrong to approach telepathic content in the way we might want to approach dreams, demanding that it be intelligible, wanting to interpret it and understand it (Totton 2003). Telepathy is the opposite of this sort of interpretive understanding: "However, there is something else which can happen in analysis and in psychotherapy; something which many theorists refer to, each in their own way; and this is what I am stalking under the rubric of ``telepathy'' - an untranslated passage of information between subjects. The shock and excitement, at times trauma, of this passage is responded to like all ``foreign bodies'': with hysteria” (Totton 2003, p.193).

In the next section I explore the relationship of language to intuition and mediumship further, through the writings of Lecercle (1985, 1994). For the moment, I note that Totton’s understanding of how language has a dual communicative function both has notable parallels with Lecercle’s ideas and suggests that language has a hidden, mediumistic side that, when uncovered, relates deeper aspects of experience (Totton 2002; Lecercle 1985). In turn, Totton’s ideas yield useful insights into how playing with language through the sort of exercises used in the research groups can lead to new relationships with academic texts. I will return later to these ideas.

3.4 Lecercle, language and délire

3.4.a *Délire*: introduction

Above, accounts have been given of a number of different approaches which can be used to develop a concept of intuition which can be further used to understand mediumship, intuition and séances. Ways of understanding embodiment and intuition, and thus of offering a way of understanding experience which does not presuppose a dichotomy between subjective and objective, have been developed through Gendlin and phenomenology and through free association (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996; Barratt 2014, 2018; Bollas 1999, 2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015). Thus, a way to understand the role of embodiment and intuition in reading has been set out.

A thread running through each of the main areas considered above is language. The discussion in the previous two sections has touched throughout upon the nature of language, and its relationship with the ineffable and arguably inexpressible. A suggestion has been made, above, particularly in the discussion of Totton (2003), but also in Gendlin’s more theoretical and phenomenological writings (Gendlin 1963, 1973), that the type of language which ‘works’ for expressing the felt sense, embodiment and free association is not the type of language that we rely on for everyday, referential communication. Rather, there are two types of language. One aims at precision, scientific accuracy and 'objectivity'. The other is more deeply rooted in the body, the symbolic and the felt sense, and is also more poetic, dark and expressive. While the theorists above have hinted at, pointed to or tangentially indicated that there are two types of language, this idea is brought to fruition in writings by Jean-Jacques Lecercle and his notion of *délire (Lecercle* 1985, 1994). This is of particular interest for this thesis, because one of the research aims is to investigate acts of academic reading. Such acts of reading are bound up with, and their limits bound by, written texts. The reading groups which make up the empirical part of this thesis collected primarily texts (with some visual materials), so this is a thesis which is concerned with experiences of texts, which collects texts as 'evidence', and which uses text as a means of expression. The thesis is therefore also bound by texts. It is therefore also useful to understand how the textual relates to unconscious content, to intuition and to the body. Lecercle's theory of *délire* offers one way of linking these elements together (Lecercle 1985, 1994).

Aspects of Lecercle's ideas about *délire* (rooted in explorations by Deleuze, 1969) tie in with ideas found in Bollas and Totton, discussed above, particularly in terms of the Totton's thoughts on the disruptive power of free association and the nature of language and communication (Bollas 2002; Totton 2003). Totton also puts forward the Lecerclian idea that the unconscious communicates through puns, seemingly nonsensical utterances, poetry, rhyme and repetition (Totton 2003, Lecercle 1985). There is also some tie in with ideas in Gendlin's approach, particularly in relation to the role of the body (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996, 2006). However, Lecercle's position more strongly emphasises the linguistic, and more strongly develops the idea of two different types of language (or two different understandings of language): primarily referential, rational and straightforwardly communicative versus an embodied view of language rooted in the symbolic, punning and desire (Lecercle 1985, 1994). This dual model of language offers both a way of understanding the investigations which will take place in the research groups and a way of further theorising the concepts of intuition and mediumship.

Lecercle's main discussion of *délire* is in his 1985 text, Philosophy Through the Looking Glass.

Writing about traditions in the philosophy of language, he opposes a "dominant tradition" (Lecercle 1985, p.6), with "another tradition… suppressed but persistent", the "age-old tradition of 'speaking in tongues'… of possessed visionaries" (Lecercle 1985, p.7). This suppressed tradition Lecercle calls '*délire*'. In Lecercle's "dominant tradition", language is seen as primarily "an instrument for communication" (Lecercle 1985, p.6). For this model, language makes sense, is primarily abstract and is an expression of a search for truth. The ideal language is mathematical or computational, natural languages are "imperfect instruments which have to be purified or translated into logical language" (Lecercle 1985, p.6). This model was most popular in the early 20th century, and can be associated with, for example, the early Wittgenstein (1922) and A. J. Ayer (1936), and more broadly with the rationalist tradition of Anglo-American philosophies. But it by no means only historical: traces of it can be found more recently. Lecercle's other tradition, by contrast, acknowledges the roots of language through focusing upon its embodiment, "its… dark, frightening origins in the human body… the material existence of words as produced by certain organs of the body" (Lecercle 1985, p.16). Thus, for Lecercle, there are two distinct ways in which language operates. For Lecercle, the dominant theory of language means that while the abstract, meaning-communicating, expressive elements are usually predominant, they are sometimes surpassed by language's material underbelly. Lecercle describes the relationship as both influenced by and expressing power relationships: the two types of language are essentially two warring factions. *Délire* is also deeply rooted in bodily processes, produced by a consuming passion for language, and made meaningful by processes of (for example) punning, alliteration and rhyme that express the unconscious rather than reason and conscious processes. This suppressed tradition of *délire* prioritises apparent lack of sense and the rootedness of language in the body (Lecercle 1985). I now move to a more in-depth look *at délire* and its implications for this thesis, after another brief autobiographical section:

As I'll discuss in more detail later, Lecercle (1986) develops a theory of délire –what's beneath the surface of neutral, rational, referential language – based on ideas he found in Deleuze (1969). One of the key ideas from Deleuze is that the introduction of a notion of 'sense' means that a model of truth v. falsity is replaced by one in which truth and lie, fact and fiction, real and imaginary co-exist. A work of fiction can thus also be a work of theory and hence have implications for how we experience *fact. This intermingling of fact and fiction has always drawn my in life, as much as in philosophy. When I was a student in Manchester, a time I've mentioned before in another fragment drawn from my life, I used to sit in a café – rather genteel, rather old-fashioned, not frequented much by students – in the city centre. This was Manchester different from the place it later became, gloomy, fascinating, unrestored, un-renovated. The café has gone now. That Manchester has gone now. That me who sat in the café, fascinated by other people's lives and making up the bare bones of stories about the people I saw, has probably gone as well. I don't have great recall of the past: what's gone has always felt a bit problematic, as if it's not clear it was there in the first place. Better to move on in the present, where there's maybe a bit more certainty about things. But if I sit down, or lie – actually lying makes it easier, somehow – and spend a bit of time being vague and feeling my way back, I can sort of remember what it was like. What stands out in this remembering is how I became utterly fascinated by someone I met there. Actually, two people. About my age – perhaps a bit younger – I thought for a while they were still at school, but eventually I decided not – two young women. I never found out their names, or much about them. They presented a rather fey, somewhat effete appearance – partly I think as a result of deliberate effort (dressed in grey and black, long wispy hair that always escaped the elaborate buns and hair nests they built, complicated yet shoved-together-looking outfits that might have been random or might have been carefully curated) and partly something else – not effort but what? I was on first nodding terms, then subsequently terms of brief conversation. I initiated the conversation, because I was curious about what they were doing: every time I saw them (only ever in this one café, never in the streets or anywhere else, never leaving or arriving, always already in place with their bits around them) they had a table upon which was opened a large book, in which both wrote, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes one then the other. There were long periods – up to 15 or 20 minutes at a time when both stared into space, then perhaps one would write something, mostly slowly and with a huge amount of apparent effort, but sometimes rapidly, demonstrating some urgency understood only by the writer, or both would write together. Sometimes they drew little diagrams (I made it my business to find out what they were doing, by walking to the counter, or the toilet, and peering hard at their book, without making much effort to conceal my interest). As I said, I was so curious that in the end I just asked what they were doing. I had some thoughts about not being so nosy and just letting them get on with it, but I decided that if as they were working in a public place, they might be open to being approached. As it turned out, it was both fine, and not fine at the same time. Although they were polite when I asked what they were doing, they were also a little cool and distant. I backed off. Over the next few months, until they just never appeared again, they sometimes spoke to me and very occasionally, unprompted by further questions, told me a bit about what they were doing.*

What they were doing, it thus became clear, was writing a work – the work of their lifetimes, to continue into the future as long as they lived, and to ensure their everlasting life beyond – in which real and imaginary, fact and fiction were mingled. They listed characters they saw around them (much in the same way as they had become characters in my life), neighbours and friends, and in this long list included a good proportion of fictional people. In fact there were numerous lists of characters, all thus mingling real and made up people: a master list, which had everyone on it, and sub-lists which had a sub-set of people, intended for developing dramas and recording scenarios. Just as the lists mingled real people and fictional ones, so the sets of actions ('events') mingled things that had actually happened with inventions. Some of the events, they told me, came in dreams, perhaps adding a new ontological layer to this work, depending I suppose on what stuff one sees dreams as made up from. There were, they told me, also gods and various spirit entities, whose actions and thoughts impacted the world of the book in ways I didn't fully understand as it wasn't fully explained. I never really learned whatthe drawings were either: what (if anything) they were drawings of, how they fitted into the grand narrative which I was led to believe was being developed within their book.

I think because they disappeared so suddenly, and so permanently, and because I understood their book and their work only partially, I was left wanting more. And now, even though I can recall what it felt like to watch them writing and drawing only through a great effort, and with no sense that I am clearly recalling what happened as it actually did, I can see the ways in which these women, and their shared work, has had an impact on me, one that's felt in this thesis. The mingling of fact and fiction, so it's not clear where a diary ends and the novel begins, the crossing of genres (was it a novel, an artwork, a history, or something else), the production of something that was written but which was at the same time unreproducible, because a copy of the book would have not been the book at all): all these things have stayed with me as themes, and have come out in this thesis, and particularly in this section of this chapter.

3.4.b *Délire*: The concept and its roots

The term *délire* (delirium) is used commonly in European philosophy, linguistics and psychoanalysis (Brossard 2005). Before Lecercle's extensive use of the concept, it was discussed by Deleuze (1969). In the following I focus on Lecercle's discussion of Deleuze, as it so heavily influences his position (Lecercle 1985). Although Deleuze barely mentions *délire* in the text discussed (*Logique du Sens)*, Lecercle finds here the roots of the concept of *délire* that he will apply to analyse Victorian nonsense language (Lecercle 1985).

Délire is both a concept used in philosophy and a body of texts. *Délire* is to be distinguished from delirium by reflexivity: *délire* is lifted beyond delirium by being understood as a methodological system. Only the latter meaning is "rich and imaginative" (Lecercle 1985, p.1). Theoretical interest in *délire* can be traced to the linguist Saussure who was briefly interested in the utterances of the medium Helene Smith who used an imaginary language she claimed to be Martian (Saussure 1916). Lecercle postulates that there are two Saussures, one who founded a science of language and meaning, and one who traced hidden meanings in archaic Latin verse (Lecercle 1985).

Lecercle's understanding of *délire* is based in Deleuze's replacement of the philosophical distinction between truth and falsehood as properties of language with a distinction between sense and nonsense (Deleuze 1969). Thus, Deleuze replaces a model of exclusion between two parts (either a proposition is true, or not) with one of co-existence (as telling the truth is not of necessity a property of either sense or nonsense, and no implication about truth or the world). This further suggests that truth has no moral superiority over fiction: "the teller of tales tells us as much about the abstruse question of meaning as the professed philosopher" (Lecercle 1985, p.93). The correlate of this is that philosophy starts to appear relevant to areas previously considered off limits. A work of pure fiction can also be a work of philosophy, an artwork or performance can philosophy. Another implication of Deleuze's new model is that philosophy does not make process, rather to philosophise is to engage in a circular reading in which old texts are read in new lights. As such, philosophising is hermeneutic (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985).

Perhaps the most important part of Deleuze's work, in terms of Lecercle's concept of *délire*, is his four-fold notion of sense (of a proposition), set out in *Logique du Sens* (Deleuze 1969). 'Sense', for Deleuze, and also for philosophers of language who precede him (particularly

Frege), is a technical term which helps us understand how individual units of language, and language as a whole, can be meaningful and communicative. Deleuze identifies three functions of a proposition:

- *Designation:* the identification and indication of the thing referred to
- *Manifestation:* the expression of the uttering subject's beliefs and emotions
- *Signification:* the relationship of the proposition to other propositions

Following the stoics, Deleuze also identifies a fourth, *Sense.* This corresponds to the Stoic term *lekton,* that which is expressed, "a complex incorporeal entity, on the surface of things, a pure event which insists or subsists in the proposition" (Deleuze 1969 p.30). This seems to relate to Frege's notion of the 'sense' of a proposition, separate from the referent of a proposition (the thing it identifies in the world) and the physical manifestation of the proposition (e.g. in written text). The concept of sense explains how propositions are able to *mean* something, and how we can communicate in language (Frege 1892).

Deleuze's introduction of the fourth element of sense, Lecercle claims, clears a path for the theory of *délire* to develop, as it allows a sentence to function without regard for its truth value. Thus, the focus can be on truth versus fiction rather than truth versus falsity. Thus: "a logic of sense can be constructed, in which *délire* can take its place" (Lecercle 1985, p.100). Deleuze elaborates the landscape of sense in two ways: first, sense is characterised in terms of a series of paradoxes including the paradox of infinite regression and the neutrality (sterility) of sense (Deleuze 1969). Second, he discusses the way in which language is structured by sense: "1 there are two series, one signifying, one signified, 2 each term in each series exists only through its relation with other terms; and 3 systematic difference is produced by a paradoxical element, which functions as the differentiating agent: it glides along the series, organising the relationship between the terms" (Lecercle 1985, p.103). Here, his account seems influenced by de Saussure (1916). Thus, sense is removed from signification and logic, and hence is able to develop in a different direction, producing paradoxes. Also thus, "one can understand better, now, the deep complicity between sense and fiction, the opposition between sense and truth or falsity" (Lecercle 1985, p.103). Thus, Lecercle sees nonsense as intrinsic to Deleuze's conception of sense: it emerges from the paradoxical element and the duality between excess and lack present in the structure of the series. Nonsense exists to structure the text: nonsense words having no meaning in themselves they yet stop the text lacking sense. "Sense is produced, as a linguistic effect, by the circulation of the nonsensical element on the frontier between the two series" (Lecercle 1985, p.104). The stoic notion of sense also feeds into Deleuze's conception of language and meaning in a way which prioritises the role of the body in sense, and hence founds *délire* in the body by insisting on the material aspects of the word and the part they play despite the process of abstraction that allows them to be part of language. Thus, the incorporeal surface of language co-exists with depth and height, which form its root. Although "language emerges because sounds can be separated from bodies, abstracted into words expressing incorporeal events", the bodily root of language always threatens to re-emerge, and in fact is necessary part of language, without which communications would fail to make communicate (Lecercle 1985, p.106).

Thus, in Lecercle's reading of Deleuze, *délire* is the key element in his notion of sense, and means sense stands alone from the other three constituent elements of meaning (Lecercle 1985). *Délire* operates at once as a threat to, and a substratum of, the structure of language as a whole, in which two series, one signifiying and the other signified, relate through a back and forth of lack and excess. The key point is to do with *délire'*s paradoxical nature: "it appears to lack meaning (partly or utterly) and yet, somehow, it always means" (Lecercle 1985, p.107). But *délire* thus operates not incidentally, but essentially: in Deleuze's account of sense, "there is a similar uncertainty in all propositions" (Lecercle 1985, p.107). That is, *délire* is part of how language, as a whole, functions. In text where *délire* predominates, like the ones in Lecercle's analysis, the structure of language is made explicit. Although Lecercle does not mention it, *délire* appears to function at least in part in a way that means it is not consciously acknowledged, strengthening connections with the Freudian unconscious and also with paranormality and mediumship.

In Deleuze's model, which Lecercle bases his subsequent analyses on (Lecercle 1985), the element of sense is that which cuts across the division between fact and fiction, as it is able to operate without having to be 'cashed out' in terms of referents (Deleuze 1969). That is, sense is not concerned whether its contents are true and false. As mentioned above, this concept of sense seems very close to Frege's (1892), but whereas Frege's model emphasised sense's close relationship with that to which it refers, and hence fed into logical positivism and the attempt to recalculate meaning in terms of referents, for Deleuze sense is cast adrift (Deleuze 1969, Lecercle 1985). Statements which are not made true by the existence of things in the world because they are fictional are on a par with those that *can* be thus falsified or confirmed. This interpretation of sense thus allows Lecercle, drawing upon Deleuze, to state that the concept of sense, thus understood, means that the radical uncertainty inherent in all propositions calls upon the writer (and reader) to make a choice between ways of dealing with sense (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). On the one hand, "one recognizes it as constitutive, and abandons the intricacies of signification, the facilities of manifestation, the certainties of designation" (Lecercle 1985, p.108), which is the way of the poet, who reminds us that the signifier, separated from the signified, has a potent and compelling life of its own (Lecercle 1985, p.108). Or, on the other hand, "one is caught in the hesitancy of paradox, unable to escape from the perpetual exchange between sense and nonsense, compelled to roam aimlessly on the surface…. Here one occupies the position of the madman, and the text becomes *délire*" (Lecercle 1985, p.108). Thus, *délire* becomes all consuming, as the *délirious* writer struggles to reconcile the inherent tensions of language with referentiality.

Délire's relationship with the body, for Deleuze and Lecercle, is also further clarified here (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). One of the paradoxes of sense is that language is, on the one hand, an abstract system removed from the human body, and, on the other, still entirely rooted in that body as it requires expression in speech or through our experiences of the written or spoken word. Deleuze elaborates this idea that language is rooted in the body through a theory developed from a distinction made by the Klenian psychotherapist Susan Isaacs, between conscious and unconscious fantasy (daydreaming or fiction v. pre-verbal worlds) (Isaacs 1948; Deleuze 1969). Deleuze draws upon this idea of the phantasy, characterising it as a pure event that is neither imaginary nor real, neither external nor internal, and neither active nor passive. Additionally, it does not require a phantasising ego to exist, and its verbal expression is as nonsense (Deleuze 1969). It is an intermediary between psyche and body. Thus, phantasy is aligned with sense, bringing the bodily into the heart of sense. The idea of phantasy functions as a psychological parallel to the idea of linguistic sense (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985).

Lecercle's understanding of the relationship of *délire* to the body is further elucidated in his discussion of the second half of Deleuze's *Logic of Sense,* where Deleuze discusses his idea that the possibility of language is founded in the separation of sounds from their root in the body and their subsequent organisation into propositions in dynamic, developmental terms (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). Deleuze sets out three stages in this process, which also reflect three elements of language. The most basic is the primary order, sounds emerging from the body. The secondary organisation is the domain of sense and understanding and the tertiary arrangement is the realm of fully formed propositions (Deleuze 1969). This is explained as a feature of psychological development: the primary order is the experience of the pre-verbal infant, one of the ebb and flow of experiential intensities, what Deleuze calls the 'body without organs' (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). This stage is that of a primordial type of nonsense. In this intrudes the voice of the parent. Adults' voices introduce the language experienced as separate and fully formed. In order for the child to be able to inhabit the world of language (the tertiary arrangement), a secondary stage is necessary, the surface world of sense, representing the manner in which the child starts to extract meaning from elements of language as a whole. The secondary organisation is through three different types of syntheses: connective, conjunctive and disjunctive. The secondary organisation is particularly central to Deleuze's thinking here, in its intermediary role between language as a whole (as a formal system) and bodily processes. The secondary stage is where the developmental work is done, and the speaking subject is situated within sense (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). Sense operates as a bridging mode between propositions, the states of affairs they express and the grammatical and syntactical rules they adhere to on the one hand and, on the other, the guttural noises and experiences of the body. At the same time, as sense is party both to the proposition and the states of affairs expressed by propositions, it balances both the propositional functions, for example, signification and those elements in the world it signifies. However, this dual function means that the secondary organisation is characterised by fragility, always at risk of collapsing into nonsense. This is in part due to the nature of sense as produced: making sense requires effort, making something out of nothing. Its constituent elements in themselves do not make sense, sense is something that emerges, through effort, from them. Thus, nonsense and the body are the threats behind sense. If the arena of sense degenerates to the mere sounds and constituent elements, the noise of the body threatens to return (Deleuze 1969, Lecercle 1985).

It is worth briefly considering what this rootedness in the body consists of. So far, it appears to be something other than reason and the cognitive: a place of guttural noises and expressiveness. This is closer to the Freudian unconscious than it is to the medium's intuition. For Deleuze and Lecercle (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985), the body that language also tangentially refers to is something to escape and suppress, and is developmentally earlier, with the implication that a more developed, desirable state is the one that escapes it. This contrasts with Gendlin's concept of the body (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996, 2006), which is a source of wisdom and hermeneutical learning.

To recap this section, Lecercle draws heavily upon Deleuze's elaboration in *The Logic of Sense* (which in turn draws heavily on developmental psychology and the theories of the unconscious from various forms of psychoanalysis, particularly Lacan) of the way in which language works, the relationship between body and language, the relationship between sense and nonsense and the constitution of the realms of abstract, formal language and the world through sense (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985). This theory of language provides the context for understanding the concept of *délire.* We now turn to Lecercle's discussion of *délire,* particularly the way he uses it in analysis as a tool to uncover language's relationship with the body (Lecercle 1985). As such, this can be used as a practical tool in this thesis for looking at the productions from the research groups and what they reveal.

3.4.c Lecercle on *délire*

Lecercle distinguishes different types of *délire (Lecercle 1985)*. On the one hand, there is the 'delirium' which characterises the discourse of the paranoid, the mad, the insane and the mentally ill. On the other, there is the form of delirium of interest not just to the psychiatrist but also to the philosopher: "the kind of reflective 'delirium' in which the patient expounds his system" as it were, to introduce method into madness (Lecercle 1985, p.2). Thus, for

Lecercle, we have *délire* as both a body of delirious texts and a philosophical approach which offers a "new approach to the classical philosophical problem of sense and nonsense" through a peculiarity which offers not a lack of meaning but an excess of it (Lecercle 1985, p.3). In this thesis, I am primarily interested in *délire* as a philosophical approach, and thus this will be the focus of this section. In order to understand Lecercle's philosophically themed *délire,* it is important to understand its roots in Deleuze's theories, in particular his 4-fold picture of language and the way in which the element of *sense* disrupts the truth/falsity status of propositions, and shifts focus to the fictional. This is the building block upon which Lecercle develops his ideas (Deleuze 1969, Lecercle 1985).

Occupying a borderline between sense and nonsense, *délire* offers a way to distinguish two different concepts of language. On the one hand, what Lecercle refers to as the "dominant tradition in the concept of language" postulates language as predominantly about communication and the expressing of truth, a way of making sense through its essentially abstract nature (Lecercle 1985, p.6). On the other hand, this picture of language ignores its other side: that it fails to communicate, fails to express, or expresses too much, or hints at that which we don't want to say: "language becomes tainted by desire, by the actions and passions of our body, by its instinctive drives" (Lecercle 1985, p.7). Lecercle wants to bring this forgotten side of language to the surface, because, by acknowledging it, language's power is increased through a process which brings fiction and desire into the world of abstractions and repressed meaning. The dominance of the traditional concept of language may, Lecercle suggests, be traced to the close alliance of philosophy with science. For some, "the task of philosophy is to justify the practice of scientists" (Lecercle 1985, p.10), for example the rationalist epistemology of Bachelard, but also the historical materialism of Althusser (Lecercle 1985). Linguistics has also come to occupy a predominant position in philosophy, leading for example to the structural linguistics to structuralism (Lecercle talks particularly of French philosophy, but the same is true of Anglo-American traditions). Within such philosophical approaches, *délire* has a role, but as the limit of the possibilities for discourse analysis. For Lecercle, however, while the dominant tradition suppresses *délire, délire* always returns to haunt it (Lecercle 1985).

3.4.c.1 Délire, language and the subject

The role of the subject is important in *délire.* Lacan, building upon the linguistics espoused by De Saussure (1916) and Jakobson, places language at the centre of his psychoanalysis and develops Freud's concept of the ego into the *subject* (Lacan 1977a, 1977b; Lecercle 1985). As such, for Lecercle, Lacan represents an aspect of the traditional view of language, against which *délire* is opposed (Lacan 1977a, 1977b; Lecercle 1985). Within this view, the subject is the master, both of language and the world. This mastery is one of rational discourse. Language is used to control the world and limit the self. But, for Lecercle, *délire,* as a suppressed but essential aspect of language, threatens the hegemony of this controlling self through the breakdown of language's rational side. However, *délire* is a threat and a negative presence mostly from the point of view of the ego: from another more expansive perspective *délire* offers an opportunity and an escape: in short, a liberation (Lecercle 1985). One part of this liberation is the opportunity for freedom from the mastery of the subject, the thinking ego whose thinking is done in language. To visit the realm of *délire* is to lose conscious control (as a trance medium gives up conscious control and lets the dead speak). As Lecercle underlines: "this is the age-old tradition of 'speaking in tongues' (Lecercle 1985, p.7). Speaking in tongues, moved by spirit is either condemned or controlled by the dominant tradition, but when suppressed returns to haunt the dominant tradition. Thus, Lecercle's discussion of *délire* overtly offers a theoretical position for understanding the type of utterances in mediumship. This understanding emphasises the way these practices are marginalised and rendered impotent by wider social forces.

The conception of language in which Lecercle situates *délire,* and which opposes the 'traditional view' is, he contends, "based on a central paradox" (Lecercle 1985, p.74). We have explored Lecercle's exposition of Deleuze's notion of sense above, and this paradox emerges from this. Language is a bounded system based on disjunctions and defined negatively, but which has an in-built possibility of transgressing its bounds. Language creates a subject, and the subject also exists paradoxically, at once responsible for their utterances and yet confined by the limits of language. *Délire* represents one response to this paradox and is what Lecercle calls a 'mythical' solution (Lecercle 1985, p.75). The myth is progressive and follows six stages, supposed to mirror the process through which the subject emerges in language. In stage one, “language speaks” (p.76) – there is no subject associated with the text. “A coherent *délire,* the *délire* of the structure… precedes the emergence of the subject”. For this understanding of *délire,* there is nothing outside language. In the second stage, “language speaks through me”: “this is an experience of possession in which language finds a subject” (Lecercle 1985, p.77). This is the process whereby the subject starts to emerge from language. The process of the creation of the subject comes to fruition in the third stage, where language “interpolates an individual into a subject” (Lecercle 1985, p.77), although communication is disjointed, taking place through fragments of dialogue. At the end of this stage “a subject appears and takes responsibility for the text” but the mastery is only partial and is constantly open to doubt (Lecercle 1985, p.77). The subject does not fully control language. In the fourth stage, the speech is owned by a subject, but the lack of full control leads to endless utterances, as the speaker lacks the mastery necessary to bring them to a conclusion. In stage five, the raving of the endless utterances is brought to an end. “the only way to end this raving is to become a linguist, to make language the object of my speech”, “the subject avoids being possessed by language by reflecting on it, finding its laws, commenting on the words” (Lecercle 1985, p.78). Full mastery is achieved in the sixth stage, language is used like a tool, and the author can finally appear. However, any claim “to mastery over words is an instance of Freudian denial, because every reader has made the same attempt, and experienced the same failure” (Lecercle 1985, p.86). Thus, the apparent control over language which develops as the subject develops is a myth, and a myth which contains within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. As Lecercle says: “the paradox... is that language, in its daily use, in its daily production of texts, occupies both positions; it both is and is not mastered by the speaking subject; it is and is not self-generated, imposed on a helpless and … unwilling subject” (Lecercle 1985, p.78).

3.4.c.2 Délire and myth

Lecercle links *délire* and myth, a move that is relevant to this thesis as it can also be related to intuitive understanding and mediumship. Arguably, experiences of mediumship are closer to myth states than to normal cognitive states in which linguistic experience is dominant.

However, Lecercle maintains that myth is a product of language (Lecercle 1985). Drawing on a theory by Max Müller (Müller 1859, 1866, 1878), he explains that "myth is produced by the unruly movements of language, the displacement of the signified which loses its privileged relationship with the signifier" (Lecercle 1985, p.86). For Muller, metaphysics and myth, as a disease of language, should be purged away, leaving a purely scientific and pragmatic language (Müller 1859, 1866, 1878). This has parallels with the view of language critiqued by Gendlin, as discussed above (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996). However if, following Lecercle, we challenge Muller's view that this separation is possible, it seems feasible to add another dimension to our characterisation of intuition, linking the realm of the unconscious, the intuitive and the telepathic with that of myths and myth-making, and giving a firmer philosophical basis to this concept of intuition (Lecercle 1985). Lecercle looks at Muller's example of the word 'nothing' – for Muller, this is a simple word which, due to the disease of language, has led to a complex elaboration of, for example, Nirvana, Nothingness etc., whereby a lack of something becomes a mysterious entity (Lecercle 1985). Thus is a language made precise in the service of science by ridding it of metaphysics and myth. However, Lecercle counters, Muller's diseased growths "never go away, and in the last resort… find a lasting protection in fiction" (Lecercle 1985, p.87). But Lecercle's argument involves more than saying that language has scope to talk about entities which are not there. Lecercle's point is both that Muller is simply wrong about the nature of language, as fiction proves otherwise; and, more radically, that myth is an intrinsic part of language's functionality - without being based on and embracing the mythical, language would not do what it does at all. The move to protect language by demarking its territory as that of truth is an attempt, doomed to failure, to suppress part of its very nature: "behind the line the threatening torrent of words gathers strength, waiting to break into *délire* and carry everything with it (Lecercle 1985 p.87). And "*délire* has a deep relationship with fiction because of their common ambiguity, each of them embodies the mixture of danger and usefulness that words contain. *Délire* is the incarnation of the dangerous side of language. And yet, perhaps it is also the origin of all language" (Lecercle 1985, p.87). This is because, following Lacan, the only reason I, as subject, am convinced that the other subject exists is because there is a possibility they might be lying, that I could be taken in by the utterances of the other. Thus "the only proof that language *does* communicate a content is the possibility of the utterer bursting into *délire"* (Lacan 1977a, 1977b; Lecercle 1985, p.87).

Thus, Lecercle's discussion of myth, language and *délire* offers a way to further understand concepts of intuition and mediumship and explore the relationship of intuitive practices to language. For Lecercle, a *déliric* text functions as a myth, complete in itself: "a myth revealed, where mind and body, words and things, madness and reason, language and desire act their colourful parts" (Lecercle 1985, p.17). In the examples Lecercle considers, the myth emerges through the multiple analyses and experiments with language. *Déliric* texts function thus as "true fiction, that is myth, a myth of origins" (Lecercle 1985, p.25). For Lecercle, this is a myth to do with the origins of the subject in language, but we could equally see this as a way for the language-bound subject to be returned to another type of 'origin', in the non-verbal experiences of mediumship, of the unconscious, of the body.

3.4.c.3 Délire and the body

Lecercle's discussion of the relationship between *délire* and the body links back to this thesis' previous discussions about the relationship of body experience to the intuitive and mediumship. Lecercle sees *délire* as a type of nonsense language, but one which is deeply rooted in bodily processes, produced by a consuming passion for language, and made meaningful by processes of (for example) punning, alliteration and rhyme that express the unconscious rather than reason and conscious processes. All these elements are intertwined: the punning and alliteration are rooted in language's origins in the body, and the inexpressiblity of bodily experience is hinted at through puns and alliteration, as it cannot be directly approached through language's ability to refer beyond itself to its real-world referents (Lecercle 1985). Thus, while the dominant tradition of language emphasises its communicative and abstract nature, the suppressed tradition of *délire* prioritises apparent lack of sense and the rootedness of language in the body. People using language, by and large, have a "common-sense rule which forbids the users of language to reflect on the material existence of words as produced by certain organs of the body" (Lecercle 1985, p.16): by contrast the writer who is comfortable with *délire* is comfortable with guttural, nonsensical elements.

Abstract language, as well as being systematic and the province of the group, not the individual speaker, is an instrument of control, which control is carried out by a speaker who is also in control. By contrast, material language is unsystematic, consists of guttural utterances that render it noisy and emotive, and is related to individual bodies and speakers rather than communities. It is less about communication and more about expression. It reveals an unstable subject. *Délire* bridges the gap between them. But neither language exists on its own: "material language is repressed and returns to the surface as a disruptive force, and the 'dictionary' is an abstraction which denies the material expression of instincts" (Lecercle 1985, p.45). "*Délire* is the name for this contradiction", existing "between the dictionary and the scream" (Lecercle 1985, p.45).

While Lecercle's (1985) account is useful, in that he articulates a connection of the body to language, it is not entirely useful from the point of view of this thesis. The body which, according to Lecercle, is suppressed in the traditional view of language is portrayed by Lecercle in what feels like an almost entirely negative way. He speaks for example of the way Wolfson, through *délire*, "fights, often a losing battle, against disorder, the disorder, violence and cruelty of language which are again perceived as emanating from the instincts of the body, and from the social organisation of bodies, the family" (Lecercle 1985, p.31). Here, there are links to the drawbacks with certain views of the unconscious revealed by free association, for example in Bollas' view (Bollas 2002). The body, in the quotation here, is basely instinctive and disordered. Lecercle does not acknowledge, in the way Gendlin does, that the body has its own sort of order and sophistication (Lecercle 1985; Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1996).

Additionally, Lecercle's body is expounded primarily as a sexualised body. Sometimes the term 'body' is used apparently synonymously with sexuality or desire (and the latter is equally equated with sexuality). For example, Lecercle talks about two conceptions of the body: the pre-subjective world of part objects and drives, and the structured body of erogenous zones (Lecercle 1985). This seems to tie in with a Freudian agenda through which the "passions of the individual body" are so unacceptable to the subject that they are repressed, denied or displaced (Lecercle 1985, p.39). Only in a psychotic use is the life of the body on the surface of language. This is a one-sided and simplistic view of what the body is, and Gendlin's approach offers a different interpretation. For Lecercle, the body is instinctive as well as primarily erogenous: language is explained as "deriving from the instinctual drives and desires of the body" (Lecercle 1985, p.35). This contrasts with the more subtle understanding of the body found in Gendlin (1978; 1992; 1996), but also in Totton, who seems to have spent more time exploring the world of bodily perspectives (Totton 2003). For Lecercle, the body is a place of primal emotion and passions, and knows of little depth, only force (Lecercle 1985). By thus equating the bodily only with the primal and sexual, we are arguably flattening something rich and complex into the simplistic.

There is, additionally, another sort of flattening going on. As well as being the site of primal passions, the body, for Lecercle (1985), is repressed within language as it is primarily a site of pain and destruction: "the experience is one of suffering, or intense pain. Life means pain and injustice; it is associated with the words of the mother tongue" (Lecercle 1985, p.39). As with the suppression, repression and denial of sexuality by language, so language presses down on the primal pain of bodily experience. But again, this is to flatten what is arguably a complex and subtle realm that includes the ineffable and sublime as much as the repellent. And this is not to argue that the passions of the body are in no way ineffable, rather that in order for Lecercle (and Freud before him) analysis to work, that which is repressed needs to be something unpleasant, painful or difficult (Lecercle 1985). This seems to mean that the sublime and ineffable, and the sublime and ineffable versions of sexuality and passion, are mostly excluded from this version of the body.

3.4.c.4 Délire and power structures / the ego and its loss

As discussed above, Lecercle's account includes a useful, though flawed, discussion of the relationship of the body to language, and the ways in which *délire* reveal the relationship of the body to language (Lecercle 1985). For Lecercle, the body is a negatively conceived mass of desires and inarticulacies. Against this, Lecercle contrasts the ego and its desire to hold on to power and resist the body revealed by *délire*. In these terms, to write deliriously is to question existing power structures. Lecercle suggests it as a perversion which interferes with, as well as taking risks with, language. Those who produce *délire* refuse to conform to common sense usages of language, instead bringing attention to the roots of language in the body. This has consequences – that the writer might be thought mad, and the risk of the dissolution of the ego. *Délire*, relating language back to its origins in the body, challenges the ego (Lecercle 1985). This mirror's some of Totton's and Bollas's thoughts about the role of the body, and the extent to which it can challenge the autonomy of the self (Totton 2003; Bollas 1999, 2002). Thus, in Lecercle's scheme as well as those of Bollas and Totton, practices like *délire* offer a way to break down the ego-self and reveal a more telepathic, mediumistic self rooted in the body. Indeed, Lecercle talks about the ways in which the breakdown of the ego associated with *délire* can be read as a 'speaking in tongues', which has interesting links with mediumship (Lecercle 1985): the practice of physical mediumship can include channelling, where the medium speaks in the voice allegedly of the deceased (for example Leonard 2005). Lecercle links this speaking in tongues as an illustration of the transgressing of the boundaries of language associated with *délire:* the possibility of systemic breakdown is always inherent in language. This exists not only at the level of the system but also for the subject, "who is both responsible for his utterances and ex-centrically dominated by language" (Lecercle 1985, p.75). Thus, for Lecercle, as for Totton (2003), *délire* is a way in which the ego-defenses of the subject break down.

3.4.d Summary of Lecercle's material: délire as method

It is easy to relate Lecercle's material to the concern of this section, to first review attempts to understand mediumship and the paranormal, and particularly to develop a theoretical context of mediumship through philosophical material. While Lecercle barely discusses any aspect of mediumship or the paranormal, his theory of *délire* offers a way to understand how intuitive material is expressed in language (not referentially, but tangentially, through hints, expressive outbursts and elements of sheer poetry) (Lecercle 1985). He also offers a way to understand the relationship of mediumistic experience which adds to the understanding already developed based on theories of free association and body-oriented phenomenology. Additionally, in the introduction I have referred to my own experiences with academic writings and approaches, which seem (on occasions) to suck the life and interest out of the subjects I thought I was interested in. Lecercle, as the other theorists I have covered above, offers a further way to develop a more rewarding relationship with reading, through playful and freely associated, body-rooted techniques which allow us to uncover the *déliric* side of academic texts (Lecercle 1985). Lecercle discusses at length concrete examples of *délire,* tracing in the seemingly nonsensical outpourings of the authors he considers a sense rooted in the body and a deeper experience than the ego-bound ones. Discussing each of these authors (Roussel, Schreber, Wolfson and Brisset), he looks at the ways in which their texts function as *délire*, e.g. by mechanisms of translation, punning, word association etc., uncovering their link to the embodied, suppressed self and latent content. As such, he is attempting something close to a psychanalysis of written texts, using the texts as a type of free association (Lecercle 1985). The examples of Lecercle's method also offer a toolkit for interpreting the material collected in the research groups. Thus, Lecercle's analysis of *délire* is useful both to feed into the theoretical understanding of intuition I have been developing above, and as offering tools for analysing the material collected.

3.5 Chapter conclusion

My aim in this thesis is to look at academic reading and work out why, for me and perhaps others, it can be a dry and dislikeable experience. I started with my personal frustrations: the research groups made me realise that my frustrations are not unique to me. I found, in some accounts of experimental séances, a clue regarding how experiences of reading in academic contexts might be more deeply felt, more connected and soulful, and more meaningful, through adding in intuition and what I refer to as mediumistic practices. This chapter attempts to understand, through different theoretical perspectives, what intuition and mediumship are, and how they might be used in this thesis.

This literature review chapter has thus surveyed some of the material relevant to the interests of this thesis. My starting point is experiences of academic reading, and my personal frustration with the processes of academia. My discussion in this chapter starts with the 'experimental' séance, which seems to offer a way to be utterly absorbed in something. I thus first discuss 'experimental' mediumship, in which groups of academic engaged in particular types of séance activities, and explored the mechanisms leading to phenomena of a mediumistic nature. Batcheldor and the Owens had some theories about their experiments, but their main focus was on the best ways to facilitate these phenomena. Thus, this chapter has attempted to understand how these experiences, intuitive and mediumistic, should be understood, first looking at some existing theories and then, finding these unsatisfactory, developing a new understanding rooted in phenomenology, psychoanalytic theory and literary theory.

To briefly recap, I first looked at some attempts to understand mediumship and the paranormal. Batcheldor and the Owen's work (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984, 1995; Batcheldor and Hunt 1966; Batcheldor and Brookes Smith 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977, Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976). Mediumship itself has attracted relatively little academic interest, at least until recently so there was a need to widen the scope. The early and continuing work of the SPR was acknowledged, but the main focus of this early section was laboratory studies, which developed out of the work by the SPR (West 2015). Various approaches were considered, and the history of such studies from Rhine onwards very briefly discussed (Rhine 1934, 1937; Rhine *et al.* 1940; Radin 2010). This section also discusses laboratory studies of the paranormal, as there are relatively few studies of mediumship specifically. The controversy surrounding interpretations of results (e.g. regarding Bem's results) perhaps indicates the extent to which this area is considered 'unscientific' and unacceptable to the wider academic population (Bem 1994, 2011, 2016). The drawbacks of this 'scientific' approach were discussed, particularly in regard to the ways in which wonder, magic and a sense of the mystical have been removed from everyday experience (Curry 2019). I discussed the extent to which this approach is characterised by a binary opposition between objectivity and subjectivity, and how this might be overcome to produce a more balanced approach.

In order to develop a more satisfactory understanding of mediumship and intuition, I turned next to philosophical approaches, particularly ones in which a clear distinction between objective and subjective is questioned. Husserl's phenomenology was discussed as a particularly important approach, not least because he has discussed an apparent crisis in the scientific approach (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960). However, Husserl's writings are particularly abstract, and I next turned to Gendlin's ideas about embodiment and intuition to set out a phenomenology which relates to embodiment, which expands ideas about the body so it becomes an arena of lived experience, not an objectified machine extending in time and space, and which offer a practical way to explore topics through looking 'inwards' and reflecting bodily (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 2006).

The discussion next moved to theories of free association (Freud 1901, 1913, 1915). The various interpretations of Freud's concept offer different amounts of 'space' for paranormality. Possibilities for understanding mediumship and intuition through a concept of telepathy in the psychoanalytic space are uncovered through a discussion of Bollas, Lothane and Barratt (Barratt 2014, 2018; Bollas 1999, 2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018). This is further elucidated as a phenomenon rooted in the body by Totton's discussion (Totton 2003, 2008, 2015). Free association thus has the ability to bring ourselves into closer relationship with the intuitive, and to paranormality. The authors warn that using free association to look deeper within the self can be a deeply disturbing process, uncovering aspects of the self that might be unacceptable or painful, and indeed Bollas suggests that attempting to avoid such painful examination may be a reason why many theorists of psychoanalysis play down free association (Barratt 2014, 2018; Bollas 1999, 2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 20015). Of course, the surrealists and other artists welcomed free association precisely because of its ability to unsettle, on the personal and on the social and political levels (Elder 2015). In terms of this thesis, free association, understood in Totton's sense as a process which reveals both the underside of the ego-self and which is rooted in intuition and mediumistic practices, becomes a tool for exploring deeper responses to academic writing beyond the referential (Totton 2003). The idea of free association as inherently telepathic also points to an inherent connectedness between people: in the intuitive and body-based states uncovered by free association, we are all linked together in an intricate, poorly understood web beyond our ego boundaries (Totton 2003).

Finally, I looked at Lecercle's theories of *délire.* Lecercle draws heavily upon Deleuze and other philosophers who talk about language, particularly Deleuze's four-fold theory of *sens*

(Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1985, 1994). Lecercle can be considered as developing a psychoanalytic theory of language, in which *délire* exposes the elements always present in language, although suppressed by the 'dominant tradition' of straightforward meanings and referentiality. Lecercle offers a way to understand how language relates to intuition and mediumship, and a practical method for understanding *délirious* texts. For Lecercle also, *délire* roots language back to the body (although Lecercle's body is a frightening and at times unpleasant place) (Lecercle 1985).

Thus, the research questions which I have above investigated through relevant literature, and will next discuss in terms of the research group investigations are:

- What is 'intuition' (understood in terms of mediumship) and what philosophical and psychoanalytical theories can be used to understand it?
- What is the role of the body and embodiment in intuition?
- What is the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language?
- How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
- How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and délire, be used to explore experiences of reading?
- What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
- What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

Chapter Four: Consideration of Feminist Approaches.

4.1 Introduction.

By its nature, a PhD is an incomplete and selective argument for a set of ideas. Important areas and perspectives are likely to be overlooked for various reasons. Some of the above discussion seems to suggest that the ways in which academia might be dominated by rationalist perspectives have been more or less entirely ignored so far. This is not, however the case. Since the 1980s some women writers have attempted to delineate a theory, as well as a practice (and a theory-as-practice) of language which suggests women's writing, and experiences, have been suppressed by masculine, rational styles which purport neutrality and objectivity, but which can be read as an act of aggression. This chapter aims to redress this lack, and consider certain feminist perspectives on language, writing and, by extension, writing within and for the academy.

This chapter does not offer a full survey of this rich area, however it does aim to acknowledge the substantial contributions made by feminist writers to the topic, particularly highlighting the ways in which selected writers – notably Cixous, Irigaray, Le Guin and Anderson – have brought attention to the ways in which the academy has historically favoured masculine approaches to reading and writing texts. These feminist writers have countered this favouritism by direct action, bringing new and radical forms of writing to academic subjects. Their experiencing, intuitive, embodied selves are frequently the currency of the new economy they introduce. These writers, as I will highlight, also bring attention to the ways in which the modern university system is experienced as oppressive and suffocating, as also reported by members of my research group.

Therefore, in the remainder of this short chapter I will look at a selected number of texts from feminist writers. This selection is, of course, limited and non-representative of the range of voices offering an alternative to the male hegemony which, arguably, has dominated academia. However, I hope to give a flavour of one approach to bringing the embodied, déliric and unconscious to hyper rational and 'neutral' worlds which aim at objectivity.

4.2 Cixous, Irigaray and Others

The rest of this short chapter will therefore look at some feminist attempts to address the issues raised by the uncovering of two sides to language, in addition to the ones discussed in the previous chapter. As examined earlier, Lecercle's (1979; 1985) attempts to understand *délire* uncovered the workings of language's dark underbelly, as exemplified in e.g. Victorian nonsense literature. However, as also briefly discussed in the previous chapters, Lecercle's discussion (1985) involved a certain distance on these texts, a distance which did not feel neutral but which seemed to ooze a sort of faint disgust, mingled with fascination, for the *déliric.* The body, although acknowledged and discussed, becomes a place of darkness: fetid, threatening, to be caged through language as if in a kind of cognitive zoo where, once imprisoned, the reasonable and neutral could stare at the messy, embodied acts of *délire*. Arguably, and as also discussed above, Bollas' (2002) approach to embrace the radicalness of free association also feels at times conscribed and fearful, at once drawn to and repelled by that mysterious thing around which it skirts.

One way of interpreting this disgust is to view it as a male disgust of women: the female body, eroticism, and embodiment. This is a point of view taken on by a number of feminist writers in the 1980s, particularly Cixous (1976) and Irigaray (1977), whose position was that writing, if not language, is gender-bound and encapsulates a cultural and social history of female suppression and male domination. Both Irigaray (1977) and particularly Cixous (1976) argued theoretically for a new form of working with words, and also produced texts which act as an example of what this call might look like in practice. For this reason, I first look at illustrative papers by Irigaray (1977) "When the Goods Get Together" and Cixous' (1976, 1986) essays "The Laugh of the Medusa" and "Sorties". Since Irigaray and Cixous, there have been many other examples of what a female-centred writing might look like: later I consider texts by Le Guin (1983) and Richardson (1997) as further examples, before moving on.

4.2.a Irigaray: When the Goods Get Together

In *When the Goods Get Together,* a discussion of the economic structures of contemporary society become a way of reading gendered relations within this society. The focus is upon trade relations, in which women are one amongst other classes of traded objects, and objects traded by men. Thus, Irigaray argues, " homosexuality is the law that regulates the socio-cultural order" (Irigaray 1976, p. 103). By contrast, heterosexuality "amounts to the assignment of roles in the economy" (page 1 of 5) - some have role of producing and exchanging subjects, others of producing goods. Sexuality is thus defined on male terms, rather than female ones. Although male homosexuality is, within the system Irigaray describes, "the very basis of the general economy" (p. 103), it is postulated as an exception. Irigaray suggests this is because the incest at the heart of homosexuality (as it draws upon father-son relationships, and does so to maintain the status quo and power relationships within society) must be kept obscure.All this pervades society in a way which cannot be undone unless by overturning the language system which underpins this. As subversive, Irigaray argues, homosexuality, particularly female homosexuality is forbidden, as it has the power to upturn existing social structures as well as commercial ones.

Within this system of trade, and following Freud's analysis, a lesbian becomes a man: "as soon as she desires (herself), as soon as she speaks (herself, to herself), the woman is a man" (Irigaray 1977, p. 104). The system is predicated upon masculinity, and as such all those who enter into the system become male players by default. This ascribes the role of a free floating signifier to homosexual women, playing various roles. This has echoes of the view of language set out by Deleuze and drawn upon by Lecercle (1979), with a blurring of the distinctions between what is real and what is fictional. For Freud, as described by Irigaray (1977, p. 104-5), the female homosexual becomes a man. But, she points out, Freud has difficulties accounting for lesbianism within his theory. Irigaray's account depicts Freud as making increasingly desperate attempts to shoehorn lesbian women into his theory. Freud she says might be operating under a kind of 'negative transference' or denied transference, by which he identified with the patient about whom he writes (a patient who "seemed absolutely indifferent to the progression of the cure" (Irigaray 1977, p. 105). Thus, female homosexuality escapes the analyst, echoing the ways in which the deepest aspects of the material revealed in free association escapes Bollas (2002). Female homosexuality exists only insofar as it is part of male fantasies. Against this, Irigaray imagines a radically different understanding. "But what if the goods refused to go to market ? What if they maintained among themselves another kind of trade ?" (Irigaray 1977, p. 107). This would mean an upturning of existing systems, with the previously unvalued assuming high worth, where exchange is intertwined with use, and where enjoyment would be free, and well-being exist without suffering. Irigaray explains this in terms of an overturn of economic and capitalist system, one in which "use and exchange would mingle… where nature would spend itself without exhaustion, trade without labor, give of itself- protected from masculine transactions – for nothing: there would be free enjoyment, well-being without suffering, pleasure without possession" (Irigaray 1977, p. 107).

The link between Irigaray's approach, as set out in this essay, with its emphasis on economic inequalities as a model for language, and my thesis lies in the idea that the imbalances Irigaray (1977) highlights can be undone only by overturning the language systems which underpin these inequalities. Irigaray thus speculates that gender relations are a function of an unequal power structure, and further speculates about what upturning this power structure might look like. Additionally, the key to overturning the existing power structures lies in that which is forbidden and misconstrued, just as Lecercle focuses upon the *déliric,* suppressed yet key to a re-thinking of language's power structures (Irigaray 1977). However, as mentioned, Lecercle's *délire* is presented ambiguously, mingling fascination with disgust. Perhaps Irigaray's approach offers a more radical embrace of the material suppressed by language?

That Irigaray's (1977) themes broadly parallel the ones in this thesis is perhaps unsurprising, as she is clearly working in the same tradition as Deleuze (1969), for example. Whitford (1986) examines her philosophical predecessors, for example tracing her deployment of the notion of the imaginary, in turn traced back to Lacan (1977a; 1977b) and Bachelard (1943), which allows her to separate out a male from a female imaginary and develop a theoretical understanding of culture as dominated by the male, rather than the female imaginary: that is, by a focus on unity, straightforward identity of self, linear development rather than an acceptance of plurality, fluidity and mutable identities (Whitford 1986). It is the female, rather than the male imaginary which reveals itself in some of the research group activities, and participants reactions to these, for example as witnessed by feedback given by participants to the free association exercise, where one person talks of becoming the witness of an imaginary journey in the space created by the text, with fluid associations wandering off in different directions at once.

This thesis does not look specifically at Bachelard's notion of the imaginary (1943) nor Lacan's associated notion of the mirror stage (1977a; 1977b) but there does seem to be some cross over between the imaginary and the notion of the intuitive developed in this thesis, and this link further supports the relevance of Irigaray's work to this thesis. Whitford (1986) further traces Irigaray's thought back to phenomenology, and particularly Sartre's (1940) phenomenology, suggesting that Sartre's discussion of the imagination and the distinct separation between perception and imagination. Irigaray, Whitford suggests (1986), has Sartre's (1940) imaginary in mind when she develops the concept. This further supports the idea that there's a commonality between Irigaray's (1977) discussion and the movements of this thesis. Interestingly, Whitford (1986) suggests that Irigaray's (1977) notion of the imaginary is more positive than that of Lacan (1977a; 1977b), who presents the imaginary in pessimistic terms, as a trap and illusion. This reminds me of the ways in which Lecercle (1985; 1994) seems both fascinated and fearfully repulsed by *délire.* Reading Irigaray, one wonders if Lecercle's ambiguity, this fascination and repulsion, is a function of a play between the genders. One further wonders if the concept of *délire* itself, which seems to be both feared and revered by Lecercle (1985, 1994), is both the product of and destroyer of Lecercle's neutrality, rationality and ultimately masculine stance on his subject.

Also interestingly, and as picked up by Whitford (1986), is that Irigaray (1977) says the female imaginary is equivalent to the parts of the mirror that are unable to reflect themselves – a part of the structure of understanding which allows a denotive form of understanding to take place, but which does not replicate this vision-based model. In my thesis I explore the idea that academic knowledge is often predicated on the visual, and in one of the research groups I explore reading using other senses apart from sight. This particular session, in which participants were asked to explore the University library and texts using hearing, touch, smell and taste, was reported to be rewarding: some participants said they had to 'tune in' to the environment, and picked up more detail than they normally noticed, allowing them to slow down. Rather than a masculine imaginary approach: directional, focused experience of looking for a particular book for a particular reason, this method allowed a female imaginary element to emerge in which it was not clear what a book might want to say, but that sense, with multiple elements, was allowed to emerge in its own time. Thus, there are clear parallels between Irigaray's theoretical position (1977) and the ones explored in this thesis.

Another way of approaching Irigaray's (1977) essay is to see it as an example of what happens when the intuitive is re-introduced into academic writing: a concrete working out of her ideas about language. Thus viewed, her essay is also relevant to this thesis. Indeed, Irigaray employs a compelling writing style. As Whitford (1986) points out, her style is both ambiguous and plural. Rather than a straightforward denotation of her meaning, Irigaray (1977) embodies a more subtle, nuanced, *difficult* way of meaning which, it could be argued, is a living example of how academic writing might breathe intuitively. Whitford (1986) suggests this is a "speaking as a woman", offering a way for the repressed feminine to erupt into writing. Whitford's (1986) gloss on Irigaray is interesting, as her interpretation of Irigaray brings out some aspects of the latter's work which have strong parallels with this thesis. For example, as Whitford (1986, p. 3) explains, this 'speaking as a woman' involves "a dialogue: the meaning … only becomes accessible in an active exchange between speaker and hearer". My thesis is not particularly concerned with understanding or explaining the meaning of texts, however one theme which emerges from the research groups is that of collaborative working, and the role the group plays in constructing a meaning re-based on intuition. One participant in research group session three commented on the collaborative exercise, saying "it shows you how you build meaning and how other people react to the same thing you're watching… sometimes you're better off working with others".

4.2.b Two Essays by Cixous

I now turn briefly to two essays by Cixous, *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1976) and *Sorties* (1976). These can be thought of as examples of writing if the need to make overt sense is questioned – perhaps overthrown – and intuition is given space to speak, as feminine modes of discourse burst through the rationalist, masculine structures of some forms of academia. It is possible to experience these texts as channelled speech transfigured into writing, and perhaps this is how they make most sense. Cixous' essays (1976; 1986) can be seen as a form of Lecerclian *délire* which interprets itself, presenting, at the same time as the visceral non-representative poetic language, the means whereby this poetry is to be understood: but a feminine form which, by challenging the predominantly masculine structures of rationalist, so-called 'objective' discourse moves beyond Lecercle's (1985, 1994) apparent ambivalence towards *délire* and becomes fully immersed in language's poetics.

Cixous' concern in *The Laugh of the Medusa* is women's writing, or *Écriture féminine* (Cixous 1976): a style of writing which is "characterised by disruptions in the text, such as gaps, silences, puns, new images and so on. It is eccentric, incomprehensible and inconsistent, and the difficulty to understand it is attributed to centuries of suppression of the female voice, which now speaks in a borrowed language" (Mambrol 2016). As such, and as pointed out immediately above, Cixous' writing (1976; 1986) both exemplifies and sets out a theory of a new form of writing which seeks to overturn the oppressiveness of other, more dominant forms of language. Cixous (1976) sees this as a radical movement, offering a break from the past, not a development out of it. "Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies-for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal" (Cixous 1976, p. 875). The link between women and the unconscious, implicit in Irigaray (1977) is explicitly brought to the surface. The philosophical key, as in Irigaray's (1977) discussion, is the imaginal: "Women's imaginary is inexhaustible, like music, painting, writing: their stream of phantasms is incredible" (Cixous 1976, p. 875). The world of women's imaginary is inextricably linked to the body "the elaboration of knowledge on the basis of a systematic experimentation with the bodily functions" (Cixous 1976, p. 875). This is, for Cixous, specifically an erotic, sexual body:

> To write. An act which will not only "realize" the decensored relation of woman to her sexuality, to her womanly being, giving her access to her native strength; it will give her back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal; it will tear her away from the superegoized structure in which she has always occupied the place reserved for the guilty (guilty of everything, guilty at every turn: for having desires, for not having any; for being frigid, for being "too hot"; for not being both at once; for being too motherly and not enough; for having children and for not having any; for nursing and for not nursing (Cixous 1976, p. 880).

Cixous' (1976; 1986) writing, as evidenced immediately above, is deliberately poetic and thus provides an example of what happens when the intuitive is allowed space within academic contexts. Cixous' (1976, 1986) approach to writing is also to some extent autobiographical and this brings about some unexpected connections with my thesis. For example, Cixous (1976) reveals her relationship with the history of what has been written. Her clear sense of inadequacy is paralleled by the participants in the research group, described in more detail in later chapters, who struggled against the oppressiveness of feeling it had all been done already, better. Cixous states: "and why don't you write? Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. I know why you haven't written. (And why I didn't write before the age of twenty-seven.) Because writing is at once too high, too great for you, it's reserved for the great-that is, for "great men"; and it's "silly""(Cixous 1976, p. 877). Indeed, all of Cixous' writing here is very direct: a call to arms as much as a reasoned philosophy. In some ways, although written a year earlier, it can be seen as an acting out of Irigaray's (1977) more measured suggestions about the ways in which culture and society are structured around the masculine. Cixous (1976) prioritises the unconscious, shown as the unacceptable and fearful other that masculine social norms seeks to imprison. The jail is a repeated metaphor for language: the unconscious is confined, incarcerated, women are brainwashed and forced into silence. The unconscious, suppressed within an all-pervasive, unwelcoming system, is conceptualised as darkness, a place where men might get lost and never emerge as cogent, coherent selves (egos). "A feminine text cannot fail to be more than subversive. It is volcanic; as it is written it brings about an upheaval of the old property crust, carrier of masculine investments; there's no other way. There's no room for her if she's not a he. If she's a her-she, it's in order to smash everything, to shatter the framework of institutions, to blow up the law, to break up the "truth" with laughter." (Cixous 1976, p. 888)

There are therefore clear parallels with the work in this thesis: most obviously in some of the data collected during the research groups. Although not the original focus of investigation, it became clear that participants in the research group shared a set of discomforts with the structures of academia, some reporting claustrophobic and painful experiences that resonate strongly with Cixous. This, appropriately, was particularly clear in the research group session dealing with embodied responses to reading. One theme that emerged in the discussion at the end of this session was how the exercises, designed to connect text with embodied experience, reminded participants of their previous struggles within academia: feelings of disconnect from the text, feelings of inadequacy as readers. One participant noted, on her body map diagram "not connecting with text. Does not understand. Wants to respect authors and engage, but totally resistant to it intellectually at the level of the heart. Heart wants to know why people have written such a dry abstract". Another participant sensitively described the impact on her body of the reading process: it was like grey paralysis, and I've written, 'I've closed down'…. So it was very hard to stay in my body – well I hadn't - I'd flown up in to my head and couldn't get it back so I got loads of statements from myself, and those were absolutely, whenever I've done academic works in my first degree, my second degree, it just took me right back there to the feelings of 'I can't do this, I don't understand, I'm the only one'..."

Cixous thus offers an understanding of what feminine writing might be – linked to poetry and the unconscious, and likened to the body: "By writing her self, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display- the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time" (Cixous 1976, p. 878) This clearly parallels some arguments in my thesis, and results from the research group, as evidenced by the quotations above. Drawing upon Gendlin (1963, 1973, 1978, 1996) I traced the ways in which the body can be understood: as an internalised, felt-from-within and experiential expansion of what counts as understanding to embrace fleeting impressions, inarticulate hints and areas considered inexpressible versus something projected, known from without and created by the gaze of others then internalised. Cixous clearly equates the body with sexuality, and sees writing as a tool to facilitate the connection of women to their bodies: "To write. An act which will not only "realize" the decensored relation of woman to her sexuality, to her womanly being, giving her access to her native strength; it will give her back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal" (Cixous 1976, p. 880). Writing, for Cixous, has a liberatory potential, a way of undermining phallocentric ego structures. Here there are some parallels with material considered in this thesis, although I understand body in slightly different, Gendlinian sense (Gendlin (1963, 1973, 1978, 1996) as not primarily a sexualised body.

4.2.c Le Guin's California as a Cold Place to Be

Le Guin's 1983 essay, *A Non-Euclidian View of California as a Cold Place to Be,* is primarily focused on ideas about utopian fiction. While its main concern is thus far removed from the interests of this thesis, there are some interesting parallels between what Le Guin (1983) says and my discussions in this thesis. In this essay, Le Guin (1983) writes interestingly about practices of reading, speaking aloud and reading, and these comments in particular have resonance for my context: "Reading is a silent collaboration of reader and writer, apart; lecturing, a noisy collaboration of lecturer and audience, together" (Le Guin 1983, p.2). Additionally, in what she says about the relationship of reading to rationality and irrationality (Le Guin 1983), there are resonances for this thesis, and I will briefly pick out these parallels in this section.

In Le Guin's (1983) essay, the concept of 'Euclidian' loosely parallels Cixous' (1976) concept of masculine dominance, approached from a Utopian perspective. Le Guin envisages a 'Gold Age' or 'Dream Time' (Le Guin 1983) which is postulated as remote, but is remote only for the point of view of hyper-rationality: "It is not accessible to Euclidean reason; but on the evidence of all myth and mysticism, and the assurance of every participatory religion, it is, to those with the gift or discipline to perceive it, right here, right now" (Le Guin 1983, p.3). This approach opens up the ideas explored in this thesis, offering a different gloss on what the world accessed by intuition looks like: for Le Guin (1983) a dreamy, golden Utopia which is essentially here, and now. It operates outside of rationally determined structures of space and time, through which the object of heart's desire is always at a spatial and temporal remove: "it is of the very essence of the rational or Jovian utopia that it is not here and not now. It is made by the reaction of will and reason against, away from, the here-and-now….It is pure structure without content; pure model; goal" (Le Guin 1983, p. 3). Le Guin's comparison between the Euclidian mind, with its obsession with the idea of regulating life by reason, and another kind of golden age can thus be seen as a parallel with this thesis' contrasting 'normal' academic discourse with that which might be possible if intuition is allowed more frequently into academic life. A belief in this kind of rational utopia also means a belief that "men can control and in major ways alter for the better their social environment" (Le Guin 1983, p. 8). But this rational utopia is also destructive: self-destructive. This might be equated with the tendency of the academic voice of reason towards criticality and analysis – breaking up to understand. For Le Guin (1983), the contested, rationalist utopia is masculine. Thus, like Irigaray (1977) and Cixous (1976), a binary separation between feminine and masculine positions is postulated.

Against this, Le Guin (1983) postulates her own, obscure rather than clear, hidden rather than radiant, dim rather than light, utopia. This alternative is rooted in Victor Turner's *communitas* (Turner 1969), as opposed to structure: "structure in society, in his terms, is cognitive, communitas existential; structure provides a model, communitas a potential; structure classifies, communitas reclassifies; structure is expressed in legal and political institutions, communitas in art and religion" (Le Guin 1983, p. 10). Communitas, in its liminality, edginess and marginality, with its ability to break up and through structure from beneath, offers a way to give depth to the notion of intuition used, and explored in this thesis. Additionally, Le Guin explicitly links it to the trickster, to the ambiguous, to the flighty and fanciful. In this light, it might not be accidental that my focus in this thesis is to suggest that intuition needs to play a part in reading, rather than explain what an intuitive reading might uncover. Such concrete terms are alien to Le Guin's (1983) communitas: rather, it's fey, shows itself by hiding, is referenced through hints and guesses rather than the direct referentiality which characterises a more rationalistic approach. As Le Guin puts it: "Perhaps the word I need is yin. Utopia has been yang. In one way or another, from Plato on, utopia has been the big yang motorcycle trip. Bright, dry, clear, strong, firm, active, aggressive, lineal, progressive, creative, expanding, advancing, and hot. Our civilization is now so intensely yang that any imagination of bettering its injustices or eluding its self-destructiveness must involve a reversal. To attain the constant, we must return, go round, go inward, go yinward" (Le Guin 1983, p.12). This clearly relates to the distinction, discussed above in Irigaray (1977) and Cixous (1976; 1986), between the prevalent masculine academy, neutral, objective and rational, and the new possibilities for more feminine academies: diverse, fluid, expressive, disruptive. This evasiveness and tricksterish quality which characterises Le Guin's (1983) communitas, offers a new way of framing the realm of the intuitive explored in this thesis.

4.2.d Lauren Richardson's Fields of Play: Poetry as method

A more contemporary example of dissident feminist voices which take a stance against dominant paradigms in Lauren Richardson. Richardson (1997) is an interesting example as she emerges from, and rebels against, some of the strictures of contemporary academia, documenting her struggles with the academic establishment whilst remaining firmly situated within the academy. In Richardson

(1997) we find a writer who has already struggled with prevalent masculine orthodoxies, and has managed to subvert the structures within which she operates. Indeed, Richardson's 1997 set of essays, *Fields of Play,* relates autobiography to the academic self. Above I have discussed how Le Guin's (1983) discussion of utopia might be a useful way to flesh out my notion of intuition in academic reading; Richardson (1977) offers another way.   Richardson (1977) starts from a position of critiquing the hegemony of the distant, critical academic voice: "academics are given the "story line" that the "I" should be suppressed in their writing, that they should accept homogenization and adopt the all-knowing, all powerful voice of the academy" (Richardson 1997, p. 2). The collection of essays considers what happens when this position is challenged. Richardson uses an autobiographical voice with a place carved out for poetry.

There are many aspects which emerge from Richardson's subtle account, which touches upon a broad range of academic experiences.   Particularly, there are numerous aspects which relate to the subjects considered in this thesis.   For example, Richardson (1977) highlights the ways in which newer disciplines can challenge the frequently unacknowledged imbalances of power within academia: "I learned that there were academics everywhere questioning the groups of their own authority, their representational practices, the boundaries of their disciplines, and the social practices within departments that reproduced unyielding authority structures" (Richardson 1997, p. 11).   She also highlights the ways in which academic experience can lead to a type of dishonesty: when asked at a conference how she was, rather than saying fine and listing projects: " I heard myself saying, "I don't know *what* I want to write about, *how* I want to write it or *who* I want to write it for." The heresy just popped out. (Richardson 1997, p. 12). Richardson's struggles relate to the struggles with academia reported by participants in the research group, particularly as expressed by CA, who commented at length on the institutional oppressions perpetrated by academic structures, which create "a context in which academic reading (and writing) has to happen in a certain way, and a way that feels restrictive, if only subliminally". CA, commenting also that she felt the oppressions present within the university structure were heavily gendered, also explained how she perceived academia, which has resonances with Richardson's sentiments: "it seems the nature of academic writing is to explain and prove before seeking to engage. Engagement (I think) comes when feeling is invoked (as in story telling), where the heart, present in the writing speaks to the heart of the reader. 'Re-including' the heart (feeling, intuition, other ways of knowing) in the academy is pretty much what we all know we're up to, but then there are always the external examiners...". Responses from this and other participants on this theme will be examined in more detail when the results are discussed in Chapter Six.

Against the repressive structures she writes about, Richardson offers a new model of academic writing, which has strong resonances for this thesis. This model emerges if we give up the idea that "our academic concepts are precise, their referents clear, and our knowledge unambiguous" (Richardson 1997, p.16) Sociological writing (her field is sociology) can be allegoric (although "the notion of sociological writing as allegorical goes contrary to received wisdom about the separation of the literary from the scientific" Richardson 1997, p. 15). Particularly, she questions the long-standing distinction between academic (associated with scientific) writing on the one hand and literary writing on the other: "literary writing has been aligned with the evocative, emotional, nonrational, subjective, metaphoric, aesthetics and ethics; science writing has been undertaken with the belief that its words were nonevocative, rational, unambiguous, accurate and correct" (Richardson 1997, p. 39). Richardson rather focuses on the ways in which all writing employs metaphorical devices, and is, therefore, inherently metaphoric. "Science does not stand in opposition to rhetoric; it uses it. And, conversely, the use of rhetoric is not irrational" (Richardson 1997, p. 40). Richardson talks about the ways in which social scientists are brought to believe that scientific language is the one most appropriate to their discipline, but I'd argue that this belief spreads to social science to other academic disciplines, and is, perhaps, at the heart of the academic context as it is often experienced: the "logic of inquiry" model that Richardson discusses (Richardson 1997, p. 40), under which the imperative is to be objective and impersonal, guided by observation and inference, and involves following a set methods with pre-established rules and set criteria for success. Richardson's idea here offers a way of framing the activities in some of the research groups: by looking specifically at the language used and what it offers up in terms of metaphor, we may be able to side step this neutrality and see the scientific language of some forms of academic discourse as a sort of poetry, by focusing on the non-referential impacts of the language (how they translate into visual images for example).

Richardson's (1997) discussions of how she presented sociological research as poetry are also particularly interesting for this thesis. Poetry becomes a method. Of course, as a social scientist, Richardson's discipline differs in key respects from the area in which I work. While we are both interested in people, my interest is in how people respond to texts. Thinking about it, I wonder if Richardson (1997) is interested in the lives of people in a way I'm not – my focus is really on how texts impact on people, and what this might mean about the way they are approached. I think this focus is slightly different, but it might be a difference in degree, rather than kind. Regardless, as part of what she does in this multi-layered text, Richardson (1997) goes some way to developing a use of poetry in research that worked as a method for her. Her starting point is her theoretical roots in symbolic interactionism, postmodernism and post-structuralism, broadly presented as the idea of challenging "all "grand theory" and all claims for a singular, correct style for organizing and presenting knowledge" (Richardson 1997, p. 13), together with the project of building "an interpretive framework that takes as its subject matter the production, distribution and consumption of cultural meanings, the analysis of texts that contain these meanings, and the connections of these meanings to the worlds of lived, interactional experience" (Richardson 1997, p.139). Using as example "Louisa May's Story of Her life", a poem which developed out of a transcript of a qualitative interview with a single mother, Richardson (1997) explains how the poem arose, and how the poem acts as "an interpretive framework that demands analysis of its own production, distribution and consumption as a cultural object and of itself *as a method* for linking lived, interactional experience to the research and writing enterprises of sociologists (Richardson 1997, p.139). Richardson's account of all this is interesting and of relevance to this thesis, so it is worth considering in some depth.

Richardson was prompted to turn transcript into poem (she interestingly describes this as being "possessed") by "head-wrestling" with postmodern understandings of what data is, how lives should be represented, and how knowledge is, and should be distributed. In this context, the poem appeared to her as a way to resolve conflict "by shaping sociological interviews into poems, rather than into prose representations" (Richardson 1997, p.140). Normally, she points out, interaction with academic texts is supported by the belief that "the purpose of the text is to convey information, as though information consists of facts or themes or notions that exist independently of the context in which they were told" (Richardson 1997, p.140). This assumption goes hand in hand with a covering over of the "lived, interactional context in which a text was co-produced" as well as the "handprint of the sociologist who produced the final written text" (Richardson 1997, p. 140). As such, for Richardson, academic texts can be built upon a series of hidden assumptions about reality and about the people the text represents. The parallels with the concerns of this thesis are clear: and Richardson's solution may offer insights about method for developing my ideas about reading, intuition and academia. Richardson's (1997) method allows context – the interview – to take centre stage – by challenging the "privileged status of the interview as "science" or "fact" (Richardson 1997, p. 141). As the poem that emerges acknowledges context, it offers a way to reflexivity on methods of production. This thesis includes, not interviews as such but transcripts of discussions with participants in the six sessions of the research group. Participants were encouraged, during sessions, immediately afterwards, and in the weeks after the sessions, to reflect on their experiences. As such, a number of group conversations were heard, the results of which were transcribed. In retrospect, it might have been interesting and illuminating to work harder to uncover the hidden assumptions that I brought to these discussions as facilitator, using some of the methods Richardson outlines. While I openly challenged privileged claims to knowledge, particularly around objectivity and fact, I perhaps failed to reflect deeply enough on the co-productive contexts of the texts I produced, in collaboration with participants.

4.3. Summary

The authors considered above certainly offer a new perspective on some of the areas considered in this thesis. As I've progressed through this discussion I've attempted to illuminate the ways in which each of them offers something new for this thesis. In particular, Cixous (1976) and Irigaray (1977) have done a great deal to overcome the patriarchal structures which existed – and perhaps still exist – at the heart of many academies and academic contexts. Cixous' work (1976, 1986), especially , can be seen as a worked example of what might come about if the separation of masculine and feminine, and suppression of the latter by the former is challenged and overturned.

Certainly, it is important to acknowledge the relevance of Cixous (1976, 1986) and Irigarary (1977) to this thesis. Both have concerns with the suppression of feminine sensitivities in the academy, and what a feminist academic language might look, and feel like. Le Guin (1983) and Richardson (1997) also offer insights into what a more intuitive approach might yield. Richardson (1997) in particular has carved out a trajectory for a different, more feminist, approach to research within the social sciences. Clearly, these writers have pioneered radically different ways of being with theory, and within the academy. With this in mind, it is important to re-contextualise this thesis with an acknowledgement of the work done by these feminist writers. In some ways, it feels as if this thesis has taken a radically different approach, to arrive at similar conclusions. My focus has been on theorists of free association, the body and *délire.* In the discussion of each of these, ways in which the authors' theories undermine their own position are examined. In this respect, I looked particularly at on Lecercle (1985, 1994), but the same also applies by extension to Gendlin (1978, 1990, 1994, 1996), and Bollas (1999, 2002). The ways in which an author's theories are undermined was explored particularly in regards to Lecercle (1985, 1994), who appears both fascinated with and repulsed by the *déliric.* Arguably, Cixous (1976) and Irigarary (1977) both posit a more holistic approach, in which the hidden, suppressed and occluded realms are allowed to breathe and speak for themselves.

This chapter has also indicated, albeit in brief, the ways in which the writers discussed are relevant to the three strands of the theory of intuition I have developed in this thesis: intuition as rooted in the body, in techniques of free association, and in an understanding of the dual aspects of language. Each of these strands can be found in the writers I have considered. Cixous (1976), indeed, explicitly links writing and the body: “Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. I know why you haven't written” (Cixous 1976, p. 876). Irigarary’s (1977, p.104) writing sometimes reads like a freely associative meditation on her subject: “Mother : phallic power; the child : never anything but a little boy; husband : man-father. Woman ? « Doesn't exist. » She borrows the disguise which she is required to assume”, and her work is a testimony to the ways in which a free associative approach can philosophise. Le Guin’s writing (1983), mingling the poetic, autobiographical and theoretical, can be an exemplar of bringing *délire* into theoretical texts. For these reasons, this chapter, although brief, introduces a necessary dimension into this thesis’s discussion.

Chapter Five: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I looked at a number of theoretical positions which can be used to understand intuition. The purpose of this was two-fold. On the one hand, I wanted to set out an understanding of intuition grounded in philosophical, phenomenological and psychoanalytical approaches which supports a study of mediumistic phenomena in a way which offers a different perspective to an entirely scientific agenda. On the other, I wanted to find a basis for some practical applications of the approaches discussed above, particularly free association, Gendlin's techniques of focusing and dipping and Lecercle's analyses based on *délire* (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003; Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006; Lecercle 1985, 1994). Thus, the literature examined in the previous chapter feeds into this methodology as a way of understanding intuition, as a theoretical support for this understanding of intuition for the processes used in the research group, and as a source of inspiration for the processes themselves.

This chapter sets out the methodology guiding the data collection element of this thesis, which is concerned with exploring people's reactions to reading in different academic contexts. I collected this data in six research groups, which took place (approximately) monthly, and which were typically attended by four to eight people. Some people attended most or all sessions, others fewer sessions. The research group used approaches inspired by different ways of working intuitively, underpinned by the theoretical discussion in Chapter Three, to investigate learning, reading, and texts. Although most of the theoretical background and techniques are drawn from this previous discussion, I also used theory and techniques inspired by other sources, for example art-related techniques, and (particularly) practices used in free association, body therapy, mediumship and/or intuition development groups.

The research groups are rooted in this theoretical background, as a context for understanding, but with a primary aim of finding answers to the final three of the research questions of this thesis. That is, the groups use the tools to pay attention to how activities of reading take place in the academy (with the understanding that there is no 'one' academy, but rather various different academies[10]), and how different approaches to acts of reading might change these experiences. The standpoint is one of exploring the conventions of the neutral, distanced, abstracted academic voice, using these tools, and looking at what might be hidden or suppressed by this voice. This is not to suggest that all writing within the academy is neutral, distanced and abstract, but rather to acknowledge that some of my experience (and, as evidenced in the feedback from participants in the group, that of others) is that academic experience can be off-puttingly dry, abstract and disconnected. The abstracts which form the starting point for the explorations in this group were chosen to represent this flavour of academic 'voice', as will be made clear later in this discussion. In this methodology I also explore some additional theoretical positions: reader response theory and auto/biographical methods in terms of what they can bring to this framing of the thesis.

5.1.a Structure of this chapter

In order to understand the rationale for arranging and carrying out the research groups, I will work sequentially through the following steps, arranged in roughly chronological order through planning to execution and data collection. I will discuss the findings and results in the next chapter.

This chapter will thus consider the following areas sequentially:

- Recap of research questions: what did I want to find out?
- The rationale: why is this important, and what purpose does it serve?
- Approach: what research philosophy and approach guided this? What models were used?
- Data collection: what happened?
- Data analysis: what was done with the data collected?
- Data interpretation: what is the wider (theoretical) context? How does this fit into

---

[10] The Cambridge Dictionary defines 'academia' as "the part of society, especially universities, that is connected with studying and thinking, or the activity or job of studying", and this broad definition with its emphasis on the university is adequate for the purposes of this thesis. This definition does, however, omit any reference to the role of reading and writing, which are central to my research, so I therefore suggest the following, amended definition of academia: 'the part of society, especially universities, connected with reading, writing, studying and thinking' (Cambridge Dictionary 2021 [online]).

my thesis?

- Conclusion (with provisional time plan)

In the following I look at these areas in more detail.

5.2 Research Questions

The main research question is:

- Is there value in using intuitive methods, in the contexts of learning, education, texts and within a particular framework of academic discourse?

The main research question generates several subsidiary questions:

- What is 'intuition' (understood in terms of mediumship) and what philosophical and psychoanalytical theories can be used to understand it?
- What is the role of the body and embodiment in intuition?
- What is the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language?
- How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
- How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and *délire,* be used to explore experiences of reading?
- What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
- What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

Chapters Two and Three explored answers to the first three questions. In the research group, having established a theoretical basis and context, I gather information to feed into answers to the final four questions. The research questions have developed as the thesis has progressed. Originally, there was a much larger emphasis on auto-biographical material, and how my personal experiences of academic work have influenced the thesis. As I developed the thesis, it became clear that I had two main focuses of interest: on the one hand on exploring philosophical and psychanalytical theories which seemed to relate to the subject areas, and, on the other, in finding out what other people's experiences of reading were, and how intuitive techniques might influence these experiences. As such, the discussion of the auto-biographical material came to play a much less important role and is now found only in the introduction. As the body of the thesis dealing with the philosophical and psychoanalytical material grew, so my interest in the original research questions, for example in the nature of reading, lessened. This is not to suggest that these topics are not important. However, in terms of this particular thesis, other topics simply seemed more relevant to focus on. Thus, the thesis process exemplified grounded theory[11], in which theory emerges through an iterative process of comparison and reappraisal (Willig 2013). While grounded theory as generally understood sees new theories emerging from comparison and reappraisal of the data, it seems also relevant as a way of understanding the approach I have used in this thesis.

5.3 Rationale: why is this important and what purpose does it serve?

There are a number of reasons why the data generated by the group is interesting. First, there are implications for our concepts of knowledge, particularly in regard to the distinction between rational and intuitive knowledge. What is it to 'know' something? How do we come to know things, and how can we be sure we know them? How are the processes of reading linked to knowing? As such, experiential insights into problems in philosophy may be generated.

Second, the results can throw light on experiences of reading within academic contexts and of academic material. Reading, although one of the main activities in academia, is sometimes done unreflexively, in the experience of the researcher. In the several years I have so far spent working on this thesis, I have, naturally, attended a number of lectures, seminars and research groups. While these rely heavily on reading in various ways, my experience is that reading as such is seldom put under any sort of reflective (or reflexive) microscope. No seminars I have attended, for example, have start with a consideration of how we read, the experiential aspects of reading, what is included and what is ignored in the process of reading, and how it leads to other outputs of thought (discussion, debate, theory). Thus, the research groups investigate experiences of reading, and reading intuitively.

---

[11] Grounded theory, first proposed by Glaser and Straus in the 1960s originated in sociology and is concerned with "how accurate facts can be obtained and how theory can thereby be more rigorously tested… " through a process of discovering theory rooted in, and emerging from, data. Being grounded in data means that theory emerges from data after the data is collected, rather than shaping expectations about the data collected (Glaser and Straus 1967, p.1)

Third, the research was originally inspired by an interest in a marginalised form of gaining knowledge (mediumship). Research into mediumship has grown recently, and new research has moved away from the perspective which predominated until 2010. Earlier perspectives were primarily concerned to explain mediumship as functions of some personal or social deficit (for example Royalty 1995; Smith et al 1998; Persinger 2001). New research takes a more open, sometimes phenomenological perspective in which experiences of mediumship are examined for their own sake, accepting the experiences they study (for example Roxburgh and Roe 2014; Rock *et al.* 2014, but see Chapter Two for more details). Institutions like the Institute of Noetic Studies (IONS) and the Windbridge Research Centre seem to have started to bridge the gap between academic approaches and mediumship. However, there is a need for further research, and particularly into research which investigates the theoretical underpinnings of mediumship and intuition, where intuitive techniques are applied in new contexts, and where the possible application of these techniques is discussed in relationship to research methods and transformative learning. This will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis.

Fourth, it is hoped that the research, by drawing upon techniques designed to enhance processes of intuition and insight, might offer new approaches to qualitative research. It is envisaged that the research will amalgamate some existing practices in research, particularly transformative and intuitive approaches (Anderson 2001, 2002, 2003; Anderson and Braud 2011), and synthesise these with upon concepts of research within the arts, particularly practice-based research and research using collaborative and participatory frameworks (Bishop 2006, 2012; Storni *et al.* 2014). Candy (2006, p.2) defines practice based research as “research that takes the nature of practice as its central focus”, pointing out that it is not limited to artists, designers or curators, and also underlining that it “has given rise to new concepts and methods in the generation of original knowledge” (Candy 2006, p.2). Correspondingly, the research will situate itself reflexively as a form of practice-based research.

Finally, I want to make clear that the main rationale is *not* to 'test' psychic skills. That is, the aim is not to carry out quasi-scientific experiments that attempt to verify blind readings against an objective, material reality. This is not to say any results which seem to suggest that participants can use apparently psychic skills to, for example, read a hidden text superficially accurately would not be interesting. They certainly would, however the main focus of the groups is elsewhere.

5.4 Research paradigm, research approach, models of practice

This section is concerned with the theoretical parameters within which the study is situated. It covers philosophical underpinnings of the research, decisions about the relative merits of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and different models of practice. This is distinct from the theoretical discussion in Chapter Three, which looked at different ways to understand intuition. The brief discussion in this section rather looks at the philosophical position in terms of the research activities carried out in the research groups.

5.4.a Research paradigm

Research can be broadly categorised in terms of three main paradigms, positivist, post-positivist and interpretivist (Baume and Popovic 2016). Each approach assumes a certain ontology and epistemology. Positivist research is associated with the scientific method, the idea that reality is objective of human experience, and the belief that knowledge is sharable and also objective. Post-positivist research (sometimes known as critical realism) aims to adhere to the general insights of positivism, but also holds that knowledge is always filtered through human subjectivity and is therefore at best partial and incomplete. We can strive to know objective reality, under post-positivism, but can never fully do so (Grix 2010). By contrast, interpretivist paradigms assume that the world is complex and dependent upon meanings generated by people (Denscombe 2009). Hence, it is associated with attempts to understand the world through the eyes of people involved in projects which are interesting to them. This approach is also usually associated with qualitative methodologies (Markula and Silk 2000). Interpretivism underscores the importance of subjectivities (Markula and Silk 2000).

The empirical part of this study assumes an interpretivist paradigm, as it starts with, and is centred upon, the experiences of group members. However, the interpretivism is tempered by Husserlian phenomenology, as well as other theories explored in Chapter Three, above (see, for example, Husserl 1960 for a succinct summary of the type of phenomenological approach this thesis is rooted in). Further details have been given in Chapter Three, but it is worth noting that in research, phenomenology has sometimes been thought to be concerned with the subjective at the expense of objectivity. As Barkway states, the phenomenological research method "is interested in understanding the human (or lived) experience of a particular phenomenon" (Barkway 2013, p.135). Phenomenology as a research method has therefore been criticised for "attempts to draw objective conclusions from subjective data" (Barkway 2013, p. 135). However, it is possible to distinguish the approach of *philosophical* phenomenology, which aims instead to dissolve the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity. Philosophical phenomenology starts with experience as given, and understands it as made up of a subjective and objective component united through intentionality (Moran 2002). As Spiegelberg points out "In this sense all objective experience is really intersubjective experience, i.e., a selection from subjective experiences... all phenomenology as a study of the phenomena is subjective in the sense that its objects are subject-related, but not in the sense that it makes them completely subject-dependent" (Spiegelberg 2012, p. 78) . As such, it offers a powerful justification for research grounded in experience. A phenomenological approach need not necessarily be solely subjective, despite starting with experience as given to the subject. Therefore, the current study is guided by phenomenology as philosophical inquiry (Husserl 1960) rather than by phenomenology as it is sometimes currently used as a research method (Barkway 2013).

Phenomenological inquiry originates in Brentano’s concept of intentionality (Brentano 1874) and Husserl’s subsequent development of this into a philosophical system and method (Husserl 1900, 1913, 1936, 1960), and is a non-causal method that relies on description to enhance understanding of human experiences. Brentano characterised experience as inherently intentional - directed (about) an object (Brentano 1874) - and Husserl refined Brentano's method, introducing the concepts of bracketing and the phenomenological reduction (Husserl 1900, 1913, 1936, 1960; Parse 2001). Bracketing can be seen as a process of setting aside personal bias and "dwelling with descriptions of the phenomenon until pure meaning surfaces" (Parse 2001, p.77), however this raises a number of questions, as this interpretation is less philosophically radical and sees bracketing as primarily a tool concerned with eradicating the personal from an experience. Bracketing and the phenomenological reduction are perhaps more usefully conceptualised as a means of radically uncovering the area to be investigated (experiential contents as they are given, and what they are about) (Berg 2015). Bracketing is thus rather a process of suspending belief in the external existence of objects as they appear in (for example) perception, and suspension of any ontological assumptions about their nature. In the phenomenological method "the *suspension* and *bracketing* (via *epoch*é) is a device which allows Husserl to account for the "immediately given" (i.e., *hyletic* or sensile) content and the intentional or *noetic*" (Berg 2015, p. 48, italics in original). The phenomenological *epoch*é (reduction) was introduced by Husserl in 1913 in Ideas, although its roots can be found in the earlier Logical Investigations (1900). In his introduction to phenomenology, the *Cartesian Meditations,* Husserl explains *epoch*é as something which reveals both consciousness and the world, and underlies any understanding of the relationship of each, and by extension the nature of subjectivity and objectivity: "the *epoch*é can also be said to be the radical and universal method by which I apprehend myself purely: as Ego, and with my own pure conscious life, in and by which the entire objective world exists for me and is precisely as it is for me" (Husserl 1960, p. 21).

As explained by Beyer (2020), if we start, as Husserl does, from a first person perspective, one has no means of ascertaining whether the perceptions one examines are veridical (truthfully relate to a world beyond the perception) or not. Thus, Husserl (1913) suggests that a properly phenomenological description should ‘bracket’ assumptions about the reality (or not) of the objects of the perception (or other experience) being described. This bracketing leads to the ‘reduction’ of ontological postulations about reality. Thus, the ontological status of any perceived objects is subject to a ‘reduction’ through the process of bracketing. Reduction, through bracketing, also involves a rejection of the *natural attitude*: the attitude assumed by the natural sciences that there exists a world outside the perceiver or experiencer, within which experiences and activities occur. Husserl in fact separates two types of reduction, local and global (Beyer 2020), but further exploration of this distinction is outside the scope of this thesis. By bracketing the assumption of the natural attitude, it is possible to attend not to the nature of things in the world, but to how they appear in (as given to) consciousness. In such a modified way of being in the world, perhaps comparable to the results of meditation, various types of experience can be studied simply as they appear, i.e. phenomenologically Husserl 1960). All assumptions about the natural world - assumptions about physics, neurology, science - are suspended. This is not an Idealist process of reducing the material world to ideas, but of putting questions of realism and idealism to one side, to better understand how the world is experienced (Woodruff Smith 2013). As Husserl explains: "the being of the world, by reason of the evidence of natural experience, must not longer be for us an obvious matter of fact; it too must be for us, henceforth, only an acceptance-phenomenon (Husserl 1960, p. 18).

Phenomenology as a method of philosophical inquiry rather than a research method, then, involves a suspension of belief about the ontologies of the entities given in experience, in order to study them more appropriately: indeed Husserl talks about the need to set aside the “universal “prejudice” of world-experience, which hiddenly pervades all naturalness (the belief in the world, which pervades naturalness thoroughly and continuously)" (Husserl 1960 pp. 36-37). It thus seems to offer a way to side-step criticisms about phenomenological research methods as generally understood, particularly that they are over-subjective and the results of such methods cannot be generalised (for example Barkway 2013). Additionally, because phenomenological inquiry involves looking at what is given to consciousness, there is no constraint that what is examined using this method is restricted to logical, rational and verbal thought processes. Phenomenological inquiry would seem to offer a way to investigate other processes including bodily and felt ones. Finally, phenomenology as method is closely linked to approaches which embrace bodily and other non-cognitive experiences. Merleau-Ponty, for example (1945) was concerned with the phenomenology of perception and lived experience, and Gendlin (1963; 1973; 1978) is clearly in the tradition of phenomenological and embodied approaches.

5.4.b Research approach

The data gathering part of this study draws upon a range of qualitative methods, as the research is concerned with exploring the rich detail of individuals' experience. At the same time, the study to some extent operates at the limits of qualitative research. Typically, qualitative research aims to express the details of participants' experience as text (with text understood in a wide sense as symbols designed to communicate meaning), drawing upon theories of semiotics, post-structuralism to explore the multiple meanings of texts (Willis 2008). In this research, non-textual elements (for example drawings, diagrams) generated by activities also played a role. Hence, while the literature review above is the primary source of the methods used to analyse the productions from the research groups, the interpretation of materials will also be informed by theories from the arts, particularly the theorisation of practice as research. Because the research groups are, to a certain extent, collaborative and participative, considerations relating to participative working, particularly in an art context (for example Bishop 2006, 2012; Storni *et al.* 2014) will be relevant, as will theories of arts-informed research (for example Knowles and Cole 2008) and a/r/tography (Springgay 2008) a/r/tography is an approach to arts-based research which emphasises the multiple identities (artist, researcher, teacher) involved in such research, focusing on lived processes and arts practice as a form of research with a strong reflexive and recursive element, and emphasising the relational, participative and embodied. As such, it provides a backdrop for the discussions in the next chapter. Another framework which informs this study is that of auto/biographical methods. In the introduction I discussed the ways in which my personal experiences of academic contexts have fed into the development of this thesis. In this section I further explore the role of auto/biography and my perspectives, but from a methodological perspective. It should be acknowledged that when I started writing I planned to integrate rather more auto/biographical material than I did, however regardless of the quantity of auto/biographical material that exists in the final version of this thesis it is useful to discuss the role of auto/biography in methodology, as it remains one of my starting points. Certainly, this thesis would not have been written at all if I had no personal drive to explore the themes which underpin it, and to see if other people's responses to academic reading chimed with my own. This starting point also informed the development of new methods to approach reading which I carried out for the thesis: it was as if, having acknowledged the various discomforts I felt, and feel, around reading, I wondered what might be changed to make things better, and whether any changes would make things better for other people as well. Thus the auto/biographical perspective remains important in this thesis.

5.4.c Models of practice

As well as the broad theoretical perspectives which will inform this research, the project also drew upon particular models of practice. The research groups included reflexive feedback from participants, for example looking at what they experienced during the process, how they theorise these experiences, and how they feel about what they experienced. It drew upon ideas from participants regarding the shape of the group, what the group might do in the future, and how the group could develop. As such, there is a need to be aware of models of reflective and reflexive practice and of group development.

In terms of incorporating reflexively into the research, a number of theoretical models might be used. Kolb, for example, proposes a four-part learning cycle based on reflection on experience (Kolb 2014). Other widely used models have been proposed by Gibbs (1988) and Boud *et al.* (1985). However, although widely practiced, these models are not necessarily the most appropriate for the context. Therefore, models of reflective practice developed for arts contexts are also drawn upon. A model of reflection derived for arts practitioners is useful. For example, Liz Lerman has developed a model called the 'Critical Response Process' (CRP) (Lerman and Borstel 2003). This is a 4-step process which aims to facilitate the artist bringing work to the process to engage more fully with the work (and want to do more). The process focuses upon developing more meaningful work, and more meaningful dialogues about work (Lerman and Borstel 2003). This model was drawn upon, adapted to the research situation, in order to facilitate useful feedback on research activities during the research group sessions.

The stages of the CRP are as follows, adapted to the proposed context (references to the ‘artist’ are substituted with ‘researcher’, and references to ‘viewers’ with ‘participants’).

> **1. Affirmation and Observation** – observers give feedback about the meaning the activity has for them, covering as wide a spectrum as possible. The focus is on the meaning of the activity.
> **2. Researcher Questions Participants** – the researcher asks the participants questions about the activity, paying attention to detail and dismissing nothing as insignificant.
> **3. Participants Question Researcher** – the participants ask non-judgemental questions about the activity. The aim is to help the researcher obtain a more distanced and analytical perspective on the activities.
> **4. Criticisms and Opinions** – this stage gathers negative responses to the activity, with the permission of the researcher. Criticisms should be expressed positively, with suggestions for improvement. (Lerman and Borstel 2003)

For my purposes, the CRP model offered a structured way for the researcher to gain insights into participants’ experiences of the work. It has advantages, for example it is designed for the very plastic, fluid entities which are artistic works-in-progress. It is also adaptable: as stated it makes no real allowance for letting participants give theoretical feedback, but it can easily be altered to do so. On the other hand, it was not, as it stands, entirely suited for the proposed research group. One of the aims stated for the CRP is that participants giving feedback are discouraged from bringing agendas to the work which are not relevant (Lerman and Borstel 2003). While this is a good way of ensuring participants do not bring, for example, a narrow perspective to the research group, in the current study new agendas were made welcome. Because the research groups are concerned with involving others in the shape and content of the research, the CRP fed into, but did not entirely shape the process whereby reflection was facilitated for research group participants.

Revising this chapter after the research groups were completed (the first draft was written before the groups happened) I see that I expected to use the CRP more than I in fact did. I was expecting a much higher proportion of visual material than turned out to be the case. In fact, the material which was generated by the processes was predominantly text-based, and the more visual material which did emerge seemed to offer less in terms of analysis. Despite this, I feel this method is a useful one for working with groups and collating feedback on research material, and the parameters of the method certainly fed into practice.

In summary, the proposed group assumes an interpretivist / phenomenological paradigm, and draws upon a range of qualitative approaches. As a reflexive process, it is also shaped by appropriate models of practice.

5.4.d Reader response theory

There is, of course, as explored immediately above, a difference between what I intended to do in terms of methods, and what I actually did. But there is also a distinction to be made between what I understood myself as doing and additional ways in which this could be framed. In particular, reader response theories have emerged as a suitable way to frame the methods used in the empirical elements of this thesis. Reader response theory is a way of looking at texts in terms of how readers respond to them, rather than focusing on the meaning or value they have as isolated entities. The role of the reader is highlighted, and particularly the reader as situated at a particular cultural and social location (Browne et al. 2021)

Reader response theory (RRT), which I will explore in more detail in this section, clearly offers a useful antidote to theories of literature which e.g. focus on the text as an entity separate from any reader's experience of it. There are also synergies between RRT and the methods I use in the research group: both, for instance, are predicated on the central role played by what is going on for the reader, rather than in the texts they are reading. At the same time, there are some differences between my approach and the approaches of different versions of RRT. In the following, I will first set out a brief overview of the key elements of RRT. As I do this, I will discuss the ways in which RRT is useful to this thesis' methodology, and will acknowledge any key differences between RRT as an approach and the methods used in this thesis.

There are many aspects to RRT and in this short section I cannot attempt to cover them all. My aim is to explain something of the overall approach of RRT, and to pick out some of the nuances and different interpretations which seem particularly relevant to this thesis. The following will, therefore, only offer a brief summary of key writers, and will focus on the aspects of RRT which seem particularly useful. In this respect, it is also important to understand something of the wider context within which RRT emerged.

Reader response theory emerged as a reaction against other ways of understanding texts, particularly the New Criticism and Formalist perspectives, which saw a text as complete in itself, containing all the ingredients needed to understand it. New Criticism assumed what Waugh (2006) calls a "bounded text" (page 174), a text the meaning of which could be determined by considering the text alone. During the 1950s and 1960s, this position was challenged by reader response theorists, who brought a new focus to the relationship of reader and text, rather than assuming an essentially passive reader. RRT thus brought new aspects of reading to the fore: the text as temporal, as sequential, the relationship between text and reader, the location and production of meaning. This characteristic of RRT is important to the methods used in my thesis. My focus in the research groups is on the impact academic texts have on the reader, particularly the embodied, emotional and unconscious impacts, rather than the overt sense of the texts. In my research, as for the reader response theorist, the focus is on how the texts impact on the reader, rather than the text as a stand-alone meaningful unit. There is, however a key difference: for RRT the main interest is in how meanings of texts are understood (in terms of the reader). My main focus in this study is on how readers respond to the texts they read. I stop short of suggesting their responses form a part, or all, of the meaning of these texts. This is not to suggest that how meanings are constructed through reader response is irrelevant or without interest, rather it is an acknowledgement that this area is so complex and rich it would take another, different, thesis to investigate. I also feel that investigation of the construction of meaning has, perhaps, been more thoroughly investigated than an investigation of the impacts – emotional or otherwise – of the texts on the reader(s).

The pioneer of RRT was Louise Rosenblatt, who set out the key elements of reader response theory in 1938. She placed new focus on the reader’s role in reading, particularly on how the reader drew upon their past experiences to foster understanding of what they were reading. Reading, for Rosenblatt, is an event, in which the reader plays a central part (Rosenblatt 1938). Rosenblatt saw the function of her work as wider than reading: at the start of her 1938 work she explains that her aim is "to demonstrate that the study of literature can have a very real, and even central, relation to the points of growth in the social and cultural life of a democracy" (p. v). Rosenblatt’s focus was on the experiences of students and the impact literature has on their cultural and social development. She attempts to refocus literary criticism as "a branch of social history" which "recounts the social activities on man in one special realm". Without this recognition, she suggests, the study of literature will be sterile (1938, p.297). These ideas relates to the work I do in this thesis, where I attempt to broaden our understanding of the impact of reading academic texts to include understanding the range of embodied and intuitive impacts the reader experiences. While my interest is, perhaps, on personal and emotional growth, rather than social growth, there are clear parallels.

Other key RRT theorists who developed these ideas and gave them a more structured theoretical basis include Iser (1993), Holland (1968), Fish (1980) and Bleich (1975; 1978). Iser (1993) formulates the concept of a text's 'indeterminacy', that is, the way in which texts are not limited to one meaning, uncovered by the reader in interpretation. For Iser, the process of reading consists of "the reader's transformation of signals sent out by the text" (Iser 1993, p.4). Meanings in literature are "generated in the act of reading; they are the product of a complex interaction between text and reader" (p. 5). Iser took a phenomenological approach, as did other reader response theorists, being heavily influenced by the writer Roman Ingarden, who used Husserl’s notion of intentionality and the poles of consciousness to understand works of literature. Iser also emphasises the temporal aspects of reading (that the text takes time to unfold): reading becomes something of a hermeneutic process (Iser 1974), as well as one characterised by indeterminacy: the text is indeterminate yet made concrete in particular reader readings. Iser’s (1993) formulation of RRT is particularly relevant for my thesis, perhaps because of the roots of his discussions in phenomenology, which has also provided the part of the theoretical underpinning of my work. Iser’s (1993) approach emphasises relationship as a hermeneutical unfolding, which is complex, many layered and unfolds over time. Although

I do not explicitly use hermeneutics as a way of framing my research, it is present in the background. The research groups' generation of material depended on a growing trust between participants which emerged over time; reflection was built into the research processes by e.g. asking participants to mull over their experiences in the following weeks and report back; the academic texts used were treated as indeterminate and open ended.

Reader response theorists differed in several respects. Stanley, for example, had a more radical position than Iser: "the reader's response is not to the meaning, it is the meaning" (Fish 1980, p.3). For Fish, additionally, the focus is not particularly on the reader as individual: he suggests that institutional contexts as much as personal responses shape reader experiences of a text (Fish 1980). Fish developed a notion of 'interpretive communities', contexts wider than the individual which shape the responses of individual readers. Reading, for Fish, is determined by the way the reader looks at the text and the wider world. The reader's interpretations surround the text and form the context in which the text is interpreted. The reader might not be particularly aware of these interpretations: they surround the decisions made by the reader about the text, rather than functioning as tools the reader picks up and uses. Fish's notion of interpretive communities has resonance for this thesis, in terms of both theoretical and empirical aspects. In terms of the first, my concern has been to develop a working concept of intuition, in which I draw upon Totton's (2003) concept of embodied experience as essentially telepathic. While Fish is by no means suggesting a telepathic community, my concept of intuition is one in which acknowledging the full experiences of texts means acknowledging the wider contexts and the roles played by community. In practice, the research groups explore reading through a community of participants: a rapport was developed through working together over the months, and the relationships between individuals fed into some of the experiences of reading intuitively.

David Bleich's (1975; 1978) 'Subjective Reader Response' also has particular resonance for this thesis, particularly his interest in readers' emotional responses to texts, and how these translate into meaning. Like Rosenblatt (1938), Bleich's theories are rooted in his experiences of students' reading: Bleich is sensitive to how teaching feels. There has been, for Bleich, an over-emphasis on getting students to understand, rather than enjoy their experiences: "we are ... trained to expect that only in rare instances will students come to "enjoy what we are teaching" (Bleich 1975, p. 1). Bleich also foregrounds the extent to which emotional aspects can be suppressed from consciousness, which is directly relevant for this thesis: "if we abandon this routine, however, and allow ourselves to take more seriously our intuitions regarding the classroom situation - conceiving the class as a group of people with differing feelings, perceptions and motives... - then we are forced to take into consideration how feelings and knowledge interact" (Bleich 1975, p. 2). Bleich sets out different techniques for making emotional responses more explicit, including the use of association and anecdotal material (Bleich 1975, pp. 11-19). As such, Bleich's approach has particularly resonances for the methods used in this thesis. Although I did not draw directly on his insights, nor use the practical methods he suggests, there are clear parallels between his emphasis on the student's emotional responses and my approach, and his methods could have been useful to incorporate into the research groups. Holland's (1968) psychological version of reader response theory (e.g. 1968) can be seen as an extension of Bleich's position.

As is clear from the brief survey, although the concern of reader response theory is primarily the literary text, there are some useful parallels with the interests of this thesis. While some theorists, particularly Holland (1968) and Bleich (1975; 1978) seem more useful than others for the purposes of this thesis, as they focus on the neglected emotional responses to texts, all the writers considered above emphasise the role of the reader in constituting meaning. By acknowledging this role, and underlining that the text cannot be considered a 'stand alone' object distinct from reader responses, the varieties of RRT can be seen as a support of my project. My purpose in this thesis is not to examine what the academic texts mean, nor to make any suggestions about how this meaning is constituted, but rather to look at the impact of texts on the reader as a way of understanding academic ennui and disaffiliation, and to wonder how a richer relationship might be established. For this reason, Reader response theory's theoretical relationship to the current thesis is covert, rather than overt.

However, as a set of tools and approaches to work with texts, RRT is invaluable, both in terms of looking forward to future studies after this one, where the detailed discussions of

Holland (1968) for example could be used as a methodological toolkit, and as a way of retrospectively understanding how the analyses of the transcripts of the research session were carried out. In reading these transcripts, I focused on readers' responses to texts, rather than on the texts themselves. I became caught up in the emotional and other processes that readers brought to the texts. The reader response theorists' work allowed this as a possibility, and their role should be acknowledged. Reader response theory also focuses on the role of intersubjectivity in constituting meaning, and thus feeds into understandings of the material from the research groups which was created collaboratively.

5.4.e Auto/biographical methods in research

Another theoretical framework which has influenced this thesis is the set of research methods loosely referred to as 'auto/biographical'. This short section fleshes out some of the concerns of this method, and discusses their relevance to this thesis. Although my use of autobiographical material in the final version of the thesis is less than I had originally envisaged, it is useful to understand something of the different theoretical approaches to autobiographical material. In particular, Auto/biography, which emphasises the narratives of personal lives but in a way which teases out their connection with wider theoretical issues, is particularly relevant to this thesis.

Autobiographical research acknowledges that the subjects which interest us as researchers are often linked to our personal interests and histories. This acknowledgement goes hand in hand with bringing other processes, sometimes an unspoken part of the research process, to the surface: relationships, power and the unconscious. As Merrill and West (2018, p. 768) put it, "we cannot divorce our experiences from the understanding of the lives of others". The term 'auto/biographic' research was first introduced by the feminist theorist Liz Stanley (1992). For Stanley, the auto/biographic understands research in the context of the symbiotic relationship between researcher (and her biography) and subject (and her biography). As Merrill and West put it (2018, p. 768), "in writing the stories of others we are also reflecting upon our own histories, social and cultural backgrounds as well as values and subjectivities". In the following I use the term 'autobiographical' and 'autobiography' to include both auto/biographical and autobiographical approaches.

Merrill and West (2018, p.765) define autobiographical research as requiring an autobiographical imagination, which “involves reflexively situating the researcher and her influence, via power, unconscious processes and writing, into the text and by acknowledging the co-construction of stories” Autobiographical research in this sense grew out of narrative and biographical approaches in qualitative methods. It relates to an interest, starting in the 1950s, in oral history, and is influenced by various forms of feminism, as well as theoretical and philosophical perspectives associated with post-modernism and the overturn of some notions of objectivity in research. Biographical methods became more widely accepted from the late 1980s onwards, with a recognition of the importance of both subjective perspectives and cultural contexts, and a dissatisfaction with claims to objectivity. Researchers started to question the predominance of quantitative methods and data collection as the best approach to deal with areas of human interest (Merrill and West 2018). Autobiographical methods thus developed out of a turn to narrative research and the development of narrative methods within qualitative research (Lapadat 2009). Seen in this context, autobiographical research explores subjects as a particular kind of narrative, one that takes into account the life histories of subject and researcher. As Lapadat (2009, p. 959) explains “autobiographical narratives are complicated by the context of their telling—for whom or with whom the story is being constructed, the time and situation of the telling, and the purpose of the telling”.

Auto/biographical approaches thus allow for even higher levels of personal meaning by recognising the positions that a researcher brings to her subject, and by allowing a wider framing. By opening up a wider perspective than one which strives to be ‘objective’ and by extracting a core of meaning from the personal contexts which surround it, so the researcher can be more closely integrated with his or her subject. This is both an acknowledgement that the area researched, as described by research subjects, is intrinsically interwoven with these subjects’ lives and cannot be extracted from them, but also an acknowledgement that the researcher, and the complexity of her own interests, cannot be removed from the process of understanding. Thus, through a double-aspected process, “what is produced is not a factual truth but a narrative truth, meaningful to the individual in terms of experience, understanding of the world and of possibilities within it” (Reid and West 2011). Additionally, through a focus on stories (the story of the respondent, the story of the interviewer) auto/biographical methods also link to narrative approaches. This link to narrative has been useful in research within certain communities of practice e.g. the caring and therapeutic professions, where it is particularly important to recognise the meanings that individuals have brought to their professional lives, and how they are contextualised by their biographies (understood in the wider social and cultural contexts) (Reid and West 2011; Lapadat 2009)

In research, then, auto/biographical research does not mean that the researcher is more important than other research participants. In interview situations, for example "emphasis is… given to attentiveness and respectfulness and to taking time to build trust and mutual understanding, and to the importance of managing and containing anxieties, especially when working with unconfident people or difficult material" (West, 2014, p. 171). Thus auto/biographical research is not at all about focus on the interviewing self and what is revealed, or what transformations are undergone at the expense of the other, it is rather about bringing a new perspective to the other, through acknowledging researcher perspectives and the history one brings to the research. That is, autobiographical research methods are always situated within a nuanced understanding of the individual as an actor within cultural, social and political contexts. This method allows a space for social justice as much as the personal and spiritual, with autobiographical methods often used to investigate areas of inequality, social purpose, exclusion and agency (Merrill and West 2018).

At the same time, auto/biographical allows a new respect for emotions, and a new "focus on the emotional qualities of the interaction between researcher and his or her subject as part of making sense of narrative material" (West 2014, p. 171). This process can be understood as a complex cycle in which researchers "cycle through sequences of oral and written interaction to express, witness, understand and ultimately act on their own and others' autobiographic narratives. Through a recursive dialectic of collectively gazing inward and then outward, the aim is that we… will not only reach deeper understanding of ourselves, but will also attain a vantage point for interpreting and influencing culture" (Lapadat 2009. p.958).

As such, with a dual focus on the self and research subject, this method is particularly important for the work done in this thesis, concerned as it is with first acknowledging and subsequently exploring the emotional contexts and resonances of participants' responses to academic reading. My starting point was a dissatisfaction with academia as I experienced it. As will become apparent in subsequent chapters, this dissatisfaction was shared by others, who struggled with academic reading in different and similar ways. But this starting point has become an exploration of the assumptions made within some practices of reading, and a further exploration of what might be the wider (social, cultural) implications of exploring new ways of reading.

It's important to recognise, despite the attempt above at an overview and definition, that the term autobiographical, applied to research, does not imply one set of approaches. Rather, as West (2014) points out, there are a range of approaches linked by a set of common themes, but also covering considerable differences. Autobiographical methods are thus theoretically eclectic. As well as the influences and contexts noted above, other perspectives integrated include symbolic interactionism, psychoanalysis and the German Interpretive tradition (Merrill and West 2018). Its spread is wide, covering sociology, areas of psychology, education and nursing. At the same time as being influential in a range of research contexts, other perspectives overshadow this approach, for example "the currently dominant discourse of neuroscience [which] tends to obliterate the human subject" (Merrill and West 2018, p. 767). The set of methods which make up autobiographical research have been criticised, particularly for an over-focus on individuality, too much interest in detail, and a consequent eradication of the 'bigger picture' (Merrill and West 2018).

As an approach, autobiography as method has strong links with autoethnography. Both seek "to describe and systematically analyse (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (Ellis et al. 2011. P.1). Both approaches challenge established methods of researching, and particularly how self and other are represented in research. Both treat "research as a political, socially-just and socially conscious act" (Ellis et al. 2011, p.1). Both are rooted in a crisis of confidence about research methods which grew out of postmodernism in the 1980s, as notions of established truth were questioned and through which new understandings of the complexities of the relationship between fact and fiction emerged. Some of the underpinnings that led to the revolution in research methods described by Ellis et al. (2011) have already been investigated in the literature review of this thesis.

Wilma Fraser's (2013) use of autoethnography is therefore also useful for this thesis. In this text, she defines and refines a methodology for working with biographical material. Discussing the difference between methods – techniques or processes – and methodology – thinking about the theoretical foundations of one's enquiry – Fraser argues that her process combines both. She embraces autoethnography, and by extension autobiographical approaches to research, offering both research techniques to use and ways to think theoretically about the material. Her explanation of the elements making up autoethographies is also helpful here. She suggests the elements of an autoenthnography consist of identifying a meaningful experience, developing an iterative relationship with one's research on the one hand and one's personal experiences on the other, using creative methods to transform the experience, demonstrating rather than explaining, embracing synchronicities, and taking account of the personal growth that the method facilitates. Fraser's (2013) short explanation of the concept in terms of its constituent parts is useful to understand the methods of this thesis, in which I draw upon autobiographical experiences and interrogate them reflectively; use creative methods to move beyond these experiences (and draw in the experiences of others); change through the process; and make space for the work to show.

The above attempts a brief overview of autobiographic approaches. The salient features of this way of doing research are, to summarise: a key role for narrative; a reiteration of the importance of personal experience and motivation; a linking of the role of researcher and subject; an emphasis of the importance of emotions; a move away from a dogmatic objectivity and a consequent turn towards stories sometimes described as subjective. It is hopefully clear why this set of approaches is important in this thesis. The thesis arose because of my personal experiences with academic processes, and throughout I have tried to weave elements of my narrative into the discussion. But my concern is not with my experiences in and for themselves, but as experiences which draw the reader out into wider theoretical understandings. Additionally, the thesis is centred around emotion in experiences of academia, and in understandings of academia. Finally, I also try to incorporate autobiographical principles into the collection and analysis of data in the research groups, allowing participants stories to unfold in their own time, and (hopefully) letting participants speak on their own terms about their experiences.

5.5 Design of research groups

This section turns away from looking at the theoretical underpinnings of method and deals with all aspects of how the outputs from the research group were collected (I call this ‘data collection’, with an acknowledgement that this might not be the most appropriate term). The groups generated a range of different outputs: predominantly text, but also spoken reflections and collages and other artworks. The section covers instrument design, sampling, and other aspects. Again, these terms are drawn from a quantitative model of research (though one also used by qualitative studies) and are used as a kind of shorthand to help explain the process, with the proviso that the terms are, to some extent, inadequate and partial.

The ‘instrument’ for data collection is the research group. A group of between five and eight people, with a background in research and academia and an interest in intuition, mediumship, research and research methods, met regularly (once a month, over a period of 6 months) to take part in exercises designed to explore certain academic practices (reading, writing) through techniques based upon exercises drawn from the theoretical discussion of intuition above and / or practiced in psychic development circles. One technique was psychometry, or the blind reading of objects. Techniques were also drawn from, for example, concepts of free association, Gendlin’s techniques of focusing, dipping and the felt sense (Gendlin 1978; 1996), and ideas generated by George and Iris Owen, in their creation of a fictional spirit entity, Philip (Owen and Sparrow 1976), and from my experience of taking part in a mediumship development group. Fuller descriptions of the techniques are given in Chapters Five and Six.

The design of research group activities was also informed by performative and body-based exercises, for example Boal's theatre techniques (Boal 1992m 1995). Reading, within an academic context, such as in a library, is often associated with a fairly narrow range of physical possibilities. Although these are not overtly proscribed or obviously rule-bound, readers typically do not explore all the physical options open to them as embodied readers. By drawing on exercises from experiential methodologies, as well as Gendlin's approaches (1978, 1996) the hope was that new insights into the physical experiences of reading, and the role played by embodiment would be generated. For the actor, physical training through, for example, theatre games "is a process leading to creative freedom.... the actor needs to be sensitive throughout the body, constantly in contact with every inch of it" (Callery, 2015, p.55). Thus, new bodily sensitivities are encouraged, in the hope new insights can be generated. This approach has rich resonances for this thesis.

There was also an emphasis upon mindful and engaged observation, through participation. That is, group members were encouraged to bring an enhanced awareness and sensitivity to all aspects of what they experienced. Their experiences included, on the one hand, thoughts and logical processes of cognition, and, on the other, fleeting impressions, bodily sensations, visual images, emotions and other non-cognitive processes which I refer to, loosely, as 'intuitive'.

5.6 Running the research groups

Although the research groups were originally inspired by an interest in mediumship and séances, and although they drew upon methods mediumship development (as well as various techniques rooted in the theories discussed in Chapter Three), the main focus, when recruiting participants, was that they had an interest in experiences of academic reading, and be prepared to come to sessions with an open mind, an experimental attitude and a willingness to play as well as a desire to explore intellectual territories. Participants did not have to have particular beliefs about mediumship or intuition to take part.

Purposive sampling was used. This is a non-scientific method where "not all of the individuals in a population are given equal chance of being included" (Calmorin and Calmorin 2007, p. 104). In purposive sampling, people are selected on the basis of suitability for the research by the researcher (Calmorin and Calmorin 2007). While this method is not suitable for research where the results are to be statistically valid, it is entirely suitable for this project. It has the advantage that subjects can be selected on the basis of suitability, and that it utilises relevant researcher knowledge (Sharma 1997). In this case, the group were selected with individuals who are open to the process of exploration, contacted by email or social media through personal contacts and contacts of the researcher’s supervisor (through course Facebook groups or via researcher networks at the university, and beyond).

A brief description was initially circulated, and further information sent to people who expressed interest in taking part (see Appendix One for details). In total, of the people who expressed interest, 12 took part in one or more research groups, different individuals attending different groups. Full details can be found in the results section. Some people attended only one of the six sessions, others attended all, or nearly all of them. Groups were held on a Saturday morning, usually between 10 and 12 noon. Five of the six groups took place on the main university campus, with one taking place in the separate library building. Groups started with a meditative exercise (for example based on awareness of breathing) designed to centre participants and help them become aware of non-cognitive, non-verbal interior processes. All exercises were carried out in a playful spirit, and as the group developed so did group cohesion (again, more information can be found in the results and discussion section).

Each group was guided by a set of theoretical considerations, as discussed in the literature review, and as follows:

- Session 1: ‘I Associate Thus’ (free association)
- Session 2: ‘Reading with the Body’ (Gendlin’s focusing and felt sense)
- Session 3: ‘Psychometry of Texts’ (*Délire*, Lecercle)
- Session 4: ‘Text into Image’ (projective testing, the unconscious)
- Session 5: ‘Reading with all the Senses’ (embodiment, Gendlin)
- Session 6: ‘Character Co-Creation’ (Batcheldor, the Owens, the experimental séance).

Each session consisted of a number (typically two or three, but see results section for full details) of exercises, with opening meditation exercise and discussions. The exercises were designed to explore, experientially, aspects of the approaches to intuitive reading set out in the sections of the literature review above. Other influences on the exercises include Surrealist word and image games, and the related word games and experiments developed by the literary group Oulipo (James 2009). Of the surrealists, Breton and Duchamp were particularly interested in the use of games as a technique, seeing them as a means of collective cohesion, a way of generating material for works, and a vehicle for epistemological discovery (Breton 1924; Brotchie and Gooding 1993). The range of games was extensive and included the use of non-standard materials to make visual works, cutting up and/or rearranging text, and collaborative drawings (Getsy 2011). The surrealists were also interested in techniques of automatic writing and the use of the Ouija board (Getsy 2011) and more generally with occult practices (Choucha 1991). Oulipo, a group started in Paris in the 1960s and led by Raymond Queneau and Francois Le Lionnais, developed a set of ludic experiments and formula for producing written text (Bohman-Kalaja 2007). The use of games was important to incubate an atmosphere which was playful and exploratory, with the aim of making participants feel comfortable enough to work with material which could be provoking. That séance work could be incubated in a more light-hearted atmosphere was mentioned by Batcheldor (1968, 1978) and the Owens (Owen 1974, 1976).

In addition to text-based responses (written by session participants, or the transcripts of discussions) the research groups collected other forms of data, including drawings and other visual materials. Participants were also asked to reflect on the sessions in the days afterwards, and feedback via post-session questionnaires by email. This extra ‘space’ for reflection was fruitful, and the post-session questionnaires generated useful material. Further details can be found in the next chapter.

5.7 Data analysis and interpretation of results

Different data analysis methods were used to explore the materials collected in the different groups. Further details can be found in the results and analysis section (Chapter

Six). Here, I want to briefly discuss the difference, mentioned above, between the expectations for analysis of the material, and what actually happened. I expected originally that I would collect far more visual material than was in fact collected. However, the smaller amount of visual material collected was considered carefully. As Gillian Rose points out, analysing images can be overlooked (Rose 2016, p. 17). Consequently, there is a need to "take images seriously…it is necessary to look very carefully at visual images, and it is necessary to do so because they are not entirely reducible to their context. Visual representations have their own effects" (Rose 2016, p. 17). The analysis of visual materials in the research groups, for example in session two, where some participants mapped their bodily experiences in drawings, was guided by Rose's insistence on the importance of the image, and drew upon methods suggested by Rose, for example her separation of three aspects of visual material, the awareness of which facilitates analysis and critique (Rose 2016). These are: the site of production (the technologies which make the image possible), the site of the image (how the image works on its own terms, and the site of audiencing (the wider social and cultural context in which the image is read) (Rose 2016). She also offers a range of tools for approaching images, including compositional analysis, analysis of content, semiological analysis, discourse analysis and psychoanalytic viewpoints (including analysis of the gaze) (Rose 2016). However, the analysis of images did not rely entirely on methods proposed by Rose. The drawings and other visual material were also analysed in terms of any apparently symbolic content.

It was also anticipated that some of the exercises would generate text which is fully or in part nonsensical, particularly Session one. Thus, it was further anticipated that appropriate analysis methods would have to be developed, guided by Lecercle's suggestions on ways of understanding *délire* (nonsense language) (Lecercle 1985). Lecercle analyses four Victorian authors of nonsense literature in terms of his theories, demonstrating in detail how their seemingly nonsensical writings could be understood as outpourings of language's dark underbelly, attacking the pseudo-rational surface meanings (Lecercle 1985). However, in practice the material generated in sessions generally remained in the realms of the rational, descriptive and referential. The possible reasons for this are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

The most frequently used method of analysis was thematic analysis[12]. As the bulk of the material outputs from the research groups were textual (either written or transcribed from, for example, the end-of-session interviews), this data was examined to find themes, and emerging themes assessed against each other for patterns and relationships (King and Horrocks 2010). Themes were subject to revision as the reflection on the research material progressed, and changes made as a result of considering new perspectives and as new insights emerged.

Notions of embodiment and the role played by the experienced body were also relevant to the research. Therefore, the analysis of the data draws upon notions of the body and the role played by embodiment in research, for example Formenti *et al.* (2014). The predominant frameworks used for analysis of the material relating to the body are Gendlin's and Totton's, as discussed in the previous chapter, and Gendlin's and Totton's theories understood as a way of linking the experiencer to intuitive processes (Gendlin 1973, 1977, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2006, 2007; Totton 2003, 2008). Other qualitative researchers who have examined the role played by the body in research have also been influential as well, for example Engelsrud uses a phenomenological perspective to understand the role played by embodiment in interviewing (Engelsrud 2005). Turner and Norwood also consider the body as instrument of, and in, research, proposing a 'mixed bodies' form of triangulation to amalgamate different forms of knowledge one (Turner and Norwood 2013). In this study, the primary viewpoint was an embodied, phenomenological one. Reflexive analysis, looking at how group participants understand the processes and exercises, was also influential and group discussions were incorporated into every session. A short time at the end of each session was devoted to feedback from the group about how that set of exercises felt, the material generated, thoughts about group direction and suggestions for future sessions.

---

[12] Thematic analysis was refined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as a way of identifying and refining themes in textual data. it describes a process of first coding and then picking out wider themes from textual responses. It can be done with different approaches (for example inductively or deductively) and takes place in a number of stages, from initial familiarisation to writing up results (Braun and Clarke 2006).

In summary, data analysis drew upon a range of techniques drawn from qualitative research, visual analysis and philosophy to assess the multiple outputs of the group exercise.

5.8 Ethical issues

Information sheets were circulated in advance of the sessions and were available at every session for new participants. At each session, every participant was asked to sign a consent form before taking part. An example of this form can be found in Appendix Two. Because the research involves human subjects, the proposed data collection element of this research was submitted to the University ethics committee. The first submission required small clarifications and changes to the proposal. Ethical clearance was granted for the study. However, ethical considerations were raised at an earlier point, when I tested out one of the exercises used in the sessions. I had been asked to run a workshop for the M.A. Group based on some of the exercises to be used in the research group. After an explanation of what the sessions involved, two of the participants' decided not to take part in the exercise, as they felt unhappy about some aspects about it. Because this issue raised new ethical considerations, I feel it is useful to discuss it here.

Before the workshop exercise, I explained to participants that the exercise I was going to invite them to take part in had been inspired by techniques taught in mediumship development. This was problematic for two people, and they consequently decided they did not want to take part. The issues, for these two people, were linked to other issues to do with experiential elements of the M.A. course and the aspect of participation, but my workshop seemed particularly challenging for the students because of its link to mediumship development exercises. They expressed a feeling that by using the techniques linked with psychic development I was opening the group up to negative experiences, perhaps engendered by low spirits on the astral plane, particularly as I was not using ritual or protection. Afterwards, I was invited to reflect on the experience in writing, the following summarises the main features of my response. There were two sets of issues raised by the workshop. First, there were issues of structure and presentation. Second, issues to do with content and subject matter.

In terms of the first set of issues, when I do any sort of workshop either as part of my art practice or in an academic context, I generally give participants the option to opt out of the workshop, either before it starts or at any point when it is taking place. In this case, I simply forgot to do this. It occurred to me afterwards that had I offered participants as usual the option to leave they might have been more willing to take part to see what the workshop was like. I wondered if not offering them this option made the experience less 'comfortable'. I also wondered if the way I had presented the workshop was at fault. I had perhaps insufficiently explained the relationship to the exercises taught in mediumship development. I approach these as an artist. In the 21st century approach to art, as it is taught in UK art schools at least, appropriation of techniques from other disciplines is a widely used method of working. It frequently involves a bracketing (suspension of belief in) of some of the context these techniques are found in. Just because I use techniques inspired by mediumship development, there is no suggestion that I situate what I am doing within that context, there is no suggestion that I accept everything (or anything) that is taken for granted in the context I take them from, nor do I necessarily think that the techniques are restricted to the context in which they originate. This was clear to me and would have been clear in the context of a workshop in most contemporary UK art schools. I assumed an attitude in my audience that probably was not appropriate, and a little more explanation might have provided the necessary context. I should say that I do think there is a debate to be had about the ethics of appropriation from other cultural contexts, but I do not think that was the problem raised about my workshop.

The other set of issues has to do with the content of the workshop, and with the content of the theoretical situation within which the objections were situated. The first concerns the tradition I see myself as influenced by, that is, the history of contemporary art. There are many examples from art history over the past hundred years, and perhaps longer, of artists working with similar techniques, for example the surrealist's experimentation with techniques of automatic writing and the Ouija board. One of the objections raised to my workshop was that I did not use the correct protective rituals, and the context in which I was using the techniques was not made ‘safe’. While acknowledging the concerns of the people who did not take part, I felt that my workshop was not doing what the non-participants thought it was doing. I did not feel that by using techniques loosely inspired by those used in psychic development I was thereby doing the same sort of thing as participants in psychic development groups understand themselves to be. That is, I did not feel I was conjuring spirits. I would not rule that out as an explanation, but I simply wanted to open up the possibility of there being other ways of framing what is going on. One such way of framing the workshop events would be to see it as an experiment in a primarily art-related area, to do with participation, non-rational aspects of consciousness, and the imagination, an experiment with the possibility of generating new insights through a participatory consciousness. Participation, it has been argued, has a specific potential to generate understanding (see, for example Magliocco 2012), and playful participation has carved out a role within contemporary art practice (Stott 2015). So, on the one hand I see what I do as something with an existing tradition, which is not the tradition of the psychic development group, but which relates to it, and on the other I see it as doing something which involves a particular position with regard to the ontology of the explanations possible. The artist often works as a sort of *bricoleur* (as, sometimes, does the researcher) using different approaches to gather material without necessarily thereby subscribing to the belief set associated with these approaches (see, for example Dezeuze 2008, p. 31). As an artist-researcher I want to hold that possible description open, while remaining uncommitted to any one ontology (unless it is an ontology that takes into account sliding between different world views and slipping between different positions).

The other aspect that concerned me about the objections was to do with closing things down and remaining open. One of the aims of the workshop, I felt, was to invite participants to experiment and be open to what is going on, perhaps considering different theoretical framings, looking at different ways of working with the material presented. By suggesting, as the people who left the workshop seemed to suggest, that we should not be working this way as a group without a ritual and without a tradition, I felt that this experimental attitude was being closed down. After all, while ritual makes some people feel (and therefore be) safe, it can have an alienating effect for others. In some cases, your ritual is not my ritual. Besides, I felt, we do not always need to approach imagination, and active imagination, through religion or ritual. After all, this is exactly what artists do, alone and in groups, without the need for any kind of religious framing. This is also what happens in play, and with children's imaginary friends and in many situations where a group creates things together. Some of these other contexts might get closed down if we insist on containing them. Some of these other areas might remain unexplored if we have to situate them within ritual. I suppose I wanted to keep open the possibility of working in a way which is outside the traditional religious contexts, I wanted to keep open the possibility of looking at places where the imagination becomes 'real' (Montague Ullman's adolescent séances come to mind: Ullman 1993; 1994a; 1994b; 1995), I want to continue using techniques and methods without having a straightforward attitude of unquestioning belief towards them. I have noticed that sometimes in discussions, within the course and more generally, that there can be a tendency to assume that *unless* one ritualises or makes safe any technique, it is therefore *necessarily* going to lead to unfortunate spiritual consequences. I do not believe this to be the case. That is, I am worried about what gets blocked off or closed down if we insist in ritual surrounding any imaginative activity. This is not to argue that it is unproductive to raise the issues, rather that I think it is a shame to close down a way of working that (1) has a precedent and that (2) might bring up some interesting, interdisciplinary results or questions.

So, in summary, the raising of problems by the individuals contributed to the ethical context in which the research group is situated. It became clear that it was important to take care to properly inform potential participants about what I was, and what I was not doing, the tradition I saw the exercises as belonging to, and my views about the need for protection and ritual. Then potential participants were able to make a more fully informed decision regarding whether they wanted to participate.

5.9 Summary

The above has set out a methodology for the proposed research group, explaining the theoretical context, and practical details of method as well as associated methodologies. Woven into this structure have been more personal considerations and reactions to the exercise of data collection and analysis.

Chapter Six: Results and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the results of the six research groups. it will explain the structure of each session, who took part, the theoretical background, what exercises took place and what participants' responses were. It also discusses the results of each session in terms of the research questions.

Organising and running the research sessions was a rich and rewarding experience, yielding varied and complex results (some easier to analyse than others). Clear themes emerged from some areas, while other areas were more resistant to analysis. Areas which I had anticipated to be easy to analyse and where I had thought results would go according to plan, turned into dead ends with puzzling outputs. The aspects I did not expect to be intriguing returned interesting findings.

What counts as a 'result' is always going to be filtered through multiple, lenses and cut according to the philosophical framework which informs an entire thesis (Collins and Stockton 2018). Thus, because results, theory and methodology were intertwined, different areas feeding into others, I have set out and discussed the results in the same chapter, referring back to the theories looked at in earlier chapters and to the research questions.

To briefly recap the research questions here:

The main research question is as follows

- Is there value in using intuitive methods, particularly techniques appropriated from those used in mediumship development groups, in the contexts of learning, education, texts and within a particular knowledge of academic discourse?

The main research question generates several subsidiary questions, as follows:

1. What is 'intuition' (understood in terms of mediumship) and what philosophical and psychoanalytical theories can be used to understand it?
2. What is the role of the body and embodiment in intuition?
3. What is the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language?
4. How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
5. How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and *délire,* be used to explore experiences of reading?
6. What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
7. What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

The first three research questions were explored in Chapter Three, and this chapter looks at questions four to seven. Clearly, the questions are interlocking, and together answer the main research question, but there is a much greater emphasis in the current chapter on participants' experiences of academic reading, and their reflections on the exercises. Although I had hoped that the research sessions would generate material which could be subject to theoretical analysis informed by techniques explored in Chapter Three, in practice the participants' observations in discussion were richer than the outputs of the exercises, and so the focus shifted away from what the exercises generated to what reflections were prompted. Thus, the material presented in below will primarily contribute to answering questions four to seven above, and the results summarised in this chapter's conclusion.

In the following, I discuss the research groups sequentially, from session one to session six. I spend more time on some sessions than others. This is for various reasons, including the extent to which the material produced in the groups seemed interesting and relevant to the themes of this thesis, and the extent to which they threw light on either aspects of the theories discussed in Chapter Three, or the research questions. The possibility of returning to the material generated in the less discussed sessions and finding more points for discussion is acknowledged.

6.2 Participants

Overall, 12 participants took part in one or more sessions. The following table summarises participation by session. Pseudonyms (two initials ascribed randomly, not a representation of participant's actual names) have been used to preserve anonymity.

Pseudonym	**Session 1**	**Session 2**	**Session 3**	**Session 4**	**Session 5**	**Session 6**
PR	X	X	X	X	X	X
LB	X	X	X	X	X	X

MB	**X**	**X**			**X**	
RB	**X**	**X**				
ZM	**X**		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
CA	**X**		**X**			
Orpheus	**X**		**X**	**X**		**X**
RS		**X**				
JO		**X**	**X**		**X**	**X**
LD		**X**				
YW				**X**	**X**	
MD			**X**			

Table 1: Summary of participants

W6.3 Session one: 'I Associate Thus'

6.3.a Participants

PR
LB
MB
RB
ZM
CA
OE

6.3.b Background theory summary

This session was based on theories and practices of free association, which was explored in Chapter Three (Freud 1900, 1901, 1913, 1915; Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003). Elements of free association were used to develop the exercises and were also communicated to session participants. The aspects communicated to participants were as follows:

- Free association is a practice, first developed in psychoanalytic contexts, of saying freely whatever comes into one's mind. Clinically, it is often practiced with the client lying on a couch (Jones 2017).

- Free association is considered to offer a way to sidestep rational thought and access parts of the self that do not follow the rules of logic (Fromm 1955).
- Free association can be seen as revealing psychic content held in the unconscious, and which influences a person's thoughts and actions (Jones 2017). This process takes place in a state of consciousness which has been likened to near sleep (Spacal 1990).
- Observation, rather than understanding, is the key to working with free association. In classic free association, the process is facilitated by an analyst, who listens and responds as the client free associates (Fromm 1955) or carries out further analyses subsequent to the session (Jones 2017).
- Free association has been (and continues to be) used outside the psychoanalytic context as a way of uncovering unconscious material, a way which offers the opportunity to work with this material linguistically. Free association has also been used as a method in the visual arts (Kiehl 2015) and as a research method (Holloway and Jefferson 2009).
- Free association can be used to undermine some models of language and reality (Bollas 2002; Totton 2003).
- Free association can be a way to uncover telepathic material and has been linked to other forms of paranormal experiences (Totton 2003).

My aim for the session was that by asking participants to free associate around academic texts, the associative material produced would reveal, when appropriately analysed, aspects of these texts different to those uncovered in more conventional practices of reading. Free association was also explored as a way to 'understand' a text without this understanding being part of a linear process. In practice, the exploration of understanding in ways other than the conventional did not happen to any great extent. But the session *did* uncover some interesting feedback from participants about their experiences of academic reading, and also seemed to offer some ways for participants to overcome certain blocks about academic study. This result – that is, little analysable material generated as direct outputs of the session, but rich material emerging from participant reflection – was a pattern repeated throughout all the sessions.

6.3.c Structure of session one

Session one took place in September 2017. Before this session, participants were sent a document explaining some of the theoretical context for the session. This document is included in Appendix Three. Example transcripts from this session (and other sessions) are included in Appendix Four.

At the start of this session, as in other sessions, participants were reminded about the purpose of the research, and asked to sign consent forms. They were also given a brief verbal description of what the session would involve. Participants were also told that the exercises were designed to help participants step away from 'head' consciousness. Care was taken to avoid presenting this in a polarised way, that is, with the idea that 'head' consciousness is undesirable, and alternatives preferable. No further explanation was given of the term 'head consciousness', but participants seemed to understand the term, and raised no questions about its meaning.

After this introduction stage, participants took part in two exercises, and in discussions about these. At the start of the exercises, each participant selected one of a number of printed A4 abstracts from academic journal articles. The articles had been selected from the University library's digital resources. They spanned a wide range of disciplines including, but not limited to, sociology the sciences, the arts, philosophy and others. A list of the abstracts and papers is given in Appendix Five. Not all abstracts prepared for the session were used (more abstracts were prepared than there were participants). The articles were selected by participants randomly, that is, participants were not able to see what the abstracts or articles said, as they were offered upside, down, like a deck of cards. It is debatable whether this technique resulted in fully random selections, but the researcher did not know what article was assigned to which participant and the participants seemed unaware of the articles assigned until they turned them over. This technique was used to avoid participants reading the papers and using this as a means of selecting something interesting to them. Thus, the aim was to further facilitate an avoidance of 'conventional' readings of the abstracts.

In the first exercise participants read through the abstracts they were given, trying to understand them as they normally might (that is, reading through, making notes, and summarising them). Next, participants were asked to pick out individual words and phrases from the abstract and circle them. They then made 'free' associations with the words / phrases, writing these down, and following the train of association as far as they could.

After a short break, participants returned to the group for exercise two. They worked in pairs. Abstracts were distributed again. There were sufficient abstracts to ensure that everyone could have a different text to work from (although this was not essential for the process). One member of the pair selected several words or phrases from the abstract and read them aloud to the other member of the pair. That person then spoke the associations made with the words / phrases. The person reading the words wrote down the associations made by the person associating. The person associated was encouraged to close their eyes and, if they wanted, to lie down. The person reading the words / phrases and writing down responses was asked to prompt the person associating at times, using phrases such as 'anything else' or 'any other associations'. Finally, the reader was asked to look at the associations and summarise the 'story' they told. Examples of the transcripts of this exercise are included in Appendix Four. As Totton talks about the inherently telepathic nature of free association (Totton 2003), it was wondered whether participants' materials might include that which was seemingly telepathically derived, as well as material which demonstrated Lecercle's notion of language having two contrasting sides: one rational and denotive, the other nonsensical (Lecercle 1985).

Finally, the participants took part in a discussion about the exercises and the overall experience of the session. After the session, a post-session questionnaire was circulated. Example transcripts of the answers can be found in Appendix Six.

6.3.d Results of session one and discussion, individual exercises

For each participant, the following information was collected:

- Summary of 'conventional' reading of abstract
- Notes made by participant about process of reading and understanding 'conventionally'
- Exercise one written word associations

- Exercise two spoken word associations
- Exercise two summary of 'story' of associations
- Transcript of discussion at end of session
- Answers to post-session questionnaire

Examples of these are available in Appendices Four and Six. The following analysis and discussion consider the results of each set of information together, and summarises themes arising from the results.

6.3.d.1 Processes of conventional reading (understanding of abstracts)

The first part of the session was designed to make participant think about the nature of 'conventional' reading in an academic context by asking them to summarise the abstracts and reflect on this process. The summaries were written in one of two ways. The majority of participants (six out of the seven who attended this session) summarised the key points of the article in bullet points. One participant provided a one paragraph summary. Most (again, six of seven) participants made 'factual' and neutral summaries of the abstracts, including phrases like "This article is about economic theory" (LB). Only one respondent (RB) introduced a less neutral note into the summary, saying "The poetics of failure": sounds like a graceful phrase for blunders or embarrassments witnessed…"

The participants also reflected on this process. What did this type of reading feel like? Here, comments included the ***mechanics of the process, the difficulty or ease of the process*** and ***emotional / bodily responses.*** Comments on the **mechanics of the process** included remarks about: picking out key ideas and rechecking them at the end; processes of scanning and picking out important words, re-reading sections more closely, and having to read several times. This theme was linked to that of the **difficulty / ease of the process** (participants often merged the two themes in their comments). Most participants described the act of conventional reading as hard work. This theme also merged into the third: the difficulty of the process generated **emotional and bodily responses,** particularly a sense of struggle against something. PR had to force herself to keep reading, despite not understanding. LB found it challenging. ZM felt she had to try to be academically correct. Sometimes the feeling of being challenged tipped over into defeatism: RB found it “mentally tiring” while PR felt there was no point in re-reading as she did not understand it the first time. Where participants experienced reading as ‘in’ a particular place, it was primarily in the head: “made my head hurt” (LB), “process is in the head, between the eyes / forehead” (CA) and “head, face, throat” (ZM) are some examples. Other parts mentioned were arms and shoulders. While some participants simply identified body places in which reading and understanding took place for them, others linked the place with emotion: Prisma stated “I felt a kind of block, maybe between my nose or eyes, because I don’t like the topic” with RB saying “a sense of droop came over me; drooping slump, physical drain: energetically draining too”. Others identified emotional responses without a bodily anchor: OE and TL talked of their slight anxiety. Outside these themes, TL related the process of summarising to divination. She also reported a synchronistic connection between the subject matter of the abstract she had picked (hallucination and psychosis) and her personal interests and life situation. It is notable that, for participants, reading generated tangible bodily responses, which chimes with Gendlin’s body-based approach to internal processes (Gendlin 1978, 1995). Understanding is, perhaps mostly, thought of as a process entirely contained in the head (whether understood as brain or mind), so it is particularly notable that these participants located it elsewhere in the body. Indeed, it might be interesting to compare the results for these particular participants, who arguably had a higher than usual awareness of these aspects of self, with results for a different group of participants.

6.3.d.2 Processes of free association: gap between my expectations and results

As mentioned above, I had hoped that the process of free association in the two exercises would generate material which was ‘truly’ free associative, in that it differed notably from the prompt material, and was of a different nature: less rational, more free-flowing, more intuitive and more poetic. I wanted to use the material generated, thus anticipated as lyrical, symbolic and free flowing, in an analysis akin to the one Lecercle carried out on Victorian nonsense literature, using his techniques, as discussed in Chapter Three (Lecercle 1985). Following Totton (2003) and other investigations into free association, psychoanalysis and the paranormal (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018), I also hoped that the free associated material would generate new understandings of the text which would throw a different light on it to the one generated by 'conventional' reading processes. However, perhaps due to the relative shortness of the session, participants' lack of familiarity with the processes used and the fact this was the first session, the material generated did not reveal particularly 'free' associations. The material was primarily synonymous, with participants typically giving other definitions rather than using the trigger words as a springboard into unconscious and perhaps telepathic or mediumistic processes. Indeed, giving synonyms for the trigger words / phrases was the primary means of working with the prompt material. Possibly just one of the seven participants in this group could have been said to have fully free associated in these exercises. The participants themselves remarked that their results were closer to synonyms than free association. My initial feeling about the exercises was that the session had failed, because of the lack of material that felt fully freely associative. However, from another point of view the exercises were successful, from the point of view of the participants. It became clear later, in group discussion and subsequent written feedback, that respondents felt the exercises were, if not successful from their point of view at least useful, for example the technique allowed their responses to the abstract to be richer and more imaginative, and their relationship with the abstract to be more engaged. This might suggest that there was something about the process of producing the free associations that freed the participants, rather than that anything particularly interesting was generated in terms of content. By allowing themselves permission to 'muse' and thus read in a way which strayed somewhat from the denoted reading of the prompts, participants seemed to feel that they could re-engage with the abstract in a new way. Overall, despite the lack of truly freely associated material, there was positive response to the exercises. Additionally, the results produced in the exercises revealed a number of very interesting further themes which are explored below as each of the two exercises is discussed in turn.

6.3.d.3 Freeing the associations: a progress from synonyms (session one, exercise one)

In this part of the session, participants made associations with elements of the abstracts.

While on first examination the responses given in the exercises seemed to be largely synonyms, there did seem to be some progression away from synonyms, even if this progression ceased before the material produced became truly free associative. For example, LB picked out key phrases as triggers, and used these as either a springboard to reflect further and more broadly on the abstract (for example, the phrase “ “A cross-sectional study of 221 cocaine users” elicited the association “Who are these people? Why do they use cocaine? Upper class, middle class, lower class, crossing class boundaries, fragments, pieces, bits, broken, bridge”. This response is interesting: at the start, it’s a question which LB asked about the abstract, but by the end it becomes more freely associative, with words which are linked to preceding and following in a different way than with the earlier questions. A similar process appeared in another of LB’s associations: to the phrase “simple way to improve detection”, Louisa associated “Really? Missing the point, easy, answer, nothing else needed, avoiding “why”, arrest, naughty, bad, criminal, shadow”. Here, again, the initial associations are a critique of the abstract, with the end part becoming more freely associative. This mingling of critique of the abstract with association is also found in RB’s and ZM’s associations, although in slightly different forms. ZM, for example, free associating on the word “methodology”, said “approaches, ways of assessing abilities, claims, pathways, routes, perspectives, prejudices, assumptions – what’s the point? What are you trying to prove? To understand?” Here, she starts with synonyms and moves to questions about the point of the abstract. By contrast, but arguably with some similarities, RB lists 7 bullet point associations for “misperformance ethnography”, including “A museum study(-ography) of things… “ but also: “pratfalls, buckets, slips, slipping over, landing badly on your face or bum” and “forensic, scientific, tweezery, cold examination of hot feelings”. Here, RB seems to be combining synonym, association and critical reflection on the abstract. Whilst the critical reflection is not what I anticipated resulting from this exercise, it is interesting in terms of what it reveals about people’s attitudes towards academic reading. I am also reminded of the ways in which free association, according to Bollas, Totton and Lecercle can act as a way of undercutting one or more establishments – epistemological, analytical, and now, perhaps, academic (Bollas 2002; Totton 2003; Lecercle 1985).

Through the exercise, participants moved towards a critique of the things which underpinned the papers summarised in the abstracts, but which had not been made explicit. As such, there was something of a trajectory towards uncovering the hidden, unspoken aspects of the abstract, but perhaps not the unspeakable. That is, the trajectory moved the participants only partially away from the realm of sense, to other, fairly easy to articulate and linguistic senses, not to Lecercle's délire or to Bollas' unconscious (Lecercle 1985; Bollas 2002).

6.3.d.4 If not free association, then what? (session one, exercise two)

In this exercise (see Appendix Seven for more examples), participants worked in pairs with one person speaking associations with the written text aloud, and the other person taking on an analyst role, supporting the speaker to continue associating, and writing down responses. The lack of completely 'free' associations was more marked in exercise two. Despite this exercise being designed to mirror the 'classic' experience of psychoanalytic free association, the majority of the participants reported feeling inhibited: more so than in the first exercise. Again, the responses here were primarily either synonyms or generally associative (meaning that they were 'common sense' associations which followed a mostly logical train from the trigger word / expression, rather than 'free' associations in which the connections between trigger word and associations, and between the associations themselves, did not follow a clear logical pattern or semantic trail). There was one possible exception: OE, who seemed not to free associate as much as comment on what was going through his mind as each word was spoken, and what he thought about his thoughts: "fantasy of what symbolic plant is doing to me / left reality of abstract behind / not sure if plant exists/ into imaginative world – own experience". Table 2 summarises the responses for this exercise for all participants:

Key word / phrase	**Association(s)**	**My comments**
"***outside the mind"***	Field, awareness, world, universe, consciousness, everything, unity/unified, "it is what it is", being, "out there", skull, bone	Closely linked words, though not synonymous. Some drifting from closely linked meanings towards end? Associations, rather than **free** associations.

“to hallucinatory phenomena”	Dreams / visions, ghosts, frightened, scared, “what’s going on here”, “who’s truth”, “frightened of myself” reality, right/wrong, drugs, opium, Coleridge, “stepping out of the window”, driven, told, controlling, (lack of) “who am I”, self-awareness	Closely and fairly closely linked, with some further deviation towards end.
“bandit”	Robin Hood / robbing rich to give to poor / one-armed / headscarf / ambush / chariot / horses / speed / conflict / driven / attack / ninja warriors / fear / anarchy / chaos / escape / travel / freedom / despair / duration / trial / test	Synonyms and closely linked words. Clear/logical links. Slightly freer associations towards end.
“long-term campaign” Strategy, plan, foresight, dedication, persistence, duration, time, achievement, goal, politics, politician, spokesperson, corporate	Strategy, plan, foresight, dedication, persistence, duration, time, achievement, goal, politics, politician, spokesperson, corporate	Move from synonyms and close synonyms to close associations
“thesis”	Idea / strong / stiff / argument / head	No exact synonyms but some close synonyms and some slightly freer associations, for example “stiff”
“Ophiuroidea”	Ancient Greece – Orpheus in underworld – lyre – Cenibus, Ophelia – academy – Plato’s academy. Shakespeare. Venereal disease. Opium. Idea. Ophelia thinking not drowning. Idea motor skills, opiates, drugs, plants. Hallucination. Herbs. Floating down stream.	Associations are much freer, Perhaps (probably?) because the meaning of the trigger word is obscure to most. So the associations are freer, based on sounding like other words. The ‘sound-like’ words then generate other, freer expressions: for example “Ophelia” and “Orpheus” lead to opium, venereal disease and herbs.

Table 2: extracts from free associations in pairs

Interestingly, the respondent whose associations in this exercise were arguably the freest was the one who worked from Latin trigger words taken from a specialist scientific journal. The distinction between denotation (the object which the word points to) and connotation (the ‘feel’ of the word, what is connected with it) is arguably useful in thinking about this particular freer association (de Saussure 1916). This distinction is part of everyday discourse but also has technical meaning within the philosophies of language, for example Frege's discussion of *sense* (connotation) and *reference* (denotation) (Frege 1948). Perhaps, in this case, that the participant could not understand the denotation of 'Ophiuroidea' meant that the connotative meaning could emerge more freely, and through this, the free associative meanings. We can also link this to Lecercle's understanding of language as having two sides (Lecercle 1985), drawing in turn upon Deleuze's ideas, in which a view of language in which fiction and fact become interlinked allows the emergence of primarily non-denotive meanings as equally important (Deleuze 1969). Lecercle expresses this in different ways, as embodied, as nonsensical, as excessive: in the following he characterises the non-denotive side of language as an excess: "the main characteristic of language is therefore *excess:* more meaning creeps into the sentence than the author intended, echoes and involuntary repetitions disturb the careful ordering of linguistic units" (Lecercle 1985, p. 80).

6.3.e Discussion of emerging themes from session one

The following themes emerged from a consideration of the material from the first session as a whole, rather than linked to particular exercises.

6.3.e.1 Whether any 'unconscious' themes emerged from the free association

I had wondered whether the process of free association might reveal a hidden story for each of the abstracts, distinct from the narrative conventionally expressed. This curiousity was inspired by a sense that, in the literature discussed in Chapter Three, a picture emerges of the different ways in which a meaningful story can be revealed by Gendlin's bodywork (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006), by a certain understanding of free association (Bollas 1999,2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Barratt 2014, 2018; Totton 2003), and by Lecercle's (1985) analyses of language. In the discussion at the end of this session, participants were asked if their associations had revealed any themes, but no one reported clear themes emerging bar AS, who said "there is definitely a theme or story to it, which is nothing to do with the words" although did not elaborate further on this.

6.3.e.2 The enjoyment of making and telling stories

One or two participants mentioned that the exercise reminded them of storytelling or listening to a story. For RB (a poet), the stories arose out of the rhythm created by the speaking aloud of the trigger words and associations. She said "I suddenly remembered how lovely it is just to hear a story, hear somebody speak a story, and we'd started off by almost bullet the point words, and suddenly there was this very fond story from childhood, of a memory of a mother and a journey, and that was so... vivid, in contrast to the blip, blip, blip feel... I'd forgotten how lovely it is just to be spoken to, with a story". RBAR also commented on this, comparing the exercise with a scientific experiment, and comparing the act of storytelling with this experiment "there's something about telling a story as opposed to just dictating these words". AR also suggested that telling a story is equivalent to drawing a picture, rather than: "just saying, well these are the rules, these are the letters, these are the words. Makes it that much easier". Lecercle, of course, links *délire* with literature, and with other ways of writing and using text that seem to undermine the clear distinction between truth and fiction: as he puts it "the truth that psychoanalysis is concerned with is psychic truth, not historical or material truth… it is best reached through myth" (1985, p. 153). The extent to which assumptions of truth-seeking are written into academic practices of reading and writing is highly debatable, but these results raise a question regarding what the impact would be of reflexive examination of day-to-day academic pursuits and their relationship to truth and fiction. Such an investigation is beyond the scope of the current study, however, but it is worth noting that a number of different approaches to integrating fiction and narrative into research methods, for example auto/biographical work (Roth 2005; Sikes 2007), fictional methodologies (Clough 2002) and intuitive approaches (Anderson 2001; 2002; 2003).

6.3.e.3 Working best in solitude

Unexpectedly, participants found the collaborative working process used in exercise two inhibitive. There were a number of reasons for this, mostly associated with a **greater sense of accountability** and the **experience of authority**. Respondents spoke of how their sense of obligation made the exercise more difficult: “I felt more obliged with words, and I just felt freer with the pen to let my mind just go where it needed to go” (LB). TL commented that whereas in the first exercise there was a feeling of “getting into your own thing”, the second exercise felt like “feeding” the analyst. This felt “not like a performance… for me it felt like I was in the spotlight … more exposed”. This was connected with negative experiences of working with another person: writing alone was a way of shutting out the outside world, which in turn gave participants a feeling of greater space and engagement with the material that was coming up (OE). OE expressed this as the difference between writing and talking, although I understood this as the difference between working alone and working with someone else.

I was surprised by the unanimity of the responses here. I personally value co-creative relationships, where working with one or more other people to produce a work which is neither me, nor you, but something ‘bigger’, and where the work seems to have the potential to take on a life of its own. I am also thinking here of the ‘Philip’ experiment, where ‘Philip’, created from a group writing experiment, came to life and moved beyond the parameters his creators set for him (Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976; Owen 1974, 1975, 1977). In the light of this, and in the light of the satisfaction I have always found in working with other people, I expected the paired free association exercise to be more productive, and much more enjoyed by participants, than it actually was. I wondered whether this was because although the pairs knew each other, they did not know each other well enough to have built up the kind of relaxed interest in and ease with the presence of each other which might be necessary to co-produce. However, when asked whether it would have made any difference if they had worked with a close friend, two of the participants said this would have made no difference: TL stating “no… it wasn’t about the intimacy, it was about the process” and AR going further, saying “that might actually have been a hindrance” (as the friend might have prompted them, tried to second guess them, or read their body language too closely). AR elaborating on this, explained that the presence of the other person brought a new dynamic level into the relationship: for example he talked about trying to ‘read’ the facial gestures of their partner when they come up with an association, and work out whether they approve of the word or not. It is also possible that the resistance was associated with the perceived non-equality of the relationships. It is clear from the examples given above that participants felt the relationship between the people working in pairs was unequal, with the ‘analyst’ role having the upper hand. Perhaps truly collaborative relationships, in order to be fruitful, have to be experienced as relationships between equals? This is discussed in a little more detail below.

Other reasons were given for preferring working alone. These were expressed positively and negatively, that is, why participants enjoyed working alone, and why they didn’t like working with partners. Positive reasons (for working alone) included:

- It felt self-contained
- Understanding “the parameters”
- Allows an “inner space of holistic understanding” (LB) to open up
- Facilitates more of a relationship with one’s true self
- Feels freer / easier to free associate
- Feels more relaxed / more spontaneous
- Processes are more authentic
- Processes are more productive

And negative reasons (for not working with others) included:

- Feeling more self-conscious / inhibited / in the spotlight / exposed
- Having to produce answers for the other person / ‘feed’ them answers / more pressurised
- Having to get answers ‘right’
- Losing the ‘flow’ of “my own mind” (PR)
- Felt more stupid / silly
- Awareness of what the other person might think

This preference for working alone in free association may have interesting implications for psychodynamic relationships in general. Do real-life analysands feel hampered and oppressed by their analysts, as the participants in this exercise were, or are these reactions simply a response to an exercise which mirrored some of the conventions of the psychoanalytic relationship without replicating the trust which is built in a 'real' psychoanalytic situation? I have found no clear answer to this, and it is worth further investigation. Above, the idea that free association and other processes in psychoanalysis can be paranormal was discussed, including the kind of telepathic exchanges and synchronistic coincidences that reportedly occur in therapeutic situations. This is particularly interesting given the discussion in Chapter Three, of the role played by the therapeutic relationship, including the extent to which it can be telepathic. Bollas (1999, 2002), Barratt (2014, 2018), Lothane (2007, 2010, 2018) and Totton (2003, 2008) also hold the therapeutic relationship as central to the processes of telepathy, but do not discuss what happens if the relationship fails or is never set up in the first place. The resistance of participants in this session to working in pairs of course does not imply the psychoanalytic relationship is inherently unsuccessful, as the establishment of a relationship in psychoanalysis is a different process to the one used in the research group. However, it does raise questions about the extent to which psychoanalytic relationships – and the theoretical considerations predicated on them – sometimes fail to establish or break down, and why.

That the participants did not enjoy the partner-working exercise as much as the researcher anticipated contrasts with a session three, in which participants created a shared drawing, and session six, where they worked together to create a shared character. Participants responded very positively to both these later sessions. This disparity could be for a number of reasons. Perhaps something about the free association exercise in this session reminded participants of an authority figure; perhaps there was more pressure in the one-to-one pairing, or perhaps by the later sessions participants had formed a stronger bond as a group (although different people attended each group, there were also some people who attended all or most of them). The fact that participants responded so positively to a more egalitarian group exercise raises interesting questions about the possibility of extending techniques of free association to group exercises. It was unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis to explore this further.

Interestingly, the comments in the discussion about the partner relationship free association exercise were mostly from the point of view of the 'analysand', not the 'analyst'. It can only be speculated why this might be. It is possible that the role of the person reading the trigger words (the 'analyst') was seen as the 'neutral' or 'default' one, and perhaps one in which reflection / reflexivity were less encouraged. That is, the analyst role might have necessitated the person with that role taking a 'it cannot be otherwise' stance which played down the role of reflection and an awareness of a sense of what it was like. Perhaps, on the other hand, the anxiety reported by participants around being the person associating (the 'analysand') was the thing that they remembered, rather than the perhaps 'easier' role of reading trigger words and recording the story. In retrospect, I should have asked participants about this. In Chapter Three, ideas of the relationship of unconscious and intuitive material to authority were explored. As discussed, Bollas suggests that free association has the potential to undermine Western epistemologies (Bollas 1999, 2002), and this is reinforced by Lecercle's conception of *délire* as a radical, powerful force which has the power to carry the utterers beyond themselves (Lecercle 1985):

reading or hearing délire is no longer an attempt at interpretation, it is an involvement in the flow of words, where the willing audience swims with the current, and allows itself to be carried away…. We have the unreliable and unpredictable workings of poetic language: not a pack of rules, a system, but a strange growth, a machine with a dynamic of its own. (Lecercle 1985, pp. 160-161).

6.3.e.4 Understandings of free association and therapeutic relationships

Interestingly in light of the above, several participants commented on the implications of the session for how we think about psychoanalysis and other therapeutic relationships, particularly given that most participants disliked working in the paired exercise. TL commented: "it does raise an issue actually just thinking about how effective free association was as part of psychoanalysis". This respondent also said:

> if you are lying on a couch. a kind of authority figure almost [?] there to help you. I think your anxiety about it, the words and the associations, could be quite high… yes, I'd not really thought about it before, but the idea that you just sit there and free associate… it's actually not that easy when there's an observer as a witness…

RB also commented on this, talking about the fear that revealing something about oneself to another opens up a possibility that one is judged by the other for what one has revealed. This seems to be supported by the participants' negative feelings around free association in pairs. Indeed, earlier in this chapter it was suggested that part of the reason why participants found the free association difficult when working in pairs was because they ascribed an authority to the analyst figure, giving them the power to decide if the associations were correct or not. Of course, and as mentioned above, it could be argued that the psychoanalytic relationship is very different from the one established in this session. In a psychoanalytic relationship, it might be assumed, both parties enter into the relationship willingly, knowing what is expected of them, and build up a trust over months or years of working together. By contrast, in the session, participants might not have worked in these pairings before, and not been quite sure what to expect from the exercise. In psychoanalytic free association, additionally, there is likely to be an expectation that through the process of free association the analysand can hope, with the help of the analyst's interpretation of the material, to learn something about themselves, and/or to be healed. Further discussion of this interesting theme is beyond the scope of the current thesis, though I return to it in brief at the end of this chapter.

6.3.e.5 Reading, understanding, the body and location

In the discussion at the end of session one, participants were asked to think about their experiences of reading in this session. They were asked to consider both 'conventional' reading and the 'free associative' reading, in terms of where such experiences might be said to be 'located', or what was going on in their bodies and where. Chapter Three has covered some of the ways in which emotional and intuitive content can be 'located' in, or associated with, our experiences of particular parts of the body. The discussion on Gendlin, particularly, explored how it is possible to access the experiences of the body and link them to wider mental and emotional processes through his techniques of focusing, dipping and the felt sense (Gendlin 1978, 1995, 1996). In the group discussion, a number of responses revealed nuanced awareness of bodily experience. Several respondents named specific places where reading was felt to occur in their bodies: all of these named, or were related to, the head.

- “behind the eyes” (PR)
- “in the head, the front usually, at the expense of the rest of the body” (LB), and “in my head” (RBRB)
- “mostly in my head and shoulders” (MB)
- “in my head, more precisely between my nose and eyes” (AS)
- “eyes and the mind” (CA)
- “in my head, behind and above the eyes” (OE)

In discussing the feeling of understanding, responses were varied: for PR it felt like “a clarity… like holding a bowl steady”. Other descriptions had a similarly poetic feel to them: AS said “understanding feels like the dissolution of a cloud, like something that was black is suddenly illuminated”. As such, at least some participants were able to move beyond the experience of bodily sensations – aches, pains, fizzing – to link with more subtle and symbolic thinking. RB, for example, linked emotion with body location: “impatience in my eyes and hands. A hopelessness in my eyes… I felt a ‘droop’, rather like a snowdrop with a heavy head nodding down. Not a sleepiness though. More an energetic drainage”. Of all the participants, Rowena’s answer perhaps suggests the most embodied experience of reading. For others, even though reading was not solely about the head and cognition, it was less directly physical and more an expanded sense of self, soul or psyche:

- the inner space of my mind was opened up (LB)
- my heart and soul were more engaged, it was more playful, and therefore more enjoyable (MB)
- I felt like my ‘whole self’ was being invited into the experience (RBRB
- I was thinking with my heart rather than my head (CA)

In general, some of the participants in this session seemed particularly skilled in the sort of techniques of body dialogue that Gendlin describes (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006), despite the limited time allocated to explore bodily responses. They seemed able to identify sensations in different parts of the body, and clearly link them with emotional content. As such, several of the group deployed a Gendlinian / phenomenological approach to analysing the experience. Gendlin describes this as a learning process, which takes time to become proficient at, and which may seem difficult because it is generally unsupported by society: “we are so accustomed to the simple patterns – if someone cheats us we are mad, if someone ignores us we are hurt – that many people don't look beneath these simple patterns to their own unique complexity" (Gendlin 1978, pp. 92-93).

Others linked the experiences of reading to the body as a whole, rather than specific parts of the body: Louisa B, for example, commented that intuitive understanding, by contrast with rational understanding, was often felt "with the whole body, and even beyond the body", linking this kind of understanding with poetry, music and the imaginal. This is a fluid type of understanding, contrasting with more rational modes: as Gendlin explains it "our usual way of thinking divides experiences into discrete entities: thoughts, feelings, memories, desires, body sensations and so on" (Gendlin 1996, p. 19). The emotional states associated with 'difficult' reading were also discussed: AR and RBRB mentioned being anxious about trying to understand, which had the effect of making it more difficult to understand the information. ZB mentioned a dislike of the abstract she was asked to read in the session. Here the responses become less embodied: as Gendlin points out, some people (and, by extension, other people some of the time) "cannot sense their bodies from the inside", they feel emotions "but they locate them "all around", or in and around their head" (Gendlin 1996, p. 18).

Other participants also gave arguably less phenomenological comments of their experiences. For example, some reflected on the relationship between understanding and memory, with TL speculating that understanding a text meant translating written words into "'pictures' in my head, as it is my belief that humans "think" in symbols and pictures NOT words". By 'less phenomenological', I mean that these respondents deviated from the sense of what understanding felt like for them, to thoughts about understanding as a process and what they knew or speculated theoretically about it. This was further illustrated by a comment made by AR in the discussion at the end of the session. I had asked participants where understanding might be located. By this I had in mind a purely phenomenological experience of understanding, in the sense I was trying to ask where participants felt their understanding was located in their experiential body (sense of self). However AR took this as a mapping of understanding onto a particularly materialist, empiricist, scientific understanding of self and experience: "Because when you mentioned about what area of the brain was considered to be responsible for understanding, where does it come from? And then that just made me think of that phrenology head, you know, where there's like bits of it: this is cognition, this is understanding this is reason, and this is, you know … ". In fact, I had not mentioned understanding as being located in the brain. On other occasions, this participant struggled with the concept of 'interior' experience and conveying, or feeling, the phenomenology of the exercises, rather translating them onto an objectivised model of reality. As mentioned above, Gendlin comments on people who find it difficult to sense their body from inside (Gendlin 1996, p. 18). For these people, there can sometimes be, as for MB, a sense of the body as machine, external to subjectivity. But, for Gendlin, the power of the focusing process is to understand the body not as "merely a machine", "not the body reduced to physiology, not the body-as-machine, but rather the body from out of which you are living. The body is not one thing while you are another, a second thing (Gendlin 1996, p.304). For MB, it felt as if the body *was* a secondary thing, exterior to himself.

In some respects, the bodily responses to the processes of reading can be understood through a Gendlinian framework, with some participants able to articulate the 'felt sense' of reading (Gendlin 1978; 1996; 2006). However, responses tended to be a report of a state, not the dynamic process that Gendlin seems to envisage, in which the initial material revealed by focusing and dipping migrates into something different, in an ongoing process of communication (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006). This may be for a number of reasons: possibly because respondents were (i) asked only to report on bodily responses to one experience, not on changes to these and (ii) given only very limited time in which to respond. It may also reflect a common way of self-understanding in which a sense of self is based not in process but in fixed states.

What is clear from the results from this session is that reading, as an experienced process, can have a strongly embodied side. As some, but not others of the participant group were able to understand and explain their experiences in this more 'embodied' way, questions are raised regarding whether some people are simply more able to report the embodied nature of their experiences, or whether it is a skill that can be developed, and also thus raised regarding whether using embodied means to report is something that can be developed or taught.

6.3.e.6 Free association, reading and imagination.

Although the processes explored by participants in this session deviated from free association as commonly understood (as discussed by Bollas 2002), and the results obtained were in some ways not as I had anticipated, the processes did allow participants to explore the texts in ways which they said differed from their normal ways of reading. That is, they felt that free association, or the variants used in the session, had the power to reveal more than a 'normal' reading might. There was an implication that this power was facilitated through imagination. LB commented that through the different ways of reading explored in the session supported a new kind of engagement, "I became the witness of an imaginary journey in the space that the text had created". This imaginary journey was largely unrelated to the abstract, LB felt, although triggered by key phrases. AR also commented that he felt more able to engage with the meanings, and that he was consequently more curious about the subject matter, because the associations were more personal, and this facilitated a personal connection with the text which helped him engage with it, and indeed "be more critical and ask lots of questions". This reaction was also mentioned by OE: critical thinking was boosted by this method, but it "came through feeling (the heart) rather than the head". As such, the process of free association allowed this respondent to "feel" critical thinking rather than "do" it, which was found useful by this respondent. The process of free association allowed this respondent to realise their feelings about the abstract's subject matter, and to let their anger (at the objectification of the people described in the study) be a useful force for engaging with critique. RBRB also commented on the "deeper level" of connection facilitated by the free association process.

It should be noted, of course, that the people who took part in this session were perhaps more motivated than others to engage with creative methods and more open to the roles played by intuition and the imagination. This aside, the responses immediately above raise interesting questions about (for instance) how a more imaginative engagement with texts might be promoted for academic readings, and about the nature of the 'imaginary journey' which can be created, and how this better engages participants. It also raises questions about the ways in which academic spaces are experienced by people taking part in academic situations. For example, does the standard seminar, lecture, meeting downplay emotional responses or suggest they are unacceptable?

This sense of deeper connection reported by some participants was further developed through reported coincidences. Two respondents said they found meaningful coincidences between the subject of the abstract they had been allocated and their own interests and lives (LB and CA). TL suggested also that had she read the text in a different context (one which valued synchronicity less), while she would have been aware of the synchronicity, she would have tried to separate out that from her reading. However, in the workshop session "the process of free association opened up a wider frame of reference for 'processing'. In other words, the context gives meaning, so in this case more meanings of a personal 'felt' nature became available. I became engaged in the abstract in a different way". Thus, the sessions gave permission for experiencing intuitive material. This finding has interesting resonances with Totton's contention that free association can reveal telepathic material (Totton 2003). For Totton, the telepathic state of body-awareness is the primary one, and our typical ego-led state the perversion of this, bred out of an overwhelming early experience of too much "incomprehensible data", from which "the only way out is via a fundamental dissociation or repression, separating in a single act not only our self from our self, but also self from other self, and "head" from "body" (Totton 2003, p. 203). But this state of separation is by no means desirable: *"joining the two up* works better…. Rejoining the two – recognizing the head as *constituted* by the body, the body as *constituted* by the head – opens us to… the barely bearable paranormality of the world" (Totton 2003, pp. 203-204).

Other participants reported other ways in which the reading process was deepened through free association, for example allowing them to see that the abstract, as well as being 'dry' and 'academic', made use of metaphorical language in addition to referential words and phrases. This in turn raises a question, related to the questions mentioned in the last paragraph, regarding whether acknowledging the meaningful nature of coincidences might facilitate a greater connection to academic experiences and particularly experiences of texts. Overall, the free association exercise opened up a new, more personally meaningful engagement with academic material for some participants, an engagement which seemed to have been facilitated through the faculty of imagination, raising questions about what might be lacking in many academic situations and how this lack might be addressed. Of course, there already exist approaches within academia which attempt to integrate these more engaged and personal responses. The recent discussions of transformational learning are very relevant, particularly Dirkx's perspectives (Dirkx 1998, 2001, 2006), and Andersen's discussions of intuitive research (Andersen 2001, 2002, 2003). These approaches, which will be discussed in a little more detail in the next chapter, have mapped out a way in which research and academic readings can feed the soul. The next section discusses participants' experiences of academia as revealed in this session in more detail, and theories of transformative learning and intuitive research are also interesting in this context.

6.3.e.7 Reading and the academy

Session one, as clear from the above, helped participants to reflect on their other experiences of academic reading. I had not anticipated the depth of emotion this would bring up. Several participants reported very negative experiences of reading academically. TL talked and wrote at length about this, relating her experiences in the session to her work as a life coach, and reflecting further on "a largely 'given' way of being when it comes to academic discourse", and brought to light her "host of preconceptions/assumptions and a way of being that dictates the way I undertake my academic work". It is worth quoting her feedback in some detail, as it throws interesting light on how some students feel about academic working:

> I don't recall being formally 'taught' these ways of being, more they are picked up from random discussions and criticism of academic work. And because they are hidden from view, they are creating a context in which academic reading (and writing) has to happen in a certain way, and a way that feels restrictive, if only subliminally.
>
> It seems to me, that whilst originality is notionally encouraged, with all this running in the background it's extremely difficult to feel comfortable with originality. Maybe the academics who 'make it' to being respected authorities

> have tackled and adjusted these ways of being for themselves without seeking permission. A freethinker is admired, provided their free-thinking is supported by academic others. I also think there's a gender issue here. Perhaps it's easier for men to be pioneers than women for all those cultural reasons we know about.
>
> I think that in many ways the academy seems to operate an apprenticeship system where you model not only the type of knowledge you pursue, but also your ways of being on your 'Master' i.e. your teachers/supervisors. After all they have the power to pass or fail. Presumably there is a recognition of this in education circles (rather like the issues of transference in psychoanalysis). I know that in my own learning groups at [the university] at least part of the discussion is always about what our teachers 'want' and the problem of how to work that out. This is a very parent/child relationship which we, in our groups, have admitted to slipping into without really noticing – it's a default mode that runs in the background.
>
> When I am reading from a perspective of trying to prove myself, being inspired to really get inside what the author is saying and generate authentic meaning **for myself** is perhaps curtailed unless I am given express permission to do so (as in this workshop). I am, perhaps, too busy trying to work out what I need to understand to be able to please my academic Parents.
>
> It seems the nature of academic writing is to explain and prove before seeking to engage. Engagement (I think) comes when feeling is invoked (as in story telling), where the heart, present in the writing speaks to the heart of the reader. 'Re-including' the heart (feeling, intuition, other ways of knowing) in the academy is pretty much what we all know we're up to, but then there are always the external examiners...
>
> In a nutshell, what I am pointing to are the relationships. I believe the relationship to the academic text is given by who we are being in the moment we read it (which is not the same as why we are reading it). This then gives us the way we read, and the scope we have for understanding. The context gives the meaning to the content. These ways of being are usually not freely chosen and are part and parcel of 'being' academic. Relationship, by its very nature is a felt/heart space thing, not a thought/head space thing. In the ideal world, the academy would consciously bring these two together and give permission for the knowledge of the heart to be included in the discourse.

Thus, for CA, experimenting with free association offers a way to step outside the hidden contexts and rules of academic reading, as well as outside a relationship which she experienced as one-sided, in which one's teachers have the power to pass or fail, and act as gateways to academic success. However, this focus on explaining and proving is at the expense of engagement and emotion. There is a need to re-integrate the heart into academic processes. This chimes with some of the discussion in Chapter Three about the ways in which free association uncovers suppressed material (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018), and the ways in which Lecercle (1985) attempts to uncover the hidden side of texts, but also looks forward to the next chapter, in which ideas about transformative learning and intuitive research are used to tie up some of the strands emerging from the research groups.

Other participants also had similar responses. MB, for example, said the free association was liberating, helping them understand the meaning of the abstract and facilitating more engagement with it. RBRB commented on “the importance of what lies “hidden” and the richness / opportunity of being able to reveal this”. OE also commented on the freedom of a situation where “permission was granted to go off-piste and read differently without the straight jacket of needing to understand in a particular way using traditional left-brained methods”. RBRB’s comment explicitly suggests that processes such as the intuitive ones used in this session can reveal something akin to the ‘unconscious’ of academic texts: other comments hint at this.

This theme was also echoed in participant’s statements about how they experienced the language of the abstract they read at the start of the session, compared with the language of free association. Responses are summarised as follows:

Language of abstract:

- Dead
- Irritating
- Asked too much of reader
- Took energy from reader
- Invasive
- Doesn’t reflect speech
- Less simple, less straightforward
- Dry, factual, scientific
- Impersonal

Language of free association:

- alive / lively
- Evocative
- Related to feelings / engages feelings / heart
- Related to story making, meaning making
- Mythical, imaginative
- More simple / straightforward
- Personal / first person

6.3.f Session one: conclusion

Session one, then, used processes loosely based on the psychoanalytic practice of free association to explore ways of academic reading. Some themes have emerged from the results so far. These include:

- Bodily experiences of reading
- Working alone and working in collaboration
- Experiences of academic reading: negative experiences
- How free association and other imaginative exercises can deepen connections with texts

As indicated above, I was disappointed that the session did not yield the type of free associative material I had hoped for, as I was initially intending to subject the material to a particular type of linguistic analysis based on Lecerclian principles (Lecercle 1985). However, the results which did emerge were interesting, particularly in terms of participants' carefully articulated experiences of academic reading, and the potential for the techniques used in this session to facilitate a more positive engagement with academic texts. While the material revealed in the session falls far short of being clearly telepathic, the processes used were felt by participants to be intuitive and it was that using such processes offered fruitful ways of approaching academic texts, perhaps in harmony with ideas about intuitive research methods, as developed by Anderson (2001, 2002, 2003) Gendlin's techniques were hinted at in some of the reports from participants, although were not an explicit part of the methods used to devise this session (Gendlin 1978, 1996).

The main research question addressed by this thesis concerns the values of using intuitive methods as a way of approaching academic texts. The results from this session strongly suggest that such techniques are valuable to participants and may have value beyond the immediate participant group who took part in session one. These techniques, the session's results seem to suggest, have the potential to engage readers more wholeheartedly with the texts they read. The benefits of the techniques, in this session, were more to do with process and how it was experienced by participants than to do with the value of the material created. The processes of free association perhaps only 'work' in a context of a well-established psychoanalytic relationship. The material produced, although offering some interesting aspects, did not really offer much to analyse using Lecercle's methods (Lecercle 1985). However, participants' responses to the process were largely very positive, and their comments about the process throw interesting light on how academic reading feels and how it might be approached.

6.4 Session two: 'Reading with the Body'

66.4.a Session two: participants

The following participants took part in this session:

LB
PR
JO
RBRB
LD
RS

6.4.b Session two: introduction and background theory summary

This research session looked at embodied experiences of reading, exploring the idea that reading might have an impact on our hearts and/or bellies, as well as our head, mind or brain (I use these terms with caution, and through a phenomenological rather than a materialist lens). This session used techniques based on Eugene Gendlin's strategies of focusing, dipping and his concept of the felt sense (Gendlin 1973, 1978, 1996). As has been explored in detail above, Gendlin drew upon phenomenology to develop a method of communicating with our experiences which avoided the tendency to base understanding around preconceived ideas. He also developed a notion of the body which rejects the notion that it is mechanical and quantifiable. Gendlin's approach was to develop a method which allowed users to experience a 'felt sense', or the lived experience of being a body in the world. For Gendlin, the 'felt sense' is a way of communicating with the unconscious: "there can be a direct awareness of the "border zone" between the conscious and the unconscious" (Gendlin 1996, p. 16). This involves an act of focusing inwards. Unclear at first, the 'felt sense' is a distinct relationship with one's experience which differs from experiencing an emotion, but which is linked with it (Gendlin 1996, pp. 16-17). The 'felt sense' can be understood as the lived experience of what it feels like to be here, now, when careful attention is being paid to what is going on. Gendlin believed that, once cultivated, his methods could be used as a way of dealing with personal issues without getting caught up in an intellectual understanding of the problem (Gendlin 1978, 1996).

Gendlin's techniques are simple to understand but require some practice to use effectively. The felt sense is intrinsically a bodily sense: the sense of this border zone "occurs *bodily,* as a physical, somatic sensation…. It is sensed inwardly, not as an external physical sense such as tight muscles or a tickle on the nose" (Gendlin 1996, p. 18). Personally, I find his techniques difficult to use effectively: I get distracted and start thinking about something rather than paying attention to embodied experiences. Gendlin acknowledged that his methods could take time to master and encouraged perseverance: "the more often you do it, the easier and more natural it will seem" (Gendlin 1978, p. 51). Taking this into account, my aim in this session was to get participants to use a simplified form of Gendlin's techniques to explore what reading feels like, and what such a 'wider' experience of reading might teach us, by asking participants to read texts in ways inspired by Gendlin's techniques (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006).

6.4.c Session two: structure

Session two started, like other sessions, with a brief introduction to the project as a whole, the circulation and signing of consent forms, and an overview of the session (the material circulated beforehand can be found in Appendix Three). Participants were then invited to take part in a short relaxation exercise in which I guided them through a meditation, using techniques to encourage bodily awareness. The meditation exercise was followed by a brief discussion. The discussion was intended to give another reflexive perspective on the experience, to allow participants to share experiences together, and to give the researcher an idea of how easy or difficult participants found the process of being aware of their body and sensations.

In the next exercise, abstracts of academic papers were distributed. Participants were not able to see what the paper was when they selected it. One participant (RS) elected to work with a text (a book) she had brought with her. On reflection, this was a mistake. By allowing this participant to bring her own book (others could have brought their own text, but decided not to) a different experience was introduced to the process, as the participant had time to think about her attitudes to various books and select one. The random selection otherwise used in this session bypasses some elements of conscious deliberation. Additionally, reading abstracts is a very specific experience, different to reading a book.

Participants were first asked to read the text and make notes about its content and their reactions to it. Next, they were talked through each stage of Gendlin's 'focusing' technique, as a way of 'reading' the text they were using (Gendlin 1978; 1996; 2006). The five stages, as presented to the group in this session, were as follows:

1. **Clearing a space**: having read the text, participants were instructed to be silent and wait, to pay inward attention, focusing particularly on stomach and chest, observing and acknowledging what came up
2. **Handle:** finding out more about the quality of the felt response by focusing on the sense interrogatively, waiting for words, images or phrases that seem to

‘fit’.

3. **Resonating:** going back and forth between the felt sense in body and image / word / phrase that was found at stage 2, noting down any resonances and/or bodily sensations and signals
4. **Asking:** dialoguing with the felt sense, asking questions, noting down insights while maintaining focus on what is going on internally
5. **Receiving:** waiting for any shift(s) that might occur, taking notes

Participants were given a sheet with an outline figure on it, to help them ‘map’ any sensations. A blank example of this is included in Appendix Seven, and the finished figures are also included. After a short break, participants took part in the group discussion. Finally, written materials and image were collected, and participants told about the post-session questionnaire. Examples of transcripts can be found in Appendix Four, and examples of post-session questionnaires in Appendix Six.

6.4.d Session two: results

6.4.d.1 Gaps between expectations and results

Results are presented thematically, but first I will discuss some problematic elements in this session.

As in session one, the session did not go as I planned. In retrospect, I was perhaps over-optimistic about the possibility of communicating Gendlin’s technique in a short session. Gendlin breaks his techniques down into five stages, as outlined above (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006). I tried to explain these stages to the group, but the space of time allocated to this was insufficient to fully communicate the stages of his process, what participants had to do, and allow participants to reflect on and assimilate the techniques. On the face of it, the techniques are simple, but becoming adept at putting them into practice is not simple. Personally, I find them difficult to do, as my mind wanders a lot, and my awareness of embodiment is at best patchy. After reflection, I now feel I should have used a much simpler version of the technique, using only one or two stages and based around a process of looking inward and mapping responses to the written article. I would introduce more freedom around the technique, which is structured around five different stages (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006). As members of the group were, in most cases, adept at mapping body experience, in retrospect it might have been better to have asked them to become aware of their bodily responses as they read, using whatever means they found most appropriate, rather than expecting them to go through each of Gendlin's stages in turn.

Another gap between expectation and results came about because I introduced a photocopied sheet as a means for participants to map their bodily responses to the abstracts, after exploring them by reflecting 'inwards' (see Appendix Seven for examples). Some participants became interested in the blank figure drawings for their own sake, rather than as an aid to complete the exercise. Additionally, by providing a bodily 'map' based around a standardised (very abstracted) human figure, I now feel I was forcing the responses into a particular shape, by pre-empting what a 'body' is and how it feels like to its inhabitant (owner). The 'map' also perhaps suggested to participants that they respond visually to the figure, rather than using writing to record their experiences. None of these responses are 'bad', *per se*, indeed they raise interesting questions about the best ways to collect, and reflect upon, body experiencing. But in this instance, I felt the participants became distracted from focusing on their experiences and that the 'body map' was a welcome distraction.

Perhaps for the reasons mentioned above, or perhaps for other reasons I have not thought of, the participants produced much less written material than I had anticipated and hoped. Examples of the material produced is included in Appendix Seven. This is not to suggest that the drawings made inside the figure were of no use. They added substantially to the material produced and offered rich material for analysis. More problematic was the way, mentioned above, in which the blank figures seemed to steer some participants in a particular direction, away from focusing on 'inner' bodily sensations. As mentioned, I myself find Gendlin's techniques difficult, and struggle to put them into practice, just as I find meditation and other methods of expanding awareness difficult. Personally, the difficulty is mostly to do with having to 'perform' focus at a particular time and in a particular context. If 'inner' or 'bodily' material arises spontaneously, I am generally aware of it and can articulate it to some extent. If I *try* to focus, I find my mind wanders and my attention slips away quickly. So I wondered after the session whether participants also struggled to maintain focus, and if the figures had therefore been a welcome distraction from a difficult task. There is also the possibility that one avoids opening oneself up to this material because it might be unpleasant. If one is suppressing material, then any technique which encourages one to open up to this material might bring up difficult or painful emotions. The avoidance of potentially difficult material might well have been probably self-protective, and in the context of a session with its acknowledged limitations, very useful. This was not a therapy session, and participants would not be able to access the emotional support they would need to process difficult material. Therefore, any self-censoring or self-sabotage in the form of distraction might in fact be the most appropriate outcome. Having said that, some participants did bring material that they found emotionally uncomfortable or challenging, but where this happened they had previously done therapeutic work, were comfortable with sharing their experiences, and were able to manage the difficult emotions in this context.

6.4.d.2 Role of the 'Body Maps'

These reservations aside, I now turn to the material collected, and how this material fits with the theoretical materials considered in the literature review. While I have sounded a negative note above about the difference between my expectations of the session and reality, and about the distracting qualities of the body 'map', it is worth looking at RBRB's explanation of her relationship with the figure. Quoting at length from her statement, she:

> *started to have a really happy relationship with the figure [laughter], and I got much more interested, and I realised I'd left it unannotated, because the message coming through from this and my feeling was, 'keep your own clarity'. Keep your own clarity. Not ignorance, but keep your clarity, and be as transparent as you can, and don't get so exasperated and frustrated because this doesn't feel real or doesn't feel true, or in some fundamental way it is offensive to my way of being! And all I could do was draw his foot, very slightly, tapping. So the irritation was there, but the message was that it is unannotated because you must keep your own clarity, and keep asking in your way of being for more transparency, and be un-deluged by other people's manipulation or even just their data.*

Although this is, in the sense outlined above, a distraction from the course I planned for the session, it does reveal something interesting and relevant about RB's relationship with academia. This ties in with the theme ***negative feelings about academic reading*** discussed below. In the above, the idea of keeping one's own clarity is opposed to annotation, and annotation is associated with the lack of transparency, and being 'deluged' by 'stuff' coming from other people – their data, their manipulation. This has some resonance with the oppositions I have been exploring in Chapters Two and Three, although is not an exact fit To recap, these oppositions are between the academy and mediumship, between Lecercle's *délire* and the dominant tradition of language, between conscious and unconscious processes as explored in free association, and between the scientific stance critiqued by Gendlin and a phenomenological awareness of self (Gendlin 1996). Although not a clear fit, the opposition RB makes does have resonances with each of these, and it is also deeply illuminative of the ways in which she experiences the things she associates with the abstract (the data-heavy, demanding, overbearing and soul-destroying weights of some academic contexts).

6.4.d.3 Bodily and emotional feelings in response to academic reading.

Turning now to the material produced, several themes emerged. There are some relationships and cross-over between these and the ones which emerged from session one. These themes are explored below. There was relatively little written material from this session, apart from the transcript of the discussion at the end, and post-session emailed feedback. Several of the respondents did not write anything for the exercise, preferring to draw on or around the 'body maps' provided. Examples of the material can be found in Appendix Seven.

Several participants mentioned the impact of reading on different body areas including stomach; heart; throat and breastplate. Bodily reactions included:

- Feeling: stomach tight (linked with lack of bodily understanding)

- Feeling: not wanting to take something in as feeling of throat as shield
- Colour in images - green used to symbolise feelings
- Breathing - increased, linked with tension in stomach.
- Awareness of warmth
- Fizzing sensation / fizzing warmth / like pins and needles / tingling
- Visual effects: finding places which it is difficult to see (back of shoulders) more difficult
- Memories popping into mind / perhaps associated with specific body areas
- Belly and heart felt very different

Thus, participants reported a wide range of responses. In some, only bodily feelings were reported. In others, memories are linked to feelings, or float freely. In some the relationship between bodily sensation and emotion and beyond was unexplored, in others more explicit: the participant who recorded the increased breathing (PR) reported that the tension in stomach lessened ("softened" as the feelings came to awareness: "I may have seen a little light where the tension was"). Some reported bodily sensations seemed to indicate negative feelings about reading the abstract, as illustrated above.

Overall, it seemed to be difficult for participants to separate bodily sensations from emotions, and to separate text from image. This lack of clarity, revealing multiple ambiguities, fits with the framework developed in Chapter Three. Gendlin, for example, talks about the ways in which the dialogue he envisages unfolds over time, hermeneutically (Gendlin 1996, pp. 32-35), as a series of steps characterised by a "carrying forward" of understanding (Gendlin 1996, p.38). Lecercle characterises the landscape of *délire* as contradictory and unclear (Lecercle 1985). The consciousness experienced in free association is likewise complex and demands careful attention (Bollas 2002). In the case of this group, where participants used the body 'maps' to illustrate their reactions, they sometimes used colour, together with written notes, to express emotions as sensations. For example, CH made a red scribble around the middle of the figure, with stronger near horizontal lines emerging from it. Next to the lower scribble was marked 'resistance', with 'tight heart' next to the lines. Above both of these was a blue-green scribble approximately over the heart area (this correlated with the participant's written notes) with 'fuse' and hazy' written next to them (See Appendix Seven). My personal impression of this illustration is of an angry, energetic knot around the stomach area, perhaps confused, with an equally confused, though more peaceful (perhaps depressive) cloud around the heart. There are lines surrounding the part of the heart area which are reminiscent of an eye, and wider rough ovals which swoop around the heart, leaving the contours of the diagram. A faint blue line, like a puff of smoke, escapes the coils around the heart and travels up to the head, on each side of which is marked 'disconnect' and 'connect'. Here, emotion and bodily sensation intermingle, as do text and drawn image. The extent to which it proved difficult to separate bodily sensation from emotion and the challenge of conceptualising these complex and subtle states may illustrate why this sort of reaction to academic readings get overlooked or downplayed, although they are clearly part of the process of reading. In retrospect, and in line with Lerman's critical response process (Lerman 2003), it might have been interesting to discuss the more visual responses in the group, to get other feedback. This did not happen at the time, primarily because the session was already very busy, but would be useful to integrate into future research groups.

It should be pointed out that although the majority of emotional and bodily responses felt negative, with participants making links to feelings about academic reading or study, not all such experiences were negative. For example, PR reported a sensation of release as the initial feelings were acknowledged: she reported that an increase in breathing was followed by a lessening of the tension in her stomach (a 'softening') as the feeling came to awareness: "I may have seen a little light where the tension was". Additionally, the term 'negative' should be used with care, as it perhaps suggests something which should be avoided, and, by contrast, 'positive' experiences cultivated. However, it may be equally important to welcome the less pleasant experiences, and to listen to what they have to say.

6.4.d.4 Struggles with the idea of a 'felt sense' and with doing the exercises

One participant (MB) struggled to engage with the exercise, saying that they were aware of no feelings, body sensations or emotions when they tried to focus on the felt sense. This raises interesting questions about self-identity and self-experience. Was it that AR at some level had the experiences which the focusing technique uncovers, and that he simply wasn't aware of them, that is, that with sufficient work he would have been able to identify a felt sense, or rather that AR is constituted in such a way that this awareness wasn't possible? It seemed, from working with AR in other sessions, that his sense of self is tied up with a sense of himself as a thinker or intellectual. As such, perhaps they had an interest only in types of understanding to do with the intellect. It is also possible that cutting off from a more embodied 'felt sense' might have been a protection mechanism, because being aware of these processes might bring about unpleasant or distressing memories or experiences. Totton talks about the necessity of cutting the head off from both the body and from telepathy (Totton 2003). As these group sessions were not therapy sessions, I was concerned not to ask AR further questions about this.

MB's responses also indicate a tension in the ways in which we can approach body. This tension – between the body understood objectively as extended in time and space and quantifiable on the one hand, and, on the other, as a rich, inner experience of 'embodiment' has been explored in Chapter Three. AR indicated that he had an objectified sense of himself as body, as something that is primarily knowable through measurement and by standards set by others, which is not accessible to sensed experiences (or perhaps these experiences were not sharable with others, or through language). AR also indicated, in other responses, that he identified himself with his brain. In a similar way, PR produced a diagram containing an outline drawing of lungs and a stomach, rather than the more expressive / symbolic diagrams others produced. This might suggest that, for PR, the 'objective' knowledge of herself as a container for medically defined internal organs takes precedence over any sense of herself as otherwise experienced. However, this outline drawing had the top of the stomach (joined to the lungs?) marked with a band of short lines, which had a more expressive function. Thus, the expressive mingled with the representational in PR's – and other participants – drawings and notes. In a self-deprecatory note, the participant had written 'I can't draw to save my life' at the bottom of the diagram. This participant also seemed to be applying an 'objective' sense of what her body was, rather than an expressive or felt sense. Given her depiction of 'objectified' lungs and heart, this is interesting and perhaps also points to a sense of herself as primarily to do with how she measures up to external expectations and standards. In other participants, a more 'interior' self-understanding as a body-mind was also mingled with elements from a quantified, materialist perspective. This raises questions about what we understand when we understand ourselves as a body, which will be considered further in the discussion of the next group session. This also resonates with Gendlin's critique of a mechanically understood body, briefly discussed above (Gendlin 1978; 1996; 2006).

6.4.d.5 Academic inadequacy

The different ways participants reported bodily and/or emotional experiences have been reported above. The participants frequently linked these experiences with wider conceptual contexts. Two of the most common feelings reported were of disconnection from the text and of a sense of inadequacy as a reader. These two reactions were sometimes reported together.

As an example, LB's diagram was annotated thus:

> ***By head:*** *"Not connecting with text. Does not understand. Wants to respect authors and engage, but totally resistant to it intellectually at the level of the heart. Heart wants to know why people have written such a dry abstract"*
> ***By heart, inside diagram:*** *"Hunger, desire, longing for depth. Frustration - moving across chest and into heart"*

In the above, the lack of connection and frustration are given a clear bodily location, in the chest and heart. Interestingly, although within Western traditions knowledge is intellectual and located in the head or brain, in other traditions it is associated with the heart. In classical Chinese philosophy, for example, the heart is understood as the centre of understanding and thought as well as emotion and intuitions (Rošker 2018).

Reflecting similar responses, but with a wider range of bodily located feelings, JO's figure was marked as follows, sometimes with arrows indicating the area under discussion:

> ***Head, circled, with arrow from words on left to location: "****all physical activity / sensations are now located here, in my head. Depressed? Cut off below my head"*
> ***To right of head: "****Familiar script: I'm the only one. Why doesn't it / can't [illegible]. Judgements about my capabilities. Giving up. I'm useless"*
> ***Throat (with line drawn to base of neck):*** *"Cold" (above line) "Searing on in breath"*

> *(below line)*
> ***Upper chest:*** *"Grey. Straight jacket"*
> ***Heart (circled):*** *"Where has the warmth gone?"*
> ***Immediately under heart area:*** *"Grey, paralysis"*
> ***Stomach / solar plexus (circled):*** *"I've closed down"*
> ***By right hand, with arrow:*** *"It feels shut down"*

JO also said during a discussion that the abstract related to her first degree, and evoked feelings of self-judgement and negative self-assessment:

> *initially I had the searing cold of the breath coming in, going down, and it was like searing … where did that come from? And then I felt very grey and straight-jacketed, all the way down, it was very cold, and I said, where is the warmth gone, and then further down, it was like grey paralysis, and I've written, 'I've closed down'. So I was aware that that was kind of my physical experience, and then all the energy, all the physical sensations were up in my head, and very closely connected with, um, judgements. Not about the text but about me, and my capacities, my capabilities. Very big judgements. So it was very hard to stay in my body – well I hadn't - I'd flown up in to my head and couldn't get it back so I got loads of statements from myself, and those were absolutely, whenever I've done academic works in my first degree, my second degree, it just took me right back there to the feelings of 'I can't do this, I don't understand, I'm the only one'... yeah.*

Other participants commented on negative feelings towards the abstract: LB said that her heart felt "hungry", a desire for more depth in the article, and LD reported a reluctance to engage with the abstract expressed as a "very visceral feeling around my chest".

These responses raise questions about what prompted them. While the primary prompt was reading the particular abstract that each person had distributed to them, it is debatable whether the responses relate to the content of individual abstracts, or are more to do with the conventions in which academic writings are encased: the type of language, the conventions of layout, etc. Certainly, JO's responses seem to link the reaction not to the specifics of *this* abstract, but to abstract in general, or more accurately, doing academic reading in general. It's also possible that some of her negative reaction stemmed from a sense that respondents *had* to engage with a partial extract of a text they were unlikely, otherwise, to have chosen to read.

Aside from these questions, the reactions also highlight what paying attention to bodily sensations might bring to academic reading. In this instance, the reactions felt cold, grey, dry, frustrated. Was this a bodily commentary on the nature of the texts, or a frustration at having been edged out of processes of reading for a long time? It is possible that, given further exercises of this sort, the body response and the text might have come to a compromise or even friendship.

A further point concerns the relationship between the bodily experiences and the nature of text. It's likely that things emerging from the body are harder to pinpoint, are fluid and changing, and defy easy categorisation. To some extent, the use of diagrams was an attempt to side-step these difficulties, but I am still trying to report primarily through text, which probably leads to a flattening and some sort of misrepresentation of the complexity of the body responses.

6.4.d.6 Thoughts about the techniques used

Another issue came up in the discussion at the end of the session: the extent to which participants struggled with Gendlin's technique (Gendlin 1978; 1996). Some found it difficult to focus on the 'felt sense', others found the explanation difficult to grasp, some found it difficult to execute, some used 'objective' knowledge, for example about organs to superimpose / shape their experiences (as mentioned above). One participant seemed to lack any sense of embodiment, feeling his body as something external to himself. Gendlin was opposed to this seemingly common understanding: "we have to think differently about the body. It's not a machine" (Gendlin 2000, p. 259).

At the start of the session, participants had been asked to take part in a relaxation exercise using body awareness techniques. The meditation prompted some comments, again particularly in the discussions during the session and in the post-session questionnaire. Participants responded:

- *I had the question in my mind, why are we doing this? Why are we doing this, in this context?*
- *Comfort / familiarity with the exercise / previous experience of similar*
- *Setting was different to usual setting for such exercises: no candles etc.*
- *Some tendency to "drift" into thinking, rather than the experience*
- *Some pressure from 'academic' setting*
- *"we tend not to bring these parts to an academic activity, and it felt wonderful"*

Other comments related to the focusing exercise, although were primarily voiced about the meditation exercise. RBRB found some areas more familiar than others or more "vocal", while, some areas felt neglected or harder to 'feel'. This was reiterated by RS: "there's blank bits". RB "apologised to some bits for not having paid them attention until they gave me trouble – and I had a pain or a difficulty or a lump or something, and I felt, I'm sorry I haven't paid attention to these parts when they have apparently been irritant really, you know". LD said that in his day job he had to work primarily with his head, which felt detached, but despite this he found it "easy to get into my body again… and I realise that I think that I *am* there, except that I don't consciously realise it". Some participants suggested it was slightly odd to do this in an academic setting, or that it seemed odd at first but became easier. AR said the surroundings were peaceful and comfortable. This raises interesting questions about the ways in which academic life is normally carried out. Relaxation felt different to the norm, and something that transgressed unspoken rules. In terms of whether doing the meditation exercise early on made a difference to the later focusing exercise, opinions differed. Some said it made no difference (MB), or that they weren't sure if it made a difference (LB, LD, PR). Others (RBRB) said it did have a positive impact, for example on their ability to 'tune in' or focus on the body: the relaxation made her more comfortable with the focusing process and that certain body parts had been ignored. Other questions are raised, for example how academic experiences would change if approached with conscious relaxation exercises, or with a focus on bodily awareness, before, during, or after they take place.

Some participants were positive about the techniques used, while others found them difficult. LD reported that he struggles with academic reading and writing, and that the technique offered them a way to think about texts in a different way and engage with them differently, connecting embodied experiences to reading. This relates to the feedback in the first session, that the techniques offered a different way to connect to the text, and as such brought increased emotional connection. LD is also dyslexic, and he related this to his struggles with reading. RS, an artist, was interested in the possibilities of the technique for art making: “it opens up a different way… but it definitely did connect me to this. by a different route… so I thought, if I also make my art as part of this as well, using this process, see what happens”. JO said that the technique helped connect her to her authentic experiences. LB also said it was useful (“it seemed to connect me to a different place of knowing”) and that she was interested in using it in her research. RBRB said it was useful, and that the ‘dipping’ process allowed her to make conscious checks on her experience, rather than simply reacting, though also added that she would have found it difficult to explain afterwards what the technique was, as it had been intermingled with “my own ‘story’”. PR said she would have to work with it more before deciding if it was useful or not. Here, a common theme is connection: new connections were opened up, new ways of connection were made possible. This suggests possibilities for different approaches to academic reading and for those of us who struggle to connect to academic texts.

6.4.d.7 Technique’s impact lasted beyond session itself: subsequent reflections

In the post-session questionnaire, usually completed in the couple of weeks after the session, participants reported that the impact of the technique had been felt beyond the session. LB and LD both said that the ‘felt sense’ felt strong, and that the exercises made them change their ideas about reading, offering a way to incorporate a sense of bodily experiences into the experience of reading. Louisa also said that the exercise had had a lasting impact on her feeling that “things have changed for me on a deep level” as she listened more to her body in subsequent days, and let it lead her to a solution to a problem she was having in her research. RBRB reflected that the felt sense related to intuitive experience, and that it would be useful to people who ‘over-think’ life, and as she defines herself as an intuitive rather than an ‘academic’ person, the exercise gave validation to intuition as an equally acceptable way of being, as she preferred the intuitive ways “but am so aware of having to check their validity and not just be subjective all the time”. She also commented on the group learning environment, saying that she prefers to learn direct from others in discussion than through reading, which she finds “lonely, isolating, scary even”, adding:

> *this exercise showed me I don’t have to just ‘react’ (either preserving my ignorance and wanting to reject the material outright) or by getting angry at the perceived invasion of my mind, time, space, effort and somehow ‘mental oxygen’. It showed me I can stay more transparent somehow and let the stuff flow through me and see what happens then – see what sticks*

LB also reported that subsequent to the session, she had had a number of strange and vivid dreams and synchronicities, and also that she felt she was being guided to listen more to her body, and “am being led in extremely valuable directions”.

In summary, while some of the techniques did not work in the way I had anticipated, the material collected revealed interesting insights into how people connect to academic material, and what perspectives a more ‘intuitive’ approach rooted in the body can bring. Intuitive practices designed to explore bodily feelings in response to the text revealed rich strands of experiences. Participants shared common themes of detachment from texts, and also very personal and specific responses. Gendlin’s techniques (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006), used in this session, were perhaps too complex and demanding for a time-limited exploration of the bodily responses to reading, but a simpler variant of these might be useful to facilitate different ways of approaching reading, particularly if informed by an understanding of intuitive research techniques (Anderson 2001; 2002; 2003). It would be interesting to explore a simpler version of these techniques with different groups of participants, for example ones who had less experience of looking inwards and valuing embodied responses. It would also be interesting to look at groups of people who were very familiar with Gendlin’s techniques (Gendlin 1978, 1996, 2006).

6.5 Session three: 'Psychometry of Texts'

6.5.a Session three: participants

LB
JO
OE
PR
CA
MD
AS

6.5.b Session three: background theory summary

This session asked participants to try and 'read' a text sealed inside an envelope. Through using imaginative and intuitive approaches, participants were asked to think about what reading is, and how we experience it in an academic context. There were two main theoretical sets of ideas which framed this session. One strand of thought draws upon ideas from the philosopher Jean-Jacques Lecercle, particularly his notion of '*délire':* or nonsense writing (Lecercle 1985). As indicated in Chapter Three, Lecercle developed a theory of *délire* which has implications for how we understand sense, meaning and texts, particularly in terms of how we understand the distinction between truth (fact) and fiction (Lecercle 1985). Lecercle contrasts a rationalist view of language with another view which prioritises the physical embodiment of text and its relationship to the body, language's material existence, as exemplified by *délire* (Lecercle 1985). The other rationale for this session was the practice of psychometry, the 'blind' reading of objects to determine facts about their owners and history. Psychometry is taught as part of mediumship and psychic development courses, and has been little studied academically (although see, for example, Baker *et al*. 2017).

The texts used for the reading were mixed. Some were extracts from books selected semi-randomly from the Wellcome Institute Reading Room in London, others were abstracts as had been used in previous sessions. The session was also rooted in ideas explored in sessions one and two, that is of free association and its possibilities for undermining rationalist understandings of language, and of Gendlin's phenomenological approach to psychological explorations (Gendlin 1978; 1996). As in all sessions, although one particular theoretical approach informed the background understanding and practical techniques, each of the theoretical contexts explored in Chapter Three cut across the others and cannot really be understood in isolation. A list of texts can be found in Appendix Five.

6.5.c Session three: structure

Session three, like other sessions, started with a brief overview of the project as a whole for people who had not attended previously. This was followed by the distribution and signing of consent forms, a reminder about data protection and security, an explanation of the theory associated with the session, and a brief explanation of what would happen in the session. A relaxation session focusing on awareness of body and breath followed, prior to the exercises making up the main part of the session.

This session applied the technique, taught in mediumship development and used by psychics and mediums, of psychometry, the 'blind' reading of texts (see, for example, Bernabo 2015). Reading (of texts) is generally assumed to be predicated on the visible, in that we need to see the text to read it (of course, other forms of writing exist, for example Braille) (see Paterson, 2016, pp. 138-159 for a philosophical account of reading using senses other than sight). Although reading thus generally assumes visibility, some aspects of texts' visual appearance, it seems, are often ignored: for example, we generally do not look at the aesthetic qualities of the material we read. Totton talks about the ways in which "psychotherapy has a history of keeping embodiment out of its field of awareness, and of preferring language-based relating to all other kinds" (Totton 2015, p. 1), and the same might be argued of our understandings of reading: the idea that reading is disembodied and only links tangentially to its physical instantiation is seemingly the preferred one. Additionally, we downplay other, embodied experiences of reading. To some extent, there has been a recent investigation into the embodied nature of reading, but studies tend to be from a perspective which does not focus on the experiential (and does not feel particularly embodied from the reader's perspective: for example Mangen and Schilhab 2012, pp. 285-300).

In the brief explanation at the start of the session, I concentrated on the session as an exploration of the ignored or forgotten aspects of reading, rather than on the precise nature and derivation of the intuitive techniques we were going to use to explore these aspects. After the explanation at the start, the rest of the session consisted of two exercises and a discussion. In the first exercise, participants worked individually. A set of extracts and abstracts, sealed inside envelopes, were distributed to each participant. These can be found in Appendix Five. Each person held the envelope and attempted to intuitively 'read' the content. They were encouraged to write down their impressions, make notes, jottings, drawings etc. They were also encouraged to free associate on nothing, let their minds wander, not to try to concentrate. They were reminded they could also use Gendlin's techniques of focusing, introduced in the previous session (Gendlin 1978, 2006). After five minutes of trying to 'read' the envelopes, I distributed question sheets. Participants wrote down their answers to the questions on these sheets. Finally, they opened the envelopes, read the texts, and compared their intuitive 'readings' with what the texts said. This exercise was followed by a tape-recorded discussion.

In the second exercise, participants worked in two groups. A second envelope containing an extract or abstract was given to each group. Together, the group held the envelope for five minutes, during which time they were encouraged to settle their mind, to be aware of their breathing and to pay attention to any sensations, emotions, images, thoughts or other material that came up. In this exercise, rather than writing down their impressions, a collaborative record was made. Each group had a large piece of paper and a pen. Each group member placed a hand on the pen and closed their eyes until the pen moved around the paper. They were instructed to "just see what happens". After a few minutes (I selected the most appropriate time to stop by deciding when each group had a substantial drawing) they were instructed to stop. Next, they looked at the drawing and decided, **as a group**, what the drawing looked like (what visual patterns or echoes they found there). They were then asked to work into the drawing, adding colour, new details and so on in order to bring out what the drawing suggested to them. Finally, after 15 minutes or so of drawing, they were instructed to open the envelope and compare the text within with their drawing.

In the final part of the session, respondents took part in a group discussion guided by questions about their experiences, if there were any correspondences between text and ‘readings’, the nature of any correspondences, what they thought about the exercise and what it was about, and any reflections on what this session implied for the process of reading. Participants were also, as usual, sent a post-session questionnaire (examples of these can be found in Appendix Seven).

6.5.d Session three: results and discussion

In the first two exercises, participants attempted to ‘read’, without looking at, texts sealed inside envelopes. In Appendix Four examples of the title of the extract, notes made by participant and the participant’s answers to the questions are recorded. While these are included in the thesis for completeness, as are the two group-produced illustrations made in exercise two, the focus of this section is the discussion about participants’ experiences of the exercises, rather than the results generated by the exercises themselves. For example, I have not discussed the image produced by the participants as a group, although I do discuss their experiences of creating it.

It should be emphasised that, first, I was not particularly expecting the results to have strong, clear relationships with the material inside the envelope, and I was not testing the participants’ ability to read what they could not see. I was not assuming that results would not be evidence of reading without conventionally seeing, but it was not the main focus of interest. Rather, I was interested in what happened when participants tried to read without the usual visual clues. I wondered if the material produced in the exercises would be akin to material generated through processes of free association. I also wondered if the material was susceptible to analysis using Lecercle’s (1985) techniques. In the end, relatively little material was generated using the first exercise, as discussed earlier, and I, as mentioned earlier, found the participants’ discussion of process more interesting than the material. Exercise two was designed to explore the processes of working together, and what this might generate. Here, also, I found the participant’s reflections on the processes more fruitful than the material produced, and thus this is the main focus below.

However, it is worth thinking briefly about the material generated in exercise one before moving on to looking at the discussion. I mention above that I am not particularly interested in whether there was a correspondence between the text sealed inside the envelope and the participant's written response. Indeed, in most cases, I can find little correspondence between the hidden text and the participants' notes and answers to questions. However, there is some relationship between JO's text and her readings. Her text was an extract from Mol's (2003) *The Body Multiple: ontology in medical practice,* Duke University Press. (p. 150). While her question answers suggested the text was a philosophical / spiritual work about the human condition, her responses in note form did mention the sacrum, solar plexus and other body parts (although this may have been because she was using the 'focusing' technique we had used in session two. Another match was noted in CA's notes about her text, an extract from Dolar (2006) *A Voice and Nothing More,* MIT Press, p. 150. She mentioned a "Welcome mat" as one of the images she saw: I had found this text at the Wellcome institute Library, in London.

LB had found striking coincidences between her text (an abstract) and her intuitions. Reading the notes, I could find no clear link between them, but Louisa explained her thoughts in the discussions and post-session questionnaire.

I now turn to the main themes emerging from the discussions and post-session questionnaire.

6.5.d.1 Links between text and 'readings'

The predominant message was that the text in the envelope was very different from the reading, with some points of similarities or "tentative links" (AS). Participants did not try to make connections despite the apparent lack of similarity: TL said, for example, that "I suppose there's *some* correlation, but I just feel it's in the realm of guessing really". The participant (who produced a drawing, rather than writing, found more profound similarities between text and 'reading'. MD selected a text by Schreber and found links between her image of a narrow, pointed shape and the “elongated form” mentioned in the text. She found the correlation ‘intuitive’ rather than obvious. JO also found a connection: “I was actually spotter on than I had originally thought I was”. OE reported “no correlation whatsoever. Um, really nothing”.

Only LB felt there was a strong correlation between the abstract and her reading, although it would perhaps be more accurate to say that the abstract, once revealed, had a strong personal meaning for her. She called the correlations “uncanny” and said that a huge amount of material came up for her. Initially, she had felt “useless” in her attempts to ‘read’, and that she was “really struggling to write anything”. I had said, in passing, when handing out the texts, “Louisa, you might like this one” although I had no knowledge of which text was in the envelope. Louisa also remarked on this comment of mine. The extent of the correlations between what she wrote down and the text felt, for Louisa, shocking.

While participants found few correlations between text and their ‘readings’ during the session, in the post-session questionnaire they reported more correlations, perhaps due to the extra time for reflection on the material. This suggests a number of other possibilities: that, over the intervening time, participants created meaning that wasn’t there at the start, or, more positively, that meanings needed to emerge as a result of a process of reflection over time, and not instantaneously. I am reminded of Gendlin’s (1973; 1978; 1996) process, which is spread out over time and requires investment of effort. Feeling the felt sense requires effort: it’s essential to stay with the sense, but “it is difficult to keep one’s attention on something unclear. It may come and be concretely present, but then vanish again” (Gendlin 1996, p. 53). Amongst participants, PR did not initially report any links, but mentioned later that in the first exercise, although she didn’t guess the specific topic she did guess that it was going to be easy to understand and a topic she was interested in. LB reflected in more detail on the correspondences which she had noted between text and ‘reading’ in exercise one. Despite her self-doubt and rational fears:

> *once I opened the envelope, I could not believe what I had written down…. I felt that the text was ‘familiar’ and ‘warm’. I also felt that it had something to do with ‘nature’, however I also had a strong impression of a giant cave or tunnel which looked quite foreboding. The images/impressions I was getting seemed to*

> *be quite contradictory. I struggled to sense whether there was one author, or two, and then I got the impression of 'multiple voices'. When I opened the text, I discovered that it referred to the results of a research project on the link between young people having tattoos and suicidal/hazardous behaviour. This was a revelation for me as I have a number of tattoos, all nature-based, which I had done at a time when I was going through a very difficult time in my life (I was binge-drinking, and had severe anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts). The tattoos helped me to regain some sense of 'normality' in my life and control over my body, at a time when I felt I was being controlled by others (my parents, society, etc.). Also, it was interesting that the paper had two authors who had conducted research with numerous research participants (this was why I felt that there were multiple voices initially). Finally, this exercise was quite revelatory for me – reminding me of ways of knowing that are possible beyond my mind and bringing up memories from the past and helping me to reflect on that time in comparison to where I am now. I felt that the whole exercise was healing on so many levels.*

I quote this passage at length, as Louisa was struck by what she saw as notable coincidences between the text in her envelope and her reading. This raises questions of how we might assess the 'success' of exercises like this which use psychometry techniques. What counts as correlation between (in this case) hidden text and participant 'reading'? To what extent are we to allow participants' emotional responses to the exercise as indicative of success? Are we looking for statistically significant evidence, or avowals of healing and meaning from participants? Further information could be found in some of the literature on remote viewing, a process which has links to the process of psychometry, but further explorations are outside the scope of this thesis.

6.5.d.2 Thoughts about process

Some of the group found the process enjoyable. AS commented that she enjoyed the imaginative journey she went on, despite the lack of correlation between text and 'reading'. Others called it inspiring and said that it resonated for them. Others found it less enjoyable. Despite the correlations she found between text and 'reading', LB found it stressful, and felt she was being tested or put 'on the spot'. TL also felt "panic about not being able to do this right". For LB, the exercise had a deeper significance in terms of what she understood as her intuitive abilities: she felt she has a skill in this area, but that she has done insufficient to enhance it, “it’s not exercised very much because I’m always in my head”. So, the exercise had deeper resonances to do with a part of Louisa that she felt had been neglected, and that she needed to pay more attention to. Again, there are resonances here with Gendlin’s process: the difficultly of feeling into the felt sense, but the reward of doing so, with the process revealing “a truth of change and development in the whole mesh of experience” (Gendlin 1996, p. 36). For Louisa, opening the envelope and finding that the text inside had personal significance for her touched her deeply: “it feels really significant for me”. Louisa also returned to this point in her post-session questionnaire. She reiterated her point about the inhibiting impact of the rational mind and the associated ‘performance anxiety’, and also reflected that working in a group was an effective way of breaking down the inhibitions she felt individually: “it was an interesting experience, as no one felt they were leading, but we were all being guided by a force greater than ourselves”.

After reflection (in the post-session questionnaire) respondents offered some thoughts about the process as a whole. AS commented that it offered a way to connect with texts that incorporated a shift of perspective “like looking at an object from many different angles, and seeing it in a more subtle and nuanced way”, a way which involved a fuller engagement “with our hearts and our intuitive mind”. PR also commented that the process seemed to have to do with “blocking the rational mind and let[ting] the creative mind take over”. LB added that the processes “were about tuning into those parts of human knowing that are seriously underused and misunderstood within our dominant worldview. I wonder whether they would come under the banner of ‘pseudo-science’ (from an empirical point of view). I wonder whether the transpersonal, imaginal or intuitive frameworks offered by Romanyshyn, Angelo and Anderson might be of some relevance here?”.

Two participants mentioned using the techniques they had learned in this and the previous sessions in their own work. One respondent AS works as a counsellor and said “I would like to engage more in things, using these methods, especially in my work with students, some of whom would find these approaches very helpful. I would also like to write my mentor reviews with students using these methods, instead of the dull, aims and objectives approach to their learning”. This raises the possibility, which I had not anticipated at the start of the sessions, that the techniques might be useful in educational contexts, to help readers connect with academic texts. As mentioned, both above and by LB, approaches by Anderson (2001; 2002; 2003), Angelo (2005) and Romanyshyn (2007) might be relevant here. LB is doing a PhD and these frameworks have influenced her thinking. She wondered if the techniques might be a way of giving herself permission "to try out different ways of knowing which can open oneself up to creative conversations and moments of revelation", and said she was thinking about doing the drawing exercise as a way of starting to think about different approaches for the next chapter of her PhD.

6.5.d.3 The role played by imagination

In the discussion during the session, I tried to ask about the nature of the imagination and the role it played in the process of 'reading' the envelope. I had in mind that the participants might be using their imaginations to come up with the envelopes' content, as much as any psychic skills. Or more accurately, I was wondering whether imagination and psychic ability are closely related. That is, the more one is able to enter into an imaginary world, the more one is open to phenomena that are called 'psychic'. For this reason, I asked participants about the nature of the projective mechanism, which had been mentioned by TL as a potential explanation of the process she had been through. However, the answers here were rather sparse. This might have been due to the way I phrased the question. JO agreed that there was an element of self-criticality at work, but when I wondered aloud if the self-criticality inhibited both the imaginative function and the ability to enter into an imaginative realm, the discussion tailed off.

In the post-session questionnaire, OE commented that he "was reminded of some aspects of 'active imagination', the method of Carl Jung to explore unconscious contents by amplification. I so to speak 'dived in' and then stepped back to reflect". Overall, the role of imagination in psychic ability needs further investigation, but this is unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis.

6.5.d.4 Group versus individual experiences

In the second exercise, participants made a group drawing, together holding a pencil as it moved over a sheet of paper. Different aspects of the process of working in a group were discussed. LB said it was “strange” and described a disorienting process in which she thought someone else was moving the pencil, and that person thought Louisa was moving it. She also reported having a visual image of a heart, and subsequently found a heart in the joint drawing. AS said that it felt like the pencil was being moved by a force independent of any of the individuals, and that she was “definitely going with the flow…. I didn’t get the sense that anyone was leading either. I didn’t get the sense anyone was deliberately manoeuvring it, it definitely felt like a kind of collective thing”. MD suggested that she saw a “creature” in the drawing and had a sense it was speaking to her.

OE talked about the group work as a “feeling into what we were doing together” and “something collectively coming out and not impeded by any intellectual thought”. What came up collectively was “so rich… which connected us in various ways. I found that fascinating”. Participants were more interested in the collective aspects of working than in any connections between the text and their drawing. As LB said, “there are certain links, but we felt more connected by our experience”. However, some related links between their impressions while doing the drawing: TL and JO both had a sense of the sea.

Most participants found the collaborative drawing exercise fun, enjoyable or rewarding. LB said it was freeing, while TL said that it facilitated conversations she felt she would never normally have with people she did not know particularly well: “the exercise put us into a different space, made us all equals, and helped us to bond quickly through shared experience (the shared experience of drawing, working together, and discovering similar things about each other). It was a truly magical experience”.

JO and AS discussed the idea that working together reduced or removed the ‘performance anxiety’ which some participants had felt had hampered them in the first exercise. OE called this exercise a “a wonderful experience” in which “all three of us were having the impression we were not steering the pencil we held together but yielding to the force of the others. What happened and came out as a drawing had a power of its own, whatever the interpretation”.

There are interesting differences between participants experiences of working collaboratively in session one, and this session. In session one, participants worked in pairs with one person free associating and the other acting as the ‘analyst’. In session one, participants reported disliking the experience and feeling inhibited by it, as reported above. This is a marked contrast with the enjoyment and interest in this session. There are different possible reasons for this. It might be because the exercise in session one rigidly delimited roles in which one person was in ‘control’ and the other free associating. In this session, participants worked together without a leader. It’s therefore possible that session one brought up feelings about authority and being put ‘on the spot’ by an authority figure to come up with an ‘answer’, whereas this exercise felt freer. No one person had to take the lead, no one could be held responsible for what was created as everyone had their hand on the pen. It might also be to do with the difference in medium. In session one, the mediums used were talk and writing. Participants had to speak their associations aloud. In this session, they produced a drawing together. Perhaps speaking words, or words in that particular context, is more inhibiting than drawing?

6.5.d.5 Relationship of ‘reading’ to other practices

It is interesting to note that, for some participants, the exercises linked to other methods of engaging with intuition or written materials. MD related the exercises of trying to ‘read’ the hidden texts to a practice from her spiritual tradition, *Lectio Divina,* a method of spiritual reading. Particularly, she said that she tried to let go of her own “stuff” or agenda, speaking to the text and asking it what it wanted her to know. LB compared the exercises with her first explorations of psychic development, which she had experienced as part of the “New Age” movement. (This is perhaps unsurprising, given that the techniques were developed from ones taught in psychic development groups.) She added, however, “these exercises carried a stronger sense of being grounded in reality and serious critique, than the rather lofty suggestions and boundless spiritual aspirations of my tutor at the time!”. AS commented that she related the exercises to play, “freeing one's imagination to entertain a broader spectrum of ideas and approaches to understanding something other than with the rational brain”. She has been involved in different types of improvisation in music and drama and related the session’s exercises to these experiences of “connecting with the unconscious or subliminal mind”. AS works as a mentor with University students, and said that she thought it might be a helpful approach to use with students who struggled with very rational or ‘left brain’ activities, in order that they might engage “with academic texts in more accessible ways, which complement their particular learning styles”. AS also said that she had adapted the free association exercise from session one and used it fruitfully with one of her students who had dyslexia. Perhaps the more a participant was able to contextualise the exercise, regardless of what the context was, the more they were able to respond to the exercise. By contrast, PR said she struggled to understand the point of the exercise, and how it might help understand texts. She said the only way she could make sense of it in this context was as relating to a process of brainstorming.

6.5.e Session three: summary

This session drew upon techniques of psychometry, although these techniques were used not as a test of any psychic ability but to connect with processes of reading academic material in a non-rational way. Participants particularly enjoyed the collaborative drawing processes, finding that they experienced these as working with a force that could not be reduced to a sum of participants’ efforts. The processes seemed to free participants’ imagination and unconscious processes. This session raises questions about the nature of imagination and its role in perception, and in creative and collaborative acts. There were some discrepancies in this session between my expectations and hopes and how things worked out. In particular, the material produced in the exercises was not as susceptible as I had anticipated to analysis. However, the participants’ reflections raised some interesting points, and some distinct themes arose in regard to these, throwing light on some of the research questions as articulated above.

6.6 Session four: ‘Text into Image’

Session four used techniques inspired by projective testing to generate collage images from words selected from academic abstracts. It approached academic reading and texts from a different perspective, questioning that such texts need to be unambiguous and straightforward. The methods in this section were loosely inspired by the practice of psychometric testing, which can be linked to ideas of free association, as a way of exploring the unconscious (Dubey *et al.* 2019). Participants worked through a series of steps starting with words taken from a set of abstracts and transforming these into an image to be read symbolically.

6.6.a Session four: participants

The following participants took part in Session Four:
YW
AS
OE
LB
PR

6.6.b Session four: background theory summary

This session investigated what happens if we try and work with academic texts symbolically. So far, the exercises in sessions one, two and three have offered different ways to access the ‘other’ side of academic reading, by using techniques designed to approach academic reading material intuitively. As indicated in more detail in Chapter Two, some scientific, positivist perspectives seem to assume that the world is clear, understandable and directly knowable (Boundas 2007, pp. 161-165), and that language is directly referential (Lecercle 1985). This view of language is the one critiqued by Lecercle as the ‘dominant’ tradition (Lecercle 1985). While the language of the “dominant tradition” “enables us to live in society” (Lecercle 1985, p. 6), it “deliberately ignores various experiences of language which are the daily lot of every speaker" (Lecercle 1985, p. 6). This view is also critiqued by Gendlin explicitly (Gendlin 1963, 1973), and implicitly by some contemporary theorists of free association, particularly Totton (2002) and Bollas (2003). For Lecercle, this unrecognised aspect of language (*délire)* relates to instinct and the body (Lecercle 1985). This raises a question of how this applies in academia. Should communications be clear and precise, referring unambiguously to their referents, or is there space in academia for poetry in communications? One view of academic writing is that it should be straightforward and clear (see, for example Soles 2003). However, other approaches acknowledge that there is a space in academia for the personal, poetic and ambiguous, as articulated by Cole and Knowles (2008). There is an argument that the answer to this will depend on the discipline in question.

In order to look at academic texts from another intuitive perspective, this session used an idea which has strong relationships to notions of the unconscious and free association; that is, projective testing. Like free association, projective testing was designed to uncover hidden mental processes. Projective testing was used from the mid-20th century onwards in psychology as a way of determining personality and personality disorders. Projective tests are typically made up of a set of images, selected to possess a high degree of ambiguity, which are presented in turn to an individual, who then interprets what s/he sees. These tests, for example the Rorschach (Rorschach and Oberholzer 1942), and Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) (Murray 1943) all use very different images. The Rorschach images are complex ink blots; the TAT uses images which show human beings in dramatic situations where it is not quite clear what is taking place. What these tests have in common is the use of ambiguous material to generate responses. The images each test uses have been designed specifically to elicit certain responses which indicate the subject's psychological profile or personality, exploring personality dynamics, (drives, conflicts, motives and areas of interest) (Gordon and Fleisher 2010). This method was chosen as it offers another way to explore unconscious material.

As with other sessions, the techniques and exercises used in the sessions are not, and are not intended to be, slavish examples of how the techniques are used in context. Rather, elements of practice were taken from each technique, and used to feed into the exercises developed for the session. In this case, the idea was that an academic text could be transformed into an image through various steps. The image would then be ‘read’, but ‘read’ in a very different way to the way the original text might be read. The reading of the image, it was envisaged, was likely to involve greater relationship with symbol, and less relationship with direct referentiality. In a previous session, techniques designed to use free association to reveal a hidden side of the text were less than successful. It was hoped that this technique might offer a different way to uncover such material.

6.6.c session four: structure

As was the case in previous sessions, session four started with a brief explanation of the overall aims of the research group, and circulation of the consent forms. This was followed by an overview of the session, explaining how this session emerges from concerns explored in the last session. Participants then took part in a relaxation session, including focus on the body and breath.

There was one exercise in this session, divided into a number of stages. The exercise was designed to take participants through a series of tasks which transformed a piece of academic writing (an abstract) into an image. First, abstracts were distributed to participants, one abstract each. Participants sat in a circle. They read through these, trying to understand the abstract and assimilating its content. In stage two, participants first closed their eyes for a few moments, then opened them again. They were then instructed to look at the abstract as a shape on the page, and to allow their eyes to wander over the page and its visual qualities, letting individual words emerge. As words emerged, participants picked out three that seemed particularly ambiguous, and circled them. In stage three, the paper was passed to the person on the left, who looked at the three circled words, writing them on the back of the sheet and inventing sentences containing all three words. At the end of this stage they circled the sentence that most appealed to them. In stage 4 the sheet was passed again to the person on the left, and the participants made a collage inspired by the sentence circled and with materials provided (magazines, coloured pens / pencils etc.). In stage five, a final pass of the collage and sentence was made, after which the next participant compared text with the collage to trace differences, similarities and otherwise 'read' the collage. They were prompted in this by a short set of printed questions. Finally, participants discussed the exercise.

I am devoting less time to the discussion of this section than to the others (particularly in comparison to the three sessions above). The main reason for this is that the main material produced (the collage) was primarily visual, and the focus on analysing the material produced from sessions has shifted so the discussion is primarily about the written material. There was insufficient time to take the different approach demanded by visual material (for example to shift into the Critical Response Process, as outlined above) (Lerman and Borstel 2003). It is hoped that future research will focus more on visual materials and their analysis. Additionally, the focus in the discussions was on the process of making the work, at least equally to the work itself. I felt it was appropriate to follow the analytic thread this brought up, looking at what it felt like to experience this approach to academic materials, rather than on what this approach produced.

6.6.d session four: results and discussion

Representative examples of the results can be found in Appendices Three, Four, Six and Seven. The outputs from this section were as follows:

- one collage per participant
- Three words from abstract per participant
- One set of sentences per participants
- One set of answers to questions about the image per participant
- A transcript of the discussion at the end of the session
- The post-session questionnaires

This section summarises some of the themes emerging from the above. As with other sessions, the process itself, as reflected on by participants, turned out to be equally, if not more interesting as the material generated by the process. Both aspects will be considered in the following.

6.6.d.1 Transformations

This session, as described above, was iterative and transformative. The original material - the abstract - was transformed in a series of steps into a collage. Some of the transformative steps are worth particular attention. Looking first at the starting words which 'emerged' for participants, while they were asked to select words which seemed particularly ambiguous, the words selected are - with only a few exceptions - unemotional and analytical, redolent of logical thought processes. This is the complete list:

- Overall Wellness / Format / Situation
- Of some kind / Notions / Those concepts
- Emergence / Unquestioned / Violent
- Subsequent / Marquand's / Sources
- Ambient / Analytical / Euler-Bemoulli

Most of the words are ones that might be expected in a distanced, analytical piece of writing. There is one emotive word ('violent'), and two names. To me, the words selected seem particularly *devoid* of ambiguity, seeming rather to be words that are empty of emotional resonance, general rather than specific, and impersonal. It is possible that I did not properly explain to the group what I meant by 'ambiguous'. Perhaps the most notable transformation occurs at the stage where the words become sentences. The unemotional and impersonal 'seed' words became imaginative and striking sentences which make the reader curious about the larger literary world in which they might be embedded. Two of the participants picked out names as the ambiguous words or phrases. This is interesting, because proper names, in some philosophical traditions, are assumed to *lack* connotation and simply denote their object (Guenthner 2013). Arguably, in this exercise, the selection of names made the sentence formation easier, as it forced the introduction of an agent / subject into the narrative.

Typically, participants created three very different sentences from the seed words or phrases. One example is as follows. This participant's seed words were 'emergence', 'unquestioned' and 'violent'. From these words, the following three sentences were created:

- *That the emergence of a violent society is a result of fearful mistrust may be unquestioned*
- ***Violent storms have been unquestioned by some as an indication of global warming***
- *It is unquestioned that he died of a violent heart attack the emergence of which was unforeseen.*

(The bold sentence is the one selected by the participant as the preferred option to work with.)

Each of these sentences is reasonably short - the longest is 17 words. Each sentence, despite having to use all three seed words, has a different flavour. The first has a quasi-academic feel and could almost be found in a report or paper. The second also reads like non-fiction but is much more direct and to-the-point. The third could belong to either fiction or non-fiction. The third also references specific events: a violent heart attack that led to the death of one person. the first sentence discusses general principles, as does the second. It's interesting to note the variations in tone from the seed words.

Some sentences emerged from the seed words with an element of humour entirely absent in the seeds. For example, the seeds 'of some kind', 'notions', and 'those concepts' generated the following sentences, the first of which adds a note of surreal humour with the 'spiky' porcupines.

- *The porcupines of some kind had inflated notions of grandeur and corrupted these concepts to meet their own spiky ends*
- *The notions of the priest were laid onto a table of these concepts – each neatly packed and utensils ready to consume, using different utensils of some kind or other.*
- *These concepts were like balloons, each of their own colour and size, floating in a sea of notions and landing upon islands of words of some kind.*

Equally, in this case, we could see the new sentences as introducing a more creative, playful, fictitious note. While the first example above (the three sentences for the words 'emergence', 'unquestioned' and 'violent') stayed firmly down to earth (although the sentences could conceivably have been fiction as well as factual), the second examples are much more playful and make a greater use of simile and metaphor. Indeed, this particular set of sentences has something of the feel of the nonsense literature discussed by Lecercle (1985), and it might have been interesting to see how the absurd elements present here could have been developed, had the exercises not moved in a different direction. I am thinking, for example, of Lecercle's analysis of Louis Wolfson's writing (Lecercle 1985, pp. 27-31), in which Wolfson describes his rejection of English and, as a defence against the dangers of the language, develops a complex set of devices for rending English safe, including one in which words are "transposed without transformation from English into another language" (Lecercle 1985, p. 28). Of course, in the exercises in this session the transformations are imposed by my rules, rather than internal rules dictated by processes of psychic self-defence, as in Wolfson's case.

Of particular interest in the set of sentences from the exercise, quoted above, is the way in which sentence two and three concern theoretical concepts (the 'notions' and 'concepts' of the seed words) but developed metaphorically and as similes, so concepts are 'like balloons' and the priest's notions are 'laid onto a table' of concepts. This elaboration of an element of the seed words into something fanciful and absurd seems to add a layer of self-conscious reflexivity to an arguably academic process of finding relationships between conceptual elements. It is hoped that future research will further investigate the language used in exercises like this, investigating the relationships between sense and nonsense further.

To some extent, the narratives produced by participants who worked with proper names, rather than other types of words, as seed words / phrases were more 'active'. These narratives had more implied action, and fewer elaborations of conceptual or highly abstract situations. They were also more 'fictive' and imaginative. As an example of the type produced by seed words which were not names, one participant picked the seed words / phrases: 'overall wellness', 'format' and situation'. The following sentences were produced from these:

- *The situation of the sauna brought a new format to the overall wellness of the visitors*

- ***The improved format of the overall wellness of the tigers in their new situation greatly assisted the success of their reintegration in nature***
- *The overall wellness of young people in the 1960s brought home the new situation and format of women's liberation to society at large*

Sentence one and two above could be read as fiction or non-fiction, and sentence three might be primarily considered non-fiction (taking into account that of course all three, as all of the sentences produced at this stage were) are fiction, as they have been invented). However, the tone of these three sentences is less immediate and less 'fictional' are the sentences which are based on seed words which include a name. In the following examples, where sentences were developed from seed words / phrases including names, there is something arguably more imaginative and active about the resulting sentences. In the two examples below, the seed word sets are, respectively, 'subsequent', 'Marquand's', and 'sources' on the one hand, and 'ambient', analytical', and 'Euler-Bemoulli' on the other.

These led to the following sets of sentences:

- ***My sources clearly confirmed Marquand's subsequent attempts***
- *Marquand's sources indicated there won't be any subsequent investigations*
- *I looked at Marquand's papers and I couldn't find any subsequent reasons to deny his sources*

- *Euler-Bemoulli was extremely analytical in his approach. Working only in ambient temperatures he found comfort*
- *With a foggy brain, Laux was struggling to use the words 'ambient', 'analytical' and 'Euler-Bomoulli' in a sentence*
- ***The driver was from Ambient Technologies. Her name was Margot Euler-Bemoulli. "What a fabulous name" I thought as I read her name badge again to make sure that I fully comprehended it. Margot looked at me, directing her analytical gaze firmly in my direction.***

Here, both sets of three sentences have a more imaginative, active and direct character, when compared with the earlier examples. My sense is that the latter sentences are more likely to be part of a novel or short story. Even sentence two of set two, which brings a knowing reflexivity to the process of writing, is organised around a character ('Laux'). Perhaps the difference is down to the different participants. Perhaps the difference is to do with the way in which seed words including names encourage participants to develop the narrative in a different, more imaginative way (I am equating ‘fictional’ with ‘imaginative’ here). It seems that the inclusion of names in the seed words led to a more ‘fictional’ set of sentences, which are a product of a more engaged imagination. Of course, fiction can take many forms, and it’s possible to imagine a fictional piece which uses the conventions of neutral, scientific writing, for instance. But many types of fiction are organised around narrative about persons, or entities to which a type of personhood can be ascribed.

Moving on from this stage of the exercise, another transformation occurred when the sentences were later translated into collages. Participants were asked to answer several questions about the ‘feel’ of the collage images. The main things to note here are first the change from the extreme specificity of the original abstracts to the generality of the images, and second the change from a more analytical and detached stance in the abstracts to the emotional, free flowing nature of the images (or at least of participants’ responses to the images). To some extent, this may be explained by one of the drivers of academic research: to identify a gap in existing literature. This arguably leads to a very precise, specific definition of subjects, and a particularly ‘niche’ feel to some of the abstracts, which fit very precisely into the constraints of the subject within which they are writing. However, the responses to the collages felt very different. For example, Hagensen, (2015) “Using a Dance/Movement Therapy-Based Wellness Curriculum: An Adolescent Case Study”, led to the following readings of the collage produced from this article “Growth, health, vitality, life, relaxation”, “care of growing things”, “relaxation”. Similarly, O’Donnell’s (2016) “Reading Allan Marquand’s “On Scientific Method in the Study of Art” generated “emotional connection, uplifting, happy connection to nature”.

6.6.d.2 Links between collage and original abstract

In the discussion section of the session several participants mentioned that they felt there was a connection between the original abstract and the final collage, although the process, involving manipulation / selection / elaboration of the original by a number of different participants, mostly eradicated any obvious links between the original abstract and the end product. The relationships reflected on by participants tended to be general and thematic rather than specific: LB, for example, made a collage about a bee called Marquand, who wanted to re-pollenate the planet, which she felt related to the subject of the originating abstract, which she expressed as “science and art”.

Overall, participants agreed that the exercise was not particularly about a direct correspondence between the original abstract and final collage. Although there were minor correspondences, overall, the links were too imprecise to be noteworthy in participants’ opinions. Rather the value of the exercise lay in finding out what can come from an alternative approach to a ‘difficult’ text.

6.6.d.3 Thoughts about process

Participants found the process “enjoyable and revelatory” (MD). This may have been, in part, because participants found ways to personalise the process within the constraints dictated by the rules. For example, YW isolated individual words from the sentence she had to work with, then found pictures to represent them, working these into the final collage. Some participants, for example LB, felt that the exercises might enhance their own academic work, although by using the process in this session as a model, not slavishly following the details of what happened in the session. LB further explained that she meant that the process of engaging with texts in a non-standard way and following any creativity that emerges was useful. OE said he felt that the two exercise stages (transformation through writing of ambiguous words, and expression in imagery) might have been too much for one session. This resonated with my feeling, expressed above, that the attempt to include all stages of Gendlin’s process in session three had been too ambitious (Gendlin 1978, 1996). Others commented positively on the mix of cognitive and intuitive skills which the exercise demanded. AS said she felt that playing around with the words was a way to engage with their meaning in more depth, and a way to link the words’ meanings with one’s own experiences of these words. For Louisa, and other participants, the idea that the exercises could help either with their own academic practice or in work with others came up several times across the different sessions. This is something that would be worth exploring in more detail in future projects, perhaps looking at how this sort of exercise, designed to spark creative and intuitive approaches, might be applied to academic work, particularly in situations where there are problems engaging with academic texts, or lack of motivation to continue studying.

Some participants felt that the processes explored in this session enriched their experience of reading. The images which emerged from the process in this session did not, on the whole, particularly relate to the abstract from which they originated. Indeed, some participants (for example Louisa) remarked that it was hard to see how the end image revealed much about the abstract. However, they *did* feel that the process enabled a more fluid understanding of 'difficult' texts, and OE talked about a "'pull' of imagery below the threshold of consciousness" which could be seen as either disturbing or enriching the academic starting point. There is something interesting here which links with the discussions in Chapter Three: what might this feeling of something below the threshold of consciousness be, how can we explore it further (particularly in regards to academic texts), what techniques are particularly useful, how do we understand it? This is perhaps also the question of how educational systems might facilitate experiences of feeling the 'pull' in academic contexts. Relatedly, AS commented that the reader was allowed a greater freedom of exploration and a greater potential to decipher multiple layers of meaning. Perhaps this was facilitated by allowing participants to take a step back from the text, as they focused on other, arguably more meditative and absorbing, practices. Perhaps it was to do with the use of creative and intuitive skills as a way of engaging with texts. Again, these areas would be interesting to explore in future studies.

In terms of how participants conceptualised the process, and what theoretical frameworks they related the material too, different responses came up. Participants drew upon their theoretical interests, and there were consequently some varied and interesting suggestions. LB suggested that the "imaginal approach of Romanyshyn would be a fitting framework, or that of Marie Angelo (*Inviting the Image to Teach*)". This related to the theoretical framework she uses in her own PhD. YW saw the process in terms of learning theories and styles and suggested the session had revealed material about how people learn using different styles, and thus "enabling more holistic learning to take place". OE related the transformational process to concepts of the unconscious, while PR thought linguistics and psycholinguistics might be a relevant frame, as well as literature on divinatory practices.

6.6.d.4 Reflections on the abstracts

Participants shared some thoughts about the nature of the original abstracts. As this process was designed in part to explore ambiguity and its uses, they were asked also about the extent to which the abstracts were ambiguous. Some found the originals hard to understand (LB), unclear (AS) or having difficult to interpret sentence structure (YW), although not particularly ambiguous (YW). OE pointed out that one of the purposes of an abstract is to make things clear (summarising the main points made in the paper) but in fact is often confusing and ambiguous. LB said she wasn't sure if the ambiguity she picked up in the abstract was a genuine ambiguity or one generated by her lack of understanding of the context for which it was written. AS expressed this as containing "broad concepts, words which weren't being defined". The abstracts were, in this session, treated like projective testing images, i.e. as ambiguous sources of interpretation. Of course, ambiguity is unlikely to have been an aim when the abstracts were written; as OE indicated, they are intended as a clear summary of a journal article. By asking participants to focus on one or two words, my intention was to treat the abstracts as ambiguous, and perhaps uncover their hidden, Lecerclian underside, with its pulls and fluid ebbs and flows (Lecercle 1985).

6.6.d.5 Different kinds of 'reading'

Reading the image and reading the text (the abstract) were experienced by participants as very different processes. Reading the image, for LB, felt "more engaging… and less of a chore". Reading the image, participants also reflected, allows more creative and imaginative thought in interpretation (YW), is more flowing and spontaneous (PR), and offers "more meaning and associations" (AS). By contrast "the academic text address addresses conceptual thought within a rationalist frame" (OE).

6.6.e Session four: summary

This session, although enjoyed by participants, seems to offer less in terms of my research questions, as it seemed to throw less light on the other sessions on the questions about whether acts of reading can contain intuitive, embodied and emotional processes. While the process of working with the text through many stages, transforming 'dry' abstracts into complex visual images felt rewarding for participants when it was taking place, perhaps the sense in which this process might be understood as a form of reading which could generate insights into the original text felt unclear to me. I felt that the images appearing only arbitrarily connected to the original texts that 'produced' them. My hope had been that the process would uncover links between text and image, but connections seemed tenuous. It is possible that I attempted to include too much in this session, and the focus sometimes seemed to be on making sure each stage was finished rather than dwelling in the experiences taking place and reflecting more deeply on the processes. Certainly, as the discussion in Chapter Three indicates, deeper 'readings' of texts and embodied communications involve a process of gradual uncovering over time, and reflection. There was insufficient time for such reflection to take place in this session. For example, the comparisons between 'reading' an image and 'reading' a text could have been explored in more depth. Similarly, it might have been fruitful to think more about reading as a form of divination, perhaps by generating an image from the text in just one stage and then spending more time on the 'reading', rather than the complex series of transformations that this session involved. Perhaps also I have paid too little attention to the final outputs from this session, and considered them too briefly, not giving them 'space' for any meanings to unfurl. There is certainly a sense that I have felt a bit 'overwhelmed' by the material produced: perhaps the failure to trace meaning in the outputs and to prefer reflecting on participant responses is a direct response to a feeling that the material is too much, and would be too difficult to properly respond to. It might also be an avoidance of uncomfortable material. Perhaps analysing the outputs from the sessions would be too personal, and uncover too much?

Setting these considerations aside, the reflections from participants do illuminate the research questions and have been interesting to explore. The enjoyment participants took from producing the collages should also not be underplayed, and certainly at least some participants made meaningful connections between the originating texts and the final artwork.

6.7 Session five: 'Reading with all the Senses'

In contrast to other sessions, session five took place away from the main university campus in the nearby university library. This session, like the previous one, is discussed in less detail than sessions one to three. Some interesting themes emerged, which are explored below. The theoretical context is rooted in the primacy of the visual in models of knowledge (Synnott 1992). A full exploration of this area was beyond the scope of the literature review, and the results here are therefore given less focus, however links to the material considered in Chapter Three are made. A brief description and discussion are included for completeness.

6.7.a Session five participants

The following participants took part in this session:

LB
MB
JO
AS
PR
YW

6.7.b Session five: background theory summary

Participants were not provided with background information for this session. This was partly for practical reasons (primarily time constraints) but also as an experiment, to see if having no background theory made participants' experiences of taking part in the session different. This session returned to ideas explored in previous sessions about the relationship between reading and the visual. Arguably, reading in academic (and other) contexts prioritises sight and the visual. As Foster points out, vision and sight have historically been considered more important sources of knowledge than the other senses (Foster 1998). The idea that sight is intrinsically connected to ideas and vision connected to knowledge is still prevalent (Foster 1998). In Chapter Three, Lecercle's suggests that *délire* undercuts rational discourse, and returns the reader to a more embodied way of relating to text (Lecercle 1985). Concepts of free association and embodied phenomenology were also explored as ways of investigating the unspoken in texts (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995; Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003; 2008; 2015). We can extend the notions discussed earlier to include the *unseen* in the unspoken. Although there is insufficient space to look in detail at the theory, challenging the priority of vision and sight can be seen as a parallel process to the processes of challenging the 'dominant tradition' of language, and of knowledge, which we have explored above. Thus, this session set out to explore the ways in which acts of reading can draw upon senses other than vision. Of course, this session also relates significantly to Gendlin's work concerned with the body, our knowledge of embodiment, and how this knowledge is related to wider explorations of self (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995). While Gendlin's focus is primarily on the felt sense and how it appears, with the felt sense a kind of inner awareness sometimes associated with the belly or heart, his critique of a certain traditional philosophical understanding of experience, and his consequent turn to this 'interior' work also fit well with looking at senses other than the visual, given the equivalence, outlined above, of knowledge with the visual (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995). This session explores how 'turning off' the visual sense in favour of the world revealed in other senses can open up a new and intuitive world and a new way to approach reading. The link to Gendlin's particular focus is accommodated in the session by the instruction to pay attention to, in addition to the other 'five' sense of touch, hearing, taste and smell, to 'any other sense you recognise'.

6.7.c Session five: structure

We met for this session in the cafe at the University library. As usual, consent forms were circulated and signed. There were no participants who had not attended a previous session, so I did not explain the overall purpose of the research groups. The background to the session was briefly explained, and the structure of what would happen set out.

The overall aim of the session was to explore the library in a different way to the use each participant might generally make of it, that is by using senses other than sight. Each person was issued with a sheet to fill in, and spare paper and pen if necessary. At the top of each sheet was written a classmark (combination of numbers and letters) similar to those used to identify books in the library. The word 'similar' is used as when preparing this session, I did not know whether the classmark I had selected in fact uniquely identified a book or not.

First, participants tried to find the book corresponding to the classmark. If there was no book for the classmark (or if it was off shelf) they took the book closest in number to the classmark. From the moment the participants left the cafe, they were instructed to pay attention to information and experiences received through other senses (while leaving sight engaged in order to navigate). The definition of 'other' senses was left up to the participant, although they were told they could include any 'sixth' sense they were aware of. Of course, these instructions assume that the five senses are easily separated into sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing, which is debatable. The extent to which existing conceptual frameworks insert themselves into our sensory experiences is also debatable. These thoughts aside, participants found the instructions intuitively sensible, and no one raised any issues about what they were asked to do in this respect.

When the book was located, participants started to explore the book (or other item, if an audio-visual item was closest to the classmark) in terms of the different senses. Participants were asked to avoid trying to read the item in the 'normal' way. Using the sheets provided, they investigated the item using different senses, as listed on the sheet (see Appendix Seven for examples). They worked through touch, taste, smell and sound, and 'any other senses you recognise'. Finally, they were instructed to open the book (view the item) and use sight to explore it. Rather than using sight to read, they were invited to use it in a wider way, looking rather than reading, taking in book's appearance, context, typography etc. In other words, they were asked to look at the book as they might an exhibit in a gallery. Finally, they were invited to read in the 'usual' way, before returning to the cafe for a follow-up discussion (due to background noise, the discussion took part in another, quieter, area of the library).

6.7.d Session five: results and discussion

The results from this session consist of the answers each participant gave to the questions on the worksheet, the transcript of the discussion at the end of the session, and the post-session questionnaire (which was returned by only two people). From these results, various themes emerged. First, the following table (Table Three) summarises the class marks allocated to each participant, and the closest book / other media that participant found for the classmark.

Participant	**Classmark**	**Book**	**Comments**
LB	373.2220942 (Po)	"Something about private schools"	Louisa did not record the name of the book
MB	745.409 (Mu)	*The Genius of Destiny*	Actual classmark 745.409 GEN. "(closest to the classmark as classmark was absent). (2 compact disks in a box)."
JO	780.92 (Po)	*Francis Poulenc* by Benjamin Ivry	
AS	305.3 (Ta)	*Power and Empowerment*	No author noted

PR	613.047 (Br)	*Health in Old Age*	No author noted
Sue	362.2094206 (M)	*Severe Hearing Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour*	No author noted

Table 3: participants, classmark, book and comments

6.7.d.1 Process of getting to the book

Respondents reported many different elements of the process of navigating to the classmark and finding the book. LB said the process was "analytical", involving checking. She also said that the analytical element was supported by vision. Other participants reported the engaging of all senses: sight, as there was a need to look, motor co-ordination, hearing and touch. JO "noticed the stripes of books and the shelving, their visual patterns" as well as a clicking noise and other sounds. AR used touch to select the 'nearest' book to the classmark. AS gave a significantly 'embodied' and impressionistic account of her journey to the shelves, which is worth noting in full:

> *The lift. Lots of bodies – warm – slightly musty and claustrophobic – bright circles of light 6x6=36. The lift was buttercup yellow – the smell of the soft grey hard-wearing carpet – dark purple walls – the sounds of traffic and muffled voices – a plastic synthetic smell in the enclosure of the library – so different from the smell outside the enclosure – the colours of the books – the taste of chocolate brownie still on my tastebuds – a sense of peace and calm – thoughts about door knobs – the black computer appearing like some futuristic art installation – then looking for the book – squeakiness of the sofa – the sound of Julia getting books – the sound of a machine then placing of books in her bag – not finding the exact book I was looking for – but being drawn to the tile of a book – which seemed to be speaking to me – I heard it calling me from the shelves – Julia's shoes squeaking on the carpet, or was it the door squeaking? The title of the book – power and empowerment.*

PR's response was slightly different: rather than focusing on the immediate sensory and/or cognitive processes, she reported going to the toilet, being disappointed that the classmark led her to another section than the one she normally visits, expectation, more disappointment (at the subject of the classmark's shelf) and finally relief and excitement at the book denoted by the classmark. This could be interpreted as an expression of experiences non-phenomenologically, that is, not as they happened at a level of the phenomena encountered, but as an expression of a series of judgements where a base layer of experience has not been explored. (Of course, this presupposes that what I am calling 'sense' experience is in some sense more 'basic' than these sorts of judgements, which is debatable, but a fuller discussion of this is outside the scope of this thesis). Interestingly, PR's responses in other sessions indicates that she was unsure about the purpose of the sessions, something which was not mentioned by other participants. I wonder if this inability to see the point of sessions is somehow connected with not entering into this experience with the senses, although this is, of course, my interpretation of what PR said in different sessions, rather than something she articulated herself. If my interpretation is correct, for at least some participants 'purpose' is linked closely to rationality and cognition. YW noted that she felt very differently from other times she had used the library, which had tended to be marked by senses of urgency and planning. This session's experience was, rather a "social adventure into the unknown". This adventure was accompanied by awareness of pain from previous injuries, and discomfort in bending down to retrieve the book.

The following themes are organised by sense, following the order of the questions in the worksheet:

6.7.d.2 Touch

Interestingly, in most of the touch responses, comments specifically about touch were mixed with comments which referenced other ways of knowing the object. This suggests that participants found it hard, in practice, to separate out experiential touch from their conceptual schemes to do with other ways of knowing. However, they did, at other times, successfully separate out reports of 'pure' touch from more mixed accounts, so this was, for them, something achievable. Of course, this separation (between accounts purely relating to touch and ones in which other forms of knowledge are intermingled) is not to imply a position on whether apparent accounts of ‘pure’ touch are indeed pure, or whether other types of knowledge are implicit in them. As indicated above, this sort of discussion is outside the scope of this thesis.

The breakdown between the two types of comments varied significantly from participant to participant. For example AR talked about the “sharp” corners of the box, but all other remarked presupposed an awareness of other spatio-temporal features which are not obviously accessible by touch alone: “the two compact discs are held inside a plastic box with sharp, rough edges. The box is a little grimy and made me think it might be dirty” he also mentions that the box “was brittle and should easily snap”. Here’ MB’s conceptual framework is not rooted in touch alone, which suggests he might find it challenging to focus only on one sense. Rather, his primary experience is one of an already-conceptualised world that firmly exists in space and time. Any sensory experiences have to be attached to this as an afterthought, and do not form part of the primary experience. MB’s experience might be compared to Locke’s distinction between primary and secondary qualities: primary qualities being really ‘in’ the object, “such as are utterly inseparable from the body” (Locke 1689, p. 85), and secondary qualities only exist in our experience of the object, “nothing in the object themselves, but powers to produce various sensations in us (Locke 1689, p. 85). Another way of understanding MB’s remarks – depending on which theoretical position is taken – is that his statements simply acknowledge that touch, as a sense, cannot operate alone. It is interesting, however, especially in the light of participants who made a much clearer separation between touch and other types of awareness that this is the experience AR offered, when asked to focus on touch only. MB’s statements are falsifiable: they are true or false depending upon what the box is, in fact, like. We could argue that sensations returned by touch are unfalsifiable: they are what they are. It is only when we start postulating a spatio-temporal world that there is a possibility of making statements about this world that can be incorrect. By assuming the existence of this world and by not focusing on touch alone, AR allows his statements a different status. As mentioned above, further discussion of this is to stray away from the main point of the thesis.

Other participants combined reflections on the spatio-temporal objects with comments on the experience of touch sensations. In general, comments about touch were in the context of discussing the objects touched. The objects served as an anchor for the statements about touch. For example, LB said “the book feels heavy. It has a soft, velvety feel on the book jacket and the paper inside feels soft”, and JO also linked sensations of substance, weight and smoothness to the book and its unbroken spine / unworn pages. Similarly, AS talks of the sensations linked with the ‘laminated surface’, ‘ridge or spine’ and ‘body of the book’. Even participants who managed, more successfully than MB, to focus on touch alone seemed to struggle to fully isolate touch from the other senses. Not only did they tend to refer back to the spatio-temporal existence of the book, they also brought in sound (AS), sight (PR) and smell (YW). In general, participants used emotionally neutral words to describe their touch sensations. However, AS used both neutral and positive words and expressions: the “silky smoothness” of the surface, the paper “softer - friendlier - not so remote”.

I had added the words “take time to go into the experience, wait for it to open up” to the instructions for this part of the exercise. Here, I had hoped that participants would go beyond the immediate experiences of the feel of the book and enter a more imaginative space (I was not sure how participants would express this). The idea was that the process of exploring the library through the senses would lead into an exploration of material beyond the immediately sensed, as Gendlin’s processes start with the inner felt sense in the body and become something much more than this (Gendlin 1996). This did not seem to happen for participants in session five. They adhered quite closely to pragmatic details of touch, with some deviation into the poetic. Perhaps the space was too public, perhaps participants were not sufficiently comfortable with the exercise, perhaps there was a counter-productive sense of urgency generated by their having to be back in the cafe within an hour. Perhaps I had not clearly communicated this in the instructions.

6.7.d.3 Hearing

Whilst I had instructed participants to touch only the item, in this question I asked them about what they could hear near and far away, as well as any sounds that their object could make. Some participants noticed more than others. LB commented that she could not engage with the book in this way, as she was distracted by keyboard sounds from other people, and the outside traffic. AR initially said he could not hear much, but then went on to describe a number of different sounds (whispering, the scraping of a pen on the page, the vibrations of writing, the hum of air conditioners). This is perhaps an example of the first level of the ‘unfolding’ process I asked participants to be open to in the touch part of the exercise: MB’s initial lack of response moved into something more nuanced and fuller. However, MB’s unfurling of the sense of hearing was different in type to the one Gendlin talks about (Gendlin 1978, 1996): AR at first cannot hear anything, but subsequently picks up different sounds. The realm of sound remains the focus. For Gendlin, the starting point (embodied sensation) is eventually transformed into something radically different (Gendlin 1978, 1996).

For hearing, as for other senses, while some participants kept their descriptions neutral, others gave them an emotional colour, even by saying “I like this sound” (JO) or by using language to create a pleasant sounding rhythmic description of the sounds, as in this statement from AS:

> *The sound of fingers typing on the keyboard. The sound of studying, of peace – the twitching of paper – not quite a rustle – the intrusive squeak of my book on the round table – footsteps – shuffling sporadic movements – pen scratching on paper – footsteps getting louder as they move towards me, then fading away into the distance – a sigh – a deep sigh of a male voice.*

Most of the participants explored sound only in the context of the object making the sound “the twitching of paper” and “squeak of my book” rather than as pure qualities of sound (as a musician might). This relates to the discussion above of the different ways in which participants approached the request to focus on touch. Arguably, and even more than with touch, sound is experienced in terms of the object which causes the sound, rather than something to be explored in its own right.

Several of the participants produced descriptions here that could be read as short narratives, or mini fictions. This was in contrast to the descriptions of touch, which seem more fragmented and slightly more rooted in the body. We are given a strong sense of a world taking place around the participant, as in this description by Sue:

> I also hear others turning pages, undoing a drink bottle and the click of laptop keys nearby. Someone is sniffing, possibly from a cold. Bags being searched. Outside there is a dulled traffic hum beyond double-glazed windows. The sound of my pen tapping on the table through the paper comes to my attention. In the background, furniture is being moved. The girl next to me is having a telephone conversation now on her laptop and showing the other person how lovely the weather is here today with her laptop camera. The friend is in Norfolk and it is spring-like there too. As I am observing sounds and as the conversation is quite loud it is not possible to ignore it. Because of the exercise I am doing this conversation is much more interesting than irritating. Another person working in the area has begun to turn her pages more loudly. The conversation ends and I can hear the whirring and clunking of a photocopier.

6.7.d.4 Taste and smell

Participants were asked to discuss taste and smell together, as it was slightly difficult for them to taste much of their object (though I did encourage them to lick the air, and if possible (and without taking any undue risks) explore the object with taste in any other possible ways). Here the descriptions were more embodied, and it was harder to separate out purely phenomenological description from descriptions predicated on spatio-temporal objects. This is partly due to the way in which the language of smelling and scent is used. A smell is not associated with an object that causes or is associated with it in the same way we associate our visual impression with the thing itself. My visual impression of a book is equated with the ‘essential’ book in a more direct way than is the smell the book has. The theories concerned with the essential qualities of items, and whether visual qualities are more ‘essential’ would be interesting to explore in greater depth but is outside the scope of the present discussion, as is the well-examined philosophical distinction between primary (height, length) and secondary (taste, smell) qualities of an object which has clear relationship to this exploration (Nolan 2011).

Perhaps for these reasons, the participants' descriptions of smell tended towards the poetic and lyrical. LB said that her book "smells very old and it has a feeling of an old teacher about it", and JO states "fanning the book tickles my nostrils with a sneeze". There is something about smell which seems to invite people to go beyond their immediate sensations and into personal, perhaps emotional links, and to do so more easily than with sight, for instance. AS comments "the book smells new, slightly chemical – I can almost imagine that I can smell the ink", and PR says ""I discreetly lick a bit of a page and notice the smelt turns stronger, and it's a pleasant smell, it's fresh. I think this makes me love the book more, it's as if I feel closer to it. I can feel it in my chest".

In the post-session questionnaire, PR mused about taste. She found this, along with smelling, the most difficult element of the session. however, she said that when she licked a page with the tip of her tongue, she felt a strong emotional connection with the book "a strange, new feeling".

6.7.d.5 A 'sixth' sense

Participants were also asked about any other senses, for example "a '6th' sense / intuition etc.") as a way to explore the book, (or object) and its environment. Here there were a variety of responses. LB said she could not engage particularly well with the book, perhaps because she was tired. AR reported a coincidence: although he found the CDs bland, on the shelf immediately below were two books of subjects of great interest to him. JO said only that the book wasn't considered valuable in the library, while AS said the book felt friendly: "as if it wants to be friends and wants to get to know me - it's beckoning me to explore its pages". PR said the topic of the book particularly interests her, and that she was curious about why the book had come to her. She also stated she would either browse through it more or borrow it. She also reported that on opening the book, she found her name. Sue found the book initially difficult ("technical and unhelpful") but, on randomly opening it, found statements of some significance to her.

In the subsequent discussion, AS said that she felt "a lot of feeling coming from the book like it was talking to me… like the title was actually… the title was calling me. And the … book, it felt like a friendly book, it wanted me to look at it". In summary, however, there were relatively few responses to the question about 'other' sense experiences.

6.7.d.6 Non-reading sight to explore object and environment

Finally, participants were asked to use sight to explore their book or other object and the immediate environment, whilst avoiding 'reading' the book conventionally. There is a relaxed feel about most of the answers to this question, as if the participants are stretching out and enjoying the book in a different way. There is some sense that having gone through the previous exercises has enabled participants to respond differently to reading material, as evidenced by LB's statement:

> *There are some interesting pictures in the book. It is beautifully laid out, the print is kind to my eyes. I like the heaviness of the book, the yellowing pages caused by age, and the old photographs of public-school housemasters, headmasters and students. It's a book that I wouldn't have ordinarily picked up in a 'normal' visit to the library.*

AS also offers a relaxed sounding, slightly stream-of-consciousness narrative:

> *The book is slim and black – light and easy to hold and carry – it is shining with a pink and gold psychedelic pattern on its front cover – in the shape of a star whose elongated limbs stretch out - in opening and contrasting patterns. There are 3 shades of pink and purple – it is warm and cheerful – life emerging from the darkness – networks – connections – I shall now read its inner content – by opening at a random page…*

Notably, two participants use this section to reflect on other concerns, in addition to the visual qualities of the book or object. JO, for example, starts with a description of the book and her environment, then finishes with a statement of how comfortable she feels, and a reflection on the content of the book. PR reflects on her answers to previous sections, and whether some of her answers would have fitted better in different sections. YW "realise[d] that I have been pre-empting the next question throughout this exercise… this is something I do… possibly 6th sense is a combination of having read the questions earlier and possibly passed them to my unconscious mind", and then reflects on the deep significance the passage she first discussed in the previous answer had for her (as well as describing her surroundings).

6.7.d.7 Experiences of the process

Several participants noted that once they tuned into the environment around them, as prompted in the exercises, they started picking up more detail than they felt they normally noticed. AS said “I was surprised how many different smells there are, which I’ve never noticed before”, while JO was amazed by the different sounds she could hear. AR commented that initially he felt he couldn’t hear much, then “you notice the footsteps, then you notice the clicking of the ring binders and things like that, and then I started noticing the traffic outside and the ping from this lift … those are things that you wouldn’t normally tune in to”. Two people commented on the quality of silence underneath or behind the sounds.

Prompted by a question from the researcher, participants considered whether, in taking in the environment through different senses, some senses were easier to articulate (conceptualise) than others. AS said that once she focused on the sensory qualities of the library, she had to look at one sense at a time, or else the experience became “just a bit slightly overwhelming”. She also said that she has a tendency to be overwhelmed by sensory experience.

JO said that she became aware that even until the end of the exercise, there was “a part of me that wasn’t settled, so I was being a bit distracted”. It took her an hour or so to settle and “get into” the book. She further reflected that she had previously been ignoring her need to settle and feel comfortable before being able to read satisfactorily.

Most participants found the session a valuable experience. Sue said it contrasted with the way she had used the library in the past, hurriedly looking for a particular book. However, LB found “the experience a little discomforting”. She found it hard to allow each of the five senses in, as she was used to using the library in a different way. She added “II felt like the book had a lot to say to me, to my senses, but actually I wasn’t able to see whatever the book wanted to say in terms of touch and smell and feel [unclear] and I feel quite disappointed actually that that book had something to give me and I don't feel that I welcomed it enough, or was able to give it enough of myself". JO also referred back to a time when she was doing academic study, commenting "when I've been doing my studies, and academic reading and whatever, I've always done it in an extremely exhausted state, I have insomnia, and so I was interested that I didn't get into that kind of panicky place – oh my god, a book, I'm expected to... expectations… a bit like you, I could actually just relax into the sense and just allow the book – if I ever did open it – and just taking my time. I didn't feel exhausted at all… by being aware of the difficulties of settling I [??] that by sort of working with it…"

6.7.d.8 Other comments

PR said that she found it difficult to understand how the exercises could help with reading, although she felt an emotional connection to the book and felt that she had been led to it in a way that felt synchronistic. She later borrowed it and read as many sections as she felt able given her other academic work commitments. In fact, the way I framed the sessions was not that they would help with academic reading, rather that they were to do with exploring different experiences of reading, and what might happen if we read in non-standard ways. PR also commented during or after other sessions that she struggled to understand the rationale for the sessions. This may be because she had an idea of what the research was intended to achieve that was at odds with my actual aims for the sessions. This might, in turn, reflect preoccupations of her own.

5.7.e Session five: summary

In this session, participants were encouraged to use techniques to explore senses other than sight to investigate non-visual experiences of reading, and, arguably, to undercut the traditional predominance of the visual in understandings of reading.

Participants in the main found the techniques interesting and enjoyable. By focusing upon hearing, touch, taste and smell, other dimensions of the reading experience opened up, and the library felt richer, though some participants reported feeling disconcerted. Some felt open to tracing coincidences and synchronicities between the reading matter they (semi-) randomly selected and aspects of their life, which in turn made them feel more connected to the texts. Using other senses offered a way to read in a slower, fuller way. Practically, there is a question of whether the typical experience of academic reading allows the time and 'space' to engage in non-standard ways like this, although arguably such a process of slowing down and dialoguing with the text is essential to a closer relationship with reading.

As in other sessions, the material produced was less interesting than the participants' responses to the different stages of the session. In this session, I also found the differences in focus (from phenomenological experience to awareness of a world of objects through the senses) philosophically interesting. In some cases, and for some senses more than others, participants reported 'pure' sensory content, in others the sense was a gateway to an assumed 'objective' world independent of sense experience. The focus (on 'pure' experience v. 'objective' world) changed depending on who was reporting the experience, on what sense they were asked to report, and on what was going on around them. The change in focus raises interesting philosophical questions about what the primary object of perceptions is, but a further exploration of this is outside the scope of the thesis.

6.8 Session six: 'Character Co-Creation'

6.8.a. Session six: introduction

For a number of reasons, session six was markedly different from other sessions. Some of the reasons for this were practical ones: firstly, there was a longer gap between this and session five. Sessions one to five had taken place at monthly intervals, starting in September 2017, with session five in January 2017. Session six, planned for February, had to be reorganised for later in the year due participants' commitments. Thus, there was a gap in continuity. Additionally, participant interest waned somewhat over the final sessions. Fewer people attended, and no-one returned the post-session questionnaires in the last session.

In terms of other aspects, there were also differences. This session related less strongly to the main research themes, although it related strongly to the starting point from which the later research concerns emerged. That is, it explored, in a playful way, the process of co-creating an imaginary character which was the process at the core of the 'Philip' experiment by George and Iris Owen (Owen 1974, 1976, 1977; Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1977). Another difference is that the starting point was in shared creative writing activities, the session did not start with an abstract and work out from there. The connection with academic writing was that participants were asked to frame the character development exercise by thinking about academic contexts they were aware of. It was hoped that by working collaboratively a shared picture would emerge, by passing ego-processes and individual positions, of how the group at a whole experienced academia. Certainly, in this respect, the results were interesting.

Additionally, and in contrast to previous sessions, I took part in the exercises, so was more immersed in the process. Certainly, this felt different from my point of view. It was more enjoyable, but I felt less in 'control' of the session. Perhaps some of the group cohesion which had been generated by a core set of participants (JO, OE, LB, PR) who attended most of the sessions, was altered by the gap between sessions and my changed role. Perhaps participants were somewhat tired of coming to the research group and were aware that this was the final session.

Finally, this session generated fewer outputs than previous sessions. Only a brief discussion took place at the end of the session (primarily because the exercises took up most of the time) and no participants completed a post-session questionnaire. Nethertheless, the session's results are interesting in terms of the research questions, throwing light on collaborative working as way of undercutting the dominant tradition of language (Lecercle 1985) and offering new approaches to academic working. While the results are interesting, this section of the chapter will be a little shorter than earlier sections.

6.8.b Session six: participants

Five people, including myself, took part in this session:
LB
OE
PR
JO
Myself.

6.8.c Session six: background theory summary

This session was based on mediumship research carried out by a group of Canadian researchers, led by George and Iris Owen in the 1970s (Owen 1974, 1976, 1977; Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1977). The account of their experiments with the séance format, and their co-creation of a fictional character, 'Philip', who subsequently developed a personality of his own when the group communicated with him in séances, is given in an earlier chapter. The session is also informed by other research into séances, particularly researchers concerned with the ontological status of the entities with which communication takes place, for example Kenneth Batcheldor's work in the 60s and 70s (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979). This is also described in more detail in an earlier part of this thesis. Of particular note for this session, is Batcheldor's suggestion that for a séance to be successful, participants have to embrace a particular mind-set: setting aside cynicism and being open to the possibility that something might happen, and being willing to take part, have fun and be excited. As Batcheldor said "Music, certain kinds of noise, jollity and laughter may all help" (Batcheldor 1968). Most emotions are helpful, but distance, suspicion or disdain are counterproductive.

As in session five, participants were not sent an explanation of the theoretical background in advance of the session. This was to avoid creating preconceptions about the session, and to allow participants to take part without having previously fitted the session into a structured theoretical context. I wanted participants to be as open as possible to what might come up in the session.

6.8.d Session six: structure

As in previous sessions, this session started with a brief introduction to the session, followed by distribution and signing of consent forms. I explained to participants that this session would build upon the collaborative exercises in previous sessions, being perhaps most closely related to the shared drawing exercise in session three. I also asked participants to be reflexive about the process: thinking about what they would be doing as they did it, and upon wider questions, whilst primarily focusing on the activity they were doing. Although this mirrored my request in earlier sessions, it seemed particularly important for this session as I was interested in any thoughts about process which seemed to have implications for Batcheldor's ideas about successful sitter groups (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979). I also reassured participants that no particular skill in drawing or creative writing were needed. In my experience, people can feel they need to have been taught to draw or write, or be naturally skilled at it, but this was not necessary for full participation in the session. The exercises in this session were part of the process of creating a character in collaboration. Ideally, this session would have taken longer, but participants could only commit to a two-hour session. We were only able to work through the writing and drawing stages, and exercise one took up most of the session.

Participants were each given an A4 sheet with a number of questions (see Appendix 7 for examples). Working as a group, the sheets were used to create a number of 'fictional' characters. Each question asked about a different aspect of the character (appearance, habits, personality etc.). Participants were informed that the character should have some relationship to academia, learning or knowledge, but that otherwise they could be free, for example in terms of geographical location, historic era and so on. Starting at the top left question, participants answered this then passed the sheet to the person next to them. Reading what the previous participant had written, the participant then answered the second question while bearing in mind the impression of the character created by the first answer. When the second answer was complete, the sheet was passed around again, and the process repeated. Participants were instructed to read what had gone before and to try and fit their new answer into the overall character. They were instructed to avoid answers that directly contradicted previous ones, but also told they should feel free to answer the question in the way which felt most appropriate. In this way, each character represented on each sheet was created collaboratively by participants through a process of reading previous answers and answering the new question. As the sheets got fuller, the process became slower as there was more material related to the sheet's character to read. At the end of the process, each sheet's answers had been completed. Finally, the sheets were passed again and the person now holding the sheet summarised the person's character in a sentence.

Next, participants gave a spoken precis of the character on the sheet they were holding, based on the answers and summary on the sheet. At this stage they could confine themselves to reading out what had been written or could add details to make the character even more coherent. Based on this verbal presentation, participants worked as a group to select one character who stood out.

After a break, I led a short meditation encouraging participants to feel into the character they had created, exploring how it might feel to be the character, and using imagination to explore what they looked like. The meditation started with a relaxation process based around awareness of body and breathing. After this, participants worked together to create a drawing of the character they had selected. They were reassured again that they did not have to be skilled in drawing to participate. In order to facilitate the process of drawing, particularly for people who had little recent experience of drawing and / or no art training, I read out a list of features, for example 'face', 'hair' 'body outline' 'clothes' and so on, and members of the group took it in turn to draw these. I also introduced elements of how that feature was to be drawn, for example with eyes closed or with non-dominant hand. This was also intended to reduce or eliminate any feeling that participants had to be good at drawing conventionally.

This was the end of this session, but further stages in the process exist, including role playing the character in relationship to others.

6.8.e Session six: results and discussion

As mentioned above there are fewer results from this session than previous sessions. The main outputs of this session are the co-created character sheets, examples of which can be found in Appendix Seven. There is also a drawing created by all session participants, of the character selected from the character sheets (‘Kurt’).

In the following, the results are presented in a slightly different way. As there is less output material, except the character creation sheets, and as I took part in this session as a participant, I am mixing some material from the outputs with my reflections and experiences of taking part. I should also add that this section is shorter not simply because of the lack of material but because a full discussion would require the session to have included several other exercises designed to bring the character to ‘life’. I can only comment on the two stages that did take place.

As five people took part, there were five characters, as follows:

- “Kurt”: an Austrian born in the 70s, “a highly egotistical hedonist & fortunately time has not run out for him – yet!”
- “Douglas, born in 1955 and resident in Edinburgh, religious and a socialist, “a person that has found his life meaning and is enjoying life more the older he gets”
- “Leon Mack”, born in 1910 and a retired professor of cosmology, of whom the summing up said “age does not wither him, nor custom stale his razor-sharp intellect”
- “Jason MC”, born in 1950 and residing in Stockholm where he researches whale communication. Lacking emotional maturity, Jason’s summary statement is “the sweetest thing is that which you will never taste”
- “Elon”, born in 1939 and living in Glastonbury, lives in a small cottage and is interesting in channelling spiritual bodies. His summary statement is “An 80-year-old eccentric academic who loves chocolate mousse and anything “spiritual” or esoteric, & hates people. A walking, talking contradiction. “

There are some notable similarities between the characters. The only constraints on the character formation process were that the statements about them had to cohere, and they all had to be connected with academia. However, despite these few constraints, the characters are fairly uniform. All are male. None is younger than Kurt, who, being born in the 70s, must (at the time of writing this) be at least 39. All live in Europe, and three of them in the UK. All inhabit our world: there are no science fiction characters born into different galaxies and / or time dimensions. All characters have something of a comic air about them. There are elements of grotesquery (Elon lives “In a cluttered, very small cottage hidden inside a barn” and Jason MC’s main achievement is “creating a chocolate display for a BBC chocolate sculpting TV competition (which he won in 2012)”). All could be described as socially inept or disfunctional: Kurt is “always on a “charm offensive. Spreading the love to everyone”, Leon Mack’s character flaw is that he has “not an ounce of human kindness in his bosom” and is “ruthless and relentless”. All could be described as “eccentric”, and all are described with a degree of humour and pathos.

It is possible that the uniformity of tone amongst the characters is a function of either the nature of the people involved in the exercise or the process itself. Considering the latter first, it is possible that the staccato movement from character aspect to character aspect and from person to person meant that the emerging character fails to ‘settle’ in a way he / she / they might if written by one person. One way to look into this would be to get people to fill out similar sheets but without the stage of passing the sheet to someone else. Another way would be to use different groups, to see whether a similar ‘feel’ emerged in the characters. However, giving one person one sheet to create a character specific to that person would eradicate a large part of the point of this exercise, as I was interested in seeing who might emerge from a group creative process. Arguably the relationship between a created character and a single individual would be too straightforward: it would be easy to see the character as a function of the unconscious psychology or conscious interests of the person creating them. Another way of interpreting this is to see the similarities between the characters as a sign that one particular character belonging to this group, on this occasion, trying to emerge. Whatever the ontological status of this particular character, the similarities between the five characters created might indicate that the group were working towards one particular character, or character type.

It is also possible that the features which I am describing as ‘comic’ in the character profiles can be read as such not because the feature is inherently comic or ridiculous, but because of the language used in the answers. Kurt’s ‘charm offensive’ could be differently described as ‘Kurt’s desire for everyone to like him, born out of an inherent self-loathing and insecurity’. The language seemingly *all* participants use tends towards an arch distance rather than an empathetic investigation of the phenomenology of the characters’ experiences. This distance may be a function of the sense of urgency participants might have felt, aware that they might be the last person writing for that round of the exercise, and that others might be impatient to move on. It might also be a function of the experience as a shared one: having to work collaboratively, participants might have been reluctant to reveal sincere and deeply emotional feelings. If so, this echoes the difficulties participants reported with the paired free association exercise in an earlier session. These are just speculations and were not backed up by any evidence from participant feedback.

It would be easy to assume that the paragraph above is making an assumption that comedy is inherently bad. This certainly is not the case, but I was a little surprised that more serious characters did not emerge, and that the tone was light. I know something of the interests of the participants, and, knowing this, I would have expected a greater degree of serious-mindedness in the characters. The most that emerged is a feeling of tragicomedy. Characters try hard and fail spectacularly. They have great ambitions which seem outside the scope of their abilities or circumstances. They have elaborate, unusual hobbies and actions, and hold out-of-kilter opinions about, and attitudes towards, others. They take themselves seriously and lack the ability to self-reflect. I am moving beyond description here, into speculation, and this is not yet a speculation clearly rooted in theory. However, it is worth noting that this comic note to the characters seems to relate to Batcheldor’s idea that sitter groups need to have an atmosphere of enjoyment and fun to be successful (Batcheldor 1964; 1966; 1968; 1979). Unfortunately, this session ended before the character we had selected - Kurt - could fully cohere into an independent character. However, stage two, in which the group drew Kurt, felt qualitatively different to stage one. Kurt seemed to take on more life and be more rounded and likeable.

It’s worth looking here, before moving on to the drawing stage, at the extent to which the results of this first stage of the exercise reflect participants' feelings towards academia. All the participants had previously revealed ambivalent feelings towards academia. Some, like JO, has talked about feeling inadequate in acts of reading and understanding. Others had talked about struggles with dyslexia and how this impacted on their academic activities. This ambivalence perhaps translated into the arch, grotesque characters who are hard to like, hard to relate to and hard on other people. That all the characters created were men, and all were older perhaps suggests something about academia being seen as a patriarchy and authoritarian. The 'character' of each of the characters is a hard, perhaps brittle shell - an outer coating - with little-to-no access to any interiority. This might also reflect participants' feelings about academia.

In the drawing stage (stage two) participants were asked to draw, collaboratively, an image of the character they had selected as a group as the strongest. Of the five characters, Kurt was selected. The meditation process which occurred before the drawing was designed to facilitate, for each participant, a closer and more imaginative relationship with him, and hence make the drawing easier. Participants were assigned a body part (or item of clothing) to draw. They were reminded that skills in drawing were not necessary to take part successfully. Participant reflection, and my experience, suggested that this stage allowed Kurt to take on new dimensions. The visual representation (see Appendix Seven for examples), although crude and not particularly life-like, together with the experience of drawing and otherwise creating the character, worked together to let Kurt become a more rounded an realistic character. Participants reported that it was easier to feel emotionally connected with him. This may also have been facilitated by the meditation, which aimed to increase imaginative engagement with the character.

As mentioned, the session was cut short. Participants were unable to spare the full day which would have given time for all stages in character development to have been completed. In fact, the ideal would have been to have a series of meetings in which Kurt's development was encouraged, in order to see whether Batcheldor-like results could have been achieved (Batcheldor 1964; 1966; 1968; 1979). However, due to participant availability this was not possible, and additionally focusing too much on this element of the research would have perhaps lost track of the research questions. While Batcheldor (1964; 1966;

1968; 1979) and the Owen's experiments (Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976; Owen 1976, 1977) were the starting point for this thesis, the main research interests are in the feasibility of repeating the Owen's experiments in creating a 'fictional' ghost, but are rather concerned with the role of intuition in writing, and the use of mediumistic techniques. However, there is a clear cross over between this session and some aspects of the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis, particularly those to do with the status of fiction. The 'traditional' view of language, undermined explicitly by Lecercle (1985) and less explicitly by Totton (2003), Bollas (1999, 2002) and Gendlin (1978, 1996, 2006), is one in which there is clear-cut and hard and fast distinction between fact and fiction. Lecercle's concept of *délire*, rooted as it is in Deleuze's four-fold division between types of sense and reference, clearly questions this distinction, re-rooting the fictional at the heart of fact, and inserting the factual into fiction (Lecercle 1985). It's in Totton's nebulous, body-related spaces that paranormality takes place, and in which telepathy is possible (Totton 2003). Therefore, this session is related to the theoretical considerations discussed in chapter three.

6.8.f Session six: summary

As I was involved in this session, which did not take place with previous sessions, I have a slightly different perspective on the process. In previous sessions, I felt I had to 'wear' my 'researcher' role in a much more obvious way. In these sessions, I felt my role was much more strongly organisational. I did not take part in any of the exercises, so I did not know how they felt in these particular sessions, from a participant's point of view (although I have done most of the exercises as a participant in other contexts). I was aware in sessions one to five that I had to 'run' the workshop, organising the events, informing participants about various issues (how to do the exercises, the wider context, etc.) rather than take part. I had to be at hand, slightly distanced, in order to answer any questions that came up during exercises. This felt like a slightly authoritative role, in which I had an 'edge' in terms of knowledge, and in which I could not relax and take part in activities. The role of power in research has been explored elsewhere, for example by Hoult *et al.* (2020) who suggest that equal representation, for example when working with communities, is sometimes denied by the research process, in which "'writing up' can actually become a kind of slow violence towards participants, projects and ourselves" (Hoult *et al*. 2020, p. 88). This limitation of expression, the authors suggest, is not set in stone, and they suggest poetry as a research method to explore alternatives. The "inherently demographic process" of writing a poem to be read by others, where a space is created for the author and ambiguous and varied responses are welcome, research can be approached in a different way (Hoult et al. 2020, p. 99). The role of poetry is particularly interesting in the context of this thesis, as it, as described by the authors, uses paradox and multiplicity of voices in a way which echoes Lecercle's understanding of *délire* and it's subversive, anti-authoritarian role (Hoult et al 2020; Lecercle 1985).

In contrast with my experiences in the earlier sessions, in session six, I was able to relax into the activities. I took a place at the table, filling in the answers and helping co-create the characters. the biggest difference I felt between the two types of experiences was a sense of fun and enjoyment. The process of creating the characters was very amusing and absorbing. I enjoyed reading the answers, and the group work / collaborative process. There was also a greater sense of relaxation in this session.

It is interesting, perhaps, that I was only prompted to mention this in this write up of the session because I took a break from this writing up and read about a somatic workshop. This reminded me that taking part in a session is not only about the 'head' experience but also about the body, I am reminded that the first sessions, although working with participants I already knew, were characterised by some anxiety centred around planning, organising, speaking to a 'public' and what might go wrong. I am reminded that participation in an activity is a more relaxed experience in which it's harder for me to fail and which doesn't attract the visceral performance-anxiety of having to explain and lead. Although, of course, I was leading this session, as I still had the workshop plan and was still informing participants of what happened next.

I have experienced similar things when working on related group activities, and my responses can be seen as a reflection of / corroboration of some of Batcheldor's suggestions about what's effective in mediumship and Séance work (Batcheldor 1964; 1966; 1968; 1979). But I will explore this in more detail in the discussion in the next chapter.

Finally, it is necessary to note that this session also differed from others in that it did not explore aspects of reading in the same way the other sessions did. Seemingly, it focused more on the ontology of fictional characters, and on the processes of collaborative co-creation of such characters. However, it related to the main research themes in more subtle ways. As an investigation heavily influenced by the Owen's and Batcheldor's methods (Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976; Owen 1976, 1977; Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979), it was connected to the starting point of the PhD. Additionally, the interest in the role of imagination and intuition, which play a huge part in the methods used in this session, are a core aspect of my concerns in this research. This session can be seen as another way of accessing participants' imagination and intuitive skills and exploring what emerges when these are given free play.

6.9 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has set out and explored the results of the research groups. Each of the six sessions was discussed in turn. What happened during the session was explained briefly, and the bulk of the discussions were concerned with exploring the outcomes in terms of three of the research questions which inform this thesis. To recap, the main research question this thesis is concerned with is about the value of intuitive methods, particularly ones using techniques taught in mediumship development, in exploring academic reading and texts. This thesis answers the overall question in two ways. First, a theory of intuition is developed (in Chapter Three) based in a number of existing theoretical positions. This theory contextualises the concept of intuition in terms of phenomenology, psychoanalysis and literary theory, and also serves as a source of practical techniques to explore the ways in which academic reading practices might be more intuitive. Chapter Three thus answered three of the subsidiary research questions, that is, about the nature of intuition, about the role of the body in intuition, and about the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language. This chapter has thrown light on the remaining sub-questions:

- How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
- How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and *délire*, be used to explore experiences of reading?
- What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
- What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

This chapter was structured around the six different sessions. Above, in the brief conclusion to the discussion of each session, thoughts relating to aspects of the research questions have been discussed, although not related specifically to each question. In the conclusion (the following chapter), I will respond in detail to each of the four questions above (as well as the other sub-questions), summarising the themes uncovered in this chapter.

In brief, at least for the people who made up the participants in this research group, practices of intuition and mediumship were a valuable way to explore experiences of academic reading. Participants reported that their engagements with the paper abstracts felt deeper and more resonant after taking part in some of the exercises. Some participants said that they would use techniques from the session to help them better engage with texts, or to use in their own work or practice. This is not to suggest that all the exercises were equally useful to participants, or that the exercises were equally useful to all participants. Some participants struggled more than others to see the exercises' purposes, and the first three sessions seemed to yield more material for analysis and reflection than the final three.

In terms of the question about theoretically derived tools, particularly ones relating to phenomenology of bodily experience (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 2006), as well as free association and *délire* (Bollas 1999, 2002; Barratt 2014, 2018; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015) and Lecercle's (1985; 1994), and the extent to which they are useful in exploring reading, the results from the different session are mixed. Some of the more 'theoretical' tools, i.e. those rooted most firmly in the theory from which they originated, were difficult to implement, particularly Gendlin's six-stage process of dipping and focusing (Gendlin 1978, 1996). The exercise based on the analytical relationship and free association also felt difficult for participants. This may have been because the exercises which adhered most slavishly to tools found in theory were more complicated to explain and harder to engage with due to this complexity, particularly given the relatively short time allocated for each exercise.

Despite these issues, and drawing upon the experiences reported by participants, there would seem to be a value in using the tools explored in the sessions in an academic context. Several participants talked about their difficulties in academic contexts, particularly a sense of having to adhere to a set of rules which had been internalised over years of academic study, and which were perceived as draconian, complex and unforgiving. By allowing an element of 'play' to enter into relationships with academic texts, and through allowing a creative engagement with such texts, some participants felt that they could engage with reading in a way which challenged these rules. Additionally, the results reported above are illuminating about the nature of reading and academic study. They demonstrate that at least some of the participants have had negative experience of reading and study and continue to struggle in this area. Of course, this could be a result specific to a very small sample of respondents. But given the ongoing issues with student engagement (Bryson 2014), it seems possible that these issues are more widespread. There are many reasons why students might fail to engage with study (see also Tight 2020): the results discussed above suggest that habitual, unquestioned ways of reading might be one of them. This is something to explore further in future studies. The results also indicate that there is some use in using tools and techniques rooted in practices designed to work with intuition in these contexts. Although some participants struggled to understand the 'point' of the exercises, most reported increased engagement with texts and learning, although of course it is not clear how widespread these results might be (are they confined to this particular research group?) nor how long lasting the increased engagement might be (for example, does it live beyond the session itself?).

Before moving on to the next chapter, where the results will be discussed in a little more detail, I want to acknowledge that not all aspects of the sessions went as planned. I had anticipated that there would be scope for a much more nuanced interpretation of the results, for example using Lecercle's techniques to uncover the 'underbelly' of the academic abstracts (Lecercle 1985), or using appropriate techniques to work with the visual material produced (Lerman 2003). In fact, the results themselves seemed less interesting than the participants' responses to the exercises. This might be because the sessions introduced a lot of material in a relatively short space of time, and that had the sessions concentrated on one technique only, the results might have been deeper and more open to a detailed analysis using Lecercle's methods (Lecercle 1985). It may also be due to my feeling that the responses from participants were so immediate and interesting that they demanded more attention and working through complex methods derived from theory was less important at this stage. Of course, future studies could spend more time unpicking the results themselves in much greater detail.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this final chapter I will bring together the different threads I've been exploring in this thesis and suggest some ways in which the research might be developed. I will also suggest some of the practical applications which could arise from the research. The thesis has incorporated theoretical and empirical elements, and each of these has separate implications (although these are also associated). The theoretical implications of the thesis include the new definition of intuition developed in Chapter Three. This was rooted in a broad context which incorporates phenomenological approaches (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960; Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2006, 2007), literary theory (Lecercle 1985, 1994), and ideas from psychoanalysis and about embodiment (Barratt 2014, 2018; Bollas 1999, 2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015). This definition of intuition also provides a grounding for understandings of mediumship and, more generally the paranormal which stands outside the aim to fit it into a scientific, empirical, materialist framework. The more practical implications have to do with new approaches which might be taken to reading academic texts, potential new solutions to problems of student engagement and retention, and new methods of research (which also synergise with a number of existing methods, particularly intuitive and transpersonal research).

To recap the research questions, my aim overall aim was to explore whether there is value in using intuitive methods, particularly ones based on techniques used in mediumship development groups, in the contexts of learning, education, texts and academic discourse. The way in which I answered these questions is two-fold. On the one hand, I wanted to understand the concept of intuition, particularly as it relates to mediumship, in order to better understand this concept and situate it theoretically. On the other I wanted to look at ways in which the concept of intuition, thus understood, could generate techniques for exploring academic practices of reading, and also look at what happens when we carry out such explorations.

The first concern is expressed in the following three sub-questions relating to my main research question:

- What is 'intuition' (understood in terms of mediumship) and what philosophical and psychoanalytical theories can be used to understand it?
- What is the role of the body and embodiment in intuition?
- What is the relationship of mediumship and intuition to language?

And the second concern is expressed in the final four sub-questions:

- How can practices of intuition and mediumship be applied as way to explore experiences of academic reading?
- How can theoretically derived tools, particularly relating to bodily experience understood phenomenologically, free association and *délire,* be used to explore experiences of reading?
- What value might there be in using such tools and techniques in an academic context, and why?
- What light does the use of such non-standard techniques throw upon the nature of reading and academic study?

In terms of the first concern, to understand intuition, I explored a number of theoretical texts in Chapters Two and Three. I first looked at attempts to understand mediumship in terms of what could loosely be understood as a scientific framework. Finding such a framework inadequate for my concerns, I then developed (in Chapter Three) a notion of intuition based in philosophical and psychoanalytical approaches, specifically Husserlian phenomenology (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960), Gendlin's body-based approaches (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2006, 2007), ideas about free association (Barratt 2014, 2018; Bollas 1999, 2002; Lothane 2007, 2010, 2018; Totton 2003, 2008, 2015), and the notion of *délire,* as developed primarily by Lecercle but also rooted in Deleuze's thinking (Deleuze 1969; Lecercle 1984, 1995). In this notion, intuition is a part of lived experience which needs to be taken extremely seriously as a way of understanding the world, and which is rooted in the body (with the body understood as lived, living entity, not the mechanised, distanced body with which it is sometimes replaced). This understanding of intuition relates to the world uncovered in free association, and its expression in language is through *délire,* nonsense and poetry, not language as 'traditionally' understood (Lecercle 1985, 1994).

As well as providing a way to contextualise notions of intuition and mediumship, the discussion in Chapter Three also yielded a number of practical tools (for example practices designed to bring about free association and body awareness), which I subsequently used in the research groups to explore experiences of reading academic texts. These techniques were central to answering the second set of research questions, to do with the practical use of intuitive techniques. In order to investigate this, I organised six research groups in which participants took part in a number of exercises designed to approach the reading of academic texts in different ways derived from the theories explored in the literature review. The results of these sessions are set out in Chapter Six, with the methodology explained in Chapter Five.

This conclusion builds upon the discussion in the previous chapters. As pointed out earlier, the results I obtained from the research groups were very interesting, particularly in terms of the light thrown on participants' experiences of academic reading. The results also illustrate the ways in which the exercises were able to facilitate participants to engage in different, perhaps more fulfilling, ways with academic texts. Bearing this in mind, the research I have carried out has great potential to have impact on helping students engage more fully with their academic life, and work through previously unacknowledged personal material to do with learning and experiences of academia. However, I also found that the exercises were less helpful in uncovering material which could be analysed with tools based on the theories discussed in the literature review. For example, I had hoped that Lecercle's techniques, which he himself used to work with *délire* (Lecercle 1985, 1994)*,* would be useful to analyse the texts produced in, for example, session one and two. In fact, the data collected from the research groups did not facilitate such an analysis. This 'failure' has been discussed in more detail in earlier chapters, and I also return to it later in the present chapter, but it is worth mentioning that this this seeming 'failure' can be used to suggest a further context for my findings, in terms of transformative learning and how my thesis might contribute to thinking about learning as a transformation. In what follows next in this conclusion, I first discuss the findings and then, in the next section look at the impact of these findings. I finally suggest some pointers for future investigations.

7.2 Discussion of findings

In the literature review I answered the first three of the research questions above. I explored an understanding of intuition based on theories of free association, *délire* and phenomenological understandings of embodiment. This exploration started with a discussion of the mediumistic experiences of Batcheldor and the Owens, who explored séance phenomena (Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984, 1995; Batcheldor and Hunt 1966; Batcheldor and Brookes Smith 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977, Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976). I was looking for a way to capture the sense of fascination and exploration I found in their reported experiences and bring this – a kind of enchantment - to experiences of academic reading.

The idea that enchantment can, and should, be reinstated as a priority for academia and beyond is gaining wider traction. A recent volume takes the modern academy as the starting point for discussions of how enchantment might be re-introduced, transforming education into a process that engages the heart as well as the mind, and which carries out wide-reaching changes in the individuals experiencing such enchantment (Voss and Wilson 2017). Such a transformation, through enchantment, emerges as a four-fold process, working with the institution, the curriculum, the mind, and with nature and body (Voss and Wilson 2017). My own stance on enchantment and the academy, which I discuss in a chapter in Voss and Wilson's *Re-enchanting the Academy* (Moore 2017, pp. 175-194), starts with the explorations of the séance and mediumship forms by Batcheldor (1964, 1966, 1968, 1979) and the Owens (Owen 1974, 1976, 1977; Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1977). In my chapter I look at what Batcheldor and the Owens (both investigators with a strongly academic background, but working outside of academia) brought to the séance, and how this flavour of the séance might offer a model to reintroduce a form of enchantment into academic experiences.

In the current thesis, I start from the idea of the séance as model for re-enchanting the academy, and develop it further, both theoretically and empirically. As my thoughts developed beyond the starting point of the value of the 'experimental' séance of Batcheldor and the Owens Batcheldor 1964, 1966, 1968, 1979, 1984, 1995; Batcheldor and Hunt 1966; Batcheldor and Brookes Smith 1970; Owen 1974, 1976, 1977, Owen and Sparrow 1974, 1976). I began to understand their experiences as ones which involved cultivating and using intuition. It therefore seemed therefore important to look at intuition, to try to understand what it is better. In this attempt to find understanding, I started with laboratory-based and other studies from an empirical perspective (full details in Chapter Two but see Radin 2010 for a good overview). These seemed disappointing, both in terms of their ability to explain the phenomena they were concerned with, and in their attempted neutrality and separation from the subject matter. I found problematic both the underlying assumptions about the most appropriate methods to explore intuitive and mediumistic phenomena, and the underlying assumptions about the nature of objectivity and subjectivity. In an attempt to find better methods with different views of objectivity and subjectivity, I turned instead to different approaches from philosophy and psychoanalysis.

Husserlian phenomenology suggests a way to understand experiences of intuition on their own terms, rather than as entirely subjective phenomena to be cast aside in favour of a rigid objectivity, and also offers a way to sidestep the polarisation between the 'subjective' and 'objective' (Husserl 1900/1901, 1913, 1936, 1960). Gendlin's writings offer a way to understand intuition as a body-based process, where 'body' in understood as lived and experienced, not as interpreted as signs of an ontologically prior, externally quantified, measurable object (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1996, 1999, 2006, 2007). Gendlin's take on interiority, understanding of the body and rejection of the dominant philosophical tradition mean that experiences of intuition and intuitive practices should be taken seriously as evidence, and the notion that our experiences are a poor copy of reality are rejected (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1996, 1999, 2006, 2007). Taking a phenomenological stance, Gendlin explains that, rather, "language and living developed together (and continue to do so), that experience and situations are together (just as our sense of "knowing how" to use a word and the situations in which we use it are together). "Being-in-the-world" is Heidegger's way of defining humans as beings-in, as experiencing-in situations” (Gendlin 1973, p. 285).

One conclusion of this, and of the fuller argument I developed in Chapter Three, is that we need to accept intuitive experiences on their own terms, and as experience of a lived world, rather than immediately seeking a more ontologically basic causal explanation of these experiences, for example in neurological disorders or personality conditions. As well as a justification for taking intuition seriously, Gendlin provides a set of carefully worked out and useful tools for working intuitively (Gendlin 1963, 1973, 1978, 1990, 1996, 1999, 2006, 2007). His discussions of focusing and dipping suggest ways in which we can use bodily-based experiences to work with a problem or to find out what we really think about things. Gendlin also suggests a new way of understanding what the body is, separating out our experiences from the abstract, mechanised, quantified entity which is often prioritised over our experiences (Gendlin 1973, 1978, 1996).

Language, however, is at times an issue for Gendlin, an uncomfortable medium inserting itself between experiences and communications of them and rendering any understanding of how reality works which assumes language is unproblematic and in which communication of experiential states are easily, clearly and simply communicated, problematic. Rather, “feelings, situations, and language are inherently involved in each other” (Gendlin 1973, p. 291). He further elaborates:

> experience is always organized by the evolutionary history of the body, and also by culture and situations organized partly by language. Although language is always involved in the complex organization of experience, it is never all that is involved in it. The role of language does not get at all of an experience. But neither are you relating statement to experience for the first time when you explicate. Language is already involved in experience. (Gendlin 1973, p. 292).

Thus, the relationship between language, experience and what is experienced is complex and challenging for Gendlin (Gendlin 1973). Here, Lecercle’s discussion of *délire* is useful, postulating as it does a two-fold function for language, one function direct and referential and rooted in science, the other dark, mysterious and rooted in the body (Lecercle 1985).

This has an implication that the language of intuition is radically other to the language of reason: it's more deeply rooted in the body, the symbolic, and Gendlin's felt sense (Gendlin 1978, 1996). It is also radically subversive and disruptive: Lecercle's *délire,* like Gendlin's project and the role envisaged for free association by Bollas (2002) and Totton (2003), undercuts any easy assumption about the nature of reality and how we understand it, because communication is no longer linear, instantaneous and straightforward, but rather dark, mysterious, complex and ongoing (Lecercle 1985).

While expecting the research groups to yield rich material that surprised me, I did also have some particular expectations for the results. As set out above, my aim was to draw upon ideas about free association, *délire* and the felt sense to understand intuition and what intuitive practices might bring to explorations of reading. As well as developing a theoretical understanding of intuition, the literature review material generated techniques which I used to collect data in the research sessions. For example, session one used free association techniques. I thus had an expectation that the ideas I had discussed in the literature review might feed into the analysis of the data. For example, I thought that Lecercle's techniques might offer tools to interpret the written data emerging from the session associated with his ideas, if not other sessions (Lecercle 1985, 1994). Lecercle not only provides a philosophical theory of *délire,* he also analyses a number of texts – predominantly from nonsense literature or written by people suffering mental illness – using his theory as a tool (Lecercle 1985, 1994). For example, he analyses Louis Wolfson's account of his mental illness and attempted cure, written about by Wolfson in *Le Schizo et les Langues* (1970), in terms of *délire.* (Lecercle 1985, pp. 27-31). Lecercle traces the ways in which Wolfson transforms language from a source of pain into an "instrument of liberation" (ibid. p. 28). More precisely, Lecercle details how acts of translation (for example, 'milk' becomes 'milch', 'maelk' or 'mleko') rendering the originating word painless, and how "a strange game" operates, "where the student of languages plays against his mother (tongue). The rules are strict, and any illegal move is punished, the translation is blocked, and, ugly and painful, the word remains English" (ibid. p.28). Even more precisely, Lecercle talks through an example in which Wolfson struggles with a translation for "vegetable shortening", and in so doing changes his rules so that the translation is no longer direct but rather "several partial equivalents in three different languages" (ibid. p. 29). This is the type of analysis I had hoped would be possible with the texts emerging from the research groups. The exercises in free association would similarly reveal material that could be treated to a sort of literary psychoanalysis.

Despite the expectations that the research groups would produce *déliric* texts, the results challenged my expectation. The material was rich and interesting, but most of the interest lay in what the results revealed about the participants' experiences of academic reading, and how the exercises helped them engage more fully with the process. In terms of Lecercle's distinction between two types of language (Lecercle 1985), the results stayed in the arena of the 'traditional' model - referential and descriptive, although often describing or referring to emotional, bodily and nebulous content. The language of the results tended not to be the language of *délire.* As a reminder, Lecercle distinguishes between language as a means of communication (the "dominant tradition in the conception of language" a form of language modelled around our need to live in society and make sense, which "conveys our search for truth and notes down the rules of our method" (Lecercle 1985, p.6). He compares this with *délire,* at once the liberation of the dominant understanding of language and its underside: non-instrumental, both failing to make sense and making sense so abundantly that sense becomes non-sense, poetic, cranky, eccentric (Lecercle 1985). In these terms, most of the results from the research groups fell into the dominant, communicative tradition; far fewer of them could be considered fully *déliric.* Primarily, the 'dominant tradition' version of language was used by participants in the exercises and the discussion sessions (and post-session questionnaires), although that which the participants communicated was frequently rooted in personal experience, phenomenological evaluations and embodied sensations.

Indeed, the respondents seemed to authentically and honestly reflect on their often-negative experiences of reading within the academy, particularly the restriction and sense of being criticised that they brought to these experiences. But they articulated these honest reactions in a very linear, communicative way. As a further example, in session one, working with free association, most participants struggled to freely associate from the key phrases, with results tending to be synonyms of these phrases. Few answers entered the realms of nonsense, though some did so to some extent: for example the participant who used the key word ‘Ophiuroidea’ produced associations that deviated more notably from this starting point, perhaps because the word was understandable only to the specialised reader, and hence the participant had to look at the elements of the word, and think about the sounds it made. In other sessions, participants also explored their experiences and were able, in the session based on Gendlin’s ideas (Gendlin 1978, 1996), to locate their reactions to the text, in some cases, in very precise interior locations (behind the eyes, in head and shoulders, between nose and eyes).

This is not to say that the material fell entirely into Lecercle’s category of the communicative ‘dominant tradition’ of language (Lecercle 1985). At times, more poetic, freer material emerged. For example, the exercise in session two drawing upon Gendlin’s ideas involved participants’ using pre-prepared sheets with a figure on, to ‘map’ their bodily experiences (Gendlin 1973, 1978, 1996). Because the pre-prepared form (in conjunction with an empty schematic image), encouraged a different way of using text, this seemed to facilitate more *déliric* responses amongst participants, at least to some small extent. The participant who was a published poet also seemed to find it easier to use less referential, communicative, social language in her responses. Additionally, as the group worked together over the weeks, there was a sense in which they seemed to be ‘freer’ in their responses. It’s possible that with different exercises, designed to more adeptly stimulate *déliric* content, with different participants or with a longer schedule for working together as a group, material more open to the type of analysis I envisaged could have been produced. It is also possible that the format of the groups and the location in which they took place provided a below-the-surface reinforcement of a feeling that straightforward, linear, ‘traditional’ styles of communication were expected, and poetic, *déliric* or nonsensical communications were not. The groups took place in rooms within the university, and the locations might be primarily associated by participants with more conventional lectures and workshops. It might have been useful, in retrospect, to have raised this with participants, for example, in a group discussion. More generally, the extent to which styles of communication are influenced by environment (physical, cultural, social) is an interesting question worth exploring in more detail. Rapoport, for example, looks at the ways people behave within environments in terms of the meaning that those environments have for them, and suggests that this meaning is mostly constituted non-verbally and felt emotionally rather than rationally (Rapoport 1990).

I have focused above on the ways in which the research group did not generate the material I had planned. However, a rich and somewhat unexpected stream of results *did* emerge, and these results cast light upon the fourth and fifth research questions, to do with the ways in which practices of intuition, and tools associated with the theories discussed in the literature review can be applied to explore experiences of academic reading, and what the results of these explorations reveal. In other words, each session revealed complex and varied responses to academic readings. I am wary of summarising the results, as I do not want to simplify their complexity or nullify their richness, however two clear themes emerge. First, respondents discussed their negative experiences of reading in academic contexts, and second respondents overall felt that the exercises they took part in, in the different sessions, helped them engage more deeply with the material they were reading. The role of the imagination was highlighted as an integral part of the second theme: the increased engagement was felt, by a number of participants, to be facilitated through the imagination.

In the rest of this section I will briefly discuss these two themes, before (in the next section) looking at transformative learning as a way of framing these findings. Session one asked participants to reflect on the processes of 'conventional' reading. Many negative responses were discussed, the fatigue such a process evokes, the lack of understanding, the feeling of a block and different types of anxiety. People talked, for example about feeling drained, and drooping. There was a feeling amongst participants that they, as academic readers, had to try and reach an unspoken and very difficult standard, the 'correct' reading, and were likely to fail in this enterprise.

That participants felt so negatively about experiences of 'conventional' reading is contextualised by the later discussions in this and other sessions, in which their previous experiences of academia were discussed. These discussions brought up mixed emotions that felt particularly deep to participants. They talked about the ways in which they felt that a particularly way of being was implicitly demanded by academia: CA, for example, talked about the preconceptions she was starting to challenge, preconceptions which she had no recollection of being formally taught but which influenced her responses to reading and learning for most of her life. As she said: “because they are hidden from view, they are creating a context in which academic reading (and writing) has to happen in a certain way, and a way that feels restrictive, if only subliminally”.

These negative responses to experiences of conventional academic reading were not limited to session one, but occurred in other sessions as well, as detailed in the previous chapter. In session two, feelings of being disconnected from the read text, and of inadequacies in reading, were commonly reported. As LB said, “not connecting with text. Does not understand. Wants to respect authors and engage, but totally resistant to it intellectually.” Another participant wrote, on the drawing map of sensations, “Familiar script: I’m the only one. Why doesn’t it... Judgements about my capabilities. Giving up. I’m useless.” JO, in a lengthy response which was quoted in the previous chapter, explained her feelings of being the only one who could not understand, feeling “grey and straight-jacketed”, disconnected from her body, and linking this back to her experiences doing her first and second degrees.

In addition to the negative cognitive and emotional processes elicited by reading the abstracts in a linear way and aiming to make sense of the processes, participants also mentioned negative bodily responses in session two: tightness in the stomach, and using the throat as a shield. These negative feelings softened and dissolved as they came into conscious awareness.

On a different note, participants found that the exercises allowed them to ‘connect’ to the texts in new, enjoyable and fruitful ways. They found the language in which the abstracts were written invasive, draining, demanding, dead and irritating, and by contrast, in the session using free association techniques, the language in which the associations were written was experienced as alive, evocative, closely connected to feelings and the heart, imaginative, mythical, more straightforward and direct, and related to meaning and story-making. In short, the processes explored in this and the other session allowed participants to engage with the texts in new ways which brought their imaginations on board and which were experienced as rooted in the body, particularly the heart. By engaging imagination, a process was triggered whereby the text became more meaningful, and the participants (for example MB) were more able to engage equally and directly with the subject matter. OE reported that critical thinking was improved, for him, through this method, as it allowed connection of heart and head, and it allowed the process of being critical and analytical to be felt, rather than ‘done. Some exercises were more difficult than others: Gendlin’s techniques were reported to be more challenging, although LD said the technique offered a new way to think about, and engage with, academic texts, and others reported positive results. Other sessions also led to comments about new ways to connect with texts, approaching reading from a different angle, and tuning in in a new way. Fuller details of the positive impacts of the exercises were given in the previous chapter.

This was a small sample of self-selected participants, and it is likely that the sort of people who wanted to take part in the group were more than usually at odds with the conventional academic experience at the start of the sessions. However, the unpicking of their reactions to reading academic extracts was interesting, and worth exploring more widely, particularly as attention has recently been placed on the need to ensure student retention, the reasons for student attrition, and ways in which students might become more deeply engaged with academic study (see, for example, Tight 2020). It is also worth noting here that the dissatisfaction with academic contexts voiced by participants in the research groups is not unique to these participants. Other records of disenchantment with academia exist and are also an area to explore further and develop links between this thesis’ findings and wider contexts. Elizabeth Hoult, for example, talks of her increasing disillusion with the academic disciplines within which she was situated professionally, and her frustrating search for a community. She writes: "academic writing seemed to be a masquerade and a distraction from the really difficult thinking and writing that happens without frameworks - a guard to protect people from engaging in what is real, difficult and authentic " (Hoult 2012, p.175). In this thesis I certainly note the participants’, and my own, dissatisfaction, but Hoult’s position suggests the need to explore further aspects of this dissatisfaction (Hoult 2012), and how it might be addressed.

In this context, as a practical example of how students can be more fully integrated into the curriculum, it is interesting to consider Voss’s (2019) discussion of an M.A. course she ran since 2014. This very popular programme[13] was established to study "esoteric and spiritual traditions and practices, mythic and symbolic narratives and discourses of the paranormal and sacred through the lens of transformative learning methodologies, so that both 'learning about' and 'learning from' these so-called 'non-rational' knowledge bases are interwoven—a three-way interplay between cultural history, hermeneutics and reflexivity" (Voss, 2019, p. 20). It is outside the scope of this thesis to examine the rationale for this programme in detail, but it is worth noting the role played by transformative learning perspectives and the integration of practices designed to cultivate the imagination and intuition. In particular, the course integrates a substantial element of the experiential with theoretical sessions, and additionally tools to promote refection on experience as a participant. From my own experience of taking part in some sessions of the course, it is designed in such a way as to develop theoretical understandings in the context of working with emotional and body-based material.

The gnosis model,[14] in which "human consciousness… participates in, and mirrors, a greater whole" (Voss, 2019, p. 21) is central to the M.A. course, and this model suggests that any deep understanding of the external world is predicated on a turning "within", in which "the word 'within must be understood metaphorically… human beings' inner worlds correspond to how they perceive their outer worlds, and indeed play a vital role in creating their perceptions of what is real and true" (p. 21).

One of the key ways in which this gnostic approach is instantiated on the programme is through a renewed focus on the mythopoetic, imaginal and sacred, and through an emphasis on exploration of students' "own mythic narratives, assumptions, and ways of learning through a variety of reflexive and creative techniques which stimulate and encourage different modes of knowing". The programme mixes lectures and seminars with creative projects, performance, reflective practice, journaling, debate, argument and critical written and spoken reflection. Interestingly, intuitive techniques are also foregrounded, based in a theoretical framework of transformative learning and methodologies. These frameworks are particularly useful in this context, as they offer a further contextualisation of the current thesis, which has not been considered in detail earlier. These frameworks are useful for understanding how this thesis might be developed in future and will be briefly considered in the next section.

---

[13] Over one hundred students participated between 2014-2021.

[14] Voss uses *gnosis* to express the type of knowing (and knowledge) pertinent to the intuitive intellect: a knowledge which is experiential rather than linguistic, not predictable, and primary (Voss 2015, p.120). this understanding interweaves with that of Kripal, who envisions a gnostic space for research in which "anything can and should be questioned (Kripal 2007, p. 24), and in this understanding "academic method and personal experience cannot be … easily separated" (Kripal 2001, p. 5).

7.3 Transformative learning and the impact of findings

It is likely to be clear from the above discussion that the spirit in which this thesis has approached the research questions is deeply experimental. The areas of interest have been used to guide an exploration, following different threads and exploring pathways as they unfold. All these explorations, both the theoretical ones which took in a variety of philosophical, psychological and literary perspectives, and the empirical ones, which used different methods to work with a small group of people, are broadly united by the concerns set out in the research questions, particularly the need to investigate ways to work with people in academic contexts using imagination and intuition. As such, I would like to propose that a way of framing the work I have carried out, and particularly a way in which the work might be developed, is the perspective of transformative learning. This frame offers both a new way to understand the work and a way in which it might develop in the future.

Current theories of transformative learning are rooted in Paulo Freire's (1970) theories. Freire saw transformation in education as inextricably linked to raising of consciousness about repression and positioned it firmly in the realms of the political and sociological. The aim for individuals is consciousness raising, more awareness of the multiple oppressions under which they live, challenging such oppressions, and a greater political activism and social awareness. Action against oppression, after awareness, is central (Freire 1970). This position has widely influenced the more recent perspectives on transformative learning, particularly in North American and European adult education (Dirkx 1998). This 'flavour' of transformative learning was developed particularly by Mezirow (1995, 1997, 2000) as a way to approach learning for adults which involves challenging beliefs, habits and values. It promotes self-direction, experiential learning and practice, and marks a shift from learning understood as something passed from teacher to pupil in a one-way exchange to one in which the relationship between student and teacher is more dynamic and based on dialogue. Mezirow (2000) developed a ten-stage framework through which students are able to question the values and beliefs they bring to the educational process. This process moves from an initial feeling of disorientation, through self-critique and examination to exploration of new options and re-integration (Mezirow 1995, 1997, 2000; Sheffield Hallam University 2020).

Since Mezirow's further development of the idea (1995), there have been many other perspectives on transformative learning. Some, including Mezirow, prioritise the political and social, and see transformation in learning as a process of rational critical reflection (Mezirow 1995, 1997). Others (Boyd 1991, Dirkx 1998) see transformative learning in terms of personal development and a Jungian process of individuation, and what he understands as a form of soul work, or inner work (Dirkx and Mezirow 2006). I want to look more closely at what Dirkx says about transformative learning, as it seems particularly applicable to the areas of concern in this thesis.

For Dirkx, transformative learning is a way to "think about and understand our senses of self, our senses of identity, our subjectivity" (Dirkx and Meizrow 2006). This is a spiritual perspective, but one rooted in intellect, emotions and social perspectives. Dirkx sees this as a deep learning that challenges existing perspectives, drawing upon Mezirow's conception but surpassing it, using the subjective as a steppingstone to the archetypal (Mezirow 1995, 1997). For Dirkx, this 'deep' learning offers a way to integrate the cognitive, social, cultural and epistemic with the spiritual, unifiying outer and inner. Jung's archetypes are the means whereby Dirkx marries the inner and outer (Dirkx and Mezirow 2006). My perspective, as outlined in the literature review, offers a way to unify inner and outer through phenomenological and psychoanalytical means, however despite differing means the outcomes of Dirkx's perspective and mine are similar, an integration of inner and outer which involves taking seemingly personal experiences very seriously as a way of accessing intuitions arising from a space beyond the personal ego. Dirkx (2006) talks about transformative learning as a way of understanding the ways in which texts and our inner lives interact, in order to facilitate understanding of inner lives and the role they play in the ways we make sense of our lives and the world (Dirkx and Meizrow 2006). Thus, the sort of focusing on personal experiences of academic reading discussed in the reports above of the research groups offers a way to tune into Dirkx's inner worlds and tease out the wider implications, which Dirkx theorises as spiritual (Dirkx and Meizrow 2006). and which I see as an interrogation of what intuitive processes reveal. As Dirkx puts it:

> As we tune into the inner world and how it relates to and interacts with our outer worlds, through our sensitivity and responsiveness to these feelings and images, we also become aware of more powerful forces and dynamics at work in our lives, forces and feel beyond us, as if we are living out parts of a larger script, one in which we are a key player but not the whole play, one in which we seem to be part of a larger whole. Learning that is transformative is in part directed to deepening our understanding of and work with these dynamics and relationships. This perspective on transformative learning directs us to both the process and the outcomes of learning, but it insists that we think of transformative learning as a kind of stance toward one's being in the world. (Dirkx and Meizrow, 2006, p.28).

Dirkx's methods and approach (2006) also embrace the emotional. The importance of emotional reactions to academic material was explored in the research groups. As these indicated, by giving permission for 'unacceptable' and emotional material to be experienced and ultimately voiced, the participants were able to approach the academic material in a spirit of greater equanimity and acceptance, finding themselves more closely related to it. As Dirkx says, the emotional aspects of learning have been neglected and/or viewed with ambivalence (Dirkx 2006, p.28). While the downplaying of emotions in academic contexts has receded to some extent, there is still, Dirkx claims, a tendency to think of a learner's emotions as literal, giving at the best practical and pragmatic insights into things that need to be changed (Dirkx 2006). But Dirkx emphasises the need to take the emotional content not at face value but as more symbolically understood, as evocative of deeper personal or transpersonal issues which can be worked with and through to lead to better understanding of self and others (Dirkx 2006). This is not to suggest that the literal interpretations of the emotions – e.g. frustration at restrictive academic structures – should be ignored in favour of work on the psyche. The literal interpretations can be extremely important. However, Dirkx points out a fruitful way of working with academic material and learning. As he comments academic material can "evoke deeply personal responses amongst adult learners, which manifests in distinctive emotional reactions" (Dirkx 2001, p.15), going on to point out the extent to which adult learning is grounded in "the way they think about them-selves and their worlds, opening possibilities for transformation and creating dramatic shifts in one's consciousness" (Dirkx 2001, p.15).

Rather than label such reactions in terms of a rationalistic and conscious framework, Dirkx suggests "an approach to understanding and facilitating transformative learning in which emotional reactions to the text are regarded as imagistic manifestations of inner selves" (Dirkx 2001, p. 15). This kind of soul work in transformative learning offers a very useful way of approaching the research material uncovered in this thesis, and of building upon the findings to integrate them into an educational perspective. Rather than downplaying the emotional reactions, for example the participants' frustrations with reading in academic contexts, they could be further explored as transformative tools, through a process of conscious realisation of the underlying emotions which, by bringing focus to these emotions differentiates and elaborates them (Dirkx 2001). As learners are able to be with and further articulate the emotional reactions, Dirkx suggests, so can integrate them and use them as building blocks to a new relationship with themselves and the material they work with (Dirkx 2001). Dirkx emphasises that these new selves do not emerge in an intentional way, or through rational processes of reflection, but rather spontaneously, further linking this idea to the realm of the imaginal, and imagination (Dirkx 2001). His discussion of this in terms of clusters of psychic energy, autonomous parts of personality, link this idea to the ideas discussed above about the role of the unconscious as a way of understanding intuition, and his description of the way in which these selves emerge links also to Gendlin's discussions, in which focusing and the felt sense reveal emotions and aspects of the self which transform as they are brought to light (Dirkx 2001, Gendlin 1996). His suggestion that learners start to work with texts through recognizing and naming the emotions that arise with their experiences of learning, chimes with the methods used in the research group. Dirkx (2001) also offers other ways of working with these emotions – writing through them, visualising them, dialoguing with them – which might fruitfully be used to extend the work started in this thesis. Other methods, for example mindfulness (Morris 2020) have also been suggested and might be useful to explore in more detail. Arguably, however, and as hinted above, Dirkx prioritises personal work over the context in which this work arises (Dirkx 2001, 2006), and it might be beneficial to extend his process by looking at the academic contexts in which emotions arise, and, perhaps by comparing responses from different people, perhaps challenging the facets of academic work which elicit such emotions. Unfortunately, there is not space to explore this possibility in more detail in this thesis.

Associated with the development of transformative learning, are new, transformative research methods. As Walton points out, the development of transformative learning was initially associated with the use of standard research methods, but research, like learning, also has possibilities for transformation, and as such requires specific methods (Walton 2014). Walton suggests, for example, drawing upon transpersonal dimensions as a route to researcher transformation (Walton 2014), but there are many routes which have been explored. One of particular interest for my concerns is that suggested by Rosemarie Anderson, who discussed the role of embodiment and the body as a means for transformation in research, and for research methods (Anderson 2001, 2002, 2003).

Embodied writing, Anderson states, occurs when the experience of the body is brought to the practice of writing (Anderson 2001). It starts from an acknowledgement of the lived body of the researcher, leading to a process of collecting, reporting and analysing these embodied experiences “to invite readers to encounter the narrative accounts for themselves and from within their own bodies through a form of sympathetic resonance” (Anderson 2001, p.83). Embodied writing is a way to let the body speak in research. As she points out “too much scientific report writing is tiresome and flat”, taking “a distanced observing stance” (Anderson 2001, p.83). This applies also to much academic writing, and it is likely that at least some members of the research group would have sympathised with her experience of trying to read about something that interests her and finding herself “yawning uncontrollably and yearning for a nap” (Anderson 2001, p. 83). Even qualitative reports, she suggests, written in what she calls a ‘Cartesian’ style (Anderson 2001; 2002), which “perpetuates the object-subject bifurcation between the world of our bodies and the world we inhabit” (Anderson 2001, p. 83), lead to feeling “disembodied, as if the report has little to do with me or things precious in my life" (Anderson 2001, p. 83). Interestingly, and as the quotes from Anderson here indicate, this form of embodied research is clearly and solidly located in the type of body-based phenomenological approach I have explored earlier as a way of approaching academic writing and working with intuition. It is clear too that her work, accessible and easy-to-read as it is, is firmly rooted in a nuanced understanding of the philosophical backgrounds which make her stance possible. For instance, in the 2001 paper, she discusses embodied writing as rooted in Husserl's *Leib*, a way to write in a way which is opposed to the "disembodied writing [which] just perpetuates the object-subject bifurcation between the world of our bodies and the world we inhabit" (Anderson 2001, p 84), a stance which she considers as 'Cartesian'.

Anderson also points out (in agreement with some of the previous discussion) that care needs to be taken to talk about the body in an appropriate way, as many ways of reporting on bodily experiences may feel head-based and disembodied (Anderson 2001). Embodied writing is a radically different form of writing (just as Lecercle's *délire* differs from the 'dominant tradition', and as Gendlin's approach differs from the traditional philosophical approach). Embodied writing involves slowing down, paying attention to the nuances of bodily experience, and cultivating mindfulness and an ability to pay focused attention to detail (Anderson 2001, 2002). As well as the skill of discerning what is going on in the body, the skill of finding the right words to describe it is also required. The writer needs to find their 'voice' and` embrace what makes them unique as a writer (Anderson 2001, 2002).

Of course, there are limits to the process of embodiment in research, and problems with its theorisation and execution. Anderson herself states that the efficacy of embodiment as a tool for research is dependent on the creation of a resonance between the written text and the reader (Anderson 2001). The concept of 'resonance' is indeed key to a successful practice of embodied research, and Anderson struggles to both define it and communicate how it should best be achieved (Anderson 2001). Perhaps in keeping with the almost hermeneutic nature of the process, the concept seems to resist easy definition and simple explanation, and rather emerges from a close, ongoing reading of Anderson's texts (Anderson 2001, 2002, 2003). It is a quasi-musical process which involves listening, being in tune, a chord being struck, through which over time, a picture emerges (Anderson 2001, 2002, 2003). However, in Anderson's account, the emphasis is on personal experience, which does lead to questions about how to reconcile wildly different reactions to different texts.

Setting aside objections and acknowledging that the above discussions of transformative learning and embodied research only skim the surface of these ideas, these perspectives do seem useful for suggesting a way forward from the ideas developed in this thesis. Part of the rationale for the research group is to explore how intuitive methods have been overlooked in some academic practices, and how they might be reintegrated. As such, Dirkx's approach to transformative learning and Anderson's suggestions about embodied research are very fruitful (Dirkx 1998, 2001, 2006; Anderson 2001, 2002, 2003). Taken together, a way forward for the research discussed in this thesis emerges. One further final perspective to take into account is that suggested by Angela Voss (2013). Voss proposes a Platonic methodology for investigating the paranormal and anomalous phenomena which involves moving beyond rationalistic frameworks, observation and empirical study to incorporate the active imagination and intuition. She discusses the different modes of cognition which apply, arguing that these type of events and objects demand new ways of knowing. These imply participation and a symbolic way of approaching objects, in which they are understood metaphorically (Voss 2013). In Platonism, this mode of knowing is seen as primary. There is a need for knowledge through sympathy and through a mode of being which is rooted in the symbolic, rather than the literal, relating to Plato's noetic modes of knowledge and drawing upon insight, inspiration and revelation as well as intuition and imagination (Voss 2013). She further discusses the instantiation of these ideas in the form of a M.A. course (Voss 2019). While Voss is specifically discussing the paranormal (Voss 2013), it is possible to extend her suggestions to wider arenas (just as the trajectory of this thesis has moved from the mediumship to academic reading). Voss's ideas also clearly fit with Anderson's (2001, 2002, 2003) body-based approach to research, and to Dirkx's (2001, 2006) embracing of imaginative modes of knowing. There are other links which it would be interesting to explore in more detail. Amanda Williamson's work on the spiritual within dance in the typical university context suggests that the spiritual is downplayed within academic considerations of dance (Williamson 2009) and this has parallels with the role of intuition as I, and my research group participants experience it in academic contexts. She suggests that part of the issue is a polarisation between “spirit verses matter” which idea “haunts much dance literature and reflects a basic understanding of spirituality”, suggesting rather a grounded, “culturally and historically specific, actively reflecting” understanding (Williamson 2009, p. 38), which relates to the concept of intuition developed in Chapter Three, relating to Totton’s position on telepathy and embodiment (Totton 2003).

7.4 Potential uses of this thesis

Thus, transformative learning offers a way to see how the insights of this thesis might be further applied in academic contexts. Anderson’s (2001, 2002, 2003) theories of embodiment offer an enriching of Gendlin’s theories (1978, 1996), and a way to apply these within research, and Voss’s Platonic account elaborates on the need to bring a new, noetic perspective to the objects of research (Voss 2013, 2019). (There are also other theoretical contexts which it would be useful to explore in more detail, for example movement-informed spiritualities (Williamson 2009).) My thesis has suggested a way to understand intuition in terms of a body-based, phenomenological framework which draws upon psychoanalytical theory and ideas about *délire.* The results of my research groups have suggested how tools developed from the literature review can be used to understand experiences of academic reading, have revealed the complex, multi-faceted responses to reading amongst participants, and have suggested ways in which academic reading can be more personally relevant and transformative, as well as embodied. However, there are clear limits to this thesis, which I have indicated in detail above, particularly concerned with the relatively small size of the research groups, the relatively short time that participants worked together, and the relatively small amount of material that emerged which felt deep and embodied. The material which emerged was extremely illuminative of participants’ stories of their various disengagements with academic reading, but further studies could look more deeply at fully embodied responses and examine a wider range of participants.

Based on both the results of this thesis and ideas from transformative learning and embodied research, then, the following questions encapsulate some areas which it might be useful to explore further:

- How does the literature on transformative learning, particularly those writings (e.g. Dirkx 1998, 2001, 2006) which focus on personal transformation and spirituality, inform the findings of the thesis?

- How does the literature on embodied or somatic research inform the findings of the thesis?
- How might the techniques used in the research groups be adapted to produce material that went 'deeper' into the unspoken and intuitive, and how might any such material be analysed?
- In the light of the literature on transformative learning, how might the techniques be adapted for use in other academic settings, for example as a means of understanding why students leave University?
- How would other groups of participants, from different age and other demographic groups, respond to the exercises used in the research groups?
- How can the findings of the research group – particularly the idea that using techniques which engage participants somatically and intuitively can foster a deeper connection with academic material – be used in further academic contexts?

These are broad questions which cannot be answered quickly or simply. However, some suggestions from the above seem relatively easy to implement. First, it would be interesting to work with participants – perhaps building a group relationship and trust slowly over time, and perhaps using very simplified versions of the tools used in the research group (or using just one tool, repeatedly) – to generate 'richer' and 'deeper' material that is more intuitive, arising from 'deeper' areas of the self. That is, I would suggest a research group that is much closer to a group for developing psychic or mediumistic skills, in which the same few people meet over a longer period of time, with a clearer dedication to entering states which could be described, depending on perspective, as unconscious, intuitive, free associative, meditative, trance, telepathic or psychic. It is predicted that the material produced would be of a radically different sort to the bulk of the material arising from the research groups presented in this thesis, and, it is hoped, would be more open to the type of analysis I originally envisaged.

Another interesting area to explore, and one which also seems relatively easy to implement, would be to carry out similar research – using the research group format, but perhaps simplified and with fewer sessions – amongst different student groups. The individuals in this group were demographically atypical in terms of the student population at the university and beyond, for example they were older. Would other groups of participants –

or even just more participants – replicate the findings here? Given the widespread attention paid to issues of student retention, it seems likely that student disengagement from academic material is an important area to understand. What makes people engage, and disengage, from academic work? The results of the research groups suggest both that such disengagement is widespread, and that techniques of the sort explored in the groups offer a way to combat this disengagement and to relate to academic material in a new, more holistic, intuitive, somatic and emotionally engaged way. Tight's study of the literature around student retention and engagement confirms that these have been issues for some time, and that different approaches have been tried to make students feel more engaged and to reduce levels of leaving (Tight 2020). It is possible that the current study could feed into this literature.

A third and final possibility is to build upon the methods used in the research groups, as well as drawing upon insights from Anderson and transformative learning to look at what the findings from this study indicate about research methods, particularly embodied, collaborative and intuitive ones. The research groups used techniques designed to put participants in touch with their intuition, unconscious, emotions and body, and these techniques were developed from a set of theories, and, to my knowledge, offer new ways of connecting to frequently ignored elements of experience in a research context. Further research, perhaps working with a small group of participants as in this research, could focus on the efficacy of these techniques, looking at which work well and which not so well, which could be improved to work better, how they might be developed for use by others in research, and how the data resulting from these techniques could best be analysed.

The above has indicated some areas in which the current study might have useful implications. It's possible to unpick these areas in a little more detail, and with develop some practical suggestions for use. This is in the context of starting to set out ways in which the study could be used in terms of the group of scholars and / or university leaders who might read it, and also how the study might inform a pedagogical approach. In these terms, the study can be seen as having two pragmatic elements: first, offering ways to understand how, and to what extent, students are dissatisfied with and disengaged from the academies in which they find themselves, and second, to work out how to mitigate this dissatisfaction.

By working with academic material in somewhat unconventional ways, for example by 'reading' in a way which by-passes the literal sense of texts, students might reveal some of the things that they bring to acts of conventional reading, and which may get in the way of a fuller engagement with academic texts. It is also hoped that this way of working might help students engage differently with academic subjects, perhaps through bringing more of themselves to the study. Occasional workshops might be offered to students perhaps initially as part of institution's range of measures to improve student wellbeing, using techniques like those explored in the reading groups, and perhaps also using techniques of embodied writing, as developed by Anderson (2001). Should these be successful in uncovering emotional and unconscious material and in re-engaging students with study, they could be included more widely as part of course modules, tailored to specific subject materials.

The techniques developed for this study might also be useful for working academics within the university context. Based on personal experience, some of the academics I have come to know well appear at times worn down by institutional processes, although institutions are committed to staff wellbeing. Offering similar occasional workshops to academic (and other) staff might diffuse some of the non-verbalised resentments against process, make employees more consciously aware of the nuances of the attitudes and experiences which characterise their experiences of academia, and perhaps offer a way to connect more positively with the institutional structures in which they are situated. Of course, this would be to move the focus of the study beyond a concern with academic writing to embrace institutional structures and their manifestation (e.g. employee communications such as Teams and email). This would also involve a move towards a more engaged and more embodied pedagogy, perhaps embracing a gnostic model (see Voss 2019), in which the pivotal role of embodiment is embraced, and in which the body is understood in a way which foregrounds lived experience. Expansion is the key to this pedagogy, an expansion into areas other than the cognitive, an opening up to the unconscious, uncanny and under-explored, a heart-focused expansion which also feeds into the intellect. This expansion would also involve a closer and more personal responsibility to pay attention: to the full range of feelings brought to the text and to the academic context, to what's felt as much as what's thought, to the world in which one operates academically, as it is revealed through all five senses, not just sight.

I have spent some time focusing on the areas which were not included in the thesis, and also looked at how the research could be extended in the future. I would like, finally, also to emphasise what I see as the strengths of the work I have presented here. First, the thesis presents work which does not fit neatly into one academic discipline. It touches upon different areas and draws from different specialisms. I believe this allows me to develop a perspective which is very different from others, and which offers something to a wide range of studies across education and the humanities. Additionally, in the literature review, I draw upon philosophical approaches, approaches from literary theory and psychoanalysis, and from embodiment studies to develop an understanding of intuition which I believe offers an original perspective from which to begin to question our conventional ways of reading. I have set out to open up and liberate the normative expectations of reading academic discourses in a way that includes a full array of our senses and felt selves. To do this, in the research groups, I developed a set of techniques which, although solidly based in theories examined in Chapter Three, are to my knowledge previously unused in research.

Chapter Eight: References

Allen, M. (2017) *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Communication Research Methods Encyclopaedia,* SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Anderson, R. (2001) "Embodied writing and reflections on embodiment ", *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology,* 33:2, 83-98.

Anderson, R. (2002) "Embodied writing: presenting the body in somatic research. Part I ", *Somatics*, 8:4, 40-45.

Anderson, R. (2003) "Embodied writing: presencing the body in somatic research. Part II ", *Somatics*, 9:1, 40-45.

Angelo, M. (2005) "Splendor Solis: Inviting the Image to Teach", *Harvest,* 51, 13-35.

Anderson, R. and Braud, W. (2011) *Transforming Self and Others Through Research: Transpersonal Research Methods and Skills for the Human Sciences and Humanities,* State University of New York Press, USA

Armitage, A. (2008) "Meditations on Self Practice: An Autobiographical Discourse" in A Brown (ed.) 7th European Conference on Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies, ECRM, pp.25-34.

Ashby, S. F. (2013) "Soul Work: Call, Movement and Response", *Journal of Transformative Education*, 11:1, 26-44.

Ayer, A. J. (1936). *Language, Truth and Logic,* Victor Gollancz Ltd, London.

Bachelard, G. (1943) *L'Air et les Songes,* Jose Corti, Paris.

Baker, I. S., Montague, J. and Booth, A. (2017) “A Controlled Study of Psychometry using Psychic and Non-Psychic Claimiants with Actual and False Readings using a Mixed-Methods Approach”, *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research,* 81:2, 108-122.

Bastos, M. A. V., de Oliveira Bastos, P. R. H., Gocalves, L. M, Osoriio, I. H. S, and Lucchetti, G. (2015) “Mediumship: review of quantitative studies published in the 21st century”, *Archives of Clinical Psychiatry,* 42:5.

Barkway, P. (2013) *Psychology for Health Professionals,* Elsever Health Sciences, USA.

Barratt, B. (2014) “A Practitioner’s Notes on Free-Associative Method as Existential Praxis”, *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 23:4, 185-208.

Barratt, B. (2018) “On the Unique Power of Free-Associative Discourse: Notes on the Contributions of Henry Zvi Lothane and Christopher Bollas”, *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 38:6, 478-487.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1964) "Contributions to the Theory of PK Induction from Sitter-Group Work" *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research,* 78, 105-22.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1966) “Report of a case of table levitation and associated phenomena”, *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 43, 339-356.

Batcheldor, K. J., and Hunt, D. W. (1966) "Some Experiments in Psychokinesis." *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 43, 339-356.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1968) Macro-PK in Group Sittings: Theoretical and Practical Aspects, June 1968 Exeter, Unpublished Typescript.

Batcheldor, K. J. and Brookes-Smith, C. (1970) *Manual of Advanced Psychokinetic Procedures,* Society for Psychical Research, London.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1979) “PK in Sitter Groups”, Psychoenergetic *Systems,* 3,77-93.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1984) “Contributions to the theory of PK induction from sitter group work”. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 78, 105-122.

Batcheldor, K. J. (1994) “Notes on the elusiveness problem in relation to a radical view of Paranormality: Erratum”. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 88, 292.

Baume, D. and Popovic, C. (2016) *Advancing Practice in Academic Development,* Taylor & Francis, UK

Beischel, J. (2007) “Contemporary methods used in laboratory-based mediumship research”, *Journal of Parapsychology*, 71, 37-68.

Beischel, J., & Schwartz, G.E. (2007) “Anomalous information reception by research mediums demonstrated using a novel triple-blind protocol”, *EXPLORE: The Journal of Science & Healing*, 3, 23-27.

Beischel, J., & Rock, A. J. (2009) “Addressing the survival vs. psi debate through process-focused mediumship research”, *Journal of Parapsychology*, 73, 71-90.

Beischel, J., Boccuzzi, M., Biuso, M., & Rock, A. J. (2015) “Anomalous information reception by research mediums under blinded conditions II: Replication and extension”, *EXPLORE: The Journal of Science & Healing*, 11:2, 136-142.

Beischel, J., Mosher, C. & Boccuzzi, M. (2014-2015) “The possible effects on bereavement of assisted after-death communication during readings with psychic mediums: A continuing bonds perspective”, *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 70:2, 169-194.

Beischel, J., Mosher, C., & Boccuzzi, M. (2017) “Quantitative and qualitative analyses of mediumistic and psychic experiences” *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness Studies*, 1:2, 51-91.

Beischel, J. (2019) “Spontaneous, facilitated, assisted, and requested after-death communication experiences and their impact on grief” *Threshold: Journal of Interdisciplinary Consciousness Studies*, 3:1. 1–32.

Beischel, J., Tassone, S., & Boccuzzi, M. (2019) “Hematological and psychophysiological correlates of anomalous information reception in mediums: A preliminary exploration”, *EXPLORE: The Journal of Science & Healing*, 15:2, 126–133

Bem, D. and Honorton, C. (1994) “Does PSI exist? Replicable Evidence for an Anomalous Process of Information Transfer”, *Psychological Bulletin*, 115:1, 4-18.

Bem, D., Tressoldi, P., Rabeyron, T. and Duggan, M. (2016) “Feeling the future: a meta-analysis of 90 experiments on the anomalous anticipation of random future events”, *F1000 Research 2016*, 4:1188.

Bem, D. J. (2011) ‘Feeling the Future: Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100:3, 407-425.

Benassi, V. A., Sweeny, P. D. and Drevno, G. E. (1979) “Mind Over Matter: Perceived Success at Psychokinesis”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 37:8, 1377-1386.

Berg, A. (2015) *Phenomenalism, Phenomenology, and the Question of Time: A Comparative Study of the Theories of Mach, Husserl, and Boltzmann*, Lexington Books, London.
Bernabo, K. (2015) *Psychic Development and Mediumship,* Balboa Press, AU

Beyer, C. (2013) “Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology Considered in the Light of (Recent) Epistemology”, in B. Mou and R. Tieszen (eds.) *Constructive Engagement of*

Analytic and Continental Approaches in Philosophy: From the Vantage Point of Comparative Philosophy, BRILL, Leiden, The Netherlands, pp. 11-31.

Beyer, C. (2020) “"Edmund Husserl", [online] (cited 3rd February 2021) available from <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/husserl/>.

Bishop, C. (2006) *Participation (Documents of Contemporary Art)*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.

Bishop, C. (2002) *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso, UK/New York.

Birkstead-Breen, D. (2019) “Pathways of the unconscious: When the body is the receiver”, *International Journal of Psychoanlaysis,* 100:6, 1117-1133.

Blackmore, S. J. (1992) ‘Psychic experiences: Psychic illusions’, *Skeptical Inquirer*, 16, 367–376.

Bleich, D. (1975) *Readings and Feelings an Introduction to Subjective Criticism,* NCTE, Illanois, USA.

Bleich, D. (1978) *Subjective Criticism,* John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore USA.
Boal, A. (1992) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (Trans A Jackson), Routledge, London.

Boal, A. (1995) *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy,* trans. A Jackson, Routledge, London.

Bohman-Kalaja, K. (2007) *Reading Games: An Aesthetics of Play in Flann O'Brien, Samuel Beckett & Georges Perec,* Dalkey Archive Press, Dublin.

Bollas, C. (1999) *The Mystery of Things*, Routledge, London.

Bollas, C. (2002) *Free Association,* ICON books, London.

Bourdieu, P. (1979) *La Distinction: Critique sociale du jugement,* Les Editions de Minuit, Paris

Bosch, H., Steinkamp, F., Boller, E. (2006) ‘Examining Psychokinesis: The Interaction of Human Intention With Random Number Generators – A Meta-Analysis’, *Psychological Bulletin*, 132:4, 497-523.

Boud, D., Keogh, R. and Walker, D. (1985) *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*, Kegan Page, London.

Boundas, C. V. (2007) *Columbia Companion to Twentieth-century Philosophies.* Columbia University Press, USA.

Bowie, F. (2012) “Devising Methods for the Ethnographic Study of the Afterlife: Cognition, Empathy and Engagement”, In J Hunter (ed.) *Paranthropology*. Paranthropology, Bristol (pp.99-106).

Bowie, F. (2013) “Building Bridges, Dissolving Boundaries: Towards a Methodology for the Ethnographic Study of the Afterlife, Mediumship and Spiritual Beings”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion,* 81:3, 698-733.

Boyd, R. (1991) *Personal Transformations in Small Groups*, Routledge, New York.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). “Using thematic analysis in psychology”, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101.

Braud, W. and Anderson, R. (1998) *Transpersonal Research Methods for the Social Sciences: Honoring Human Experience*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA, USA.

Braud, W. G., Wood, R., and Braud, L. W. (1975) “Free-response GESP performance during an experimental hypnagogic state induced by visual and acoustic ganzfeld techniques: a replication and extension”, *Journal of American Society for Psychic Research*, 69, 105–113.

Brentano, F. (1874) *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London

Breton, A. (1924) *Manifesto of Surrealism, Editions du Sagittaire*, France.

Brossard, N. (2005) *Nicole Brossard: Essays on Her Works,* Guernica Editions, Toronto.

Brotchie, A. and Gooding, M. (1993) *Surrealist Games,* Shambhala Redstone Editions, UK.

Brottman, M. (2011) *Phantoms of the Clinic : From Thought-Transference to Projective Identification,* Routledge, London.

Browne, S., Chen, X., Baroudi, F. and Sevinc, E. (2021) 'Reader Response Theory' [online] cited 13th February 2022, available from https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780190221911/obo-9780190221911-0107.xml

Brugger, P and Graves, R (1998) "Seeing Connections: Associative Processing as a Function of Magical Belief" *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, 4, 6-7.

Brugger, P., Regard, M., Landis, T., Cook, N., Krebs, D. and Niederberger, J (1993) "“Meaningful” patterns in visual noise: Effects of lateral stimulation and the observer's belief in ESP”, *Psychopathology*, 26, 261–265.

Bryson, C. (2014) *Understanding and Developing Student Engagement,* Taylor and Francis, UK.

Butler, J. (1999) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity,* Routledge, New York.

Butler, J. (2004) *The Judith Butler Reader,* (ed. S. Salih and J. Butler) Blackwell, UK / USA.

Callery, D. (2015) *Through the Body: A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre*, Routledge, London.

Calmorin, L. and Calmorin, M. (2007) *Research Methods and Thesis Writing,* Rex Bookstore, USA.

Campbell, J. and Pile, S. (2010) “Telepathy and its vicissitudes: Freud, thought transference and the hidden lives of the (repressed and non-repressed) unconscious”, *Subjectivity,* 3:10, 403-425.

Candy, L. (2006) *Practice Based Research: A Guide*, Creativity and Cognition Studios, University of Technology, Sidney.

Cardeña, E. (2010) Research Methodology on Anomalous Experience: Between Borges and a Hard Place …, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 7:1, 73-78.

Carr, D. (1970), "Translator's Introduction" xv-xlii, at xxv, to E Husserl, The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology, Northwestern University, USA
Carroll, M. T. and Tafola, E. (2000) *Phenomenological Approaches to Popular Culture,* Popular Press, USA

Castricano, J. (2005) ““Shirley Jackson's The Haunting of Hill House and the Strange Question of Trans-Subjectivity”, *Gothic Studies,* 7:1, 87-101.

Chaperot, J. (2011) “Telepathic-style phenomena into the therapeutic relationship with schizophrenic patients: Hypothesis of a potentially harmful influence of the therapist’s thinking”, *L’evolution psychiatrique,* 76, 273-286.

Choucha, N. (1991) *Surrealism and the Occult,* Mandrake, UK.

Cisek, P. (2008) “The affordance competition hypothesis: A framework for embodied behaviour” in Klatzky, R. L, MacWhinney, B. and Behrmann, M. *Embodiment, Ego-Space and Action,* Psychology Press, UK, pp. 247-274.

Cixous, H. (1976) “The Laugh of the Medusa”, *Signs,* 1:4, 875-893.

Cixous, H. (1986) “Sorties”, in H. Cixous and C. Clément C (1986) *The Newly Born Woman (trans. B Wing),* University of Minnesota Press, USA.

Clancy, S. A., McNally, R. J., Schacter, D. L., Lenzenweger, M. F., and Pitman, R. K. (2002) ‘Memory distortion in people reporting abduction by aliens’, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology,* 111, 455–461.

Clark, A. (1997) *Being there: Putting brain, body and world together again,* MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Clark, A. (2008) *Supersizing the Mind: Embodiment, action and cognitive extension,* Oxford University Press, Oxon.

Clark, M. C. (2012) "Transformation as Embodied Narrative", In E.W. Taylor and P. Cranton, *Handbook of Transformative Learning: Theory, Research and Practice,* John Wiley & Sons, San Francisco USA, pp. 425-438

Clements, J. (2004) “Organic inquiry: Toward research in partnership with spirit”, *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 36:1, 26-49.

Clough, P. (2002) *Narratives and fictions in educational research,* Open University, Milton Keynes, UK

Colombo, M., Gervais, R. & Sprenger, J. (2017) “Introduction: objectivity in science”, *Synthese* 194, 4641–4642.

Cole, A. & Knowles, J. (2008) “Arts-informed research”, in A.L. Cole and J. Knowles (eds.) *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA,* pp. 55-71).

Collins, C. S. and Stockton, C. M. (2018) “The Central role of Theory in Qualitative Research”, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* 17-1, December 2018.

Cornelius, G. (2010) “Chicane: Double-thinking and Divination amongst the Witch-Doctors”, in P. Curry (ed.) Divination – Perspectives for a New Millennium, Ashgate, Farnham, pp. 119-142.

Coyle, A. (2010) ‘Qualitative Research and Anomalous Experience: A Call for Interpretative Pluralism’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 7:1, 79-83.

Crane, T. and French, C., "The Problem of Perception", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition), [online] cited 25th july 2018, available from https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/perception-problem/

Curry, P. (2016) “From Enlightenment to Enchantment: Changing the Question” in R. Thomas-Pellicer, V. de Lucia and S. Sullivan (Eds.) Contributions to Law, Philosophy and Ecology: Exploring Re-embodiments, Routledge, London, pp. 106-118.

Curry, P. (2019) *Enchantment: Wonder in Modern Life,* Floris Books, Edinburgh, UK.

David-Néel, A (1929) *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*, Librairie Plon, Paris.

Deleuze, G. (1969) *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit); tr. as *The Logic of Sense*, by Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987) A Thousand Plateaus (Transl. B. Massumi), Bloomsbury Academic (reprinted 2014), London.

Denscombe, M. (2009) *Ground Rules For Social Research: Guidelines for Good Practice* McGraw-Hill Education, UK.

De Peyer, J. (2016) “Uncanny Communication and the Porous Mind”, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues,* 26:2, 156-174.

Dezeuze, A. (2008) “Assemblage, Bricolage and the Practice of Everyday Life, *Art Journal,* 67:1, 31-37.

Dirkx, J. M. (1998) ‘Transformative learning theory in the practice of adult education: An Overview’, *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning,* 7,1-14

Dirkx, J. M. (2001) “Images, transformative learning and the work of soul”, *Adult Learning*, 12,15–16.

Dirkx, J. M. (2006) “Engaging emotions in adult learning: A Jungian perspective on emotion and transformative learning”, *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education*, 109, 15–26.

Dirkx, J. M. and Mezirow, J. (2006) “Musings and Reflections on the Meaning, Context, and Process of Transformative Learning: A Dialogue Between John M. Dirkx and Jack Mezirow”, *Journal of Transformative Education,* 4:2, 123-139.

Drinkwater, K., Dagnall, N., Grogan, S., and Riley, V. (2017) “Understanding the Unknown: A Thematic Analysis of Subjective Paranormal Experiences”, *Australian Journal of Parapsychology,* 17, 23-46.

Dubey, B. L., Banerjee, P. and Dubey, A. (2019) *Inkblot Personality Test: Understanding the Unconscious Mind,* SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Elder, R. B. (2015) *‚DaDa, Surrealism and the Cinematic Effect,* Wilfrid Laurier University Press, USA.

Emmons, C. F., and Sobal, J. (1981) “Paranormal beliefs: Testing the marginality Hypothesis” *Sociological Focus*, 14, 49–56.

Engelsrud, G (2005) “The lived body as experience and perspective: methodological challenges”, *Qualitative Research*, 5:3, 267-284.

Fish, S. (1980) *Is there a text in this class? : the authority of interpretive communities,* Harvard University Press

Flournoy, T. (1900) *From India to the Planet Mars: a study of a case of somnambulism with glossolalia,* Harper & Bros, New York, London.

Foster, N. (1998) "Boundaries of Sight and Touch - Memoirs of the Blind and the Caressed", *Tracey: Drawing and Visualisation Research*, September 1998.

Formenti, L., West, L. and Horsdal, M. (2014) *Embodied Narratives: Connecting stories, bodies, cultures and ecologies*, University of Southern Denmark Press, Denmark.

Fraser, W. S. (2013) 'In Search of Sophia: Seeking wisdom in adult teaching and learning spaces An Autoethnographic Inquiry', Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Canterbury Christ Church University.

Fraser, W. S. (2017) *Seeking Wisdom in Adulut Teaching and Learning: An Autoethnographic Inquiry,* Palgrave MacMillan, UK.

Frege, G. (1896) 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung', in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*, 100: 25–50. (Translated by M. Black in Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottleib Frege, P. Geach and M. Black), Blackwell, Oxford.

Freud, S. (1900) The Interpretation of Dreams. Part I. and II., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume IV*, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London, 1-338.

Freud, S. (1901). The psychopathology of everyday life, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume VI*, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London, 1-290.

Freud, S. (1913) "On Beginning the Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis I)", *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund*

Freud, Volume XII (1911-1913), The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London, 121-144.

Freud, S. (1915) "The Unconscious", *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV,* The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, London, 166-204.

Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, Seabury Press, New York.

Fromm, E. (1955) *The Sane Society*, Rinehart & Co., USA.

Gendlin, E. T. (1963) "Experiencing and the Nature of Concepts", *The Christian Scholar,* 46:3, 245-255.

Gendlin, E.T. (1973) "Experiential phenomenology" In M. Natanson (ed.), *Phenomenology and the social sciences, Vol. I*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston. pp. 281-319.

Gendlin, E.T. (1978). *Focusing (first edition)*, Everest House, New York.

Gendlin, E. T. (1990) "the small steps of the therapy process: how they come and how to help them come" in G. Lietaer, J. Rombauts and R Van Balen (Eds.) *Client-centred and experiential psychotherapy in the nineties*, 205-224.

Gendlin, E. T. (1992) "The primacy of the body, not the primacy of perception", *Man and World*, 25:3-4, 341-355.

Gendlin, E. T. (1995) "Crossing and Dipping: Some Terms for Approaching the Interface between Natural Understanding and Logical Formulation", *Minds and Machines*, 5:4, 547-560.

Gendlin, E. T. (1996). *Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy*, Guildford Press, New York.

Gendlin, E. T. (1999) “Implicit Entry and Focusing”, *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 27:1, 80-88.

Gendlin, E. T. (2000) “When you feel the body from inside, there is a door”, In J. K. Zeig (Ed.), *The evolution of psychotherapy: A meeting of the minds.* The Milton H. Erickson Foundation Press, Phoenix, AZ, USA. pp. 255-271

Gendlin, E. T. (2006) *An introduction to focusing: Six steps,* The Focusing Institute, New York.

Gendlin E. T. (2007) *Focusing: The body speaks from the inside* Transcript of talk given at 18th Annual International Trauma conference.

Germain, G. G. (1993) A discourse on Disenchantment: Reflections on Politics and Technology, SUNY Press, USA

Getsy, D. (2011) *From Diversion to Subversion: Games, Play, and Twentieth-century Art,* Pennsylvania State University Press, USA

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*, Further Education Unit, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford.

Glaser, B. G. and Straus, A. L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory,* New Brunswick, London / USA.

Goldsmith’s University of London Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit (2014) ‘What is Anomalistic Psychology?’ [online] (cited 9th November 2014) available from http://www.gold.ac.uk/apru/what/

Gordon, N. and Fleischer, W. (2010) *Effective Interviewing and Interrogation Techniques (3rd Edition),* Elsevier, USA.

Grix, J. (2010) *The Foundations of Research,* Palgrave Macmillan, UK.

Guenthner, F. (2013) *Handbook of Philosophical Logic,* Springer Netherlands, Netherlands.

Gyimesi, J. (2012) “Sándor Ferenczi and the problem of telepathy”, *History of the Human Sciences,* 25:2, 131-148.

Hansen, G. P. (2001) *The Trickster and the Paranormal,* Xlibris Corporation.

Harris, C. (2006) “Language and Cognition “, *Encyclopaedia of Cognitive Science,* 2006.

Heidegger, M. (1927) *Being and Time*, (trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson). Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2009). “Researching defended subjects with the free association narrative interviewing method”, in H.J. Cook, S. Bhattacharya, & A. Hardy (eds.) *History of the social determinants of health: Global histories, contemporary debates*. Orient Black Swan, Hyderabad, 296–315.

Honorton, C. (1977) “Psi and internal attention states”, In Wolman B.B. (Ed), *Handbook of Parapsychology*. Van Nostrand, New York: Van Nostrand, 435–472.

Honorton, C., Berger, R.E., Varvoglis, M.P., Quant, M., Derr, P. and Schechter, E. (1990) “Psi communication in the ganzfeld”, *Journal of Parapsychology*, 54: 99–139, 1990.

Hoult, E.C., Mort, H., Pahl, K. and Rasool, Z. (2020) “Poetry as method – trying to see the world differently”, *Research for All*, 4:1, 87–101

Hoult, E. C. (2012) *Adult Learning and la Recherche Féminine: Reading Resilience and Hélène Cixous,* Palgrave Macmillan, USA

Hunter, J. (2013) “Taking Experience Seriously”, *Paranthropology,* 4:3, 3-9.

Hunter, J. and Luke, D. (2014) *Talking With the Spirits: Ethnographies From Between the Worlds*, Daily Grail Publishing, Brisbane, Australia.

Hunter, J. (2015) *Strange Dimensions*, Lulu.com, USA

Hunter, J. (2016) “Engaging the anomalous: reflections from the anthropology of the paranormal”, *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*, 18:2, 170-178.

Hunter, J. (2020) *Manifesting Spirits,* Aeon, London.

Husserl, E. (1900) *Logische Untersuchungen. Erster Band: Prolegomena zur reinen Logik,* E. Holenstein (ed.), Husserliana XVIII, The Hague: Nijhoff. 1975.

Husserl, E. (1913)*, Ideen zu einer Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Halle*, E. Niemeyer and .E. Holenstein (eds.), Husserliana XVIII, The Hague: Nijhoff. 1975.

Husserl, E. (1936) *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology,* trans. D. Carr. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1970.

Husserl, E. (1960) *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, D. Cairns (Transl.), Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague/Boston/London.

Hyder, D. and Rheinberger, H-J. (2010) *Science and the Life-World: Essays on Husserl's 'Crisis of European Sciences*, Stanford UP, USA.

Kiverstein, J. (2012) “The Meaning of Embodiment”, *Topics in Cognitive Science,* 4, 740-758.

Krippner, S. (1993) "The Maimonides ESP-dream studies." *The Journal of Parapsychology*, 57:1, 39-54.

Kripal, J. (2006) *The Serpent's Gift: Gnostic Reflections on the Study of Religion,* University of Chicago Press, USA.

Inwood, M. J. (2005) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy,* OUP, Oxford.

Irigaray (1977) "When The Goods Get Together", in E. Marks and I. de Courivron (eds.) *New Frence Feminisms,* Amherst, University of Massachusetts, 1980, pp. 103-107.

Irwin, H. J. (1990) "Fantasy proneness and paranormal beliefs", *Psychological Reports* 66, 655–658.

Irwin, H. J. (1991) "A study of paranormal belief, psychological adjustment, and fantasy proneness". *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* 85, 317-331.

Irwin, H. J. (1993) "Belief in the Paranormal: A Review of the Empirical Literature". *The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*. 87, 1-39.

Irwin, H. J. (2009) *The Psychology of Paranormal Belief: A Researcher's Handbook,* University of Hertfordshire Press, Herts.

Isler, J. J. (2017) "Tulpas and Mental Health: A Study of Non-Traumagenic Plural Experiences", *Research in Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*. 5:2, 36-44.

Isaacs, S. (1948) "The Nature and Function of Phantasy", *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 29, 73-97

Iser, W. (1993) *Prospecting: From Reader Response to Literary Anthropology,* JHU Press, USA.

Iser, W. (1974) *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett*, 1974

James, W. (1890) *The principles of psychology*, Holt, New York.

James, A. (2009) *Constraining Chance: Georges Perec and the Oulipo,* Northwest University Press, USA
Jennings, J. L. (1986) "Husserl revisited: The forgotten distinction between psychology and phenomenology", *American Psychologist,* 41:11, 1231-1240.

Jensen, O. and Munt, S. R. (2013) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Paranormal Cultures,* Routledge, UK.

Jones, J. (2017) "About the Free Association Method" [online] cited 30th September 2017. (available from http://www.freudfile.org/psychoanalysis/free_associations.html).

Kapadocha, C. (2020) Somatic voices in Performance Research and Beyond, Routledge, UK

Kiehl, E. (2015) *Copenhagen 2013 - 100 Years On: Origins, Innovations and Controversies: Proceedings of the 19th Congress of the International Association for Analytical Psychology*, Daimon, Einsiedeln.

Kim, S. H., "Max Weber", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2012 Edition), [online] (cited 25th November 2014) available from
http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/weber/

King, N. and Horrocks, C. (2010) *Interviews in Qualitative Research,* SAGE, London.

Kiverstein, J. (2012) "The Meaning of Embodiment", *Topics in Cognitive Science,* 4:4, 740-758.

Kockelmans, J. J. (2012) *Phenomenological Psychology: The Dutch School,* Springer, Netherlands.

Kolb, D. A. (2014) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development,* FT Press, UK.

Koopman, O. (2015) “Phenomenology as a Potential Methodology for Subjective Knowing in Science Education Research”, *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology,* 15:1, 1-10.

Kripal, J. (2001) *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom,* Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Kripal, J. (2007). *The Serpent’s Gift - Gnostic reflections on the study of religion.* Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Kripal, J. (2011) *Authors of the Impossible: The Paranormal and the Sacred*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Krippner, S. and Friedman, H. L. (2010). *Debating Psychic Experience: Human Potential or Human Illusion?* ABC-Clio, Santa Barbara, California.

Kristeva, J. (1974) *Revolution in Poetic Language,* SUNY Press, USA

Kuhn, T. (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Kusch, M. (1995) *Psychologism: A case study in the sociology of philosophical knowledge.* Routledge, London.

Lacan, J. (1977a) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, (edited by Jacques-Alain Miller, transl. by Alan Sheridan), W.W. Norton & Co., New York.

Lacan, J. (1977b) *Ecrits: A Selection*, (transl. by Alan Sheridan), W.W. Norton & Co., New York.

Lakens, D. (2019) “A pre-publication peer-review of the ‘Feeling the Future’ meta-analysis”, *The 20% Statistician,* [online] (cited 24th December 2019) available from http://daniellakens.blogspot.com/2014/05/a-pre-publication-peer-review-of-meta.html

Lamont, P. (2007) ‘Paranormal Belief and the Avowal of Prior Scepticism’, *Theory Psychology*, 17, 681-696.

Lamont, P., Coelho, C. and McKinlay, A. (2009) “Explaining the unexplained: warranting disbelief in the paranormal” *Discourse Studies*, 11:5, 543-559.

Laughlin, C. D., and Rock, A. J. (2014) “What can we learn from shamans’ dreaming? A cross-cultural exploration”, *Dreaming*, 24:4, 233–252.

Leary, M. (2011) “Why Are (Some) Scientists So Opposed to Parapsychology?” *Explore,* 7:5, 275-277.

Lecercle, J-J. (1985) *Philosophy through the Looking-Glass,* Open Court, La Salle, Illinois.

Lecercle, J-J. (1994) *Philosophy of Nonsense: The Intuitions of Victorian Nonsense Literature.,* Routledge, London.

Le Guin, U. K. (1983) “A Non-Euclidean View of California as a Cold Place to Be”, *The Yale Review,* Winter 1983.

Leonard, T. J. (2005) *Talking to the Other Side: a History of Modern Spiritualism And Mediumship: A Study of the Religion, Science, Philosophy And Mediums That Encompass This American-made Religion,* iUniverse, New York.

Lerman, L. and Borstel, J. (2003) *Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process: A Method for Getting Useful Feedback on Anything You Make, from Dance to Dessert,* Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, USA

Levy-Bruhl, L. (1923) *Primitive Mentality* (trans. Lillian A. Clare), George Allen & Unwin, London.

Littell, J. H., Corcoran, J. and Pillai, V. (2008) *Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis,* OUP, Oxon.

Locke, J. (1689) *An essay concerning human understanding,* Ward, Lock & Co, London, 1881.

Lothane, Z. (2007) 'Reciprocal Free Association', Paper presented on July 28, 2007 at the International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Berlin.

Lothane, Z. (2010) "The analysand and analyst practicing reciprocal free association—defenders and deniers", *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 19, 155–164.

Lothane, Z. (2018) "Free Association as the Foundation of the Psychoanalytic Method and Psychoanalysis as a Historical Science", *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 38:6, 416-434.

Magliocco, S. (2012) "Beyond Belief: Context, Rationality and Participatory Consciousness", *Western Folklore,* 71:1, 5-24.

Mambrol, N. (2016) "Luce Irigaray and Psychoanalytic Feminism" https://literariness.org/2016/12/19/luce-irigaray-and-psychoanalytic-feminism/

Markula, P. and Silk, M. (2011) *Qualitative Research for Physical Culture,* Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hants.

Mastropieri, M. A. and Scruggs, T. E. (2018) *The Inclusive Classroom: Strategies for Effective Differentiated Instruction*. Pearson, United States.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945) *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris: Gallimard; *Phenomenology of Perception*, D. Landes (trans.), Routledge, London, 2012.

Mezirow, J. (1995) 'Transformation theory of adult learning', In M. R. Welton (ed.), *In defence of the life-world*, State University of New York Press, NY, pp. 39-70.

Mezirow, J. (1997) 'Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice', *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 74, 5-12.

Mezirow, J. (2000), *Learning as transformation: critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. Jossey-Bass, USA.

Milder, P. (2011) “Teaching as Art: the contemporary lecture-performance”, Patricia Milder *Journal of Performance and Art*, 97, 13-27.

Mills, J. and Birks, M. (2014) *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide,* SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Moore, G. E. (1913) "The Status of Sense-data", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* 1913.

Moore, J. (2017) “On the Margins of the Academy: séances, sitter groups and academics”, in A. Voss and S. Wilson (Eds.) *Re-enchanting the Academy,* Rubedo Press, USA, pp. 175-196.

Moran, D. (2002) *Introduction to Phenomenology,* Routledge, London.

Moran, D. (2005) *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology,* Polity Press, Cambridge.

Morris, T. H. (2020) “Transformative learning through mindfulness: Exploring the mechanism of change”, *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 60:1, 45-65.

Muller, F. M. (1859) “A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature So Far as it Illustrates the Primitive Religion of the Brahmans”, Williams and Norgate, UK.

Muller, F. M. (1866) “Lectures on the Science of Language: Delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in April, May, & June 1861”, Longmans, Green & Co. UK.

Muller, F. M. (1878) “Lectures on the origin and growth of religion as illustrated by the religions of India”, Longmans, Green & Co. UK.

Murray, H. A. (1943) *Thematic Apperception Test*, Harvard University Press, Harvard, USA.

Myers, F.W.H (1903) *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, Longmans, Green, London.

Noakes, R. (2008) "The Historiogaphy of Psychical Research: Lessons from Histories of the Sciences", *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 72, 65-85.

Nolan, L. (2011) *Primary and Secondary Qualities: The Historical and Ongoing Debate,* OUP, Oxon.

Osborne, G. and Bacon, A. M. (2015) "The working life of a medium: a qualitative examination of mediumship as a support service for the bereaved" *Mental Health, Religion and Culture,*18:4, 286-298.

Otis, L. P., and Alcock, J. (1982) "Factors affecting extraordinary belief", *Journal of Social Psychology*, 118, 77–85.

Owen, G. A. R. (1964) *Can we Explain the Poltergeist,* Helix Garrett, New York.

Owen, I. M. (1974) ""Philip's" Story Continued", *Journal of the New Horizons Research Foundation*, 2:1, 14-20.

Owen, I.M. and Sparrow, M. H. (1974) "Generation of Paranormal Physical Phenomena in connection with an Imaginary "Communicator"". *Journal of the New Horizons Research Foundation,* 1, 6-13.

Owen, I. M. (1976) "Continuation of the Philip Experiment" *Journal of the New Horizons Research Foundation*, 2:2, 3-6.

Owen, I. M. (1977) '"Philip's" Fourth Year", *Journal of the New Horizons Research Foundation*, 2:3, 11-15.

Owen, I. M. and Sparrow, M. (1976) *Conjuring Up Philip: An Adventure in Psychokinesis,* Harper & Row, USA.

Oxford Languages (2021) Oxford Languages and Google, OUP, Oxon.

Paler-Calmorin, L*., Calmorin,* M*.* (2007) *Research Methods and Thesis Writing*, Rex Book Store, Phillipines.

Papazian, B. (2017) "'Telepathic' phenomena and separation anxiety", *International Journal of Psychoanalysis,* 98:4, 1169-1192.

Papineau, D. (2009) *Philosophy,* Oxford University Press, Oxon.

Parker A. (1975) "Some findings relevant to the change in state hypothesis", .In Morris, J.D., Roll, W.G., and Morris, R.L. (Eds), *Research in Parapsychology 1974*, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, 435–472.

Parker A. (2000) "A review of the ganzfeld work at Gothenburg university", *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 64, 1–15.

Parker A. (2001) "The ganzfeld: suggested improvements of an apparently successful method for psi research", *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 16, 23–29.

Parker A. (2005) "Psi and altered states", In Storm L, and Thalbourne M. (eds), *Parapsychology in the 21st Century*, McFarland, Jefferson, NC, Chapter 10.

Parse, R. R. (2001) *Qualitative Inquiry: The Path of Sciencing,* Jones & Bartlett Learning, Sudbury MA.

Paterson, M. (2016) *Seeing with the Hands: Blindness, Vision and Touch After Descartes*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Persinger, M. A. (2001) “The neuropsychiatry of paranormal experiences”, *Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 13, 515–523.

Peirce, C. S. (1902) Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, 8 vols. Edited by Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss, and Arthur W. Burks (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1931–1958; vols. 1–6 edited by Charles Harteshorne and Paul Weiss, 1931–1935; vols. 7–8 edited by Arthur W. Burks, 1958).

Porter, T.M. (1996) *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life,* Princetown University Press, USA.

Rabeyron, T., Renaud, E., and Massicotte, C. (2019) “”*« Es gibt Gedankenübertragung » :* transfert de pensée et processus télépathiques en analyse”, *Revue française de psychanalyse*, 83:4, 1239-1252.

Radin, D., Nelson, R., Dobyns, Y. and Houtkooper, J. (2006) “re-examining Psychokinesis: Comment on Bosch, Steinkamp and Boller (2006)”, *Psychological Bulletin*, 132:4, 529-532.

Radin, D. (2008) “Testing Nonlocal Observation as a Source of Intuitive Knowledge”, *Explore*, 4:1, 25-35.

Radin, D. (2010) The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomena, *Harper Collins*, New York.

Randall, T. M. (1990) “Belief in the paranormal declines: 1977–1987”, *Psychological Reports*, 66, 1347–1351.

Rapoport, A. (1990) *The Meaning of the Built Environment: A Nonverbal Communication Approach,* University of Arizona Press, USA.

Reeder, H. P. (1986) The Theory and Practice of Husserl’s Phenomenology, University Press of America, USA.

Reich, W. (1976) *Character Analysis,* Vision Press, USA.

Rhine, J. B. (1934) *Extra-Sensory Perception*, Bruce Humphries, Boston, MA.

Rhine, J. B. (1937) *New Frontiers of the Mind*, New York, NY, USA.

Rhine, J. B., Pratt, J. G., Stuart, C. E., Smith, B. M. and Greenwood, J. A. (1940) *Extra-sensory Perception after Sixty Years*, Bruce Humphries, Boston.

Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life,* Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ.

Rock, A. J., Beischel, J., & Schwartz, G. E. (2008) "Thematic analysis of research mediums' experiences of discarnate communication", *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 22, 179-192.

Rock, A. J., & Beischel, J. (2008) "Quantitative analysis of mediums' conscious experiences during a discarnate reading versus a control task: A pilot study", *Australian Journal of Parapsychology*, 8:2, 157-179.

Rock, A. J., Beischel, J., & Cott, C. C. (2009) "Psi vs. survival: A qualitative investigation of mediums' phenomenology comparing psychic readings and ostensible communication with the deceased", *Transpersonal Psychology Review,* 13, 76-89.

Rock, A. J., Beischel, J., Boccuzzi, M., & Biuso, M. (2014) "Discarnate readings by claimant mediums: Assessing phenomenology and accuracy under beyond double-blind conditions", *Journal of Parapsychology*, 78:2, 183-194.

Romanyshyn, R. (2007) *The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind,* Spring Journal Inc., USA

Rorschach, H., and Oberholzer, E. (1942) "The application of the Form Interpretation Test", In H. Rorschach & P. Lemkau, B. Kronenberg (Trans.) & W. Morgenthaler (Ed.), *Psychodiagnostics: A diagnostic test based on perception, including the application of the form interpretation test (p.*

184–216). Verlag Hans Huber.

Rose, G. (2016) *Visual Methodologies: an Introduction to Researching with Visual Methods,* SAGE, Thousand Oaks. CA.

Rosenblatt, L. (1938) *Literature as Exploration,* Appleton-Century, New York.

Rošker, J., "Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2018 Edition),* [online] (cited 25th October 2020) available from https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/chinese-epistemology

Roth, W-M. (2005) *Auto/Biography and Auto/Ethnography: Praxis of Research Method,* Sense Publishers, The Netherlands.

Roxburgh, E. C. and Roe, C. A. (2014) “Reframing voices and visions using a spiritual model. An interpretive phenomenological analysis of anomalous experiences in mediumship”, *Mental Health, Religion and Culture,* 17:6, 641-653.

Royalty, J. (1995) The generalizability of critical thinking: Paranormal belief versus statistical reasoning”, *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 156, 477–488.

Russell, M. (2006) *Husserl: A Guide for the Perplexed,* Bloomsbury Publishing, London
Schwartz, S A (2013) “False Equivalencies and the Mediocrity of Nonlocal Consciousness Research Criticism”, *Explore,* 9:3, 131-135.

Ryle, A. (1969) *Student Casualties*, Allen Lane/The Penguin Press, London.

Ryle, G. (1949) *The Concept of Mind,* Hutchinsons, New York, USA.

Sánchez-Medina, A. (2018) “Projective identification and “telepathic dreams”, *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 99:2, 380-390.

Sartre, J-P. (1940) *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination* (tr. J. Webber), Routledge, London and New York, 2004.

Sartre, J-P. (1943) *Being and Nothingness*, (H. E. Barnes, Tr.) Philosophical Library, New York, USA [1948].

Saussure, F. (1916) *Course in General Linguistics*, C. Bally & A. Sechehaye (eds.), W. Baskin (trans.) The Philosophical Society, New York, 1959

Sawicki, M. (2014) "Edmund Husserl (1859-1938)" [online] (cited 11th July 2014) available from http://www.iep.utm.edu/husserl/

Schwartz, S. A. (2013) "False Equivalencies and the Mediocrity of Nonlocal Consciousness Research", *Explore,* 9:3, 131-135.

Sharma, R. K. (1997) *Sociological Methods and Techniques* Atlantic Publishers & Dist, New Delhi.

Sheffield Hallam University (2020) Tranformative Learning Toolkit, [online] (cited 29th December 2020) available from https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/engagement/toolkit/transformative-learning-toolkit/

Sikes, P (2007) "Auto/biographical and narrative approaches" [online] (cited 16th July 2014) available from http://www.tlrp.org/capacity/rm/wt/sikes/

Smith, M. D., Foster, C. L., and Stovin, G (1998) "Intelligence and paranormal belief: Examining the role of context", *Journal of Parapsychology*, 62, 65–77.

Soles, D. (2003) *The Essentials of Academic Writing,* Houghton Mifflin Company, USA.

Solomon, G. (2006) *The Scole Experiment: Scientific Evidence for Life after Death,* Campion Books, UK.

Solomon, R. C. (2008). *The philosophy of emotions.* In M. Lewis, J. M. Haviland-Jones, & L. F. Barrett (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotions*, The Guilford Press, UK, pp. 3–16.

Spacal, S. (1990) “Free Association as a Method of Self-Observation in Relation to Other Methodological Principles of Psychoanalysis” Psychoanalysis Quarterly, 59:3, 420-436.

Spanier, B. (1995) *Im/partial Science: Gender Ideology in Molecular Biology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind, USA.

Spiegelberg, E. (2012) *Doing Phenomenology: Essays on and in Phenomenology,* Springer Science & Business Media, USA.

Springgay, S., Irwin, R., Leggo, C., and Gouzouasis, P. (2008) *Being with a/r/tography,.*Sense, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Stainova, Y. (2019) “Enchantment as Method”, *Anthropology and Humanism,* 44:2, 214-230.

Stott, T. (2015) Play and Participation in Contemporary Art Practices, Taylor and Francis, UK

Storm, L. and Ertel, S. (2001) “Does PSI exist? Comments on Milton & Wisemann’s (1999) Meta-Analysis of Ganzfeld Research”, *Psychological Bulletin* 127:3, 424-433.

Storni, C., Lee, Y., Schepers, S. (2014) *Participation is Risky - Approaches to Joint Creative Processes*, Anagram Books, London.

Suddaby, R., Ganzin, M. and Minkus, A. (2017) “Craft, magic and the re-enchantment of the world, *European Management Journal,* 35, 285-296.

Synnott, A. (1992) “The Eye and I: A Sociology of Sight”, International Journal of Politics, Culture and society, 5:4, 617-636.

Tight, M. (2020) “Student retention and engagement in higher education”, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 44:5, 689-704.

Tobacyk, J. J., and Milford, G. (1983). “Belief in paranormal phenomena: Assessment instrument development and implications for personality functioning”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 1029–1037.

Tobacyk, J. J. (1984) “Paranormal belief and college grade point average”, *Psychological Reports*, 54, 217–218.

Tobacyk, J. J., Miller, M., Murphy, P., and Mitchell, T. (1988) “Comparisons of paranormal beliefs of black and white university students from the southern United States”, *Psychological Reports*, 63, 492–494.

Tobacyk, J. and Shrader, D. (1991) “Superstition and Self-Efficacy”, *Psychological Reports,* 68:3, 1387-1388.

Totton, N. (2003) *Psychoanalysis and the Paranormal : Lands of Darkness*, Routledge, London.

Totton, N. (2008) “Funny you should say that: Paranormality, at the margins and the centre of psychotherapy”, *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counselling”,* 9:4, 389-401.

Totton, N. (2015) *Embodied Relating: The Ground of Psychotherapy,* Karnac Books, UK

Turner, P. K. and Norwood, K. M. (2013) “Body of Research: Impetus, Instrument and Impediment”, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 19:9, 696-711.

Turner, V. (1969) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Alline Publishing, Chicago.

Tymienieka, A-T. (2006) *Logos of Phenomenology and Phenomenology of the Logos. Book One: Phenomenology as the Critique of Reason in Contemporary Criticism and Interpretation,* Springer Science & Business Media, USA.

Ullman, M. (1993) "The Bindelof Story, Part I (of 4)", *Exceptional Human Experience*, 11:1.

Ullman, M. (1994a) "The Bindelof Story, Part 2" *Exceptional Human Experience*, 12:1.

Ullman, M. (1994b) "The Bindelof Story, Part 3", *Exceptional Human Experience*. 12:2.

Ullman, M. (1995) "The Bindelof Story, Part 4", *Exceptional Human Experience*, 13:1.

Voss, A (2013) "Making Sense of the Paranormal: A Platonic Context for Research Methods", Jenzen, O. and Munt, S. R. (eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Paranormal Cultures*, Routledge, UK

Voss (2015) "*Delectare, Docere, Movere:* Soul-learning, Reflexivity and the Third Classroom", in A. Voss and S. Wilson (Eds.) *Re-enchanting the Academy,* Rubedo Press, USA, pp.113-138.

Voss, A. (2019) *"Myth, cosmology and the sacred: transformative learning as the bridge between worlds" in: :L. W. Filho and A. Consorte-McCrea, (Ed.) Sustainability and the Humanities, Springer,USA, pp. 19-34*

Wales, K. (2009) "Unnatural conversations in unnatural conversations: speech reporting in the discourse of spiritual mediumship", *Language and Literature: International Journal of Stylistics,* 18:4, 347-356

Walton, J. (2014) "What can the 'transpersonal' contribute to transformative research?", *International Journal for Transformative Research*, 1:1, 25-44.

Waugh, P (2006) Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide, Oxford University Press, OXON.

Weber, M. (1920) 'Science as Vocation', in Gerth, HH, Mills, C W (eds.) *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (1948;1970)* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Weber, M. (1930) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. (transl. T. Parsons) Allen & Unwin, London.

Weber, M. (1946) *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Gerth, H. H. and Wright Mills, C. (trans & ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxon.

Weber, Max (2004) "Science as Vocation" in R. Livingstone, (Trans), D. Owen (Ed.) and T. Strong (Ed.) *The Vocation Lectures,* Hackett Books, USA.

Weber, M. (1963) *The Sociology of Religion*. Beacon, Boston.

West, D. (2015) 'Society for Psychical Research' [online], cited 24th March 2021, available from https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/society-psychical-research

White, S. E. (1937) *The Betty Book,* E.P. Dutton & Company, USA.

Whitford, M. B. (1986) "Luce Irigaray and the Female Imaginary: Speaking as a Woman" *Radical Philosophy,* 43:7, 3-8

Wilde, D. J., Murray, J., Doherty, P. and Murray, C. D. (2019) "Mental health and mediumship: an interpretive phenomenological analysis", *Mental Health, Religion and Culture,* 22:3, 261-278.

Williamson, A. (2009) "Formative support and connection: somatic movement dance education in community and client practice", *Journal of Dance & Somatic Practices,* 1:1, 29-45

Willig, C. (2013) *Introducing Qualitative Research In Psychology,* McGraw-Hill Education (UK) / Open University Press, Maidenhead Berks.

Willis, J. (2008) *Qualitative Research Methods in Education and Educational Technology,* IAP Education, Charlotte, NC.

Wilson, S. C. and Barber, T. X. (1983) "The fantasy-prone personality: Implications for understanding imagery, hypnosis, and parapsychological phenomena", *Psi Research* 1:3, 94-116.

Wittgenstein, L (1922) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 1922, translated C. K. Ogden Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Wittgenstein, L (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, Blackwell, Oxford.

Woodruff Smith, D. (2013) *Husserl,* Routledge, London.

Wooffitt, R. (2006) *The Language of Mediums and Psychics: The Social Organization of Everyday Miracles*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, Hants.

Wooffitt, R. (2007) "Communication and laboratory performance in parapsychology experiments: Demand characteristics and the social organization of interaction", *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 6, 477-498.

Wooffitt, R and Gilbert, H (2008), "Discourse, rhetoric, and the accomplishment of mediumship in stage demonstrations", *Mortality*, 13:3, 222-240.

Wooffitt, R., Jackson, C., Reed, D., Ohashi, Y. and Huges, I. (2013) "Self-identity, authenticity and the Other: The spirits and audience management in stage mediumship" *Language and Communication*, 33, 93-105.

Wooffitt, R. (2017) "Relational psychoanalysis and anomalous communication; continuities and discontinuities in psychoanalysis and telepathy", *History of the Human Sciences,* 30:1, 118-137.

Wuthnow, R. (1976) “Astrology and marginality”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* 15, 157–168.

Zelic, T. (2008) “On the Phenomenology of the Life-World”, *Synthesis Philosophica,* 46:2, 413-426.

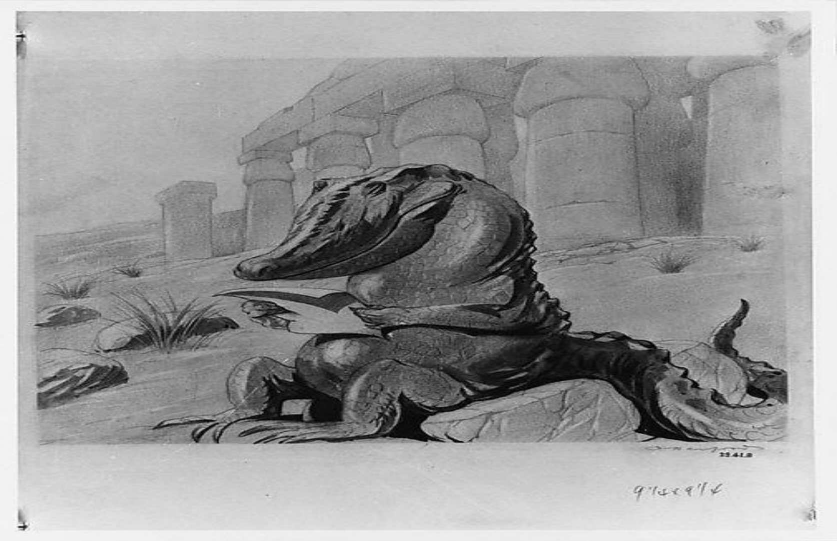
Chapter Nine: Appendices

In the appendices I sometimes include samples of the material gathered in the research group, rather than the entire set of material gathered in the exercises and discussions. Where I include samples rather than all the material, the items included are selected to provide an overview of the wider body of material collected.

Appendix One: Invitations

A1.1 Initial invitation circulated by email

THE OTHER SIDE OF READING': SIX EXPERIMENTAL SESSIONS



(Image: Oliver Herford 1891)

Calling postgraduate students and staff across all faculties! Would you like to deepen your understanding of reading academic texts in creative and unusual ways?

I am a PhD researcher at [NAME OF INSTITUTION HERE] University who is particularly interested in how reading-related activities take place in academic settings, and I am looking for participants to take part in a series of collaborative group sessions as part of my research. We will use approaches inspired by psychic development and mediumship techniques, surrealist games, collaborative and performative art, creative writing and drama exercises. There will be six sessions, which will take place on the [NAME OF INSTITUTION HERE] Campus as follows. Participants may attend as many or as few sessions as they like.

Session	Title	Time, Length	Title
1	*Reading with the Body*	11am-1pm	28th October 2017
2	*I Associate Thus*	11am-12.30pm	18th November 2017
3	*Text into Image*	11am-12.30pm	16th December 2017
4	*Psychometry of Texts*	11am-12.30pm	20th January 2018

5	*Reading as Movement*	10am-1pm	17th February 2018
6	*Collaborative Character Discovery*	11am – 4pm (with break for lunch)	17th March 2018

If you are interested in taking part or would like to find out more, please contact Julia Moore, [EMAIL ADDRESS GIVEN]

A1.2 Information sheet

READING AND INTUITION: ARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

A research study is being conducted at [NAME OF INSTITUTION HERE] University by Julia Moore, PhD researcher (Faculty of XXXX)

Background

I am interested in finding out whether the methods used in mediumship and psychic development groups, designed to facilitate the use of intuition and the unconscious, can be used to explore processes of reading, learning and textual analysis. To investigate this further, I am creating a research group, and am looking for participants to meet regularly to take part in exercises which explore intuition and reading. The exercises are inspired by techniques taught in mediumship and psychic development groups, but also draw upon other areas, particularly collaborative and conceptual art, creative writing and theatre games. The exercises will involve using these techniques to explore, and perhaps expand, our experiences of reading and writing in academic contexts. Reflection on group activities, together or individually, is a central part of the research group. The exercises will be interesting and enjoyable (at least, that's the aim).

What will you be required to do?

Participants in this study will be required to:

- meet regularly (it's envisaged that the group will meet once a month for 1.5 to 2 hours at a time)
- If possible commit to attending as many of the series as possible (the group will run for 12 to 18 months, from Summer 2016)
- Take part in group exercises designed to facilitate intuition and explore reading and writing
- Be willing to reflect on their experiences

To participate in this research you should:

- Be prepared to engage in exercises designed to tap intuitive responses (e.g. meditation)

- Be interested in exploring the unconscious
- Ideally have some experience of either: collaborative art practices, creative writing, psychic development, intuitive work, dream work, other creative or intuitive practices
- Have an interest in exploring new approaches to academic work
- Be open-minded about the techniques taught in mediumship and psychic development
- Be open to collaboration, creative processes and group-work
- Be prepared to reflect on the group experiences
- Able to commit to 1 monthly group session, to be held at [the university].

Procedures

You will be asked to attend monthly group sessions, and at each participate in group activities. It's hoped that these will be enjoyable and interesting. The exact details of the activities is being finalised, but they will involve using intuitive techniques to explore academic reading and writing. Activities might include: writing, guided relaxation, exploring theoretical texts, group work, drama games, reading, drawing (you don't have to have any particular skill in any activity, but it helps to be willing to 'have a go'). There is no obligation to take part in any, or all, of the group activities.

Feedback

I will invite reflection on the activities both during (at the end of) each session and afterwards, by email. The research group will integrate reflection and reflexivity about the processes, so any feedback is warmly encouraged.

Confidentiality

All data and personal information will be stored securely within [the university] premises in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's own data protection requirements. Data can only be accessed by Julia Moore. After completion of the study, all data will be made anonymous (i.e. all personal information associated with the data will be removed).

Dissemination of results

The data collected will be analysed and published as part of my PhD thesis

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Should you decide to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason.

Appendix Two: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Reading and Intuition
Name of Researcher: Julia Moore

Contact details:

Address: [ADDRESS GIVEN]

Tel: [TELEPHONE]

Email: [EMAIL ADDRESS GIVEN]

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. ☐
3. I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential ☐
4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature

Copies: 1 for participant, 1 for researcher

Appendix Three: Information sheets

A3.1 Information sheet for session one

Some Background on Free Association

1. Origins

Free association is a method used in psychoanalysis, other therapies and beyond. It was developed by Sigmund Freud between 1892 to 1898 (Jones 2017). In developing the idea of free association, Freud wanted to find a method to replace hypnosis as a way of exploring neuroses (Jones 2017).

Free association draws upon the method of spontaneous recall pioneered by Breuer as a way of treating patients with hysteria (Spacal 1990). The method also offered Freud a way of working with patients suffering trauma, who were unable to recall the events leading to their illnesses (Lothane 2007).

The technique has been widely influential: Fromm (1955) suggests that it is one of Freud's two main achievements (the other being his discovery of the unconscious). It offers a way to "leave the realm of conventional, rational thought and … voice ideas which are not determined by the rules of normal, conventional thinking" (Fromm 1955, p. 129).

It has been claimed that free association marks an important difference between psychoanalysis and some other therapies, as it includes the unconscious into the working process (Britzman 2003).

2. Techniques

Free association can be seen as a way of bypassing the 'head' and finding out what is going on in other parts of the body, or exploring aspects of a person beyond the ego (Fromm 1955). In free association as practiced in Freudian psychoanalysis, a client lies on a couch and speaks freely about anything that comes into his or her mind. Thoughts flow, and are uttered, freely, and the client attempts to express them without censoring them and without intervention by the critical mind. Intellectual control is voluntarily given up (Jones 2017). Observation, rather than reflection, is key, and the aim is to establish a state similar to that experienced before falling asleep (Spacal 1990).

Other techniques can be used: Fromm (1955) suggests using questions like "tell me what is in your mind right now", or asking the client for the first thing that comes to mind. He also suggests guided visualisation-like techniques: e.g. describing a situation, then asking the client about what comes into her/his mind, or asking the client to imagine a blank movie screen upon which things subsequently appear.

Free association is a collaboration in which the analyst is also involved. One person free associates and the other listens and responds. When the therapist (or witness) responds, further elements of free association may also come into play (Fromm 1955)

3. Results and Meanings

In the Freudian model, the material produced in free association is subsequently analysed by the psychoanalyst. Free association is employed to reveal psychic complexes held in the unconscious. The individual may be unaware of these complexes, but they are likely to influence that individual emotionally, and impact on their thoughts and actions. The process of revealing these complexes is designed to integrate them consciously and hence improve the client's mental health (Jones 2017).

Beyond Freudian contexts, the value of free association lies in it being a way of uncovering unconscious material through the facilitation of a particular frame of mind. Lothane (2007) describes it as a "Copernican revolution", uncovering the "contribution that non-rational (not: irrational), representational, magic and pictorial thinking makes to discursive, logical and rational, and goal-directed thinking". While there are other ways (for example, dreams) of getting in touch with the non-rational realm (some with advantages over free association), free association offers a way of working with the content linguistically (Lothane 2007).

Free association can also be thought of as a way of unsettling our relationship with language: everyday language is generally fairly straightforward and works referentially. However, "in free association, language resembles a photographic negative" (Britzman 2003, p. 26). Thus, free association can be a way to free language, through entering a dream-like trance, from the "grip of censorship and criticism, and unmoor it from the entanglement of endless clarifications, justifications, projections, and rationalizations" (Britzman 2003, p. 28).

What is revealed by the process of free association is not easy to understand: the real meaning of what is free associated has to be uncovered from a seemingly disorganised mass of "negation, disavowal, slips of the tongue, forgetting details, and undoing what has already happened" (Britzman 2003, p.26). Losing one's grip on everyday language in turn means giving up "however briefly, one's sense of reality in the world, one's sense of actuality and its limits" (Britzman 2003, p.28).

It has also been suggested (Bollas 1999) that by thus reworking language, free association is a new technique for thinking which can lead to a new type of discourse and, ultimately, an alternative epistemology:

> to ask Western man to discover truth by abandoning the effort to find it and adopting instead the leisurely task of simply stating what crosses the mind moment to moment is to undermine the entire structure of Western epistemology (Bollas 1999, p. 63).

What this new epistemology might look like is beyond the scope of this brief introduction, but I will explore the relationship between techniques like free association and communicative language in more detail in my PhD thesis.

4. Other Practices

As a way of uncovering unconscious material, the practice of free association can be related to other practices. Jung's active imagination has been compared to free association, in that it encourages mental play and a suspension of criticality; however Jung's process places a much greater emphasis on the image, creativity and fantasy. Free association has also been widely used in the arts, notably in surrealism and in particular by Andre Breton (Kiehl 2015), although he used the term 'psychic automatism' instead (Breton 1924). Naranjo (2006) compares free association with meditative practices, and develops a modification of the technique which involves greater awareness and attention, and includes greater use of listening in the practice of free association.

Free association has also been used (Holloway and Jefferson 2009) as a research method. In some situations, research participants might be reluctant to disclose information, either because they fear it will be unacceptable to the researchers or is unacceptable to their conscious selves. Holloway and Jefferson (2009) developed a narrative approach to interviewing which incorporates free association and enhanced listening.

References

Bollas, C (1999) *The Mystery of Things*, Routledge, London.

Breton, A. (1924) *Manifesto of Surrealism*, Editions du Sagittaire, France. Transl. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane.

Britzman, D P (2003) "Five Excursions into Free Association, or Just Take the A Train", *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 1:1, 25-37.

Gallback, M. R. (2006) *Learning from Dreams*, Daimon, Einsiedeln.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2009). "Researching defended subjects with the free association narrative interviewing method", in H.J. Cook, S. Bhattacharya, & A. Hardy (eds.) *History of the social determinants of health: Global histories, contemporary debates*, Orient Black Swan, Hyderabad. pp. 296–315.

Jones, J (2017) "About the Free Association Method" [online] (available from http://www.freudfile.org/psychoanalysis/free_associations.html). Cited 30th September 2017.

Kiehl, E. (2015) *Copenhagen 2013 - 100 Years On: Origins, Innovations and Controversies: Proceedings of the 19th Congress of the International Association for Analytical Psychology,* Daimon, Einsiedeln.

Lothane, Z (2007) 'Reciprocal Free Association', Paper presented on July 28, 2007 at the International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Berlin.

Naranjo, C (2006) *The Way of Silence and the Talking Cure On Meditation and Psychotherapy*, Blue Dophin, USA.

Spacal, S (1990) “Free Association as a Method of Self-Observation in Relation to Other Methodological Principles of Psychoanalysis”, *Psychoanalysis Quarterly*, 59:3, 420-436.

Further Reading

Bollas, C. (2002) *Free Association* Icon, UK.

Fromm,E. (1955) “Remarks on the problem of free association”, *Psychiatric Research Reports*, 2, 123-134.

Horney, K. (1945) *Self-Analysis*, Norton, UK/USA.

Kris, A. O. (2013) *Free Association: Methods and Process*, Routledge, London.

Torsti-Hagman, M. (2003) *Harvesting Free Association*, Free Association Books, UK.

A3.2 Information sheet for session two

Some background on the theoretical background to session 2

This session draws upon ideas developed by Eugene Gendlin, and uses a variation of his techniques of 'focusing' and 'dipping' to explore the reading of texts. Gendlin trained as a philosopher, specialising in phenomenology, and later became a psychoanalyst. His background in philosophy, particularly his investigations into experience and the body, inform his practical techniques. For Gendlin, the body is not a mechanical entity which is separated from mind, spirit or soul, but is rather interactive, ambiguous and experienced. Gendlin also suggests that the body is known intuitively, not primarily through abstract and rational schemata and concepts.

Session 2 will draw particularly upon Gendlin's technique of focusing. Focusing involves developing an awareness of what is going on 'inside' us, particularly in the belly and chest regions. Gendlin believed that by thus becoming aware of this 'felt sense' of ourselves, we can gain new insight into personal situations and problems, and widen the sense of what a self is beyond the head, ego and linguistic consciousness. The technique may also have the potential to inform our understandings of situations beyond the personal. Focusing, and the associated concepts of the 'felt sense' and 'dipping', can also be seen as a both ways of approaching material in an intuitive way, and ways to help develop a wider theoretical concept of 'intuition'.

Gendlin's Philosophy and Theoretical Concepts

Gendlin's philosophy gives an insight into his more practical ideas. He is a phenomenologist. Phenomenology, broadly, is a "philosophical movement based on a self-critical methodology for reflectively (reflexively or introspectively) examining and describing … lived experience (the phenomena)", as a basis for a revised understanding of the world and our place in it" (Reeder 1986, p. 21). Gendlin used the phenomenological approach as a way of critiquing a dominant philosophical tradition in Western philosophy, that is, the tendency to interpret experience, and reality "as basically a formal or logic-like system" (Gendlin 1973, p. 281). This includes, but is not limited to, attempts to privilege science as a system capable of explaining reality. Under this dominant tradition, experience mirrors nature, and nature is assumed to possess a formal, abstract and structured system. Correspondingly, within this tradition, science or mathematics is assumed to be the best ways of understanding the nature of reality. While different philosophies within this tradition have had different agendas, in most cases, the "needs of knowledge (as analyzed) governed what was said of experience or nature" (Gendlin 1973, p. 282).

Through questioning various aspects of this dominant tradition, using tools developed within the phenomenological disciplines, Gendlin starts to develop his own philosophical approach which both provides a theoretical basis for and inspires the tools he develops.

Gendlin's Practical Techniques

Gendlin's practical techniques, developed during as a result of his practice as a psychoanalyst, are, then, rooted in and justified by his philosophical concepts. His notion of the body is particularly important in understanding his practical techniques: one of the ideas he rejected from the 'dominant tradition' is that the body is mechanical and quantifiable, and the associated idea that the mind (sometimes equated with the brain) is an entirely different type of substance. Gendlin rejects the “common assumption that the body is a fixed piece of biological machinery” (1990, p. 214).

It is out of this revised conception of the body, through his notion of ‘sentient bodily interaction’ (SBI), that Gendlin transforms a phenomenology of bodily experience into a model for working with intuitive experiences. The body, for Gendlin, is something that is experienced from ‘inside’. The lived experience of the body is primary: our essence (ego, self, soul) is not locked away in our heads, somehow communicating with a mechanical body, but is present in our bodily experience.

Gendlin’s techniques are ways of exploring this lived experience of being a body (or body-mind) in the world. His main techniques are ‘focusing’ and ‘dipping’, which are both supported by his idea of the ‘felt sense’. The ‘felt sense’ can be seen as the body feeling of what it is like to be here, now, when you pay attention to what is going on. It is distinct from what we call physical sensations, emotions etc., though it relates to and crosses over with these. It includes, for example, any sense of what seems to be about to happen, in any concrete situation. In some of the passages where he describes this felt sense, it sometimes starts to sound like precognition, or a sixth sense.

The more attention we pay to our felt sense, the more it opens up, reveals itself and the situation it responds to, and the more it changes. Sometimes this leads to changes in other areas of our lives. The ‘felt sense’, then, can be seen as the experience of being oneself in a situation, which is not the same as understanding the contents of one’s mind, but involves, but is not limited to, sensory experience. It is not fixed, but changing, and its mutability comes as a consequence of attention. So, this felt sense can be cultivated, and changed through attention:

> The body responds to attention. With a little training, people can learn to put their attention inside their bodies and let a physical quality come there. If the person thinks of something else, the quality changes. The body responds with a uniquely different quality to anything, whether large or tiny” and “if one attends in the body and awaits a unique quality until it actually comes, then little steps come from it. They can answer questions. (Gendlin 1997, p.1)

Gendlin’s concept of ‘dipping’ relates closely to that of the felt sense. Dipping is a way of relating to the felt sense. It offers a way in which one can become more aware of the self in the world through focusing on the felt sense:

> Let your attention refer inside, directly, physically, to the comfort or discomfort in the middle of your body. I want to ask you just about my talk so far (not about your other situations). About my talk, in the middle of your body, there – what comes there – about what I am saying? Is it all neutral and at ease there about that? Or is there some excitement, or some unease. Perhaps there is a sense of much that seems not quite right in what I am saying. Whatever body-sense is there, are there not many arguments explicit in it, which you could explicate if you had a few moments’ peace? (Gendlin 1995, p. 551)

So, dipping is a process of becoming more aware of the felt sense through careful attention, particularly to the belly and heart regions. Although this process might seem like one of uncovering the extremes of subjectivity, which are utterly private and which have no import in the objective world, in fact, for Gendlin, the place in which dipping occurs is in the world, as it is about the world in a way which is immediate, direct, and unchallengeable.

Focusing is also a way of having a relationship with the felt sense. It has a similar meaning to 'dipping', but Gendlin uses it more often and it is, perhaps, his preferred term. It has a more general scope:

> Focusing starts with a concrete feeling in your body – in your stomach or in your chest. It is a kind of inward bodily attention that a few people have naturally but which most people don't yet know. Focusing is not being in touch with emotions or feelings and isn't guessing or figuring things out in your head about yourself. It is a way of getting a bodily sense – I call it a felt sense – of how you are in a particular life situation. (Gendlin 1999, p. 85)

The techniques of focusing and dipping, supported by the idea of the felt sense, were developed by Gendlin into a 5-part method for working with bodily experience and reactions to situations, as a tool for personal development and psychoanalysis. Because of the strength of this method for looking at intuitive material, we will be using a variant of it in this session to look at bodily responses to reading. I

It is difficult to convey, in a short text, what Gendlin means by these concepts, as he struggles to articulate ideas which perhaps escape full definition in words. Hopefully, though, the above has given you some idea of Gendlin's ideas, and their usefulness for looking at experience.

References

Gendlin, E. T. (1963) "Experiencing and the Nature of Concepts", *The Christian Scholar*, 46:3, 245-255.

Gendlin, E.T. (1973). Experiential phenomenology. In M. Natanson (Ed.), *Phenomenology and the social sciences, Vol. I,* Northwestern University Press, Evanston. pp. 281-319.

Gendlin, E. T. (1992) "The primacy of the body, not the primacy of perception", *Man and World*, 25:3-4, 341-355

Gendlin, E. T. (1995) "Crossing and Dipping: Some Terms for Approaching the Interface between Natural Understanding and Logical Formulation", *Minds and Machines*, 5:4, 547-560.

Gendlin, E. T. (1999) "Implicit Entry and Focusing", *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 27:1, 80-88.

Gendlin, E. T. (2006) *An introduction to focusing: Six steps*, The Focusing Institute, New York.

Gendlin E.T (2007) “Focusing: The body speaks from the inside” Transcript of talk given at 18th Annual International Trauma conference.

Gendlin, E. T. (1990) “the small steps of the therapy process: how they come and how to help them come” in G. Lietaer, J. Rombauts and R Van Balen (Eds.) *Client-centred and experiential psychotherapy in the nineties,* Leuven University Press, Leuven, pp. 205-224.

Reeder, H. P. (1986) *The Theory and Practice of Husserl’s Phenomenology*, University Press of America, USA

A3.3 Information sheet for session three

Session 3: Psychometry of Texts

This session will draw upon ways of working with academic texts which seem, at first glance, to be doomed to failure. Through using imaginative and intuitive approaches, we will be thinking more about what reading is, and how we experience it in an academic context. There are different theoretical framings of the exercises we will be doing. One way in to the session is through some ideas from the philosopher Jean-Jacques Lecercle, particularly his notion of '*délire':* or nonsense writing. Drawing upon ideas from other theorists including Deleuze and Kristeva, Lecercle developed a theory of *délire* which has implications for how we understand sense, meaning and texts.

Lecercle discusses two different understandings of language: in the first, language is seen as "as an instrument (of expression or of communication)" (Lecercle 1985, p. 49). He associates this with, for example, the rationalist tradition of Anglo-American philosophies, and suggests it ignores the physical embodiment of text and its relationship to the body. This "dominant tradition" (p. 7) can also be equated with some of the forms of academic texts which these research groups investigate. The ideal language, for this tradition, is mathematical or computational: natural languages are "imperfect instruments which have to be purified or translated into logical language" (p.7). For this model, language makes sense, is primarily abstract and is an expression of a search for truth. As Lecercle explains:

> The dominant tradition in the conception of language regards it as an instrument for communication – although natural languages are imperfect instruments which have to be purified or translated into logical language. Language enables us to live in society, it is the vector of our everyday intercourse with our fellow[s]; it also enables us to phrase our attempts to express truth. In other words, language makes sense; in spite of its shortcomings, it conveys our search for truth and notes down the rules of our method. It can do all this – which allows, among other things, the writings of books – because of its abstract character: an intellectual faculty (language) realised through ideal systems (natural languages as langues.) (Lecercle 1985, p.7)

However, understanding language in this way is severely limited. Lecercle further explains:

> But this characterisation of language, vague and unsatisfactory as it is, is itself an abstraction. It deliberately ignores various experiences of language which are the daily lot of every speaker: words often fail us, that is, fail to express what we mean; or, conversely, they express too much, more than we mean: they utter what we refuse to recognize, what we would rather have left unsaid…. Language loses its capacity to communicate. But it can also, at the same time, increase its power: it ceases to be controlled by the subject but on the contrary rules over [the subject]. Instead of truth, we have fiction; instead of sense, nonsense or absurdity, instead of abstraction, desire. Instead of method, we have the madness of délire." (Lecercle 1985, p.7)

Against this, Lecercle contrasts a second understanding of language which acknowledges these roots through focusing upon language's embodiment, "its… dark, frightening origins in the human body… the material existence of words as produced by certain organs of the body" (Lecercle 1985, p. 16). In contrast to the rationalist tradition, Lecercle suggests that *délire* represents:

> a form of discourse which questions our most common conception of language…, where the old philosophical question of the emergence of sense out of nonsense receives a new formulation, where the material side of language, its origin in the human body and desire are no longer eclipsed by its abstract aspect (Lecercle 1985, p. 6).

He adds that:

> Another tradition emerges, suppressed but persistent, in which language is both 'liberated' (from the systematic rules of its structure: a doubtful benefit) and dominant (it imposes its workings on the subject, who loses mastery). Mad linguists and 'fous littéraires' make up this tradition. This is the age-old tradition of 'speaking in tongues'… of possessed visionaries (Lecercle 1985, pp. 6-7).

Lecercle sees d*é*lire, therefore, as a type of nonsense language deeply rooted in bodily processes, produced by a consuming passion for language, and made meaningful by processes of (for example) punning, alliteration and rhyme that express the unconscious rather than reason and conscious processes. While the dominant tradition of language emphasises its communicative and abstract nature, the suppressed tradition of d*é*lire prioritises apparent lack of sense and the rootedness of language in the body.

This dual model of language offers a way of understanding our investigations in this session. We will work with texts associated with Lecercle's first understanding of language, and our activities will attempt to find the texts' *déliric* content, hidden below the surface content. Lecercle does not set out an explicit method for doing this, although his reading (1985) of Anton Artaud and Raymond Roussel and later (1994) analysis of Victorian nonsense literature offer some examples, for example tracing *délire* in terms of linguistics, pragmatics and polyphony.

Lecercle's liberated language of possessed visionaries, then, emerges from somewhere behind, or beyond rationality, and is rooted in the body. Here, Lecercle's ideas seem to cross over with both techniques of free association, explored in session one, and Gendlin's techniques, which we explored last session. The psychoanalyst Bollas (1999) suggested, after all, that free association offers a way to undermine the hegemony of Western epistemologies and dominant, rationalist linguistic traditions through radically reworking language. At the same time, Gendlin's work is deeply embodied. While Gendlin emphasises the phenomenological, experiential side of the felt sense and its embodiment, Lecercle's interest in embodiment is finding how written texts have a hidden, embodied side. To what extent Gendlin's and Lecercle's ideas explore similar areas from different perspectives is beyond the scope of this short introduction.

References

Bollas, C (1999) *The Mystery of Things* Routledge, London

Lecercle, J-J (1985) *Philosophy through the Looking-Glass,* Open Court, La Salle, Illinois.

Lecercle, J-J (1994) *Philosophy of Nonsense: The Intuitions of Victorian Nonsense Literature.,* Routledge, London

A3.4 Information sheet for session four

Session 4: Text into Image

Session 4 relates fairly closely to material explored in session three, but does so from a different perspective. In both sessions, we are looking at what happens when we question some of the basic assumptions we may make about reading, what it is and how it works. Last time, we explored the idea that in order to read a text, we have to be able to see it. This time, we will look at the assumption that academic writing needs to be unambiguous and straightforward, as well as devoid of symbolic content. This assumption is one that is widely circulated, particularly in advice for university students. For example, many textbooks and guides for students suggest that clarity and lack of ambiguity should be the standard across all academic disciplines, for example Kirton (2012) states "academic writing in all the disciplines uses good, clear unambiguous standard English".

That all academic writing is, or should be, unambiguous and straightforward is, in fact, contentious. The extent of ambiguity and obscurity tolerated is a function of different factors. Some subject matters, for example philosophy, may involve studying texts which are very obscure and arguably ambiguous. Other subjects, particularly those in the sciences or for which a formal language has been developed (mathematics, physics) are markedly less tolerant of ambiguity. Fewer academic subjects encourage writing which might be seen as symbolic, although some of the arts subjects may involve studying texts which function symbolically.

It can be argued that behind the idea that academic language should be clear and unambiguous lies a philosophical assumption (or set of assumptions) about language and reality. These assumptions are (also arguably) shared by some scientific, positivist and rationalist perspectives: that the world is clear, understandable and knowable, and that language is directly referential (words and their combinations have meaning through *referring to* something objective beyond themselves that exists in the word, whether this objective something is the *physical thing* they name or the *meaning, meaningful content* or *sense* which acts as a mediator between the human being using language and the real thing in the real world that the sentence, phrase or word is about). This view of language is the one critiqued by Lecercle as the ‘dominant’ tradition (as discussed in a previous pre-session background theory document). While the language of the “dominant tradition” “enables us to live in society” (Lecercle 1979, p. 6), it “deliberately ignores various experiences of language which are the daily lot of every speaker” (Lecercle 1979, p. 6). For Lecercle, this unrecognised aspect of language (*délire)* relate to instinct and the body.

Regardless of the philosophical assumptions involved, it might seem that there is a good rationale for the idea that academic writing should be clear and unambiguous. It’s unlikely that any student would want to struggle with a textbook that contradicts itself, is obscure and more difficult to understand than it needs to be. However, this session is concerned to investigate whether, within an academic text which aims to be clear and unambiguous, any ambiguity can be found, and what can be derived from this ambiguous material. In particular, we will be using the ambiguities as a way of making images to be re-read or interpreted symbolically, generating (hopefully) new and richer ‘readings’ of the original.

As mentioned above, the predominant view of academic writing is that it should be straightforward and clear. However, other approaches acknowledge that there is a space in academia for the personal, poetic and ambiguous, as articulated by e.g. Knowles and Cole (2008). In previous sessions, we have discussed our experiences of reading academic material, and some of us have reported that we find it, on occasion, distancing, dry and lacking in a deeper ‘meaning’ than the merely referential. As the symbolic realm and aesthetic realm, understood very broadly as an imaginative space in which visual content is resonant with meaningfulness and connections, may offer a way of accessing the meaning that is lacking in some academic texts, this session aims to uncover the symbolic and visual masked by the dry and straightforwardly referential.

The methods we will use in this session are loosely inspired by the notion of projective testing. During the 20th century, projective testing was widely used in psychology as a way of determining personality and personality disorders. Projective tests are those in which an image selected because it possesses a high degree of ambiguity is presented to an individual, who then interprets what s/he sees. Examples include the Rorschach test, in which inkblots with no specific shape but with suggestive possibilities for interpretation are ‘read’ by a user in terms of what they see in the image. This ‘reading’ by the user is subsequently interpreted by the psychological professional, perhaps in terms of insight into the user’s psychodynamic processes (Plotnik & Kouyoumdjian 2013). Another example is the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) which presents black and white images for interpretation (Murray 1943). Dream interpretation and free association might also be considered varieties of projective tests (Plotnik & Kouyoumdjian 2013).

These tests all use very different images. The Rorschach images are complex ink blots; the TAT uses images which show human beings in dramatic situations where it isn’t quite clear what is taking place. What these tests have in common is the use of ambiguous material to generate responses. The images each test uses has been designed specifically to elicit certain responses which indicate the subject’s psychological profile or personality, exploring personality dynamics, “internal conflicts, dominant drives, interests and motives” (Gordon and Fleisher 2011).

As such, the use of projective testing might be seen to adhere to a somewhat mechanistic, medicalised model of the human psyche. However, there seems to be a parallel between the way projective tests are ‘read’ and some processes of divination. Scrying, tea leaf reading and reading tarot cards can each be considered a means of entering into ambiguous material to retrieve new material that is meaningful and which fosters a sense of connection between the reader and the wider world. Arguably, the process of divination takes place in the context of a richer and more fulfilling ‘world’ than the mechanical and medicalised one of projective testing, but equally arguably, both processes can be seen as somehow connected, as both involve the interpretation of symbolic material capable of holding multiple, layered interpretations.

Note: there were no information sheets for sessions five and six.

Appendix Four: Samples of transcripts and written material from sessions

A4.1 Session one transcripts

(EXERCISE ONE AND TWO BY PARTICIPANT)

PR

Abstract: Murtazashvili, I and Mertazashvili, J (2016) "When does the emergence of a stationary bandit lead to property insecurity" *Rationality and Society,* 28:3, 335-360.

Exercise 1: Summary of article

- The article is about economic theory
- It focus on the figure of the stationary bandit
- It wants to link the last previous elements in a new way
- It gives an example of the ideas presented, by means of the story of Abdur Rahman

Exercise 1: Reflections on reading and understanding

When I first started reading and saw the article was about economics I felt a kind of block, maybe behind my nose or eyes, because I don't like the topic. I made myself keep reading, even without understanding much, thinking that maybe at the end I'd be able to see the big picture. I only read it once because I thought there was no point in trying to understand more. Then I took the four main ideas which I thought were key. At the end I read the title and realized I may have missed a key idea, which was property insecurity. This made me think that if I read it again I'd understand more, but I didn't read it again.

Exercise 2: Associations (note – laid out exactly as done. I'm not clear which are the trigger words and which associations)

Illustrated	leads to	ownership
Bandit	rise	drastically
Ruler	expected	rights
Improves	coercive	short
Insight	powerful	coercion
Emergence	framework	

Note – the above seem to all be words taken from the abstract, and below the associations? The latter in 3 columns of a grid, as they appeared in the original.

Drawing	time	fair
Colours	cut	fight
Pirate	force	small
Steal	pain	brute
harsh	big	force
Sun	stone	bend
Light	scaffolding	
New	skeleton	
Fountain	hold	
Path	possession	
up	home	
Air	sudden	

Exercise 2: Summarising the 'story' of the associations

"If I look at the words I've chosen, I'd associated them with what was going on in my life at the moment, a personal story of feeling powerless or not being sure about what to do, nothing academic whatsoever".

LB

Abstract: Vorspan, F et.al (2015) "Self-Reported Cue-Induced Physical Symptoms of Craving as an Indicator of Cocaine Dependence", *The American Journal on Addictions,* 24, 740-743.

Exercise 1: Summary

1. Cocaine dependence
2. Survey of cocaine users to help them recognise cocaine dependence (cos many of them do not seem to recognise they are dependent)
3. Exploring past experiences of physical symptoms of craving to help users become more aware of their cocaine dependence
4. Increased self-awareness is subsequently helpful in a clinical setting so that clinicians can make correct diagnosis
5. Easier detection of cocaine dependence for clinicians

Exercise 1: Reflection

- Challenging – had to read it many times over
- Made my head hurt
- Completely ignored the results section – too mathematical / statistics led. No point in me even attempting to understand this!

Exercise 2: Associations

1. "the presence of cocaine dependence is under-recognised by cocaine users":

Drugs, addiction, desire, numbing feelings, "getting high", what is going on emotionally? Is drug dependence necessary? Something hiding, covering pain (emotional), denial, shadow

2. "A cross-sectional study of 221 cocaine users"

Who are these people? Why do they use cocaine? Upper class, middle class, lower class, crossing class boundaries, fragments, pieces, bits, broken, bridge

3. "Simple way to improve detection"

Really? Missing the point, easy, answer, nothing else needed, avoiding "why", arrest, naughty, bad, criminal, shadow

Exercise 2: Summarising the ‘Story’ of the Associations

Peggy was hooked on cocaine. She didn’t realise it; to Peggy she could control her intake of this heavenly white powder that helped her to cast off her troubles and forget this deeply disturbing world. To admit she was “dependent” would take her life in directions she didn’t want; would make her face her darkest fears and deepest secrets. Cocaine was the bouncer on that doorway, and no one was getting in!

RB

OE(EXERCISE THREE – SAMPLES OF SPOKEN ASSOCIATIONS)

Note: in exercise three it is not clear who spoke the associations, as this wasn't recorded. Where I know who said what, this is noted.

Person 2

Abstract: Okanishi, M., Olbers, J. M, Fujita, T. (2013) "A taxonomic review of the genus Asteromorpha Lutken (Echinodermata: Ophiuroidea: Euryalidae)", *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology,* 61:2, 461-480.

"***Asteromporpha"***
Star. Death. Morphing, changing. Stars changing – space travel – starship Enterprise. Spock – star shape – flower white – stars morphing into planets – nature, cosmos - ???? – tarot card – temperance – tarot card – re star – angels, shape shifting.

"Ophiuroidea"
Ancient Greece – Orpheus in underworld – lyre – Cenibus, Ophelia – academy – Plato's academy. Shakespeare. Venereal disease. Opium. Idea. Ophelia thinking not drowning. Idea motor skills, opiates, drugs, plants. Hallucination. Herbs. Floating down stream.

"Mortensen"
Swedish, death – mort, character in Terry Pratchett Book – scythe – death angel – sarriel (?) archangel of death – death of Arthur, Morte d'Arthur. Son of Mort, Swedish detective – Scandinavian crime drama library.

Person 3

Abstract: Rusk, G (2014) as before.

“***Outside the mind”***

Field, awareness, world, universe, consciousness, everything, unity/unified, “it is what it is”, being, “out there”, skull, bone

“***Within their own mind”***

People, stewing, mulling, person/hood, mental, life-story, habits, views, opinions, inner-world, right/wrong, values, truth, judgement, wondering, over-laying, filtering, “my world”

“***To hallucinatory phenomena”***

Dreams / visions, ghosts, frightened, scared, “what’s going on here”, “who’s truth”, “frightened of myself” reality, right/wrong, drugs, opium, Coleridge, “stepping out of the window”, driven, told, controlling, (lack of) “who am I”, “self-awareness”.

Person 4

Abstract: Murtazashvili and Mertazashvili (2016) as before.

“***Bandit”***

Robin Hood / robbing rich to give to poor / one-armed / headscarf / ambush / chariot / horses / speed / conflict / driven / attack / ninja warriors / fear / anarchy / chaos / escape / travel / freedom / despair / duration / trial / test

“***Afghanistan”***

Middle East / weapons / war / dictatorship / invasion / unstable / fear / terror / dissolution / destruction / beauty / family / home / hope / creation / destination / stumble / encounter / tenor / blasphemy / persecution

“***Monopoly”***

Game / encounter / movement / gathering / money / property / places / power / captialising / corruption / materialisation / greed / loss / internal critic says it’s got to make sense.

LBPR

A4.2 Session two transcripts samples

FIRST DISCUSSION, AFTER RELAXATION EXERCISE

JM: I suppose I'm just curious about what that was like, and particularly what that was like to do in an academic institution, which, if you've been here before, you might associate with a different kind of practice. Or just what it was like as something to do.

PR: Well I had the question in my mind, why are we doing this? (mumble) why are we doing this, in this context?

JM: OK. Do you want me to answer it? (mumbled brief conversation). Yeah, I suppose… it will become clear when we do the next exercise, but my aim in doing it was to facilitate a way of working with reading in a slightly different way, because I think when we go into a classroom, quite often we leave aside awareness of what's going on in what you might call a body, whatever you mean by that. So I suppose it's a kind of warm up, because I thought it might be a way of introducing you to the technique. So that's my reason for doing it. But as usual, I'm very curious about what everyone made of it, and what they thought.

RS: For me it was comfortable because I'm doing meditation and tai chi, so it's similar… to kind of connect with your body and feel things from there.

PR: I'm used to this as well, I do this every day. I'm used to the technique and the er… just not used to doing it in a class.

JM: And is that a bad thing, or a good thing, or just?

PR: it's good, of course, for me it's good.

LB: Yes, I think the setting is interesting because I'm used to facing in on my body in different settings, meditation maybe in a room where there's incense going and er… nice throws, it's just different, and I found it really difficult to keep my mind in place… I kept drifting into – what thinking about – rather than just allowing the experience to unfold. I felt there was pressure on me, somehow, this being a kind of academic setting, that I was thinking, well what's this going to lead into? And so I kept drifting a bit...

RB: I found more ability to attune to certain areas than others, for example my feet felt more familiar to me, and perhaps because it was the first thing we did I was sort of engaging… I actually apologised to certain parts, just because I felt I hadn't been around them much recently… some parts were very present, and some parts were like, 'oh we haven't seen you for a while', and that was unexpected.

RS: Actually that's true... cos there's blank bits … I was listening to Julia, going 'oh, there's a blank bit'… careful, pay attention to… not in a relationship type way, but I don't know, awareness I suppose.

RB: I apologised to some bits for not having paid them attention until they gave me trouble – and I had a pain or a difficulty or a lump or something, and I felt, I'm sorry I haven't paid attention to these parts when they have apparently been irritant really, you know.

JO: My experience was that most parts of my body were very, very erm vocal, not in an unpleasant way but they were very active, and what you said earlier, Julia, about we tend not to bring those parts to an academic activity, and it, felt wonderful, actually, yes. I wonder what this, this extra could bring.

JM: Did anyone find it difficult, because I've always found it incredibly difficult to switch off my head... well I know it's not about switching off your head, but to give any other areas space, and my head is always very 'mim nim mim nim' (chatter). I suppose I'm also curious about to what extent you find it easy, and to what extent you found it almost... well impossible or near impossible.

LD: For me, well I was just thinking about the previous question... experience. And I thought I'd been quite heady… that's what my job is calling for at the moment … and a sense of detachment as well, in some respects. And I was surprised I found it very easy to get into my body again… and I realise that I think that I *am* there, except that I don't consciously realise it. And I associate it with my head, as that's where I think I am. And for me, to answer both of your questions, for me it was surprisingly easy and that surprised me, in a way, if that makes sense.

JM: Yes contradictions make sense to me (laughs).

LD: Yes, big contradiction with it. But that was my experience and my ease at being in my body.

JM: I'm also curious about… and this is probably... cos I think we are getting into territory that becomes somehow quite, a little difficult to map... I suppose what were the sensations like, and… I guess my experience of doing this kind of thing and doing yin yoga is that something that starts, there's a kind of sensation, there's a pain, whatever, as you maybe give it more attention, it can become more complex than you originally thought. So I suppose my question is, does anyone have any thoughts about the quality of what they were coming up against in… as they travelled round the body.

PR: Can you repeat the question, please?

JM: Ooo. what… how would you describe what you were coming aware of?

LB: I became aware of warmth, as I was focusing on different parts of my body. And I did similar with my feet to you, RB, whereas I thought 'oh, gosh, you do such a lot for me, you carry me from place to place, and I was just thanking them over and over again, and thought, I really should pay you more attention, but I felt a warmth, a sort of fizzing warmth as I moved around the body, and that sort of became more warm, and more fizzy as it continued... I think those are the best words to describe it really.

RS: She says fizzy… you say fizzy… mine was like, you know when you get pins and needles, well maybe not as strong as them but a very slight sort of tingly feeling, so when I focus on my feet this time... and then as it moved up, I notice that when we did the stomach and the heart, the quality of it expanded. I became warm all over. It helped a lot to warm up… it was like a waking up I think.

RB: I found something visual was happening, I can't quite describe it, but there are parts which you are familiar with because you can see them, like your feet and your hands, and it's the old cliché, I know it like the back of my hand, because you can see them, but places like the back of my shoulders, or the back of my back I found a bit more difficult in a sense because it was conceptual, because I can't see it, but at the same time it was perfectly accessible because I live in there… so it did work. I worried at first because it wasn't visual, but it just worked anyway… there's something about a visual... knowing your hands and feet better than the bits you can't see.

JM: Any other thoughts, of any sort?

JO: In this climate of er sexual harassment and abuse, whatever, I've been connecting with stuff that happened many decades ago, and when we got to our backs there was a memory I had of a comment made, not about me but about someone else's back, which popped into my mind, and I know it's connected with a big issue around abuse, but... it was fine, just a memory and a visual memory as well. The rest of the time I didn't find myself kind of making comments about my experience or judging it or liking or not liking it... it was just – this is it, this is the experience, that was good.

JM: Good, good is good. So. Are we relaxed and ready to begin the 2nd exercise?

SECOND DISCUSSION, AFTER FOCUSING EXERCISE

JM: What was the exercise like? How did people find it? Any thoughts? At all?

LB: I think it was quite difficult for me to move, initially, out of my head, into my body, just because the abstract is nothing that I was really interested in. Just trying to read it over and over again just to try get some thread to what these people were saying. So, in my body, well, I didn't get anything … in my belly, my belly just felt really happy because it was doing its thing and it was processing breakfast [laughter] so it was like, well, yeah um that's fine, a little thing going on, I'm doing my job [background mild laughter] so, you know, that was the sense I got from my belly. But my heart was different, then... it felt kind of frustrated, um, it felt like it was hungry. Interesting, I've never felt hunger from my heart before… maybe I had but I never really consciously thought about it. And I felt like I was hungry to eat something, but that was arising from the heart. And I thought, well surely hunger arises from the belly. But my belly was off doing its thing processing breakfast, as I say. So that kind of caught me in a little loop as to what that might be about. And then it moved into desire and longing for a more… some kind of depth I think, there wasn't enough for my heart, in the chest area, in what I read. So that was my experience.

JM: Other experiences?

LD: For me there was a, I had a [] and I was quite interested but not enough [] of it and for me as a whole there was a reticence to engage with the article or the abstract, but um, very visceral feeling around my chest, like an objection to the abstract. But I knew it was going to be that. I knew exactly what I had picked. So, yeah, I knew what I was getting in to. It was a very strong feeling. Yeah. And I got nothing in my belly [] just eating breakfast… it was the same breakfast [as LB?] which was quite nice. Yeah, it was here, around my solar plexus really, and then spreading out. It didn't start there and spread up, it was there all the time, but if I... just checking in and seeing where it would have started it would have been the solar plexus. So yes, so that was my experience. [inaudible]

JO: As coincidence would have it, the abstract which I selected and I didn't know what it was going to be, it was about history of art, and that [inaudible] was the subject of my first degree. So it rushed me right back to that place, and all those fff… so I felt like, initially I had the *searing cold* of the breath coming in, going down, and it was like *searing*... where did that come from? And then I felt very grey and straight-jacketed, all the way down, it was very cold, and I said, where is the warmth gone, and then further down, it was like grey paralysis, and I've written, 'I've closed down'. So I was aware that that was kind of my physical experience, and then *all* the energy, *all* the physical sensations were up in my head, and very closely connected with, um, judgements. Not about the text but about *me*, and my capacities, my capabilities. Very big judgements. So it was very hard to stay in my body – well I hadn't - I'd flown up in to my head and couldn't get it back so I got *loads* of statements from myself, and those were absolutely, whenever I've done academic works in my first degree, my second degree, it just took me right back there to the feelings of 'I can't do this, I don't understand, I'm the only one'... yeah.

JM: PR, did you have anything about the experience you wanted to share?

PR: Well, what happened to me was that I could feel my breathing going faster, um, and I could feel some tension maybe it was in the solar plexus, or beginning of the stomach… now thinking about WHY was I having those feelings, [?] I felt excited because I told you I didn't understand that text before but I understood it better now, I could join in the ideas. Maybe I was getting excited and that's why I had those feelings maybe it was the excitement of understanding…

JM: MB, anything you wanna share?

MB: As far as the felt sense went I didn't get anything at all, absolutely nothing. Um, I didn't feel anything in the heart area or the belly, everything was in the head, um, I got a bit out of trying to cognisise things after I'd read the article… and I sort of wrote down some words, that when I read it and turned it over and put it down, were things that stuck in my head... um, ways of describing things which I thought were either unusual or specific to academic writing that didn't necessarily make sense, but it just stuck in my head, so I thought I'd write those down. Then I had some other things coming off it, peripheral things which sort of related to the main subject which was this complex piece of writing on Nietszche's work.

JM: So did anybody else find it difficult... or nothing happened? Did you all otherwise get something?

CH How did you find it? I can see red…

RS: Yes, people mentioned having this sort of resistance, I think that's what it was, cos it was stronger in my stomach area. But I also think that's cos I am hungry! It did grumble... but anyway, there's that, and a sense that if I put in colour… so I put the colours down because red's associated with that kind of thing, and also *heat* … but in the heart, strangely enough, it was … green, a green feeling, which is like spring, you know something new, and something growing, that sort of feeling? So I used green to express that, and it wasn't unpleasant.

JM: And what was the text you read? It was about art?

RS: It's a Chinese translation of, well I'll read you the title: 'the great image has no form or on the non-object through painting'. But, then I felt a little bit bad because I just kind of randomly opened the page and I thought, I'm just going to use that. Actually, it's kind of... this thing is my thing! I've chosen something that is my area, has been. And I didn't chose something that is like... uncomfortable. And I think perhaps it would have been better for this if I'd grabbed one of the things that I was unfamiliar with, and that would have been more true, honest, to your experiment perhaps, I don't know.

JM: Well, I think it is interesting that the heart is full of green springs

RS: Well, and then the head bit was the cool bit, it's all blues... it wasn't… many people have many thoughts, but I felt some disconnect, I have more feelings than thoughts… I just thought it was rather interesting, and what it relates to the work is, the book talks about, the book talks about finding the origin of things before they take form. So trying to think how that relates to what I was feeling. Like, going back to the pre-beginning of all things, you know, and I was trying to fight trying to intellectualise, conceptualise that, I think … so hence this sort of confused disarray going on inside the body, perhaps.

JM: Do you have anything about the process that you want to share, RB?

RB: Yes, but it was boiling down to… I'm getting nothing, but then I realised that it was a deliberate sort of nothing, because actually I didn't want to annotate the picture of the little figure, because the feeling I had, I realised, when I held the abstract up and read it in my right hand and read it, my left hand went to my throat and my kind of breast plate, and I realised I was defending myself against it, and I thought, I don't want to take this in. So because I'm not really an academic, I'm not primarily an academic, I started to have a really happy relationship with the figure [laughter], and I got much more interested, and I realised I'd left it unannotated, because the message coming through from this and my feeling was, 'keep your own clarity'. Keep your own clarity. Not ignorance, but keep your clarity, and be as transparent as you can, and don't get so exasperated and frustrated because this doesn't feel real or doesn't feel true, or in some fundamental way it is offensive to my way of being! And all I could do was draw his foot, very slightly, tapping. So the irritation was there, but the message was that it is unannotated because you must keep your own clarity, and keep asking in your way of being for more transparency, and be un-deluged by other people's manipulation or even just their data. You know I've started a new job recently, and I realise I'm actually being trained to panic to other people's priorities [laughter]. It's absolutely true! And once I've sufficiently taken on and I panic appropriately to what their priorities are, I'll be a fully functioning worker! And I don't get it and I don't like it, but I have to do it and I need a day job and I'm doing it. But this is very important to me, and I started to really like this figure, and I started to think about the rock paintings of star men that were painted on the rocks in south America in the Toomash[?] Indians, and they knew an awful lot about what really counted... and I like the breadth of his body – or her – and the width and clarity, and the fact that he's quite stable and trunky and yet completely transparent, and I kept thinking of star men and what those people really knew... and I kept thinking, what is real and what is true hmm [indicating abstract] or hmm [indicating drawing] [to general laughter] and it just kind of side by side all my attention is constantly going to this rather aboriginal *err err* figure [ur?] and what it actually means… existence, consciousness, these are the things that attract me … and I felt a kind of pleasure that I didn't have to read the abstract again if I didn't want to, but I *could* spend my life thinking like that, and that felt valuable to me. So the answer is sort of nothing, but a deliberate sort of nothing.

MB: Strange actually, I felt exactly the same thing when I saw that image, and it was nothing really to do with this. It was an aide to the experiment and yet that took away most of my focal point, rather than what I was reading here. I thought of the figure on the hillside with the rather phallic er symbol … I don’t know what it’s called [someone: ‘Ceren Abbas’], yes yes, that one and also the Lauscaux cave paintings where they are hunting the bison running round France at the time… yeah, those sort of, they are often elongated or that sort of a picture, yeah, came to my mind as well.

JM: I was thinking now, I should maybe have painted them on the wall [???]. Um, what did people think of the technique? Cos I really like Gendlin, and I find his writing very easy and likeable, and I find his techniques fascinating, and I find his philosophical underpinnings of his technique very useful for me writing, but having tried to distil the technique into something that works in a workshop context, I was a bit like ‘well, is this actually gonna work, is it too complicated, does it throw any light on the subject that I am trying to throw light on? So, I guess, what do you think of the technique, good, bad, indifferent?

LD: I think for me it’s… I struggle with academic writing, but I know I’ve got to do it, know I’ve got to read it, for my PhD, and I’d not thought about doing this. Cos being dyslexic as well, its… I struggle with texts generally, so books, texts, and then when it steps up a gear I’ll even more struggle. So I’ve not thought about that because I live in my head with it, and I go off and do my job, and I live probably in my body, so that technique has made me think about texts in a different way, how to engage with them and also in what I discover about them, how to write

RS: May I borrow this idea for making art?

JM: Yes! I’m sure Gendlin wouldn’t mind... I’ll give permission on his behalf… no, do you have an idea about how that would work or...

RS: Well it’s exactly this particular area that you know I’ve been having a block with. And just trying to read it always, just read it, it just stays up here? And suddenly by doing this, I mean it’s still... it’s challenging cos you think, oh [] feel something but the fact that it’s challenging, and then while discussing it with everyone else, I am beginning to see, ‘oh it meant *that’* so it opens up a different way… but it definitely did connect me to this... by a different route… so I thought, if I also make my art as part of this as well, using this process, see what happens.

JM: Well I hope we all get invited to the private view!

RS: Definitely you'll get credit and everything!

JM: That's good! Any other thoughts about the technique?

JO: It's really connected me to my authentic experiences. I haven't thought of a way forward, artistically, intellectually or whatever, but I certainly feel like, yes, these are my issues very very clearly laid out… I'm not doing anything, any form of intellectual study at the moment, and I'm pleased about that. And I'm very inspired by you two [RB, RS], who allowed yourself to be distracted, I felt I was going by the rules… and that's part of the trap I guess. So it's been very helpful.

RS: I have a question. Wouldn't this also be applicable for for, like not just for study but anything. Like if you encountered some relationship problem, or you have something or whatever, in your daily life, and then you just think ok I'm not going to think about it, I'm not going to be angry about it, I'm just going to see what's going on in my stomach, what's going on in my heart.

JM: Yes that was the rationale for the technique … Gendlin's rationale for the technique, cos he trained as a philosopher, a phenomenological philosopher, and he then went into psychoanalysis, but not the *evil* sort of psychoanalysis, [laughter] a psychoanalysis that enabled him to develop this technique, and it was specifically designed as a therapeutic technique which allowed… I mean he found that people were getting blocked by trying to over-intellectualise their problems and think it through and not actually make any real change. So, he found that if he encouraged his clients to actually look at what was going on for them in quite a non-wordy way, then he felt it facilitated change. So that is the context it comes from. but obviously in the context… you are given a whole lot more time to use it, so

I’ve had to condense some of the basic ideas and try and apply them to an area that it wasn’t specifically written for, so, yeah… Any other thoughts about technique or anything?

JM: Well I will be sending out questionnaires, so any thoughts that haven’t come to you already I’d be really pleased if you could share them…

A4.3 Session three transcripts samples

Note: ordered by participant responses.

PARTICIPANT: ZM

Extract: Chatburn and Lucas (2013) *A brief history of whistling*, Five Leaves Publications, p. 150.

Exercise 1: notes, jottings etc. after 'reading' of envelope

- Bridges
- Journeys
- Leaving / arriving
- In transit
- A centre with paths moving in different directions – a spider mandala – a web – web of life
- A high vantage point – seeing in all directions – an overview
- A landscape / a sky scrape
- A quest – the hero/ines journey
- A labyrinth – to the centre – to the heart
- A central argument with many facets
- A standing stone made of rose quartz in the centre of a stone circle – glowing in the sun – a child kissing the rose quartz and inviting friends to form a circle around it and dance in an anti-clockwise direction.

Exercise 2: answers to questions

Question	**Response**
What is the piece of writing about? (subject, narrative etc.)	Journeys – journey to the centre of one's self – the heart – and metaphors for journeys – individuation.
What tone does the writing have? (nuance, 'voice' etc.)	Personal, transpersonal, therapeutic.
What theories inform the work (if any)?	Jung, Alder, Sheridan, Frankl.
How do you imagine the writer of this piece? What are/were they like as a person? Is there one author or more than one?	The author is female, a lecturer in transpersonal therapy and is esoterically minded – in her late 60s.

Who is the intended audience of this piece?	Anyone with an interest in self-development but written in a semi-academic style.
Is there anything else you want to say about this piece of writing?	It is part of a workbook – with experiential exercises.

PARTICIPANT: MD

Extract: Schreber (1903) *Memoirs of my Nervous Illness*, New York, Review Books. P. 150.

Exercise 1: notes, jottings etc. after 'reading' of envelope

Participant made a drawing

Exercise 2: answers to questions

Question	**Response**
What is the piece of writing about? (subject, narrative etc.)	It's about a journey. Just I saw a postbox – then a landscape (Japanese). Then the image of a bee moving from flower to flower. Then a curving - river? Path boxes or steps and a gateway into a garden with a formal shape.
What tone does the writing have? (nuance, 'voice' etc.)	Lyrical.
What theories inform the work (if any)?	I don't know.
How do you imagine the writer of this piece? What are/were they like as a person? Is there one author or more than one?	I imagined a man but I wasn't sure if he was the writer or a character.
Who is the intended audience of this piece?	I don't know – other than me.
Is there anything else you want to say about this piece of writing?	

PARTICIPANT CA

Extract: Dolar (2006) *A Voice and Nothing More*, MIT Press, p. 150

Exercise 1: notes, jottings etc. after 'reading' of envelope

- Panic about not being able to do it!
- Colours – red and blue
- Scientific text – feel it's difficult to understand in some way - [??] / memory of that biology text I had last time (memory kicking in to "help"?)
- Blue keeps coming up, it feels cold
- Welcome mat (NOTE – This text was one I selected for a workshop I ran at the Wellcome institute!)
- Oregano
- The purpose of insects
- "Rumour has it"
- Michaelangelo

Exercise 2: answers to questions

Question	**Response**
What is the piece of writing about? (subject, narrative etc.)	Scientific? Biology, animals, insects. There's also something about art? (Michaelangelo??) - maybe describes a picture of some sort?
What tone does the writing have? (nuance, 'voice' etc.)	Matter of fact, explanatory, cold, hard, dry.
What theories inform the work (if any)?	"scientific".
How do you imagine the writer of this piece? What are/were they like as a person? Is there one author or more than one?	Female, serious minded, trying to prove a point – may be some collaborators.
Who is the intended audience of this piece?	Academics, fellow scientists? Author not really concerned about the audience.
Is there anything else you want to say about this piece of writing?	I think this is much more about my personal projection than the actual piece of writing! Which is interesting because I don't see myself as 'scientific'. Or perhaps I'm

	projecting “other” onto it… what I am not.

PRLB

A4.4 **Session Four Transcripts samples**

A4.4.a Abstracts, selected images, questions for image

ABSTRACT 2 / IMAGE 2

Prendergast, M. (2014) "Misperformance Ethnography" Applied Theatre Research, 2:1, 77-90

Ambiguous words or phrases

Of some kind
Notions
Those concepts

Sentences

- The porcupines of some kind had inflated notions of grandeur and corrupted these concepts to meet their own spiky ends
- The notions of the priest were laid onto a table of these concepts – each neatly packed and utensils ready to consume, using different utensils of some kind or other.
- These concepts were like balloons, each of their own colour and size, floating in a sea of notions and landing upon islands of words of some kind.

Questions

What is the symbolic content of the image (how do you 'read' it? Does this relate to the abstract)?	Earth, space, common[unclear], connections between things.
Does the image tell a story? Does this relate to the abstract?	How the world began, evolution, creativity.
What is the 'feel' or emotional colour of the image? Does this relate to the abstract?	Blue, space, intensity, vibrancy.
Any other comments about the abstract, image and their relationship (if any?)	Words as communication, language, performance.

ABSTRACT 4 / IMAGE 4

O'Donnell, C. O. (2016) "Reading Allan Marquand's "On Scientific Method in the Study of Art" European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy, 8:2, 275-

Ambiguous words or phrases

Subsequent
Marquand's
Sources

Sentences

- **My sources clearly confirmed Marquand's subsequent attempts**
- Marquand's sources indicated there won't be any subsequent investigations
- I looked at Marquand's papers and I couldn't find any subsequent reasons to deny his sources

Questions

What is the symbolic content of the image (how do you 'read' it? Does this relate to the abstract)?	Flowers, work (bees), industry, nature, computer. Linked to abstract through science and art (computer and nature).
Does the image tell a story? Does this relate to the abstract?	Marquand (is a bee) who is repollinating the planet with his bee [?}. Yes, it relates to the abstract.
What is the 'feel' or emotional colour of the image? Does this relate to the abstract?	Yes, emotional connection, uplifting, happy connection to nature.
Any other comments about the abstract, image and their relationship (if any?)	Coincidence with title of abstract and general idea in the collage. (science + art / computer + nature).

A4.4.b Transcript of final discussion

JM: Did / has anyone got any thoughts about the process? The experience?

CA: It was really enjoyable and revelatory.

ZM: There were links, weren't there? I think specially your…

OE: (unclear)

ZM: That one you could kind of… related the most.

OE: It was interesting, if the… one of the key ideas of the abstract came in as an ambiguous word and then that was expressed in the collage... you could beautifully see the link between the three... for instance, in this one it was about wellness, wellness came in the words, and the collage expresses the feeling of wellness, so there was a definite link. But in your collage [? who?] unless clearly ambiguous word… it was a name actually... which then the name turned into a personal sort of a short story and that was expressed in this collage, so the relation between the abstract and the collage was completely lost. The more ambiguous, the better it seems to keep it as a core idea.

CA: Yeah, there were different approaches as well, because my approach was to pick out the four key words from a sentence and find pictures to represent them.

ZM: it was more based on… well more character, cos it was about this character of this woman you know what she was like… she was a visionary, she was a [unclear] her company was 'Ambient Technology'... she was very, very analytical … living in her head

PR: So that's the one that refers to the abstract [unclear]

LB: [unclear] my abstract

ZM: Yes, your abstract, so it was about that woman... you turned her into a woman didn't you. You took her abstract and you created a character out of that…

LB: Yes, I had three words [?] thought, I have no idea what to do with these, so, you know… and the hyphenated one became [unclear]

ZM: Yeah, she is… it's quite uncanny cos she looks actually quite similar… all the pictures that I found that were completely not her in different magazines [unclear] all looked a bit the same, like … so I have this very strong image now of this woman.

LB: it's interesting, Eduard, what you say about the idea of [name?] takes you maybe further away from what the abstract was... we found something in contrast to that where we had a name of 'Marquand' M.A.R.Q.U.A.N.D, and I turned Marquand into a bee, so this is Marquand [shows collage]. And so, sources confirm that Marquand's attempts were you know, sort of working. So Marquand the bee was actually going out repollinating the planet. And him and his little bee friends was bringing the world back to life. And the abstract actually was actually about science and art. So if you look at [sources?] as being the computer at the top, and lots of different sources going in, collecting data, and then we've got nature being the outcome of Marquand's quest to repollinate the world, so you've got science and nature which did relate to the theme of the abstract.

ZM: So you did that one?

LB: I did the collage, yes.

OE: You hadn't read the abstract?

LB: I hadn't read the abstract so this was, basically your sentence, wasn't it…

OE: [unclear] proves my observation.

ZM: did you do this one? So what was the abstract?

LB: It was very dry and I didn't understand it, it was about economics… it was interesting because I read that collage completely differently [?] I'd done, so I was feeling positive about the planet and I was kind of seeing that woman down [?] as being quite contemplative… actually when I looked at the sentence it was about climate change... kind of questioning validity, I saw everything completely differently… so the fish died. I saw the people in the rice field as collecting harvest before, when I read the sentence everything changed. Kind of like the abstract really, I felt dead. And if you think about economics there was no kind of links to nature, or anything like that, and … making tenuous links here, but I felt that there was a link in terms of how that image changed for me…

JM: What about the aspect of the process which involved finding the ambiguity. Was that difficult, or? Did you find the text ambiguous or quite straightforward?

CA: I didn't find it ambiguous, but I found the structure of the sentences difficult to interpret

ZM: Well it's not clear is it. Not simple.

OE: The abstract is obviously designed to be not the []. It tries to make things clear, however, if you … close reading, sometimes there are things which are confusing, they could mean different things, and all … I realise I had an image arising, which was not really related to the abstract. I mean it was something more [?] coming up than the abstract was trying to do, so I thought that is the ambiguity.

LB: I was looking at an abstract which had nothing to do with anything that I was [] so there was nothing there that I could feel connected to, and I don't know then whether the ambiguity that I picked up was as a result of me not understanding. So for me, it wasn't necessarily that things were ambiguous, it was just that if I were in a particular discourse and I understood what … [] would there be ambiguity? It was ambiguous because I didn't really understand the context in which they were being used, so for me that was where the ambiguity arose.

ZM: For me the ambiguity was like, broad concepts, words which weren't being defined.

JM: Kind of almost the same thing that LB mentioned?

ZM: Not so much that – they were quite straightforward words, but they could still be interpreted… [unclear]

LB: [initial part unclear] I was actually in that discipline I would understand what particular things meant and I would be able… because I was trying to make the link... if I understood what that *meant* then things would be made clear to me… or would I be *assuming* those links? I don't know. I got myself into a whole kind of whirl around how I was interpreting the text anyway.

A4.5 Session five transcripts samples

A.4.5.a Section 1: Answers to the worksheet / exercises.

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS, CLASSMARKS AND BOOKS

Note: the following lists code (R1, R2 etc.) for participant, and the classmark assigned to each.

R1: LB. 373.2220942 (Po). No named book ('something about private schools)

R2: MB. 745.409 (Mu). The Genius of Destiny (745.409 GEN) (closest to the classmark as classmark was absent). (2 compact disks in a box).

R3: JO. 780.92 (Po) Francis Poulenc by Benjamin Ivry

R4: ZM. 305.3 (Ta) Power and Empowerment (author?)

R5: PR 613.047 (br) Health in Old Age

R6: SX. 362.2094206 (M) Severe Hearing Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour

WORKSHEET TRANSCRIPT samples BY QUESTION

Worksheet Q1 Instruction. *Make the journey to the book, journal or other item indicated by your classmark (top of page). If no exact match, pick one physically close by. As you get to the item indicated by the classmark, be aware of the experiences of all your senses.*

Q1. Make notes about the experience of getting to the item. What senses were engaged? What did you notice?

R3: Very clear signposting.
Aware of counting down to my item – to delay gratification / disappointment?
My item not [exacting]? There – ‘pou’ 4.05 pia, not Po are nearest – DVD Pia, Book Pou.
Visually as I got close, I noticed the stripes of books and of the shelving, their visual patterns.
There was a clicking noise – a clock? No, a faulty light clicking on and off close by.
In general, the lighting feels dull though quite adequate to read. Fluorescent? I don’t like fluorescent! I hear the sound of someone typing on a keyboard, and the hum of the aircon system, pages being turned.

R5: Before going upstairs where the shelves are I went to the toilet because I felt I may need it and didn’t want to be interrupted later on. I’m familiar with the classmark system and I was disappointed at first as I could see this number is not in the section I usually visit. I went to the 3rd floor. I was expectant about what I might find. I was a bit disappointed when I saw “Economics” on the shelf, and then relieved and excited when I saw “physical health” in the shelf I needed to search I could feel these feelings in my chest. I found a book with the closest classmark to the one above, as that exact one didn’t exist. I felt excited because the book had a title I might be interested in: “health in old age”. I found a quiet place in the library, next to the window, with no one around. I’ve never been here, and I think this is a pleasant space. It's maybe too warm, and writing on this table is uncomfortable, but at the moment I'm going to stay. I can't help reading the subtitle "myth, mystery and management", what a coincidence! That's me! Am excited, can feel it in my eyes.

***Worksheet Q2 Instruction**. Take the book / other item indicated by your classmark to a nearby quiet place. Start to explore the book with senses other than sight. Take your time, both to explore and to write down. If you remember the Focusing technique we used in an earlier session, this might be useful. Start with TOUCH.*

Q2. Make notes about the experience of touching the item. What does it feel like? (take time to go into the experience, wait for it to open up).

R1: The book feels heavy. It has a soft, velvety feel on the book jacket and the paper inside feels soft.

R2: The two compact discs are held inside a plastic box with sharp, rough edges. The box is a little grimy and made me think it might be dirty. It had very sharp corners which could cause an injury if opened quickly. It was brittle and should easily snap if pressured. There was no particular odour. As it was dirty I was not going to taste it. It made no sound unless I opened or closed it.

***Worksheet Q3 Instruction**. Next hearing. What can you hear about you (near, further away)? How does the item behave when you handle it – any noises? Explore HEARING carefully.*

Q3. Make notes about the experience of hearing the item and using listening.

R5: I flick through the pages. The sound is light, I think this may be light / easy reading. I tap on the cover, the sound is strong, this may mean it's important. It seems I want to translate perceptions into thoughts right away. I can hear birds in the distance, and the sounds of cars.

R6: Notes on hearing the item made in part 2 above. I also hear others turning pages, undoing a drink bottle and the click of laptop keys nearby. Someone is sniffing, possibly from a cold. Bags being searched. Outside there is a dulled traffic hum beyond double-glazed windows. The sound of my pen tapping on the table through the paper comes to my attention. In the background, furniture is being moved. The girl next to me is having a telephone conversation now on her laptop and showing the other person how lovely the weather is here today with her laptop camera. The friend is in Norfolk and it is spring-like there too. As I am observing sounds and as the conversation is quite loud it is not possible to ignore it. Because of the exercise I am doing this conversation is much more interesting than irritating. Another person working in the area has begun to turn her pages more loudly. The conversation ends and I can hear the whirring and clunking of a photocopier.

Worksheet Q4 Instruction*. Next TASTE and SMELL. What can you smell around you? How does the book smell? Can you taste anything? Explore TASTE and SMELL carefully.*

Q4. Make notes about the experience of smelling the item and its environment, and any experiences of taste.

R3: The book smells strongly of the paper dressing and inks used probably. I regret not having a very good sense of taste and smell. A clean smell, not one of people who have have cumulatively used the book as it hasn't been handled much. Fanning the book tickles my nostrils with a sneeze. The smell and taste of the environment is of a very low level, I can't pinpoint it / describe it, but it doesn't feel unpleasant, just neutral.

R4: I can taste the peppermint tea merging with the chocolate brownie inside of me. The book smells new, slightly chemical – I can almost imagine that I can smell the ink. The book tastes dry and earthy. There is a slightly bitter depth to its taste. It feels both rough and smooth – smooth on the outside but rough on the inside.

Worksheet Q5 Instruction *What about OTHER senses (e.g. a '6th' sense / intuition etc.) Explore the experience of being with the book, journal etc. using OTHER senses (if appropriate)*

Q5. Make notes about the experience of using other senses to explore the object and its environment.

R1: Maybe because I am very tired, I can't seem to engage well with the book I chose. I feel sorry for the book in this regard as I sense it has a great deal to say, and to offer me, but I just can't connect with it. I feel disappointed that more couldn't come out of our meeting.

R6: It is difficult to avoid reading the book, the subtitle of which is 'Designing high quality services'. I feel it may be quite technical and unhelpful, but my prejudice is negated when I randomly open page 235 to find halfway down the page the paragraph 'Providing helpful environments'. "one of the tasks facing services, then, it's to provide a helpful or supportive environment which will reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviour. Rather it will act as a kind of prosthesis" (Lindley, 1964). In the same way that a wheelchair can promote mobility … a helpful environment can encourage adaptive rather than challenging behaviour" (Emerson, McGill and Mansell, 1994, p. 235).

Worksheet Q6 Instruction. *Finally, use SIGHT to explore the item. First look at the book, journal etc. as you might an art object or a natural object. consider its aesthetic qualities. Use sight in the widest sense. Then, READ some of the book/journal etc.*

Q6. Make notes about the experience of using sight to explore the object and its environment, and then reading it.

R2: Very boring and bland looking. The cover reminded me of my early days as a teacher when I was teaching ICT alongside English. It was produced using that early form of ‘clip art’ that came with Windows 95 and similar systems. The content of the film was probably much better the cover did not do it justice as it could have been produced by a 10-year-old with average computer skills.

R3: The book cover is filled with a photo of the composer Poulenc – close up with a bright orange tab which colour is repeated in the fold out covers and in the first page of every chapter – visually stunning. There are many photographs within the book, plus drawings and artwork reproductions. The font size is small, which I find off-putting. My table has computer screens and keyboards on it with space for papers/writing. The sun is shining on the table and floor, dappled through the large glass windows. I feel comfortable here, but it feels too soon to relax into reading the book, which I’m finding hard to do. Actually, this book is interesting – an easy to read biography with a nice turn of phrase e.g. Poulac was born “in Paris’s frigidly wealthy eighth arondissement”.

TRANSCRIPT OF DISCUSSION AT END OF SESSION

(some discussion of where it’s best to sit: we are in the library)

JM: … Guess be aware of public space... have to be sensitive to that…

JM: Just a brief discussion about everyone’s experience, what it was like... shed any light on reading, or not… all welcome… interesting... anybody?

ZM? I was surprised how many different smells there are, which I’ve never noticed before [unclear]... very aware of the different smells.

[Some discussion, unclear, of the smells]

JO: I’ve got a really poor sense of smell and taste, so I was kind of aware that there was something in the environment, but I felt really... that I was missing out... but I was amazed by the *sounds* that there were.

ZM: Lots of sounds.

??: Yes, lots of sounds.

??: …noticed that, even within all the sounds it felt like there was a silence… [mumbled]

JO: I thought there was the constant hum of the aircon... but that felt very holding. But to start with, it felt silent, then it got very populated with ...

MB: The more you listen to it, the more sounds you detect, don’t you?

JO: Yeh!

MB: I did the same thing, I felt… like you said, [quiet], I can't hear much apart from the odd student whispering, and then you notice the air conditioning, then you notice the footsteps, then you notice the clicking of the ring binders and things like that, and then I started noticing the traffic outside and the ping from this lift … those are things that you wouldn't normally tune in to...

YW: I had a girl next to me who took a telephone call, and I heard her whole conversation. She was using her camera to show the people how nice the weather was here. It didn't annoy me so much because I was recording the sounds, but the person the other side was I think quite irritated by it, and I would have been, if I was studying. It was a very interesting conversation…

JM: Did you find any of the stuff that you were taking in in different senses harder to articulate? I was thinking that smells… unless you can relate then to something that it clearly smells of, then it's not necessarily as easy to articulate as sounds might be.

YW? You have to guess, really, what they are. The book had a certain smell, and I thought it was the paper and the ink... [unclear]

ZM? I separated some of the senses … [unclear] … kind of together, like… [Some discussion about where we are sitting, ZM has the sun in her eyes]

ZM: It feels like different feelings came in with the smells, and um, colours.

JM: So that's like a kind of, what do they call it…

ZM: Not so much [..] but more like dark and light, whatever [unclear] so like for different smells I got sort of different tastes… very light, very dark. Yes, so in fact it was a bit confusing [unclear] piling on top of each other…

JM: Too much?

ZM: Yes. Could focus solely on one sense.

JM: So that actually sounds like it was slightly negative experience in a way?

ZM: Just a bit slightly overwhelming. I think I normally try and block things out as it's too overwhelming, but when I'm consciously focusing on it for the exercise it makes me realise how much it overwhelms me.

JM: And you've managed to come out of that now, or?

ZM: It was tiring… it kind of made me feel quite exhausted.

JM: Did anyone else find it negative in any way, or difficult?

JO: I was aware that, right up until the very very end, um, there was a part of me that wasn't settled, so I was being a bit distracted, not to the extent that you are describing, but I was a bit distracted, so when it came to read some of this book, it was like – 'I can't read this book, I can't do it'. But somehow or other I got passed it, and I loved the book! But it was very hard, and it took an hour, or however long. So my thought was, actually this is what I'm ignoring, this need to settle, this calming, this getting it right, whatever, however [unclear] in blocking it out, it doesn't necessarily help.

[mumbled agreement]

ZM: Yes, I find it very difficult to block it out… I wanted to read the book but I couldn't take it in, couldn't take the words in… [unclear]

YW: I found it difficult not to read the book.

JM: So you found it hard to focus on anything other than reading the book?

YW: Well, no. The whole exercise... I suppose being in a library and as I observed in the beginning the whole exercise was different to what I usually do in there. It's usually a – well it used to be, when I was doing the MA – trying to get to books as quickly as possible to find the ones I want, very urgent, and this was quite relaxed, but to do the other exercises rather than reading the book… [unclear] trying to stop myself reading was an effort… because that's what we do with books. And I actually started reading it before I got to the last bit... writing quotes! So I was… I found I was doing all the exercises before they came up, moving to the next one naturally.

JM: Does anybody, has anybody had any experiences that we've not touched upon so far?

LB: I think I'd just like to say about [unclear] the experience a little discomforting. I was quite happy going up to the [unclear] to find [unclear]. Things I wasn't normally used to doing. And I tried to allow it, the touch, the feeling, the senses, speak to me, but I'm not sure I did. I felt like the book had a lot to say to me, to my senses, but actually I wasn't able to see whatever the book wanted to say in terms of touch and smell and feel [unclear] and I feel quite disappointed actually that that book had something to give me and I don't feel that I welcomed it enough, or was able to give it enough of myself.

JM: I suppose you have to be quite settled to be able to be aware of other things... [unclear] I can relate to what ZM is saying about finding things overwhelming, because I find being distracted by things that inverted commas aren't relevant is a real problem when studying or doing anything. So… you know, maybe there's a good reason why you take in what you take in

LB: Yeah. I think it gave me a deep awareness of how much I'm in my head, and how much [???] my sight. And then when I'm asked to do something different, I feel overwhelmed a bit.

ZM: I feel the opposite… I enjoyed all the sensory stuff, I could have just stayed in that, but when it came to opening the book and trying to read the words, that's when it all fell apart for me, it was like I was enjoying the smelling and the tasting and things… [unclear] it was just these words [unclear]. That might be the dyslexia.

JO: When I've been doing my studies, and academic reading and whatever, I've always done it in an extremely exhausted state, I have insomnia, and so I was interested that I didn't get into that kind of panicky place – oh my god, a book, I'm expected to... expectations… a bit like you, I could actually just relax into the sense and just allow the book – if I ever did open it – and just taking my time. I didn't feel exhausted at all… by being aware of the difficulties of settling I [??] that by sort of working with it… it kind of got me eventually to the place that [???]. [?] the book in a much more positive way than … always been a battle for me. So… [unclear]. But this urgency that you [C] mentioned [unclear] just finding and… and then…

YW: The weight of carrying it. but I thought… I've tended to approach books in an intuitive way, on the M.A., because the M.A. led itself to that. Because I [???] so expansive books, it was a method for me to select what to read. And strangely I opened this book, which was... [unclear] the impression I was getting from the book was… scanning it... was kind of quite technical. I didn't... and it was about severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviours and I opened it randomly at a page, then after that I went through the structure, there were things about costs and benefits... placements... different chapters, and I feel that the quote I took from it was probably the core truth from the book. Can I read it? It said "one of the tasks facing services, then was to provide the help and supportive environment which will reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviour. This will not of course cure challenging behaviour, rather it will act as a kind of prosthesis, in the same way as a wheelchair can promote mobility" then I skipped a bit "a helpful environment can encourage adaptive rather than challenging behaviour" and I just feel that that was what the whole book was about [unclear] interesting. Just turned to that page.

ZM: [unclear] …what facilitates the reading and what distracts from it… [unclear]

JM: AR [unclear] any results you want to share?

MB: I just found that I was primarily... out of the senses I was using my sight and I suppose to a degree touch... more than the others, I don't think I used smell much. Those... there's a bookshop smell you get when you go into a second hand bookstore, but it's not so prevalent in the library, probably because it's got air-conditioning, and the fact that the books are newer... and stuff like that. But um, I didn't use taste at all, and my particular book, the cover was kind of a bit grimy anyway, it was a CD cover, so I decided not to taste it [general laughter] but the... I found that there was a kind of [unclear] it was yes, I went to this book, which didn't exist, so I chose the book next to it, and that was this cd thing, which was on architecture and how its impacting on modern day life, which is probably very interesting, but there were 2 books underneath which strangely enough didn't seem to be in the right section. One was on Albrecht Durer's paintings and drawings, which I'm interested in, and another one was on the Coptic Christians, which is another area of interest, so I thought, umm. Perhaps I was destined to come to this rubbish book, to get these two underneath! So I took those two with me and went off to a quiet area, so when I've finished this I'll have a good look through these Coptic remains and these wonderful drawings. But yes, that was something which was probably a coincidence rather than a synchronicity. Um, and then I thought that the actual book that I had in front of me, it was bland in its design, so much so that it was as if it had been designed to be purposely bland. And that didn't really go with the topic, because the topic was architecture and how it was purposeful in life, and I thought, well how can you produce something… that was the whole paradox because the content was supposed to be about producers of designs, and yet the cover was the most bland design that I could find at all... It was that kind of like Windows 95 clip art cover that a 10 year old could have put on there… It didn't do the content any justice at all. Um, which is ironic really, considering what the content was, um, but er, yeah. I found the exercise useful, and doing things that I wouldn't normally have done in a library like listening to the sounds and then picking up other sounds, and the more I listened to them the more I found that there were other sounds behind them… and normally your brain would sort of tune them out and it would just home in on the odd conversation, or someone closing a door near you, but suddenly hear the traffic outside, or birds going past… and that's something I didn't really think that I would hear in the library... which was a [unclear]

JM: Did anyone... two questions. Did anyone use taste at all? And did anyone have a sixth sense, or another sense not covered by sight sound touch taste… the other one.

ZM: [unclear]

JM: How did you use taste?

ZM: [unclear] yes, quite bitter, slightly bitter, inside very dry, outside was silky. Slightly plastically. But it was interesting what you said about the smells of the books as well, because I felt like I could smell the ink more… whereas if you got to antique bookshops, it’s the paper that you can smell, the decaying paper has this very strong smell. But yes, it felt like the ink was … quite a chemically smell.

YW: [unclear]

ZM: I was very aware of the textures, like the textures of the … the different kinds of paper, like the cover, the laminated [unclear] and then the green thing, and that … the different qualities than the white paper [unclear] so yeah, but I could take things inside, not just the book.

Laura: I licked a little bit. [laughter] I did not think that anybody [unclear, laughter]. All I can say is that this [??] becomes stronger… you know, when you [??] the tip of it…

ZM: Absolutely! The taste becomes stronger. I noticed that. Yeah, the smell and the taste… if you wet something it smells stronger than if you taste it when it’s dry… I know it sounds gross but [laughter]

YW: Did you [unclear] the CCTV cameras?

Laura: I was facing a window

[laughter]

JM: Has anybody got any final thoughts, final thoughts?

ZM: You said about the sixth sense… well I did [unclear] I felt a lot of feeling coming from the book like it was talking to me a bit like [unclear] experience of these books, they were calling me and they were relevant... I didn't find the actual [unclear] book, but the closest thing to it... and I felt like the title was actually… the title was calling me. And the [unclear] of the book, it felt a very friendly book, it wanted me to look at it [unclear]. And I was interested in the overall sort of topic, which was about empowerment and it was all about discrimination and equality [unclear] so I was drawn to the subject... but I found it very difficult to keep focusing on the words … the book itself friendly, I felt that was more of an emotional connection.

JO: I got angry, well angry is a bit strong, on behalf of my book, because it felt very neglected. Because it's not been taken out for almost 10 years. And it's been very unread, and its spine isn't broken and its edges are all still precise, and I just felt like, you've been so neglected…

JM: What was the book?

JO: It was a biography of the composer Francois Puvant. And I was like – isn't anyone interested? And when I did eventually get around to reading it, I thought, this is really interesting. I mean, my little quote, that I've quoted – where did I write it? Yeah, nice turn of phrase. It said, early life, that he was born "in Paris's frigidly wealthy eighth arondissement" I liked that, it's nice, I'm interested. [unclear]

JM: Maybe he needs a new biography. Maybe you are the person to write it?

[unclear]

ZM: Overwhelming, books. I mean there's so many of them. It's like, how do you decide what to read? Very overwhelming. Even with this little book I felt like I couldn't give it justice in such a short time, I could only get a fleeting glimpse of its contents.

JM: I used to get that a lot… so I relate to that sense of overwhelm.

JM: OK…

A4.6 Session six transcript samples (character sheets)

CHARACTER ONE

1. What is the character's name? Kurt	**12. What was their biggest character flaw?** Vanity & thinking he can have his cake and eat it.
2. When were they born? 1970s	**13. What did their friends most like about them?** Host the best parties: legendary
3. Where do they live? Small village in Austria.	**14. What is their most important achievement?** The yearly 'gold' retreat for women only.
4. What do they look like (physical appearance)? Blond, blue eyes, big tall and stocky, handsome though [worn?] off by life.	**16. What are their politics?** No politics. They spoil the fun. He's independent.
5. How do they dress? Vintage 70s and 80s clothes. Miami vice-style suits. Sunglasses. Smart & colourful.	**17. What is their main way of relating to other people?** Always on a "charm offensive". Spreading the love to everyone.
7. What type of house / dwelling do they live in? Typical Austrian Tyrol chalet.	**18. What is their favourite recreation?** Masturbation and trimming his nasal hairs.
8. What is their main occupation (they will be connected with study or academia) Runs retreats for exhausted academics.	**19. Who are the most important people in their lives (max 3)?** 1. 'Else' his housekeeper 2. 'Herr Autuste', his lawyer 3. 'Maria' his muse
9. What is their main internal passion? Enjoying the basics of life: food and sex.	**20. Why are these people important?** They keep up his libido and bank account.
10. What is the main theory by which they live? Pleasing the senses is a key to a happy life.	**21. What are the key events in their life?** When his younger brother drowned in a lake when Kurt was 10. When his wife ran off with another man 1

	year after their wedding.
11. What situations recur most frequently in their life? Attracting old ladies in supermarkets who think he is a ‘lovely young man’.	**22. What object / item best symbolises this person?** His chunky gold necklace and signet ring.

One sentence summary of the person described above. You don’t have to mention all the traits and can rely upon traits not mentioned. Sum them up symbolically and otherwise:

Kurt is a highly egotistical hedonist & fortunately time has not run out for him – yet!

CHARACTER TWO

1. What is the character’s name? Douglas	**12. What was their biggest character flaw?** A tendency to tell lies.
2. When were they born? 1955	**13. What did their friends most like about them?** His wonderful chicken curry (home-made).
3. Where do they live? Edinburgh	**14. What is their most important achievement?** Learning to play the bagpipes.
4. What do they look like (physical appearance)? Red hair. Sprouts from nose, ears, chin, chest, everywhere but head.	**16. What are their politics?** Devout socialist with strong ecological perspective.
5. How do they dress? Grey, striped suit, very neat.	**17. What is their main way of relating to other people?** Through the local parish only.
7. What type of house / dwelling do they live in? In an old house in the centre of the city, a two-bedroom apartment which has been renovated recently.	**18. What is their favourite recreation?** Contemplating his butterfly collection.

8. What is their main occupation (they will be connected with study or academia) Professor of Zoology	**19. Who are the most important people in their lives (max 3)?** a. The local vicar b. Ethel (the organist at the church) c. Victor (the tramp who lives under the yew tree in the church grounds)
9. What is their main internal passion? Saunas and Presbyterian religion	**20. Why are these people important?** They're the people he sees most regularly.
10. What is the main theory by which they live? Overtly staunch Empiricist & Materialist, but philosophical Idealist on the quiet.	**21. What are the key events in their life?** 1. Having effective sanitation installed at the age of 62. 2. Conversion from Atheism at the age of 62.
11. What situations recur most frequently in their life? Attacks by animals.	**22. What object / item best symbolises this person?** Crucifix of solid iron.

One sentence summary of the person described above. You don't have to mention all the traits and can rely upon traits not mentioned. Sum them up symbolically and otherwise:

Douglas is a person that has found his life meaning and is enjoying life more the older he gets.

Appendix Five: Journal articles and other texts used

A5.1 Session one

Adiputra, N., Aman, G. M. and Manuaba, B. P. (2017) "The toxicity of antiviral plants used in Balinese traditional medicine", *Bali Medical Journal*, 6:2.

Bose, D. and Chaterjee, K. (2015) "Specialized versus Multi-skilled Workforce: A Newsboy Approach for Call Centre Resource Planning", *Management and Labour Studies,* 40:3-4, 252-267.

El-Alayi, A., Lystad, A. L., Webb, S. R., Hollingsorth, S. L. and Ciolli, J. L. (2006) “Reigning Cats and Dogs: A Pet-Enhancement Bias and Its Link to Pet Attachment, Pet-Self Similarity, Self-Enhancement, and Well-Being”, *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 28:2,
131-143.

Giripunje, M. D., Fuke, A. B., Khairnar, K. K. and Meshram, P. U. (2013) “A review of Phytoplankton Ecology in Freshwater Lakes of India”, *Lakes, reservoirs and ponds*, 7:2, 127-141.

Hagensen, K. P. (2015) “Using a Dance/Movement Therapy-Based Wellness Curriculum: An Adolescent Case Study”, *American Journal of Dance Therapy,* 37, 150-175.

Lomard, K-J. (2012) “Social Entrepreneurship in Youth Culture: Morganics, Russell Simmons and Emile “XY?” *Jansen, Journal for Cultural Research*, 16:1, 1-20,

Murtazashvili, I. and Murtazashvili, J. (2016) “When does the emergence of a stationary bandit lead to property insecurity?”, *Rationality and Society,* 28:3, 335-360.

O’Donnell, C. (2016) “Reading Allan Marquand’s “On Scientific Method in the Study of Art””, *European journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy,* 8:2, 275-289.

O’Keeffe, C. and Wiseman, R. (2005) “Testing alleged mediumship: Methods and results”, *British Journal of Psychology,* 96, 165-179.

Okanisi, M., Nishimuro, S. and Fujita, T. (2013) “A taxonomic review of the genus Asteromorpha Lutken (Echinodermata:Ophiuroidea:Euryalidae)”, *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology,* 61:2,

Parclel, L.M. and Lamme, M. O. (2012)” Not “Merely an Advertisement”: Purity, Trust, and Flour, 1880–1930”, *American Journalism*, 29:4, 94-127

Predergast, M. (2014) “Misperformance ethnography”, *Applied Theatre Research,* 2:1.

Raju, S. R., Umapathy, M. and Uma, G. (2017)” Piezoelectric energy harvesting with single and multiple condensed cavities”, *Ferroelectrics*, 507:1, 29-42.

Rusk, G. (2014) “Automatic Word Processing Hypnosis and Cognitive Therapy for Psychosis: A Case Report”, *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, 57:1, 57-67

Vospan, F., Forias, M., Zerdazi, Karsinti, E-H., Karsinti, E., Block, V., Lepine, J-P., Bellivier, F., Brousse, G., van den Brink, W., and Derks, E. M. (2015) “Self-Reported Cue-Induced Physical Symptoms of Craving as an Indicator of Cocaine Dependence” *The American Journal on Addictions,* 24: 740–743.

A5.2 Session two

As session one, with the addition of the following abstracts:

Bain, D. (2017) “Evaluativist Accounts of Pain's Unpleasantness”, In J. (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Pain*, Routledge, London pp. 40-50.

Fragoso, Z. L., Holcombe, K. J., McCluney, C.L., Fisher, G.G. McGoagle, A. K. and Friebe, S. J. (2016) “Burnout and Engagement: Relative Importance of Predictors and Outcomes in Two Health Care Worker Samples”, *Workplace Health and Safety*, 54:10, 479-487.

Guo, K., Wu, S. and Xu, Y. (2017) “Face recognition using both visible light image and near-infrared image and a deep network”, *CAAI Transactions on Intelligence Technology,* 2, 39-47

Peralta, F. and Devroe, S. (2017) “Any news on the postdural puncture headache front?”, *Best Practice & Research Clinical Anaesthesiology,* 31:1, 35-47.

Prinsloo, P. (2017) “Fleeing from Frankenstein’s monster and meeting Kafka on the way: Algorithmic decision-making in higher education”, *E-Learning and Digital Media,* 14:3, 138-143.

A5.3 Session three

Used texts sealed inside envelopes, as follows (note: font was larger, each text on separate card). Texts include extracts and abstracts.

EXTRACTS

On a larger scale this phenomenon sometimes arises at the beginning of a sailboat race; you *see* a boat cross the starting line and then hear the starting gun, but was the boat over the line too early? It is logically impossible to tell unless you can calculate the different transmission times for sound and light to the place where you made the discrimination. Once a judgement has been made (either *all clear* or *boat #7 was over the line early*) this content can be conveyed to the participants in a leisurely fashion, without regard to how fast or far it has to travel to do its job.

So timing of some representing matter *until* a discrimination such as *left-to-right* (or *over the line early*) has been made, but once it is made, locally, by some circuit in the cortex (or some observer on the committee boat), the content of the judgement can be sent, in a temporally sloppy way, anywhere in the brain where this information might be put to use. Only in this way can we explain the otherwise puzzling fact that people may be unable to perform above chance on some temporal order judgements while they perform flawlessly on other judgements (such as direction of motion judgements) which logically call for even greater temporal acuity. They use specialized (and specially localised) discriminators to make the high-quality judgements. (Dennett, D (1991) *Consciousness Explained,* Penguin, p.150)

Mutual inclusion does not imply that there are no frictions left. The ontology of medical practice is not *the* ontology of a *single* practice: there are as many frictions between objects enacted as there are between the practices in which their enactment takes place. Aiming to improve the health of populations, or rather that of individuals, are goals that often are at odds with one another. And yet no population makes progress on any scale if no individuals' situations have been altered. And a treatment can only be established as good if it brings about a measurable change in a large enough number of people in its target population.

And then there is interference. This book unravels the enactment of a single disease in a single site: atherosclerosis in hospital Z. But this object is obviously not alone. It interferes with the reality of many others: surgeons, tables, pavements, X-ray, nurses, and so on. A few of the interferences between the reality of atherosclerosis and that of sex difference were mobilized here as an illustration. Coexistence side by side, mutual inclusion, inclusion in tension, interference: the relations between objects enacted are complex. Ontology-in-practice comes with objects that do not so much cohere as assemble. (Mol, A (2003) *The Body Multiple: ontology in medical practice,* Duke University Press, p.150)

The "little devils" stood on both sides of this cleft and compressed my head as though in a vice by turning a kind of screw, causing my head temporarily to assume an elongated almost pear-shaped form. It had an extremely threatening effect, particularly as it was accompanied by severe pain. The screws were loosened temporarily but only very gradually, so that the compressed state usual continued for some time. The "little devils" responsible mostly derived from v. W's soul. These "little men" and "little devils" disappeared after a few months never to appear again" (Schreber, D P, (1903) *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness,* New York Review Books, p.150)

Although recordings of whistlers long pre-date the Great War, the arrival of sound broadcasting gave an enormous boost to individual performers and to musicians in general, especially if they became identified with orchestras who then recorded music that was also, even perhaps usually, heard "on air." Elmo Tanner, for instance, born in Nashville in 1904, had an integral part in the popularity achieved in the 20s and 30s by the Ted Weens Orchestra. Among the numbers on which Tanner whistled were "Marvellous" (1927), "You're the Cream in my Coffee" (1928), "Heartaches" (1933 – an enormous success, so much so that Tanner's whistling created the template for much "lonesome" whistling of the following years), "Moonlight (1939) and "Out of the Night" (1941). (Chatburn, A and Lucas, J (2013) *A Brief History of Whistling*, Five Leaves Publications, p.150)

But what is its status? Is it a pre-existent independent entity, only waiting for its chance to make its entry? Evidently there is no lack of occasions. But that would make unconscious desire something separate and detached from language, an independent tendency which would use language as its means and material in order to "express" itself. Where would it originate? It would appear as the Leibnizian *principium reddendae rationis,* the principle of sufficient reason, providing a sufficient reason for sliups, dreams, symptoms – all that seem precisely to lack a sufficient reason, those tiny cracks of contingency which do not possess a firm foundation and appear as a pure surplus, an excess without a covering. We could formulate the problem of the neurotic in Leibniz's terms: everything has a sufficient reason – except me, except my slip, my symptom, my suffering, my enjoyment. How can I ever justify my existence? An impossible task in the universe of the sufficient reason. Can unconscious desire serve as the name for the sufficient reason of all that lacks a sufficient reason? Could we see in it a *ratio* examining all potential slips and wisely choosing the best one? (Dolar, M (2006) *A Voice and Nothing More*, MIT Press, p.150)

Another session was devoted to the effect of magnetized water and was chiefly remarkable for the efforts made by Elliotson and the other experimenters (with Elizabeth's help) to rationalize the confusing results. In one experiment the third and fifth glass of a series of six glasses of water had been magnetized by dipping the magnetist's fingers into them. Elizabeth went into a trance after sipping the contents of the second, third and fifth. Put into a trance at the conclusion of this experiment she was asked why she had responded in a similar manner to the second and third glasses. Her reply, that she still had the water from the second in her mouth when she drank from the third, satisfied all the experimenters, although Mills ruefully comments that the need to take these experiments slowly was often forgotten in an anxiety to obtain results. However, it is obvious that Elizabeth's answer was satisfactory only on the supposition that it was the second glass that was mesmerised. Mills and the others appeared to forget that her response to this glass was to ordinary unmagnetized water. (Forrest, D. (2001) *Hypnotism: a history*, Penguin, p.150)

ABSTRACTS

The purpose of the study is to assess university students' involvement in tattooing and examine associations between tattooing and risky behaviors. University students enrolled in physical education and health classes at one Midwestern University are study participants, and a survey is used to examine 998 university students' involvement in tattooing. The results indicate that 29.6% of respondents have a tattoo. The most common locations for tattoos are the chest (37.6%), foot (26.8%), arm (15.8%), and back (14.4%). Females are more likely than males to have a tattoo. Tattooed students are significantly more likely than non-tattooed students to engage in alcohol and marijuana use and risky sexual behaviors. Suicidal behaviors and suicidal ideation are not related to tattoo status among university students. Therefore, college health professionals should be aware of associations between tattooing and risky behavioral involvement. Educational programs are needed to increase student awareness of body modification and associated risk behaviors. (King, K.A., and Vidourek, R.A. (2013) "Getting inked: Tattoo and risky behavioral involvement among university students", *The Social Science Journal*, 50:4, 540-546).

Mitochondria contain their own DNA (mtDNA). In most sexually reproducing organisms, mtDNA is inherited maternally (uniparentally); this type of inheritance is thus referred to as 'maternal (uniparental) inheritance'. Recent studies have revealed various mechanisms to prevent the transmission of sperm-derived paternal mtDNA to the offspring, thereby ensuring maternal inheritance of mtDNA. In the nematode Caenorhabditis elegans, paternal mitochondria and their mtDNA degenerate almost immediately after fertilization and are selectively degraded by autophagy, which is referred to as 'allophagy' (allogeneic [non-self] organelle autophagy). In the fruit fly Drosophila melanogaster, paternal mtDNA is largely eliminated by an endonuclease G-mediated mechanism. Paternal mitochondria are subsequently removed by endocytic and autophagic pathways after fertilization. In many mammals, including humans, paternal mitochondria enter fertilized eggs. However, the fate of paternal mitochondria and their mtDNA in mammals is still a matter of debate. In this review, we will summarize recent knowledge on the molecular mechanisms underlying the prevention of paternal mtDNA transmission, which ensures maternal mtDNA inheritance in animals. (Sato, K. and Sato, M. (2017) "Multiple ways to prevent transmission of paternal mitochondrial DNA for maternal inheritance in animals” *The Journal of Biochemistry*, 162:4, 247–253).

Drawing on a multilevel model of motivation in work groups and a functionalist perspective of citizenship and socially responsible behaviors, we developed and tested a multilevel model of voluntary workplace green behavior that explicates some of the reasons why employees voluntarily engage in green behavior at work. For a sample of 325 office workers organized into 80 work groups in three firms, we found that conscientiousness and moral reflectiveness were associated with the voluntary workplace green behavior of group leaders and individual group members. Furthermore, we found a direct relationship between leader green behavior and the green behavior of individual subordinates as well as an indirect relationship mediated by green advocacy within work groups. Our theory and findings shed new light on the psychological and social conditions and processes that shape voluntary workplace green behavior in organizational settings and suggest implications for organizations striving to improve their social responsibility and environmental sustainability. (Kim, A., Kim, Y., Han, K., Jackson, S.E. and Ployhart, R.E. (2014) “Multilevel Influences on Voluntary Workplace Green Behavior: Individual Differences, Leader Behavior, and Coworker Advocacy”, *Journal of Management,* 43:5, 1335-1358.)

This study aims to investigate the altmetric activity of papers published by the University of Zagreb School of Medicine in internationally visible journals and to identify differences in altmetric activity between the papers published in international and local journals and between those published in English and Croatian. We also investigated changes in altmetric activity over time and the characteristics of papers with the highest Twitter and Mendeley activity. The sample included 390 papers collected from the bibliographic database Scopus. Their altmetric and citation activities were measured at three time points: in July 2014, 2015, and 2016. The findings generally correspond to those observed in the large-scale studies of medical papers. Papers in renowned journals, and papers reporting clinical guidelines and multicentric studies had the most intense altmetric activity. In contrast, papers published in local, Croatian journals showed minimal altmetric activity, especially the papers published in Croatian. These results indicate that the local publishing community has not yet recognised social media as a tool for promoting research and that non-English language publications have minimal chances to receive attention, even in social media. The evaluative potential of altmetric indicators has to be further explored in a broader context. (Vrkić, D., Škorić, L. and Petrak, J. (2017) "Altmetrics of Papers From Scientific Periphery Reflect Global Trends: A Case Study of Publications by Zagreb University School of Medicine", *The Journal of Academic Librarianship,* 43:6, 479-486.)

A5.4 Session four

Used the following text extracts:

Artists who responded respectively to Moreau and Puvis de Chavannes were Armand Point (1861-1932) and Alphonse Osbert (1857-1939). Point, who was born in Algeria, moved to Paris in 1888. The medievalizing element in his art produced a hybrid style that recalls the English Pre-Raphaelites as well as Moreau. In addition to this the facial type of the figures used reveals Point looking not to the medieval past but to the Florentine Renaissance, to Botticelli and to Leonardo da Vinci for inspiration. Both Moreau and Point executed a version of the *Princesse a la Licorne,* itself a subject Gothic in origin. Point's *Princesse a la Licorne* was exhibited in 1898 at the Salon d'Art Idealiste. Point in 1896 founded a group called 'Hauteclaire' which under his direction produced a great number of decorative objects. (Milner, J (1971) *Symbolists and Decadents,* Studio Vista / Dutton Paperback, London, p. 78)

But the dining room which opened out of the hall was a place of shadow and gloom. It was a long chamber with a step separating the dais where the family sat from the lower portion reserved for their dependants. At one end a minstrels' gallery overlooked it. Black beams shot across above our heads, with a smoke-darkened ceiling beyond them. With rows of flaring torches to light it up, and the colour and rude hilarity of an old-time banquet, it might have been softened; but now, when two black-clothed gentlemen sat in the little circle of light thrown by a shaded lamp, one's voice became hushed and one's spirit subdued. A dim line of ancestors, in every variety of dress, from the Elizabethan knight to the buck of the Regency, stared down upon us and daunted us by their silent company. We talked little, and I for one was glad when the meal was over, and we were able to retire into the modern billiard-room and smoke a cigarette. (Conan Doyle, A (1929) *Sherlock Holmes: Long Stories,* John Murray, London, pp. 335-336)

After luncheon, accordingly, when the other two had settled themselves into the chimney-corner and had started a heated argument on the subject of *eels,* the Badger lighted a lantern and bade the Mole follow him. Crossing the hall, they passed down one of the principal tunnels, and the wavering light of the lantern gave glimpses on either side of rooms both large and small, some mere cupboards, others nearly as broad and imposing as Toad's dining-hall. A narrow passage at right angles led them into another corridor, and here the same thing was repeated. The Mole was staggered at the size, the extent, the ramifications of it all; at the length of the dim passages, the solid vaultings of the crammed store-chambers, the masonry everywhere, the pillars, the arches, the pavements. (Grahame, K. (1908) *The Wind in the Willows,* Methuen & Co Ltd, London, pp. 86-87)

It is seemly for me to explain here, I feel, the nature and standing of the persons present. Mr Collopy was my mother's half-brother and was therefore my own half-uncle. He had married twice, Miss Annie being his daughter by his first marriage. Mrs Crotty was his second wife but she was never called Mrs Collopy, why I cannot say. She may have deliberately retained the name of her first husband in loving memory of him, or the habit may have grown up through the absence of mind. Moreover, she always called her second husband by the formal style of Mr Collopy as he also called her Mrs Crotty, at least in the presence of other parties; I cannot speak for what usage obtained in private. An ill-disposed person might suspect that they were not married at all and that Mrs Crotty was a kept-woman or resident prostitute. But that is quite unthinkable, if only because of Mr Collopy's close interest in the Church and in matters of doctrine and dogma, and also his long friendship with the German priest from Leeson Street, Father Kurt Fahrt, S. J., who was a frequent caller. (O'Brian, F. (1961) *The Hard Life,* Picador, London, p. 18)

The Leftwich family is basically French, originating in Saint-Sauveur in northern France; the family name was originally De Leftwyche. Since his mother was also French, Robert Leftwich may be regarded as more than 50 per cent Gallic. The family moved to Northwich, where there was, at one time, a Leftwich Hall. On the whole, then, the family 'came down in the world'. Even so, his father, a mathematician and member of the Royal Society, had some distinguished friends, including Sir James Jeans, Sir Arthur Eddington, and Sir Charles Boys, the man who ‘weighed the earth’. Robert’s rather casual relationship with the latter ended when he was eleven or twelve: Sir Charles invited the Leftwich family to his home near Andover. Wandering around the garden, Robert found a pump. Even at this time, he was fascinated by hydraulic devices. He primed the p ump with a bucket of water and worked the handle. A sludgy substance came out. He assumed the pump needed a lot more working before clean water came through, so he went on pumping… In fact, he emptied the liquid manure tanks, and flooded the lawn. Sir Charles wrote Leftwich senior a letter, asking him not to bring his son to the house in future… (Wilson, C. (1975) *Strange Powers,* Abacus, London, p. 64)

The female street-sellers are again a fluctuating body, as in the summer and autumn months. A large proportion go off to work in market-gardens, in the gathering of peas, beans and the several fruits; in weeding, in hay-making, in the corn-harvest (when they will endeavour to obtain leave to glean if they are unemployed more profitably) and afterwards in the hopping. The women, however, thus seeking changes of employment, are the ruder street-sellers, those who merely buy oranges at 4d. to sell at 6d., and who do not meddle with any calling mixed up with the necessity of skill in selection, or address in recommending. Of this half-vagrant class, many are not street-sellers usually, but are half prostitutes and half thieves, not infrequently drinking all their earnings, while of the habitual female street-sellers I do not think that drunkenness is now a very prevalent vice. Their earnings are small, and if they become habituated to an indulgence in drink, their means are soon dissipated; in which case they are unable to obtain stock-money, and they cease to be street-sellers. (Mayhew, H (1861) *London Labour and the London Poor,* Penguin, London, p.150)

All went as he had hoped. He spent a rather exciting evening in the library, for he lighted to-night upon a cupboard where some of the rarer books were kept. When he went up to bed, he was glad to find that the servant had remembered to leave his curtains undrawn and his windows open. He put down his light, and went to the window which commanded a view of the garden and the park. It was a brilliant moonlit night. In a few weeks' time the sonorous winds of autumn would break up all this calm. But now the distant woods were in a deep stillness; the slopes of the lawns were shining with dew; the colours of some of the flowers could almost be guessed. The light of the moon just caught the cornice of the temple and the curve of the leaden dome, and Humphreys had to own that, so seen, these conceits of a past age have a real beauty. (James, M. R. (1931) *Collected Ghost Stories,* Wordsworth Classics, Ware, Herts, pp. 348-349)

He had taken to wandering into this pub recently at lunchtime because he liked the beer, because it was near a restaurant to which he had taken a fancy, and because here he was not likely to meet any other members of the firm – in other words 'the boys'. This did not mean that he dissociated himself from the boys, or thought of himself as anything other than one amongst the boys, who at lunch-time, and indeed at several other odd moments of the day, flocked into the little pub almost immediately under the office in Jermyn Street, and there did business or had fun. It simply was that he recently had come to believe that in that particular house at that particular time of day he had begun to drink too much bitter, play to much electric pin-table, and waste too much time, and he had decided to give it a miss for a bit. He had also lately, after accidentally reading an English translation of *Pere Goriot,* become fascinated by the author Balzac, whom he had never read before; and whenever he was under the spell of a new author it had always been his particular delight to go apart and imbibe him in the lunch hour. Now, as he sat on the stool of the bar, he had the Everyman edition of *The Country Doctor* open on his knees, and he had been reading intently. (Hamilton, P. (1941) *Hangover Square,* Penguin, London*,* p. 96)

I sold my big airy apartment in Barnes, so near the river, so near the railway, in a fever of haste when I was buying Shruff End. And this little flat was, almost in my intention, a sort of penitential chapel. I have not even yet had time to arrange the furniture. Beside me as I write is an armchair with a television set on top of it. (Thank God for the impossibility of television at Shruff End).) Beyond, a bookcase stands facing the wall, presenting to me its greyish back, draped with cobwebs and pitted with woodworm. Pictures, lamps, books, ornaments and rolled up rugs cover the floor, together with a sinister scattering of pieces of broken glass and china. I hustled the removal men, and they were not at their best. Crates of kitchenware, not unpacked, fill the tiny kitchen. Even though I sold many things and put some in store (including several trunks full of theatre souvenirs) there is far too much stuff here. The two bedrooms are small but have an attractive view down a mews where many plants and trees are growing outside the little houses. The kitchen, if you can get in, is satisfactory, with a good gas stove and a refrigerator. Yesterday I lunched on tinned macaroni cheese jazzed up with oil, garlic, basil, and more cheese, and a lovely dish of cold, boiled courgettes. (Courgettes should never be fried, in my opinion.) I must remember to buy more courgettes and some green peppers to take back with me. (Murdoch, I (1979) *The Sea, The Sea,* Triad/Panther Books, St. Albans, Herts, p. 154)

So, the great day came when Mary was let out of her underground home and allowed to see color for the first time. You can imagine how excited she was,, but the scientists and philosophers who had brought her up and educated her and taught her everything there was to know about colour were nearly as excited because they were going to get answers to questions that had puzzled them for a long time and about which they had argued amongst themselves for a long time, questions such as what is it *like* to see color for the first time, because as I was saying you cannot ask a baby what it is like to see color for the first time because they cannot talk so they cannot tell you but Mary would be able to tell them, and is color something that just happens in your brain or is it something that exists on its own in the world, and is color something you can imagine in your head without seeing it, or do you have to see it, and is a particular color the same for everybody or is it different for each individual, and could a color scientist like Mary, for that is what she had become by now, who knew all about wavelengths and frequencies, identify the first color she saw just by taking measurements with a spectrophotometer or would she have to be told what it was? These were some of the questions the scientists and philosophers hoped Mary would be able to answer for them when she saw a coloured thing for the first time on the day that I am telling you about (Lodge, D. (2001) *Thinks…,* Penguin Books, London, p. 160).

Appendix Six: Post-session questionnaires samples

A6.1 Session one questionnaires by question and participant (samples)

Q1. When you read 'conventionally', where do you experience understanding? Does it occur / is associated with any particular part of your body? What does understanding a text feel like? (you might think about your experiences in doing the first reading exercise)

R2: To me, understanding is in the mind, which is connected to the body as a whole. Academic or 'rational' understanding I feel in the head, the front usually, at the expense of the rest of the body. Sometimes I complete forget my body when struggling with thought. Intuitive understanding however I often feel with the whole body, and even beyond the body, for instance when doing Daoist meditation of psychic energy. This kind of understanding is however not very articulate, more poetic, musical or imaginal.

R3: I felt it mostly in my head and shoulders. I noticed myself feeling anxious about understanding what I was reading, and this anxiety made it hard for me to absorb the information, I had to read it several times to understand its possible meaning.

Q2. Thinking about the 2nd two exercises, where you read by free association:

Q2.a What sort of meanings did the process of free association reveal?

R1: I was ashamed how negative most of my free-association links were (to the abstract titled 'Misperformance Ethnography'). I saw that this had two layers:

A) It uncovered a dissatisfied and small-minded ego / personality in me, and a deeper, very insecure unconscious / sub-conscious, so clearly there to see. This was partly because I took against both the subject-matter and the tone / language of the abstract.

I also happened to choose, completely unseen and at random, an abstract about 'The Poetics of Failure', and I work vocationally as a poet, and I love this work! – but knowing the potential insubstantiality, value-judgments, public-performance angst, fear and risk that poetry can hold – rather as the person next to me happened to choose a random abstract about psychosis, and was a hypnotherapist who had to deal with family psychosis… a coincidental test of our own 'stuff' happening before our own eyes….

B) I felt irritated both by this chosen abstract and by my own reaction to it – a two-layered irritance… I still feel the irritation now, remembering it… it's not resolved until I choose to let go, assimilate, move beyond it. 'Beyond' not in terms of time or of space, but in terms of acceptance and inner subtlety somehow.

R4: I think that the process revealed my 'hidden' concerns – i.e., I wanted to ask the question as to why someone was cocaine dependent in the first place. The study didn't allow for this question (which to me, was crucially important).

Q2.b How did any meanings revealed by the associations relate to the original text (the abstract), if at all?

R3: I felt that the associations did relate to the text, but the associations were more personal. I was also able to make better connections between the points raised in the texts and felt moved to be critical and ask lots of questions.

R4: Definitely related to the original text – but on a deeper level. From the point of view of wanting to connect with the cocaine dependent person, try to help them…

Q2.c What was the experience of reading in this way like? (e.g. what 'parts' of you did it involve? Where, if anywhere, was the experience situated?)

R1: An exasperation in my mind; impatience in my eyes and hands. A hopelessness in my eyes – swiping / sweeping the page, looking rather in vain for something to like, to agree with, to be part of; for some humanity, for some reason why this text had been even written or shared: why? Why this formula, this style of dry distancing? I could see that the subject-matter was actually pretty trivial but was being dressed up and represented as a clever psychological finding. This all simultaneously irritated, alienated and drained me as reader or potential reader; I felt pushed away (revulsed) by the text itself - or more exactly, I felt a wish for self-preservation, to choose to keep clear away from it, to steer away.

I felt a 'droop', rather like a snowdrop with a heavy head nodding down. Not a sleepiness though. More an energetic drainage, brought about by feeling of gloom, exasperation, and some isolation in the face of this drear abstract text. Being vampired energetically by the lack of genuine energy or inspiration emanating from the abstract's author. Dehydrated of joy. A close-down coming from my heart – my heart doesn't want to engage, co-operate with this. I felt I was being taken for a ride. The same story (in the abstract) could have been told anecdotally as 'What we feel when we make mistakes and fall down'. It didn't have to be so complicated by language or inference.

R2: As my imagination was triggered, the inner space of my mind was opened up, so to speak spreading from my head to the rest of my body and in a sense beyond, as I was experience a sense of moving through an imaginary landscape (the jungle) while sitting at the desk, writing.

Q2.d How did the two exercises (reading alone and working in partners) differ?

R2: Reading alone works better for me to open up the inner space of holistic understanding; I feel inhibited when talking. Although I have a persona to talk and communicate, I feel my true self is largely living in the inside, introverted.

R3: I preferred to read alone, as I felt freer to come up with associations in a more relaxed way, when I was speaking my associations with a partner, I felt a pressure to 'get it right' I felt I was under a spotlight, and very exposed, which impaired my ability to free associate in a spontaneous way, I could be more spontaneous alone.

Q2.e Are there any theoretical contexts or material you think relevant to these exercises?

R2: Actually no, this comes from subjective experience, any child will know this. I do not have any suggestions for further reading.

R3: I don't know.

R4: Just a general wondering really…… Laura and I were interested, given our experiences in 2.d., as to what happens in free association in traditional therapy settings? Given my personal experience of free-association being easier when left to my own devices, I wondered how clients were asked to do this exercise (i.e., on their own, or with a therapist writing everything down for them) and whether how they approached it would inhibit/enhance their experience.

Q2.f Did any material which came up reveal anything that was (perhaps unexpectedly) related to any aspect of your personal or professional life? (you might prefer to wait for some days before thinking about this)

R3: I was very interested in the topic I chose, which was mediumship, although it isn't related to my public or work life, it does relate to my personal interests, which made it easier to read than the second piece of text I chose, which wasn't an area of life I was interested in.

R4: Strangely, I had watched a comedy about an old man inadvertently smoking pot out of his pipe the previous evening, then before coming to the session I noticed a white tablet at the entrance to one of the university buildings. I then picked an abstract on cocaine dependence! Seems like a strange synchronicity, but unsure what it means!

Q2.g Were there any differences between the language in which the abstract was written and the language in which your associations were written? If so, what were they?

R1: Yes. Dead, and alive. The 'Dead' language so irritating as it was asking / assuming something of me as reader that I simply did not want to give. A source of energy in me being plundered without my wishes. Like allowing myself to become totally invaded and interrupted by this style of writing. I remember thinking – If someone came along and spoke like this abstract to another living person, talked aloud to other real people in the language of this abstract, it would be obvious they were mad. You'd avoid them – for self-preservation and for sanity. It's easy when you think of it as potentially spoken language to see how formulaic and artificial it is. Why do this to ourselves, to our brains, hearts? Why not learn and SHARE openly what we learn, for the beauty and grace and honour of it, not offer what we may have learnt as desiccated and desiccating pellets of data that do not nourish or contribute to life? Imagine if this abstract language were food. One wouldn't want to eat it and wouldn't benefit much from it if one did eat it. You are certainly on to something here, Julia.

R2: As a non-native speaker, my language is not very well developed and may not reflect the different forms of understanding as well as with native speakers. However, when moving in the imagination, my writing becomes simpler and more straightforward, quite different from my academic prose.

Q3. Do you have any other thoughts or feelings about the material explored in this session?

R3: I enjoyed doing the activities, I found the free associating to be very liberating in terms of my ability to engage with and to understand the meaning of the text. Thanks for introducing these exercises to me.

R4: Really enjoyed it. Lots to think about and I guess I'm still processing. Really showed me the importance of what lies 'hidden', and the richness/opportunity of being able to reveal this. Thank you, and I look forward to the next session.

A6.2 Session two questionnaires (samples)

Q2: Did the first relaxation exercise influence your later experiences in this session? If yes, how?

Respondent	**Answer**
R1 LB	I couldn’t really say. Difficult to tell. Perhaps better if the whole session could have been repeated in a more holistic environment so that a better comparison could be made.
R2 LD	I couldn’t say how the two were connected – not sure it made any difference.
R3 RB	Yes, it made me aware of a visual dimension to awareness of my body which came out later in the diagramming part of marking up the human figure diagram – feeling in relaxation more familiar with bits I can see (my hands, feet) – less familiar with the bits I can’t (my back, shoulders) which felt a bit abstract even though they are mine! Feeling I don’t ‘visit’ certain parts internally unless they give me discomfort / fail in some way and feeling a bit apologetic to my body – it’s patient, capable.
R4 MB	No.
R5 PR	I am not sure about this. I think it´s always good to be relaxed before you do anything, but because I think I´m usually quite relaxed in my normal state, I don´t know whether the exercise had any effect on what I did afterwards.

Q3: Thinking now about the exercise with Gendlin’s technique:

Q3A: How easy / difficult was the technique?

Respondent	**Answer**
R1 LB	I found the technique very easy; I tend to be able to get into my body quite easily anyway. There was a little bit of mind-chatter, but I think that was more to do with the academic setting.
R2 LD	The technique was easy for me, in the distilled version that was Presented.
R3 RB	It was easy, and it seemed to make sense…
R4 MB	I found it quite difficult.
R5 PR	It was fairly easy to follow and to identify the feelings in my

	body.

Q3C: What was it like to apply the technique to reading?

Respondent	Answer
R1 LB	I would concur with LD’s comments.
R2 LD	It was a different experience; normally I am reading in my head, but this time I could allow my body to be engaged.
R3 RB	‘Dipping’ was most helpful – checking in within consciously, instead of just reacting.
R4 MB	It did not work for me.
R5 PR	I think it was fairly easy, although again I´d say I´d need more practice to really be able to assess whether I was doing it right and whether it´d add something to my reading experience.

Q3E: How has this exercise impacted on your thoughts about reading? (if at all)

Respondent	Answer
R1 LB	Same comments as LD. It has made me very aware of just how disconnected I am from my body when I research and read.
R2 LD	My thoughts about reading have changed. I am now thinking more about how the body reacts when reading, not just the head.
R3 RB	I remain knowing I’m not primarily ‘an academic’, though educated to postgrad level and can say things like ‘Thinking is not my primary function…’ - I much prefer intuitive ways but am so aware of having to check their validity and not just be subjective all the time. I guess that was why ‘academic-speak’ was invented, to try to standardise the field… I REALLY liked the offer of marking up the human figure diagram, set beside the ‘mental’ work of reading the abstract. That shifted enormous amounts of ‘stuff’ for me. Set me off on a new direction and a welcome one.
R4 MB	N/A
R5 PR	Not at the moment, perhaps I need to go through other experiences of reading.

A6.3 Session three questionnaires

R1 - ZM
R2 – PR
R3 – OE
R4 – LB

Q1. What was your experience of the processes / exercises we used in session 3?

R1: Hi Julia, thanks again for an inspiring and enjoyable session. I found it to be a very freeing experience, and although there were only tenuous links between the associations I came up with in my imagination and the actual text, it was an interesting exercise. I am sure, with practice, my psychic faculties will develop, it's just my rational mind, and performance anxiety which get in the way. In the communal drawing activity, it felt much easier to connect with the content of the text through the 'group mind' as opposed to my individual mind, and the performance anxiety was removed. It was an interesting experience, as no one felt they were leading, but we were all being guided by a force greater than ourselves.

R2: I enjoyed the exercises very much, it was fun, they sparked my curiosity. The process was easy, quick, and enjoyable.

R3: Very inspiring! A treat!

R4: I thoroughly enjoyed this session and felt, of all of the sessions, that this particular one was the one that I most resonated with (I have enjoyed them all, but this one stands out for me). This is interesting because during the first exercise I was struggling to ‘tune in’ and actually found it (from a mind-based point of view) quite challenging.

Q4. What were the processes about? How do you theorise them (if at all)? What theoretical frameworks might be relevant?

R1: I felt the processes were about connecting with text in ways that allow you to shift your perspective, like looking at an object from many different angles, and seeing it in a more subtle and nuanced way, in all its entirety. I'm not sure about theories, this is not something I have much experience of, but it feels, that the exercises we id on Saturday encouraged us to engage with our hearts and our intuitive mind. Could theories be described as 'intuitive engagement', ‘intuitive interaction'?

R2: I would say it has to do with parapsychological theory, I guess you have to have some psychic power to have some chance of succeeding at the exercise. Maybe some psychological theory about blocking the rational mind and let the creative mind take over. I am sorry I cannot be more scientifically precise.

R3: I was reminded of some aspects of ‘active imagination’, the method of Carl Jung to explore unconscious contents by amplification. I so to speak ‘dived in’ and then stepped back to reflect.

R4: I think that the processes were about tuning into those parts of human knowing that are seriously underused and misunderstood within our dominant worldview. I wonder whether they would come under the banner of ‘pseudo-science’ (from an empirical point of view). I wonder whether the transpersonal/imaginal/intuitive frameworks offered by Romanyshyn, Angelo, Anderson might be of some relevance here?

Q5. Does it bring up any further thoughts about the processes of reading, writing, sense and meaning making, thoughts about communication?

R1: I would like to engage more in things, using these methods, especially in my work with students, some of whom would find these approaches very helpful. I would also like to write my mentor reviews with students using these methods, instead of the dull, aims and objectives approach to their learning.

R2: Not about the process of reading, somehow I find it difficult to understand the fact that in order to read something you start by not reading it, not even have a clue of what the topic is about, the kind of text,... I cannot imagine how this can help the process of reading. The collaborative exercise is interesting in that it shows you how build meaning and how other people react to the same thing you´re watching. It is also very important for communication among the people in the group, and to see that sometimes you´re better off working with others.

R3: Well … I suppose I should have a look at Etty Hillesum again!

R4: Yes, definitely. Personally speaking I think I am still too head-based in my approach towards reading and writing and communication in general. It was so wonderful, in these exercises, to be given intellectual permission to try out different ways of knowing which can open oneself up to creative conversations and moments of revelation.

A6.4 Session four questionnaires

R1=LB
R2=YW
R3=OE
R4=PR
R5=ZM.

Q1. What are your thoughts about the processes we used in this session?

R1: I enjoyed the session and can see how this work might creatively enhance my own writing project (engaging with texts that I am reading and following where the creativity leads).

R2: The process of reading an abstract, finding ambiguity, taking the words at its root and creating something textual, then visual from these was very interesting. It involved a mixture of cognitive and intuitive stages which I am sure were different for each individual. The collage-making was fun and stimulated discussion of the processes.

R3: There seem to have been two different processes, 1. the transformation of key ambiguous words and 2. the expression by images. I think that this may have been a bit too much for one session, as we were running out of time.

R4: I found them very enjoyable to carry out, as they involved using your creativity and practical skills. I am not sure about how they may aid the process of understanding the text where they came from.

R5: I really enjoyed this process, I don't have many thoughts, except it was interesting to think about what makes a text ambiguous, but I found it difficult to choose the words, which may have been because the text I had didn't seem that ambiguous it was quite clear. It was interesting to play with these words though, and I did enjoy coming up with sentences which included all of the three words, it was fun, and it encouraged you to think about the meaning of those words in more depth, or in a more personal way with regards to your own perception of them.

Q3. How, if at all, does 'reading' the image differ from reading the academic text?

R1: Reading the image is different. It seems to engage different areas of the brain – it's more engaging and feels less of a chore. Obviously, the interpretation of the text and image differs.

R2: Reading the image allows more creative use of imagination in interpretation.

R3: The academic text addresses conceptual thought within a rationalist frame, the image does not necessarily address any of these two conditions

R4: In my opinion it differs in terms that it is more flowing, much more spontaneous, at the same time it could allow completely different readings. For instance, my partner first read my collage in a positive way and when she found out the sentence where it sprang her view changed completely, and still made a coherent interpretation. Maybe this is what we mean by the ambiguity of the text.

R5: I feel I can make more meaning and associations with the images, than with the texts, the images open up more possibilities and different ways of reading, interpreting and making meaning of the texts.

Q4. What were the processes about? How do you theorise them (if at all)? What theoretical frameworks might be relevant?

R1: I think these processes were about engaging the imagination and following where that might lead. Certainly, an imaginal approach of Romanyshyn would be a fitting framework, or that of Marie Angelo (inviting the image to teach)

R2: To me the processes were about making sense of and learning from the original texts. Unimaginative texts were used in a new way to stimulate creative thinking. I would tend to theorise them in terms of learning theories and learning styles and am aware that this tendency is influenced by my own background and educational interests. The processes could fall into a framework that enables people to learn using different styles to those with which they have a natural or learned tendency thus enabling more holistic learning to take place.

R3: Both the transformation of key words and the transformation of key words to image I would think are related to the influx of unconscious concepts, and psychological theories might be relevant.

R4: I don't know. Probably some literature on text linguistics and psycholinguistics would and could explain the choice of words and the characteristics of the original texts. Then about how the image may still refer to the original abstract we may have to go into some divination literature, as I think you pointed out at the beginning of the session.

R5: I felt they were about opening our imaginations to possible meanings inherent within words and a piece of text, looking for the symbolism associated with text, maybe it could be theorised as symbolic interpretation of text???

A6.5 Session five questionnaires

R1: LB

R2: PR

Q1. What are your thoughts about Session 5 (reading with all the senses)? (Feel free to say as little or as much as you like.)

R1: I enjoyed the session but felt thwarted a little by my own senses. The session made me very aware how dominant my sense of sight is, and when I tried to engage with the book on a feeling, touching, tasting, hearing level, I struggled. Perhaps this has more to say about me, than the book and the session itself! I wish I could have engaged more.

R2: As usual I felt curious about what the experience may bring. I started with an open mind and was pleasantly surprised by the book I got, *Health in old age*, as it is on a topic I think about often. I sat down in a beautiful spot in the library I had never been before. I remember thinking about how little I make use of these things that are at my disposal. I chose it also because it was quiet, there wasn't anybody around. I am aware how the sense of sight dominates our actions and it is important that we make an effort to become conscious and use our other senses, but it's true I chose this spot using my eyes. I did the different exercises that were on the worksheet, and tried to be creative about them, for instance to use hearing I dropped the book to listen to the sound it'd make. Perhaps the smelling and the tasting were the most difficult or uncommon ones to use. For tasting the only thing I could think of was to lick a page with the tip of my tongue, and I can say this provokes a strong connection, it was a strange, new feeling. I think by using all senses, by touching the book, by smelling and even licking it as I did, you develop a stronger emotional relationship with it, it is like bonding with the book. However, I am not sure how much this helps to actually understand the text. What I know is that I borrowed the book and now it is on my sitting room table. I have read some parts of it and wish I could read it all, I will probably enjoy it, but now I have to do my own work and have to read many books more directly related to my research and I am not sure how much of this one I could read. I felt lucky and happy that I had got this book, I think it may be some kind of synchronicity, though at the moment am not sure what about. Perhaps it is telling me don't worry too much, or, as I have already read on it, how growing old might be a case of how you mentally approach it.

No questionnaires were returned for session six.

Appendix Seven: Other Material from Sessions (samples)

A7.1 Session One

A7.3 Session Two Body Map (blank)

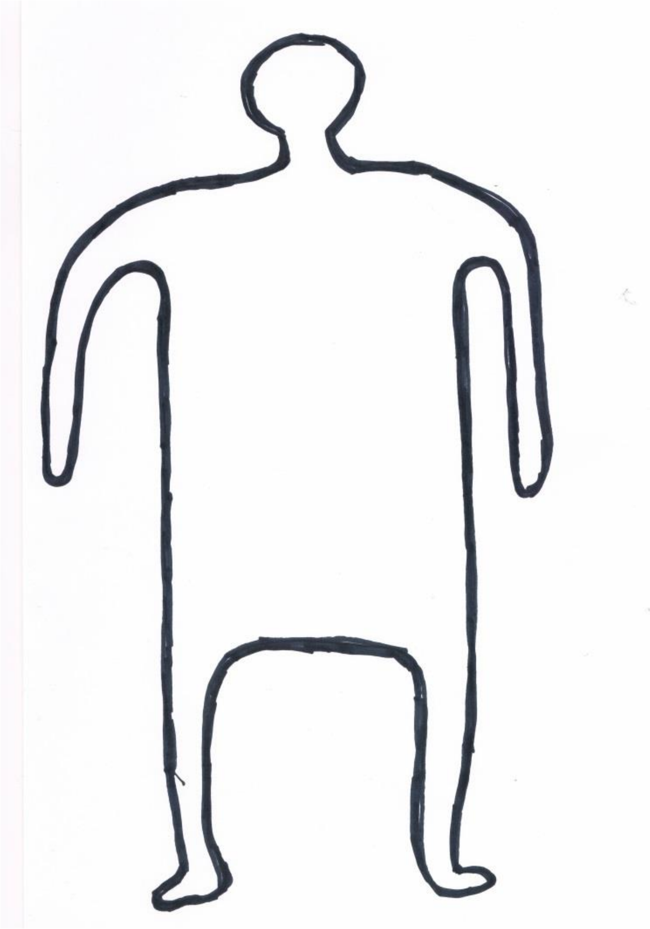


Image 1: Blank 'Body Map' for Session Two

A7.4 Session Two Individual drawings samples

Image 2: Body Map Drawing JO

Image 3: Body Map Drawing LB

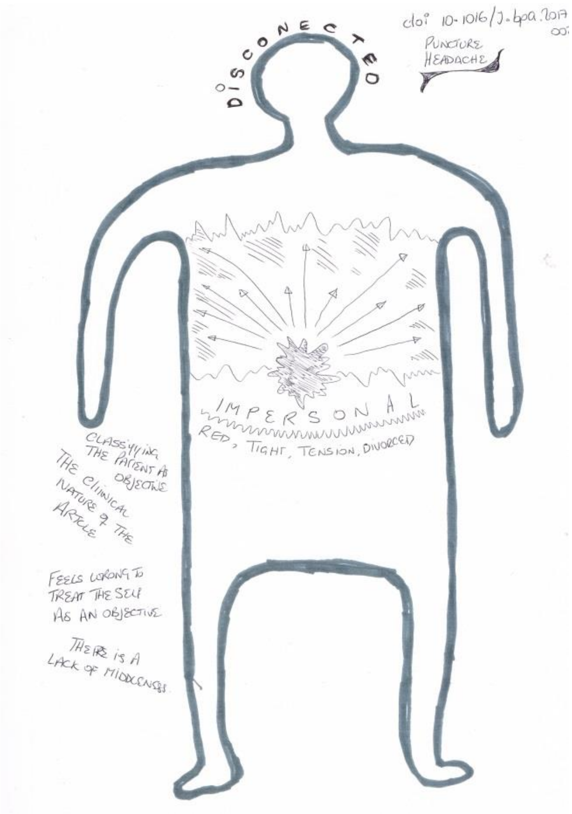

DISCONECTED
doi 10.1016/j.bpa.2017
00
PUNCTURE HEADACHE
IMPERSONAL
RED, TIGHT, TENSION, DIVORCED
CLASSIFYING THE PATIENT AS OBJECTIVE
THE CLINICAL NATURE of THE ARTICLE
FEELS WRONG TO TREAT THE SELF AS AN OBJECTIVE
THERE IS A LACK OF MIDDLENESS

Image 4: Body Map Drawing LD

Image 5: Body Map Drawing PR

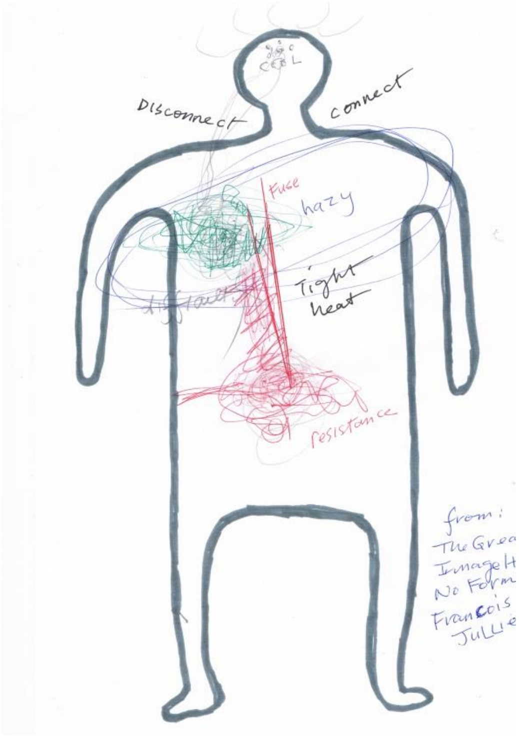

COOL
Disconnect
connect
Fuse
hazy
diffract
Tight
heat
resistance
from:
The Grea
Image H
No Form
Francois
Jullie

Image 6: Body Map Drawing RS

There were no additional documents for session three.

A7.4 Session four

A7.4.b Example sentence

MISTS
AMIABLE
CUSHIONS

- The curtains parted and the mists disappeared. An amiable scene with many cushions was revealed

- Emerging from the mists, I sat down on the cushions and found them amiable.

- An amiable young man lay on the velvet cushions, pulling at his hair and talking of the mists that clouded his thought-processes.

A7.4.c Collage images samples

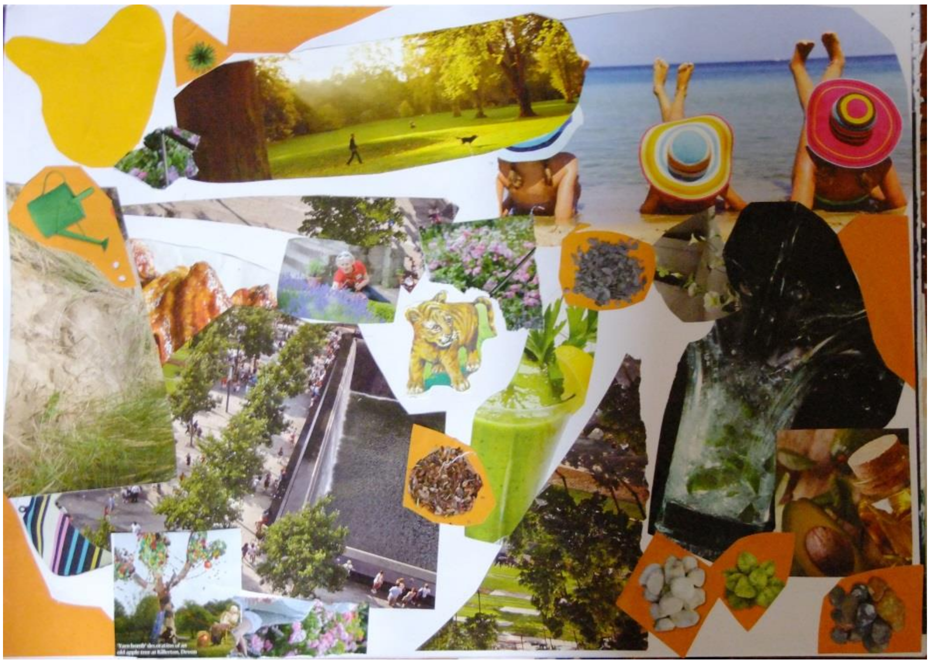


Image 7: Session Four Collage

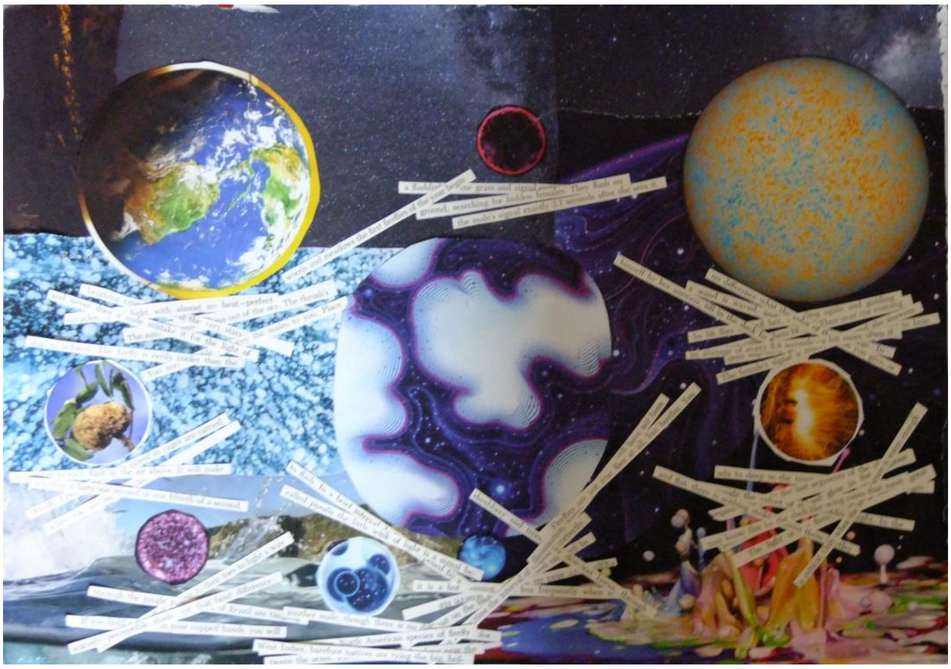


Image 8: Session Four Collage

A7.5 Session Five

A7.5.a Worksheet

SESSION FIVE WORKSHEET

Classmark: ____

Name: ____

1. Make the journey to the book, journal or other item indicated by your classmark (top of page). If no exact match, pick one physically close by. As you get to the item indicated by the classmark, be aware of the experiences of all your senses.

Q1. Make notes about the experience of getting to the item. What senses were engaged? What did you notice?

2. Take the book / other item indicated by your classmark to a nearby quiet place. Start to explore the book with senses other than sight. Take your time, both to explore and to write down. If you remember the Focusing technique we used in an earlier session, this might be useful. Start with TOUCH.

Q2. Make notes about the experience of touching the item. What does it feel like? (take time to go into the experience, wait for it to open up). Make notes – as full as possible. Continue on back if necessary.

3. Next hearing. What can you hear about you (near, further away)? How does the item behave when you handle it – any noises? Explore HEARING carefully.

Q3. Make notes about the experience of hearing the item and using listening. Use back of sheet if necessary / extra sheets.

4. Next TASTE and SMELL. What can you smell around you? How does the book smell? Can you taste anything? Explore TASTE and SMELL carefully.

Q4. Make notes about the experience of smelling the item and its environment, and any experiences of taste. Use back of sheet if necessary / extra sheets.

5. What about OTHER senses (e.g. a ‘6th’ sense / intuition etc.) Explore the experience of being with the book, journal etc. using OTHER senses (if appropriate)

Q5. Make notes about the experience of using other senses to explore the object and its environment. Use back of sheet if necessary / extra sheets.

6. Finally, use SIGHT to explore the item. First look at the book, journal etc. as you might an art object or a natural object. consider its aesthetic qualities. Use sight in the widest sense. Then, READ some of the book/journal etc.

Q6. Make notes about the experience of using sight to explore the object and its environment, and then reading it. Use back of sheet if necessary / extra sheets.

Now return to the cafe!

A7.6 Session Six

A7.6a Drawing Stage Instructions

Non-dominant hand	**Eyes closed**
Pen mounted on stick	**Using pen / crayon in fist (not held with fingers)**
Collaged with torn coloured paper	**Holding pen with mouth**

Non-dominant hand	**Eyes closed**
Pen mounted on stick	**Using pen / crayon in fist (not held with fingers)**
Collaged with torn coloured paper	**Holding pen with mouth**

A7.6.b Acting Stage Instructions

- Facial expression(s)
- Typical postures
- Style of walking
- Any mannerisms
- Speech style / voice
- Style of sitting down
- Key elements this spirit might want to communicate with an audience
- (2 people) dynamics of the relationship with the key character
- (2 or more people) a key incident from the character's life

- Facial expression(s)
- Typical postures
- Style of walking
- Any mannerisms
- Speech style / voice
- Style of sitting down
- Key elements this spirit might want to communicate with an audience
- (2 people) dynamics of the relationship with the key character
- (2 or more people) a key incident from the character’s life