THIS BOOK CALLED MY BODY: AN EMBODIED RHETORIC

By

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ABSTRACT

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Motivated by my experience with dance, movement education, and writing, *This Book Called My Body: An Embodied Rhetoric* is a methodologically diverse project, locating the literal body in Rhetoric Studies. I look to dance and movement education as sites where the body is not only important, but necessary to the articulation of knowledge. This dissertation argues for an expansive definition of rhetoric as the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships. I show how this study can be demonstrated specifically through acts such as balance, weight transfer, range of motion, and fluidity/resilience. This revised notion of rhetoric as both phenomenon and disciplinary practice, works to decolonize bodies, groups of bodies, and language about both. Too, this project helps unseat the false "naturalization" of Cartesian dichotomies and reveal explicit and implicit consequences of such naturalizations in Rhetoric and Composition Studies. Finally, this dissertation argues that writing is a material and physical practice; that the body carries agency within it; and that the field's tendency to "read" the body as another text has resounding complications that obscure racist and colonialist impulses.

My methodological choices for the project call on Debra Hawhee's description of "transdisciplinarity" as well as Jacqueline Jones Royster's "disciplinary landscape." Both insist on an attempt to see things newly, and avoid the preoccupation with re-circulating and re-inscribing the same stories in new language. This new vision requires we suspend our beliefs ingrained in us through our disciplinary lenses, and attempt to look through other fields.

requiring us to see our preoccupations and warrants inherent in our "own" field's operating theories and belief systems. I also rely on Michel De Certeau's tactics and practices to inform the inductive process of my project. In order to attempt a transdisciplined approach to my theories of rhetoric as always embodied, I argue that I must emphasize the practices and citational logic in movement education.

In addition, I trace the body in key Greco-Roman rhetorics, showing how these thinkers have been conceived by Enlightenment philosophers to construct knowledge *about* the body which places it in a position of mistrust, fear, and anxiety. Alongside these readings, I offer different points of entry from another lineage of theorists, that of movement education, identifying a sustained and rich canon of knowledge about the role of the body in meaning-making practice. Not only does this establish another existing canon of material which invigorates our own discipline's understanding about the role of bodies, but the combined work of looking to these texts and contemporary practitioners further theorizes how we see and interpret what I refer to above as "bodily discourse." In the process, bodies are de-textualized, recognized as exigent beings unto themselves, but also beings which exist in a complex system of others, and which all function as relational and coordinated parts.

The implications for such a revision requires a rigorous inquiry into our discipline's current practices in the teaching of writing, as well as in our scholarship. As a case study, I describe what subtext is carried in our discussions about "voice," that, like rhetoric, "voice" is always an embodied act, but which has become abstracted over time and continual colonial practice. My revised definition of rhetoric allows us to reshape our expectations and objectives in all our scholarly (indeed, human) activities, and to intervene in the patterns and practices which have obscured bodies, but also violence's enacted on groups of bodies, and individual ones.

“Plasticity of mind is what makes movement possible at all.”
~Irene Dowd, *Taking Root to Fly*

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More than once, I said to Malea Powell, dissertation chair extraordinaire, “I’ve been waiting to write this dissertation for *years*.” What I had been waiting for, I wasn’t quite sure until just the other day. In some ways, I was hoping for permission, and Malea gave that to me in bushels-full. But too, I was waiting for courage, and what I understand now, is that this is something that comes from my connection to the universe, to the floor. This connection is the kind I try to explain in the following pages and chapters, but for now, please allow me to express my gratitude for all those who have encouraged me to stand in my feet, as fully as was possible at any given moment.

As a new and mostly terrified dancer at the old age of 19, I was fortunate to collide with Killian Manning, who trusted me with her choreography, and introduced me to the world of modern dance as both a physical, emotional, and intellectual activity. I still long for the solace of her technique classes, when we would hang our torsos over our legs, and she would read to us, from Vonnegut, from Cage, from Rich, from whomever, because as she said “some things are easier to hear when you are upside down.” It’s true, K.

Along similar lines, my friendship and work with Cara Reeser taught, and continues to teach me, about the power of silence and seeing. Her patience and humor helped me rehabilitate a shoulder and knee, but right alongside these physical healings were emotional ones too, and with Cara I have learned more about what it means to fail, to make mistakes, to say “I’m sorry” and to witness others doing the same. This is as intrinsic to movement education as it is to teaching writing, as it is to making change in the world, and I am grateful to have had the practice at such difficult tasks with Cara.

I am, of course, wildly thankful for the members of my guidance committee: Julie Lindquist, Trixie Smith, and Dean Rehberger. Julie's unflagging enthusiasm and attentive questions about my hesitance at so many points along the way were just the kind of prods a woman needs when she is about to step out on a ledge, unsure of what is underneath her. My work with Trixie reminded me all along the ledge that I was not, in fact, the only person in the world interested in what I was writing, that I was not the only person to feel the things I did. And Dean's insistence that I not be a sledgehammer (though he may wince at this comment, now), helped me look for a standing position informed by balance and care, rather than might and defensiveness.

And then there is Malea. While I've already mentioned her in the opening to this list of gratitudes, there is always more for me to say. From the very first conversation I had with her, and throughout the process of writing this dissertation, Malea encouraged me to try things I had only ever dreamt of before. Even when I faltered with doubt, or felt exhausted from all the work that goes into such a thing, Malea helped me see possibilities, ways of moving through it all, and reminded me that what I know, and how I have come to know it, is valuable. Not to say she didn't push me, of course, and I am grateful for that too, for I know it's the pushing that helps me to feel the world around me, where I am standing.

Standing in that world, I am increasingly aware of how many people are there with me, a list too long for me to do justice to here. But on that list, Andrea Riley Mukavetz is constant in her willingness to listen to my ridiculous anxieties, to remind me of my successes, to ask me difficult questions, and to laugh out loud in public with me. Fran Yelon honored me with her commitment to moving powerfully in her own body, and sitting across from me at Chapelure every week for months, knitting while I alternated between muttering to myself, to her, or staring

out the window. I also want to thank the members of the Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab, the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, and The Writing Center, all at Michigan State University, for their individual and unique support and assistance. Whether it was in the form of financial assistance, intellectual persistence, or community existence, each of these three institutional spaces were grounding elements for me. And absolutely, within these spaces are many, many people whose individuality and brilliance sparked and helped me to sustain my energy level, especially Marilee Brooks-Gillies, Matt Cox, Doug Schraufnagle, Suzanne Webb, and Trav Webster.

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And finally, there is my family to thank – Louis and Jane Levy, and Kevin Johnston – each of whom let me know in no uncertain terms that she or he had my back at every turn. My father commiserated with me, and at a crucial moment, reminded me to "just let your brain go, Daisy. Do what you know." I have joked about it before, but Dad, I think your chemistry and my writing have more in common than you know. My mother, Jane, is tireless in her encouragement and willingness to listen. I have a shoebox full of notes of affirmation and a stack of beautiful quilts to wrap myself in at the end of a long day of work, thanks to you Mama. And my partner, Kevin, who insisted that I finish, that I say what I had come here to say, even if it was in "baby

steps," also always reassured me that in the end, it's "just a thing." It is, indeed, just a thing, Kev, but I never would have tried it without your support.

And that's the whole point.

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Breath: Supine

I invite you to sit comfortably where you are and close your eyes.

Once you are comfortable sitting here, use your mind's eye to look into your ribcage at your lungs. Picture them as balloons. Give them a color. As you breathe in and out, watch the balloons expand and deflate. Notice where in the balloons the color thins, and where it is darker, where the balloon is less elastic. Don't change the way you breathe; try to just observe.

Take another inhale, noticing what is different in the way your balloons inflate, and as you exhale, feel the weight of your body drift down through your middle, into the bowl of your pelvis, filling the seat of the chair with the weight of your skeleton. Notice if you are holding yourself in the chair, or if the chair is holding you. Notice what you feel in your shoulders. Notice your neck.

Notice how the balloon's expansion presses against the inside of the ribcage in certain places, or against the respiratory diaphragm. Too, as the balloon deflates, it gathers the rib cage, the diaphragm, maybe even parts of the belly back inward, or downward, or center, or some other direction.

Keep watching your balloons fill and empty, pressing against your ribcage, your shoulder blades, your sternum. Can you allow the chair to hold you while you inhale into your balloons? Can you do it while the balloons empty? Does anything change in between the exhale and the moment when you start to breathe in again? What happens in your legs or your arms?

At the end of your next exhale, open your eyes. Notice how you feel after these couple of moments. Is anything different? What is the same? Can you still feel the chair holding you?

Chapter 1: Articulation of Joints: How My Body Learned to Story Itself in Disciplines

Dissertation: A story told out of time

Somewhere in the middle of my project, I remembered that bodies are smart. It seems such a funny thing to say, and also so striking. Isn't that what I had been trying to get people to understand all along? And yet, at some point, or more accurately over and over again during data collection, interpretation, writing, and drinking all the coffee in the world, I remembered what I mean when I say that bodies are smart. I don't need Aristotle to help me know that bodies are smart, neither do I need Hugh Blair, Foucault, Austin, not Damasio, not Burke, not Freud. Definitely not Freud. Bodies are smart because they are, not because these people say so.

In the middle I realized that all along, I had really been asking about consequence. In my prospectus, I asked these questions: If we embrace the body as a means for making knowledge, what happens to all the other infrastructures through which we try to understand? If we embrace understanding kinesthetically, then what do we have to let go? Do we have to? Does this one way of knowing have to become less, by virtue of there being more than this?

In the middle of this project, it occurred to me these were not the questions, not the ones I was concerned with. These questions were easy to answer, and that answer is, of course, NO. Instead, I understood that I was preoccupied with teasing out how moving bodies function in ways that communicate, persuade, interpret, articulate. But, since my answer to the earlier questions, the ones about embracing understanding kinesthetically, is no, then how is it I could show bodies as communicating entities, rather than communicating about bodies?

A Beginning: Coffee Shops and Humanists

I am sitting in a coffee shop in East Lansing, Michigan, worrying about two people I love dearly, both of whom are struggling with health, illness, and the kind of existential angst that usually accompanies both of these things. While I am worrying about both of these people, I am also rereading this very collection of writings you are reading now, as well as a slew of other things I've produced in the last five years. I am trying to find the way, trying to find the answer to what I've been fretting over all this time. What is it, I keep asking myself, about bodies? What is it that I just can't let go of, whenever people start talking about discourse, about language, about rhetoric? Because I can't let go of it. Not in the writing classes I teach, and not in the doctoral program I am finishing. I also, strangely, can't let go of it in the pilates classes I teach, or in my yoga practice. This is the very problem that's driven me to this project, that there's no "way", no answer - as in the right one, the single one. What keeps me from trying to talk about it is the anxiety that I will say the wrong thing. Or worse, that I will say it in a way that makes it seem illogical, fanciful, artsy-fartsy, a bunch of hooey. And *that* is what's at the beginning of this whole endeavor.

We are ground through with the notion of language and knowledge and reason and logic and persuasion and order. My yoga teacher last night suggests that we should see a white light in our bodies, filling up the spaces that are tight, or holding, or hurting. It's a perfectly fine suggestion, and yet, it bothers me - bothers me to the point of distraction. I can't lie on that mat in *savasana*[1] and see white light running through my aching back without thinking of things like "purity" and "salvation" and "grace." And then I am angry. And the white light takes on a brittle

[1] *Savasana* is a common posture to close yoga practice. It's English translation is "corpse pose," as in, to lie like a corpse. The body in this posture is supine, legs straight and hips relaxed, arms to the side and away from the torso just a bit. Generally, the emphasis on this posture is on breathing, not holding a position, but allowing the physical body to deepen all its joints and sockets, allowing the focus to move inward.

quality, sharp through the edges. Those fucking Humanists, I am thinking. Those fucking Scholastics.

You would be right to chuckle at this. It's a sign of over thinking, of a woman who "knows too much," of the dangers of phd work. But now you should be thinking, yourself. You should be wondering about this phrase "over thinking", about how much is *too much* and what is it about a phd that is dangerous. All of this is exactly my point. We have not thought *enough*, not considered what it means to *know* anything, about what consequences and risks our language foists onto the world. Somewhere it became acceptable to separate the act of knowing from our bodies, and to subsequently overlook the work that is borne out, not by our consciousness, not by our soul.

And I am back to thinking about my loved ones, and their own struggles, physical ones as well as emotional, and intellectual, and spiritual. Sometimes deciding you want to live is not enough. Sometimes your body makes the choice for you. All the white light in the world will not kill the cancer that spreads through your lymph nodes. People disagree with me. I know that. And I don't take their argument lightly. I believe that white light (or red, or green, or whatever color it is), and belief in powers greater than you, and positive thinking, and community, and emotional support, and even modern chemistry can all intervene powerfully against a body that is struggling to find its way to continue functioning.

But not all powerfully.

In this space between thinking, belief, and a body's material power is where I continually found myself, during this project. In this space, I felt sure there was something important, something very important, to get to. I could feel it in my personal life, as in these instances with my family members, but I could feel it in other places too – in the rooms where I taught writing,

or those where I was a graduate student, even in "rooms" in the world beyond the academy, in newsrooms, and senate chambers, in neighborhoods in other cities, in other countries. In the span of time during which I worked through this project alone, roughly two years, handfuls of examples[2] presented themselves as indications that there was a disconnect between how we think of bodies, of people, and of the distinctions between both.

Over and over again, I found myself at the limits of rhetoric as a discipline, it seemed. In order to allow for the material body to show itself, and for me to be able to point out the elements I see as critical to an understanding of embodied rhetorical practice, I needed to slow down. I needed to listen to how our disciplinary traditions have silenced and pressured the body out of its potential communication, persuasion, interpretation, and articulation. I needed to listen to the silence, to look at all the places where I could see these bodies, but where it seemed no one else was recognizing them.

I started to wonder why I could see them. What is it about movement, and a knowledge about how bodies function that allows for this kind of visibility? Why did it make me feel as if I was obsessive, over-reaching? Why was I so worried about over-simplifying this conversation? At some point towards the end of the middle, I wrote down this intensely simple list:

<u>A Note on My Logic:</u>

1. Rhetoric is always about power.

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[2] As just a few of these examples: Arizona's passage of SB1070, a supposed "solution" to the "immigration problem"; Trayvon Martin, an unarmed black teenager, is shot down by a neighborhood watch member, allegedly for "suspicious behavior," the shooter going uncharged for months after the event; video footage of US Marines brutally raping, abusing, and murdering Afghani civilians is released to the public in the US; a state representative in Michigan is banned from speaking in her professional and elected capacity on the floor of the house of representatives, for using the word "vagina" in public dissent of a heavily restrictive and punitive piece of legislation against reproductive rights, "vagina" apparently being vulgar and derogatory language.

2. Power can be expressed as power over or power to.

3. The body can be understood entirely as a system of power.

4. The body is rhetorical.

Of course, the conversation is not a simple one, yet, it seemed every time I mentioned my interest and fixation on the body, people would nod, say things like "of course" and "uh huh" and "you've read Hawhee, haven't you?" To which I thought hastily unkind things, and then often turned those unkind things back on myself[3]. At some point, I realized that my irritation was not born from the various responses, but from my own insistence in feeling the need to defend what I was trying to say.

And then I wrote this dissertation, and instead of pointing out all the issues I take with the tendency to oversimplify bodies and knowledge, I committed myself to a different practice – one where I offered an alternative vision of power and force – as an embodied one, which manifests action, ability, energy, fluidity, resilience, balance, range of motion. Describing these elements as rhetorical acts for our field expands our disciplinary patterns to include negotiations of culture, discourse, knowledge as things which are made up of and by all kinds of these moving bodies. Even as our disciplinary traditions have some excellent terminology and concepts for talking about meaning and practice and discourse (and the list of words goes on and on here), I believe we don't use them very well, don't use them with the kind of depth and breadth and fluency that effects power, as in dynamism, as in force, as in motion.

I argued that rhetoric is about movement. What does this mean, I asked myself continually, and what does it give us? If, as I claim above, our discipline is constraining itself

[3] This, we know from Foucault, is one way that the panopticon of the various institutions in our lives works on us, encouraging us to doubt our own initial responses to criticism and then to flip our response towards authority, aiming it at our own "obvious" inadequacy, thereby securing and

with many of the ways we tend to study meaning-making practices and discourse systems, then what should we do differently? Rhetoric describes a study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships. To study rhetoric then, means cultivating an awareness of bodies, space, and time, as entities which are always present, and always changing.

A Beginning: Transdisciplinary Methodology

When I started this project, I was dissatisfied with the ways I hear "embodiment" in our scholarship[4]. I kept seeing this word used in ways that had less and less to do with bodies, explicitly, at least as I have come to understand them in my own personal and professional experience in dance and movement education. I saw and heard embodiment getting taken up as a metaphor for talking about language, or writing, or persuasion. I saw and heard it as another way of talking about affect, as in emotion[5]. But I couldn't find the bodies, the limbs and trunk, and organs, the skin, the tissue, the fluids.

What I have learned as a dancer and educator, is that bodies move themselves through space, they story their way in the world[6]. What I was hearing and seeing, and importantly feeling

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maintaining the status quo.

[4] In a lot of ways, I still am.

[5] These conversations are ones I discuss in more detail in Chapter 3.

[6] Dancers and movement educators are not the only ones to understand bodies this way, of course. Michel de Certeau theorizes about walking bodies as ones which constantly write and rewrite the city as relationships and subversions of structures: "Their story begins on ground level, with footsteps. They are myriad but do not compose a series. They cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative character; a style of tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation. Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 97). Elaine Scarry reconciles the in/expressibility of pain as an interconnection between a) the difficulty of articulating it, b) the "political and perceptual complications" that

as a scholar and teacher of writing and rhetoric is that bodies are a vehicle for the mind, a container of consciousness, one that has to be read, has to be interpreted. This isn't what I had experienced. It isn't what I know. And so I took on this project – and had to go – forgive me – "beyond the body" of the scholarship, to articulate what I was feeling. Debra Hawhee describes coming to a similar place in her introduction to *Moving Bodies.* She says, of her project, that she had "come up against the limits of humanist approaches to the body," reacting to these same approaches' predilection to "freeze bodies, to analyze them for their symbolic properties, thereby evacuating and ignoring their capacity to sense and move through time" (7). I'll reiterate something I stated just a page ago: *Somewhere it became acceptable to separate the act of knowing from our bodies, and to subsequently overlook the work that is borne out, not by our consciousness, not by our soul.*

Hawhee's methodological decision was to move from interdisciplinarity to something she calls *transdicisplinarity,* a move requiring her and her readers to recognize the "limits of knowledge itself" (3) and in so doing, to suspend our own disciplinary norms and frameworks. It sounds hard. It *is* hard. But the notion of recognizing what I do not know, and how I do not know it came to be liberating, and in fact, gave back to me a sense of all the multiple things I *do know,* and the ways I know them[7]. Rhetoric studies wasn't offering me a way to make meaning about

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result, and c) "the material and verbal" quality of expression: "Physical pain has no voice, but when at least it finds a voice, it begins to tell a story, and the story is about the inseparability of these three subjects, their embeddedness in one another" (*The Body in Pain* 3). Trinh T. Minh Ha insists that *story* is both a theoretical and practical necessity to physical survival, as well as being incomprehensible without the material and livable self: "Understanding is creating and living, such an immense gift that thousands of people benefit from each past or present life being lived. The story depends on every one of us to come into being." (*Woman, Native, Other* 119).

[7] Hawhee is not the only scholar in our discipline to suggest such a radical extra-disciplinary vision of course. As one very recently published example, see Jaqueline Jones Royster's reflection on her own "disciplinary landscaping" concept in *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*, a "metaphor" she introduced years earlier, and claims "served as a springboard from which I

bodies and knowledge making practices because there are limits to what that discipline understands and marks as knowable. But what I found, or perhaps more accurately, came to remember about what I already knew, was a deep and sustained theoretical, intellectual, and pragmatic history of knowledge about bodies, what they know, and their relationship to the mind.

Even more significant, I would say this tradition, this *rhetorical* tradition, has much to offer us today about how to see and feel the body, our bodies as knowing and moving agents of change. Mabel Ellsworth Todd[8] wrote in *The Thinking Body*, in 1937, that

> Living, the whole body carries its meaning and tells its own story, standing, sitting, walking, awake or asleep. It pulls all the life up into the face of the philosopher, and sends it all down into the legs of the dancer. A casual world over-emphasizes the face. Memory likes to recall the whole body. It is not our parents' faces that come back to us, but their bodies, in the accustomed chairs, eating, sewing, smoking, doing all the familiar things. We remember each as a body in action. (1)

A Beginning: 2010 RSA Biennial Conference, Keynote Address.

Sharon Crowley is speaking, asking us what we shall do with all the white people. I feel my skin prickle. Crowley is invoking W.E.B. DuBois, and I understand why, or at least I think I do. She wants us to reconsider the question, perhaps even the moment in which DuBois felt

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started thinking in a more coherent way about the need in RCL to incorporate deliberately into our theoretical and methodological approaches mechanisms for moving beyond the constraints of habitual paradigms in order to notice conceptual and ecological features that might otherwise go unnoticed." (11).

[8] Todd is one of Movement Education's early theorists and practitioners. Her book, *The Thinking Body*, is still considered to be a reference for kinesiologists, dancers, physical therapists, massage therapists, etc.

compelled to ask it. *I feel my skin prickle.* There's too much assumed with this question, too much unarticulated critique. I certainly don't want to argue with DuBois' point; but I *am* curious about Crowley's invocation. I trust her intention is respectable, not a rash act, not an appropriation of DuBois' act of necessity for a cheap joke. In fact, I believe Crowley is acting to hold an ironic mirror to the faces in the room. To the bodies, perhaps.

As I sit in her audience, I wonder how many variants of that question I might ask. What shall we do with all the Straight People, maybe. The Hearing People. The Rich People, et cetera.[9] Of course, this series of questions is not simple; not to answer, and neither to decipher what meaning they're trying to get at. As I sit in her audience, I am preoccupied with a feeling I've been trying to articulate for the last few months, that we might be asking the question in a language that does not offer us enough in its words. I want to suggest that the power of spoken, written, heard language allows us, we Hearing, Straight, Rich, White people, to avoid other languages – those that reveal themselves and are revealed to us as they are practiced and enacted and felt in the bodies around us, in our own bodies. After all, these questions, whether they are about white or brown people, queer or non-queer, native or colonizer, are all about bodies – those that mark or have been marked over and over again, inscribed, written and written upon.

Months and years later, I return to this moment as a defining one, for my own preoccupations. I believe that Crowley was asking us to look at our own bodies through her ironic mirror, and that she was performing this mirror in order to reveal other things too - to notice the history of power as registered in our particular bodies. Or, more, to illuminate the workings of an ideology not yet gone from our world.

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[9] I've capitalized each of these identifications purposefully, here. In some cases, the communities represented here, specifically, Hearing, the capital letter is not my own invention but a way of marking a culture, one that can be named and is coherent. Capital H Hearing is used

I don't believe she succeeded in this gesture.

In order for this room full of rhetoric historians[10] to get a good glimpse at our own bodies, we would need an indication that our bodies are important, as signifiers. Not only do we require this signification, but we would need an acknowledgment that our bodies are living things with critical impact on our disembodied[11] selves. If we were to look in an *actual* mirror, those of us in the RSA Audience might see the color of our skin, mostly because it's been pointed out to us. We might see the ways we have aged, or not. We might "see"[12] the ways in which culture has worked its way on our image - what we wear, the color of our hair, the style of it.

But I am thinking of what we would not see, instead.[13] We would likely not see the ways we carry our shoulders, how we stand in our feet, the shape of our spine. We would probably not hear the sound of our voice, the accents, the colloquialisms we use (or don't), the rhythm of our speech, the breath we bring to the words and sounds we utter. Other things we likely pass over are the particularities of our genders - while we might recognize how our clothes negotiate those identifiers, most of us will notice these things, and then dismiss them. We don't see these things

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in Deaf and Hard of Hearing cultures to denote a person who self-identifies with other folks.

[10] The Rhetoric Society of America is comprised of a variety of types of scholars; however, the convention is often attended heavily by rhetoric theory historians. I note this dominance to recognize the proclivity of scholars who are focused on historical work, but who also perhaps remain ignorant of the physicality that history maintains, even in a present reality.

[11] For the sake of argument, and at the risk of being imprecise, I suggest here, that "disembodied" can be code for "intellectual."

[12] "See" is in quotation marks here because I intend a figurative seeing to infer "interpret" or "read."

[13] And here, I mean "see" literally, as in "to recognize with our optic nerves."

because we believe they are unimportant, markers of the frivolous, manners of identification which have no place in the professional world, where intellect is king.[14]

We have learned to consider race in special ways, contextualizing it in terms of the color of our skin, and the histories we have studied and experienced. Those who carry the mark of extra-pigmented skin have also carried the burden of awareness and internalized inferiority marked through other physical markers - broad noses, or hooked ones, wide hips, high gluts, full lips, slanted eyes, stick-straight hair, or nappy. We know this list. For these bodies, attention to the physical is crucial, unavoidable, fundamental to how lives are constructed. But for those of us with the good fortune to carry whiteness,[15] physical particularities and attributes are passed over, unseen. We don't make our selves (in our minds) as entities with physical lives; to do so would acknowledge limitation, fallibility, weakness. Physical lives include multiple and persistent threats to survival; we need water, food, shelter: we die.

In the beginning of my project, I worried about distinctions between "embodied" and "bodily." It seemed to me that every time I used the word "embodied," I was invoking something not entirely bodily, as in not trapped in a material reality. So often, "embodiment" suggested a "cleaned up version" of bodies, a quality to aspire to, but which doesn't require mess. And so, I would change up my terminology, and get myself stuck in what I see now is a predicament which only distracted me from a clearer route. Was I trying to give a theory of bodily writing or of embodiment? This continually tripped me up, trying to nail down these words, trying to align myself somewhere in a neat category.

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[14] I do mean king, and all the assumed signifiers that correspond - Male power which is singular and total.

[15] and other markers of white privilege

The answer to this question, in retrospect is *Yes.* The answer is *Stop making it so neat and tidy, Daisy.*

Refrain: A Note on My Logic and A Little Context

1. Rhetoric is always about power.

2. Power can be expressed as power over or power to.

3. The body can be understood entirely as a system of power.

4. The body is rhetorical.

What does it mean to make such a claim: the body is rhetorical? At this starting point, I'll modify the claim just a bit, to state that rhetoric is always an embodied practice. Recall the breath I asked you to explore in these opening pages, how the balloons inside your chest filled and emptied, and how that filling and emptying created conditions of lightness and heft in other parts of your body. In Movement Education, there is a constant attention to these conditions, as they exist in gravity. Clearly, these conditions do not stay the same, and are not controllable, in the ways many of us think of controlling language, say, or writing. Gravity sucks, goes the bumper sticker, the point being that no matter who you are, how smart, strong, and effectual you are, gravity will always pull you down, will always root you to the earth.

In our traditional, disembodied conception of rhetoric, we can think of our will as exerting force, or power, over other things - our words, for example, or words of other people, or other people themselves. We can change their *minds,* influence their *desires*, their *decisions*, their *actions*. I argue that to think of this as somehow not bodily is naive and uninformed. Rhetoric is always an embodied practice, regardless how you intend it, and always there, just as

gravity is, whether you think of it as a force to which other bodies must yield, or one which connects bodies and the environment around them.

It's the way we experience that force that matters, and the way we continue to orient ourselves within it. Rhetoric, as an embodied practice, is always constituted of layers of changeable entities, as speakers, purposes, texts, audiences, and bones, tendons, ligaments, and nerves. In the relationships between them all,[16] in the slippage of these joints, meaning is made, decisions forced, patterns put in motion. Rhetoric as an embodied practice means that the body is more than a text to be read by the mind. It means, too, that so are texts more than the printed word on the page, but that they are also the accumulation of practices and bodies engaged in the production of those pages. Rhetoric as an embodied practice means that rhetoric is something we *do*, something that lives in our bodies, as much as in our minds.

How does it, though, live in our bodies? This is the question that movement educators help me to answer, and a central question to this dissertation. As I stated earlier, I believe rhetoric to be the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships[17]. In order to articulate these qualities, relationships, and changes, I offer four principles of physical movement: proprioception, innervation, coordination, and locomotion, explained in the coming section. Each of these principles play a part in how we arrange our bodies in relation to gravity,[18] but they are also useful in terms of rhetorical theory. Additionally, and importantly, they are principles I considered necessary to the orchestration and completion of this project, ones that construct a

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[16] This list is certainly not exhaustive, but merely representative.

[17] from page 9

[18] a necessity I call on and describe explicitly in the next chapter

methodological orientation attending to the complexities of the relationship between bodies and meaning-making practices.

PROPRIOCEPTION describes a system which is crucial to regulating all other systems within the body. It's often referred to as the system which tells us how to move specific body parts, where we are at any moment in time, and how we can get somewhere else. Proprioception is made up of three different types of awareness: kinesthetic;[19] labyrinthine;[20] and visceral.[21] These different types work together, and in collaboration with what Mabel Todd calls the "outer senses" to let our bodies sort out how we know where we are, which ultimately leads to how we know *who* we are. For Todd, proprioception "is responsible for the appearance of the individual as an organized unit when he is moving about" (27). In terms of my methodological orientations, maintaining my own awareness of where I am, who I am, and how to get to the next place is one way to describe the general arc of my project, more of which I describe below. But for now, assume this arc to be described as my locatability in a discipline which generally identifies with an ancient Greco-Roman and Western European tradition, my own experience within and outside this tradition, and my desire to make sense of these inside and outside experiences.

INNERVATION refers to the process of stimulating a part of the body with nerves. While proprioception regulates a body's awareness about location, relationship, and motion, this stimulus spurs fibers of muscle tissue to contract, lengthen, engage, stretch, work, or release, according to the body's specific goals. These goals may range from gross motor activities –

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[19] or movement-related

[20] or, spatially related

[21] This one is a little more difficult to reduce easily. Visceral awareness is generally not associated with any conscious awareness. Todd has this to say about it "They [visceral sensations] are not related directly to the motor apparatus save in certain areas […] A feeling of fatigue, for instance, may mean a culmination or sum-total of unrecognized stimuli from fatigues

taking a step, say, or reaching overhead – or they may be internal, more finely tuned, such as the way your lungs are innervated to expand and shrink as you breathe, and all the related actions required of such an event. According to Todd, again, "the signaling between the various parts of the body and the cerebellar switching station is like that in the dispatching office, only far more complicated" (37). Methodologically, innervation looks similar to a web; stories, data, experience exist in a type of signaling network, connecting to each other, and cuing each other to contract and expand, or release and stretch, or some other activity, accordingly. No elements of this research project exist without "talking" to each other, in this innervated system.

COORDINATION draws on both principles above, using proprioception for an appropriate sense of where and who I am in space, and innervation to supply the various elements of the project with commands and actions to complete. The combination of these two principles, as long as they are balanced and working together, results in a balanced effort between them and the related body parts as "automatic and not the result of any consciously directed movement of particular muscles. It is the result of a combination of reflexes, no one of which can be selected as in itself 'causing' the movement or pattern of movement" (Todd 33). Coordination is a phenomenon referred to when we say things like "it just feels right" or "it's natural," indicating we are unable to identify any one system or body part that is the initiator of movement, instead feeling as if the *whole body* has worked, usually, with a feeling of effortlessness. In this project, I claim that this sense of coordination is one of those principles of embodiment, and rhetoric, that we are invoking when we try to explain "good writing[22]." Too, coordination as a methodological choice, requires I attend to the multiple parts of a project, either simultaneously or in ways where there is not an identifiable cause/effect relationship, as this relationship is artificial, and one

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stomach, liver, other viscera or muscles" (*The Thinking Body 27)*

mode that gets placed on top of much research in our field, resulting in inefficient and overly labored movement patterns.

LOCOMOTION is the final principle of an embodied methodology, one that involves elements of the previous three. The ability or act of moving from place to place requires 1) an understanding of that place and what other places exist, 2) a communications and networking system to relate the multiple parts involved, and 3) a finely orchestrated series of signals and actions that can fire with ease and clarity. Movement, both the desire for it, and the ability to commit it, is at the center of rhetoric. While we may not be focusing on the movement inherent in a given body, we are conducting research on studies of how meaning is made, how it is transformed, as well as how it transforms other people, places, and things. We are teaching our students this study, as a strategy for survival, maybe, or for mobility in a stratified world.

A Beginning: Interventions

In the pilates classes I teach, one of the most difficult things we have to be able to do is to lift our head off the floor, from a supine position. The head is heavy, of course, and sits on top of a supremely unstable structure, that of the cervical spine. Each of the seven vertebrae in this section of the spine is highly mobile, and unlike other areas of the body, this one does not benefit from large muscle groups surrounding it as support. This is a good thing; it facilitates our ability to look over one shoulder, or to bend our head in any number of other directions. This also makes for a very unstable platform when we are lying on our back, and need, for whatever

[22] I take up this claim in more detail in Chapter 4

reason, to lift our head. The ability to do this requires a kind of postural strength and thoracic mobility[23] that many of us just don't have, for a variety of reasons.

So, in most cases, when someone first comes to pilates, and is faced with this difficult task right away,[24] she or he struggles to do it without neck or shoulder fatigue. My role, in this case, is to *intervene* in the patterns this particular body just can't get around, by helping to hold their head up with my hand, say, in order for them to begin a new pattern. Rather than continuing to engage the muscles of the neck and the chest, they can start to experience other ways of supporting their head on their spine, and a different way of maintaining their skeleton in gravity. This intervention is another important part of what I argue is an embodied methodology, and it has ramifications for all our academic and community commitments. My purpose,as a scholar[25] is to look for movement patterns – and then decide if they are efficient or not. My goal is not to identify what's *wrong* about that pattern, but instead, where energy is getting stuck, where coordination is inhibited, where proprioception is challenged or weakened; then, I can intervene in that pattern, find possibility for new ones, and support the process in the meantime.

As one of these sites of movement patterns, in Chapter 2 I look to one of our field's long-hailed traditions in the history of rhetoric for ways bodies have been understood . While much of the current scholarship in Rhetoric Studies is now including multiple traditions and legacies, the ancient Greco-Roman line is still held up by many as indicative of the "birthplace" of

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[23] refers to mobility through the thoracic spine, which corresponds to the spinal vertebrae in line with the rib cage, one rib inserting into each of these vertebrae

[24] Lifting your head off the floor, and supporting it, is something that happens in nearly every exercise in the floor work of a pilates class, and in most exercises in the work using machines as well.

[25] as well as a teacher, and a writer.

Rhetoric.[26] The arguments around whether or not this is, indeed, the birthplace, is not as important to my point as is the reality that plenty of people do still think of it this way. Given this, and even by those of us who resist this easy location of an origin, the dominance of ancient Greco-Roman traditions in contemporary and popular thought about discourse and knowledge production makes my search's beginning necessarily linked to the works[27] of Gorgias, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.[28]

What is most interesting to me about our discipline's notion of embodiment, specifically the absence of material bodies, is the way in which these viewpoints seem so naturalized, even in daily conversations in seminars, and conference presentations. Very few people seem curious about the body itself. This is, to me, entirely consistent with colonialism, racism, theories of dominance – an erasure of the physical body even as the discourse about them becomes more and more visible[29]. At the same time, it is also entirely *inconsistent* with how bodies are

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[26] Consider the popular texts for teaching the history of rhetorical theory: Bizzell and Herzberg's *Rhetorical Tradition,* Crowley and Hawhee's *Ancient Rhetorics,* Corbett and Connors' *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student.*

[27] Of course, our disciplinary attachments to these lineages are filtered through the powerful influence of Early Modern Europe, in particular the Scholastics and later, Enlightenment philosophers. When I mention the ancient Greeks and Romans and their claims and belief systems, I am of course, referring to the ways their works have been translated and codified in very particular ways consistent with the agenda of those in EME who are credited with doing much of this codification.

[28] There are plenty of other ancient Greeks and Romans to pick from, of course. I use these five as a sampling, to show the consistency over time and through the traditional canon, of how bodies figure.

[29] This is yet another instance of something Foucault has pointed out to us, in his genealogy of discourse on sexuality, in particular "that Western man has been drawn for three centuries to the task of telling everything concerning his sex,; that since the classical age there has been a constant optimization and an increasing valorization of the discourse on sex; and that this carefully analytical discourse was meant to yield multiple effects of displacement, intensification, reorientation, and modification of desire itself (*The History of Sexuality: Vol. 1* 23*)*.

arranged, presented, and re-presented in other venues, particularly in dance and movement education. I realized that one primary goal of this project was to position these consistencies and inconsistencies alongside one another, and in Chapter 2 I do just that. The positioning helps to show us how classical Greco-roman rhetorical theory has been enacted to submerge physical bodies, and also helps to particularize the first two claims in my logic: that rhetoric is always about power; and that power can be expressed as power over, or power to.

This submersion of physical bodies has become an important moment in my project. As a movement educator, I know that change occurs after awareness; and so, in order to build a theory of embodied rhetoric, I needed to see as many places where those bodies existed. In order to show you how bodies are agents of knowledge production, I first had to show you where those bodies are. I wanted the Greeks and Romans to be present and highly visible, as well as the Europeans who came to use them in such specific ways.

In addition, my previous knowledge about how bodies work, and how they are their own discursive practices, was knowledge I wanted to share. So, my interviews with Barbara Mahler,[30] and my research in the New York Performing Arts Library's Jerome Robbins Dance Archives help to make visible multiple ways that the body is understood as an agent of meaning-making. I begin to show these multiple ways in Chapter 2, alongside our disciplinary traditions, as a way to complicate the view. Especially, the data I collected from Mahler and my archival research fills out my discussion of the distinction between power over, and power to, as in the 2nd claim in my logic. As an example of how to understand this distinction, I rely on the trope of

[30] Barbara Mahler is a dancer and movement educator, living in New York City, who graciously granted me interviews for my own project. For over 30 years, she has been one of the innovators and developers of Re-Education Technique: Klein Stretch and Placement, a system of building awareness and functional movement. Mahler maintains an active and well-respected teaching practice in New York City, as well as around the United States and abroad.

"voice," one which has explicit ramifications for much of our work in Rhetoric and Composition Studies.

Chapter 3 builds from my introduction of movement education as a theoretical paradigm, to further elaborate how another understanding of bodies and motion can deepen our discipline's work of studying meaning-making practices. In this chapter, I ask us all to consider as primary our relationship to gravity, both literally and figuratively. Gravity is one of the foundational forces to entertain in movement education, and you may have guessed that it's not as simple as it sounds. Orienting and reorienting to gravity is a physical activity that is constant, and one which requires a fluid, resilient[31] body to sustain, in order for the individual body to survive, adapting to its always changing environment. Not only that, but these reorientations ensure an individual body maintains its relationship to other ones – bodies and environments both. By articulating some of the ways we might use this notion of reorientation in our disciplinary work, I am returning to the third claim in my logic: The body can be understood entirely as a system of power.

Similarly to the way I position traditional canonical rhetorical theory alongside what I am arguing is a model of embodied rhetorical theory in the earlier chapter, Chapter 3 takes up the task of positioning current Rhetoric and Composition Studies scholarship that maintains a singular orientation to gravity alongside other work that I argue moves and reorients to allow the "body" of our discipline to learn and integrate multiple movement patterns, making us more adaptable, more fluid, more resilient. I outline three important notions of the body[32], taken from

[31] Both of these ideas – fluidity and resilience – are ones I illustrate in detail in Chapter 2.

[32] Specifically, these notions are that bodies are fundamentally unstable, that bodies' centers are moving and shifting, and that there is nothing inherently good or bad about any particular body.

movement education, that suggest even more possibility for how we might research and teach in our discipline, thereby building greater functionality.

But just to show these two approaches next to each other was not enough, I felt, not satisfying. It certainly made obvious the discrepancies in paradigms, but did little to mitigate them. If, as I claim above, the goal in a transdisciplinary methodology is to broaden perspective, rather than just to share different ones, I need to offer some tools, terminology maybe, or lenses through which we might reconcile the multiplicity. In Chapter 4, I continue elaborating my logic, as listed in this introduction, that as I show in Chapter 3, the body can be understood as a system of power, and since, as I've detailed in Chapter 2, rhetoric is always about some version of power, then *the body is rhetorical*. How to understand it as such, requires all the previous concepts of fluidity, resilience, gravity, patterns of movement, instability, centering, and a distancing from assuming an inherent valuation of bodies. These concepts work together, in movement education, but also in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, as ones which culminate in larger phenomenon: Balance, Weight Transfer, and Range of Motion. These three phenomena are ones which translate meaningfully when thinking about how we, in our discipline, might study bodies, as well as how we study discourse of all kinds, as well as how we write and teach writing.

One aspect of my central argument is that our traditional definitions of rhetoric and histories of rhetorical theory constrain us in ways that are inappropriate and irresponsible. As an alternative to ways to see bodies as rhetorical agents, in Chapter 5, I argue performance theory provides us with some useful interventions. This alternative may well share some European lineage, and focuses similarly on systems of knowledge production, but in this case the body is not at all submerged. In fact, it's surfaced and even integrated. Many scholars of rhetoric are

using performance analytics with their rhetorical theories; my aim is not to imply I am the first to suggest it. However, what I am claiming is that what *performance* allows us is a way to communicate our awareness about ideological discourses as they are embedded into our canon, and through our own bodies. Also, performance theories can allow us other choices about how to theorize what relationships can possibly exist between bodies, language, and knowledge. Once again, my knowledge as a movement educator pushes me to remind us all that if you are looking to affect change, awareness may be the first goal, but once you have begun that process, you must also begin to build new patterns of movement, of thinking, of being in the world.

Embodiment as a rhetorical practice, or as a methodological orientation, is only experienced as a system, deeply layered with strategies and tactics. It is a phenomenon of motion and change, which can't be seen or felt in ways that don't account also for the myriad forces that surround us. Rhetoric as an embodied practice is not simple; it can't be reduced to how the Greeks/Romans address the body, neither to how "other" cultures emphasize the body in admirable ways. Rather, rhetoric as an embodied practice insists that ideology, language, and material practices work together and on each other in order to shape and impact the world.

Finally, this dissertation marks rhetoric studies in the following ways: 1) Our discipline has maintained a colonialist paradigm[33] about the value and worth of a body; 2) Looking to multiple intellectual and theoretical paradigms about the value and worth of a body is critical to our methodological and pedagogical commitments; and 3) Contextualizing ideology and discourse as always material, always bodily, reorients us as researchers, teachers, and members

[33] In my original notes, I wrote that this was accidental. When I reread my notes, I put "" around the word, and later, as I typed it into my document, I took the word out altogether. While my dissertation points out this phenomenon of preserving a colonialist agenda, it does not work extensively to *prove it.* That work has been taken up by other scholars, such as Walter Mignolo, Qwo-Li Driskill, Andrea Riley Mukavetz, Malea Powell, Jacqueline J. Royster, and many others.

of multiple communities invested in the production and distribution of knowledge and engagement in all elements of human life.

Chapter 2: "Stacking the Bones": European Narratives of Rhetorical Bodies

We, in this discipline, have told ourselves a consistent story about the necessity of words in our understanding of bodies, one with deep roots. Often, I suggest, we don't even realize the extent to which we are telling this story, at the same time that we claim to be expanding the narrative, broadening our scholarly perspective. The deep-rooted story persists, one about the relative worth and subsequent dependence of bodies on consciousness, a story which effaces the body for something "richer" or "more complex" or "discursive." In one graduate seminar I attended, while I was trying to make a point about the bodily quality of knowledge, a fellow graduate student cut me off, to say "But we are talking about *consciousness,* Daisy. Not bodies." My response[34] was perhaps a little short-tempered, or too hasty, but in the moment, I was flabbergasted. Somehow I had overlooked the extent to which my peers accepted the notion that knowing was not something that occurred in their cells, or even in their organs – such as the brain. Afterwards, I began to see that this is not an uncommon belief, at least not in our discipline, and maybe even in other fields in the humanities. I was curious about how we got to this place, knowing that there are other professions, academic and otherwise, that didn't accept the same assumptions. If rhetoric is always about power, then what is the body's purpose? Surely it had one, I thought to myself, as an undeniable, and unavoidable aspect to human life.

What I offer next is a detailed examination of the story, as I have come to understand it, woven through what is still considered our discipline's primary canon. As I've already pointed

[34] To be fair, I can't recall the exact words I uttered, but it was some attempt to equate consciousness with brains and bodies. Looking back, I find the moment itself to be most instructive. My fellow student's exasperation (for that's certainly how it seemed to me) with my persistent insertion of bodies into conversations that were needlessly (in my opinion) eliminating them signals to me a well-fortified resistance to the possibility that bodies play a powerful role in

out, this canon is still heavily invested with the ancient Greeks and Romans – all of whom were mostly uncomfortable, in my estimation, with the very existence of bodies[35]. From this lineage, we rhetors, compositionists, and theorists inherit and reinscribe our prioritization of language, ideas, words, and epistemology. Implicit in these priorities is reflected our disciplinary ancestry's discomfort and mistrust of the physical self, and which results in an unstated, and largely unequivocal, acceptance of rhetorical power as having *power over*. Over what, you may be asking. By looking closely at selective texts[36] from this primary canon, I argue that rhetorical power has been manifested as a force *over* physical bodies themselves by erasing their very physicality and surveilling them with instruments of governance and religion.

In addition, I argue that the difficulty of erasing and policing these bodies results in a need to reconcile other qualities, ones endemic to rhetoric as a practice. Specifically, the quality of *desire* begins my argument that rhetorical power can also be felt as *power to* – to move, to speak, to make, to effect change. In this claim, I identify two important elements borrowed from movement education, *fluidity* and *resilience*; and through these elements as well as from close analysis of our primary canon, I link one of our disciplinary tradition's fundamental concerns – that of *voice* – to rhetoric, to the body, and to power. Limiting our understanding of power as it has been, as primarily something to hold over another thing, restrains us. These restraints are felt intellectually, of course, in terms of how we pursue our research and teaching, but they are also

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the way we make meaning and understand the world.

[35] The existence of bodies is a foundational concept to all my claims in this dissertation, rather than the "idea" of them. Much as I state in Chapter 1 regarding gravity, bodies are always present, and as such, they are always *doing*.

[36] Gorgias' "Encomium to Helen", Plato's "Gorgias", Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics", and "On Rhetoric" , Cicero's "Oratory", and Quintilian's "Instiutio."

felt physically, as arms of the imperial project always reaching to expand itself, and to conquer people and lands.

The texts I draw from aren't exhaustive, of course, and are not offered here to prove without exception that the Ancient Greeks and Romans disavowed the physical self. In fact, we know otherwise, and examples of how we mark the physical self in the ancient Greco-Roman tradition are described in the following section. Much of these examples, I claim, are easily interpreted to re-circulate our acceptance of a *power over* relationship: knowledge over body. My hope is that, by suggesting an alternative paradigm for power, we can begin the process of other interpretations, and in these interpretations we might revise our perspective, cultivating new patterns and orientations.

Deferring the Physical Body

Deferral happens in a couple of ways, as I see it. We may talk about or allude to culturally identified bodies often, in rhetoric studies. For example, consider the edited collections by Lewicki-Wilson and Wilson's and Crowley and Selzer, *Embodied Rhetorics: Disability in Language and Culture* and *Rhetorical Bodies,* both of which include articles on the material experience and cultural construction of *discourse about* bodies, as well as the lived consequences attributed to some of those same bodies. This book, an important collection of scholarship bridging scholars from disability studies and rhetoric studies, does remind us all of the inescapability of having a body and of the value in studies that help to reshape what we mean when we write about bodies and study them. Yet, the pieces in this book seem primarily concerned with embodied rhetoric as rhetoric about bodies. This is important, **very important**, I assure you – for as I've mentioned repeatedly, rhetoric has real consequences for us all, whether

we are thinking of ideological ones, or political ones, or everyday occurrences. My point about the deferral is less about this, than about the ways the literal body gets seen as meaning-maker.

Too, remember Hawhee's *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece,* and Fleckentstein's *Embodied Literacies: Imageword and a Poetics of Teaching.* Hawhee works to remind our discipline to see the "interstices between athletics and rhetoric in order to help elaborate rhetoric's emergence in a network of educational and cultural practices articulated through and by the body." (*Bodily Arts* 4). A year earlier, Fleckenstein insists that "Locked within the word, we cannot understand how images hurt or heal us. We cannot understand how images embody meaning at the same time that they render it communal." (*Imageword* 11). Both Hawhee and Fleckenstein show how bodies are players in the production of meaning, and allude to the ways culture is enacted through them.

Rather than emphasizing the cultural construction of bodies through discourse, some of us, in rhetoric studies, *infer* bodies, when we describe rhetoric as a physically enacted practice. In her introduction to *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, editor Andrea Lunsford points out the materiality of this kind of scholarship when she claims that "the essays in this volume aim to contribute […] first of all by *listening* - and listening hard - to and for the voices of women in the history of rhetoric; by becoming, as Cheryl Glenn suggests, the audience who can at last give voice to women lost to us; […] and by acknowledging and exploring the ways in which they have been too often dismissed and silenced" (6). For Lunsford and, by association, the scholars whom she has included in this volume of work, there seem to be two different levels of physicality – that of the actual voices of the women who have been silenced, that of the sound of the voice of the scholar speaking now[37] for these silenced women.

[37] the quiet and listening audience

Yet, while many of us do consider the relevance or effect or impact of the material body, often the effect leans toward something more abstract, even if it includes an influence with real material consequences, lived experience. Take Brueggeman's *Lend Me Your Ear: Rhetorical Constructions of Deafness.* In it, she is indicating the weight and texture of Deaf Culture, connecting notions of language and culture to the body in direct ways. Brueggemann is theorizing about a language system reliant on bodies[38] in terms of its rhetorical weight. She is using classical rhetorical theory to talk about the structure, use, and social elements of language of a group of people who cannot[39] speak, read, and/or write in the ways we assume are the standard mode. Importantly, Brueggemann points to ways in which rhetoric, rhetorical theory, and history have been used and can be used still to maintain sites of power or agency.

However, the bodies themselves are notable for their absence. As I notice this, I am wondering again why it seems we can't admit the bodies themselves into the conversation. I've already intimated that the answer might go something like this: "Rhetoric is about discourse. About language." Maybe we might ask in response "But how can we talk *about* bodies *without* language?" Or "We only know our bodies *through* language." And "*We need words and discourse to make meaning* out of our bodies." All of these questions make sense to me, but strike me as ultimately preoccupied with working within unqualified expectations. Certainly language is the most convenient, and possibly the only accessible, device we have for communicating our ideas. I don't mean to suggest otherwise, neither to do I seek to undo all existing knowledges and understanding about the relevance of language to our meaning-making

[38] Not "just" American Sign Language, as that system, but all manner of communication tools that are customary for Deaf culture.

[39] or choose not to, or cannot in the way Quintiliam may have intended as "speaking well"

practices. Instead, I'd like to point out some of the cultural and historical practices which have influenced our preoccupations, so we might mark them as such.

Surveilling/Knowing the Body

Gorgias' logic of the body lives in the emotions, however those emotions are clearly articulated through the soul. The soul, for Gorgias and others, acts as the stabilizing force for this[40] body, and these emotions. In "Encomium to Helen" Gogias relates speech and emotions to drugs and body: "just as different drugs dispel different secretions from the body, and some bring an end to disease and others to life, so also in the case of speeches, some distress, others delight, some cause fear, others make the hearers bold, and some drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil persuasion" (Ch. 14). Emotions, through speech, act on the body as drugs might, and therefore this body needs some counter anchor to the "bewitching" and bodily affect, an anchor that lives in the soul.

Plato's version of this analogy is even more constrictive, maintaining the body's constant relationship to the soul, a relationship necessitating the soul's oversight. The necessity is borne from Plato's concern that without the soul, the body is incapable of making sound decisions:

> For indeed, if the soul were not in command of the body, but the latter had charge of itself, and so cookery and medicine were not surveyed and distinguished by the soul, but the body itself were the judge, forming its own estimate of them by the gratifications they gave it, we should have a fine instance of what Anaxagoras described, […] everything

[40] as in, the body to which Gorgias is referring to, which is a specific one, of course. See the following footnote.

would be jumbled together, without distinction as between medicinal and healthful and tasty concoctions (Section 465d, my emphasis).

Clearly, for Plato, the body is a thing that needs surveillance, in particular it needs to be managed by the soul. It (the body) is prone to overly decorous acts, self-flattery, and fancy. On the other hand, with the supervision of the soul (and it's corresponding social venues – medicine and justice), Man[41] and society exist as well-tempered, rational experiences, ordered and thus capable of knowing Truth. Without this supervision , man would be unknowable, undistinguishable for its parts. The body is only knowable by the soul, and only when the correct relationship is in place – the soul "in command."

We might compare Quintilian's concerns about bodies[42] to Plato's; both feel a body is something to be disciplined, restricted, and contained. Where Plato thinks the body is an obstacle for the soul's endeavor to know itself, or to know Truth, Quintilian is adamant that the body is an obstacle towards propriety, and *propriety* is the path to rightness. Quintilian shows his distaste for overly ebullient displays of emotion, of "the prevailing practice of allowing boys to stand up or leap from the seats in the expression of their applause. Young men, even when they are listening to others, should be temperate in manifesting their approval" (*Institutio* 2.3.9).

But even restraint is not enough: Quintilian is quite clear about the impropriety of "boys sitting mixed with young men," in the off chance some unmentionable behavior should elapse.

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[41] I use the gender specific pronoun intentionally here, and throughout. It's my understanding that, while there were women considered to be rhetors, or in any case, worthy of discourse, for the most part, the speakers whom I'm referencing here meant to exclude women from the debate. It's my understanding that when it comes to women, bodies meant something altogether different.

[42] In *The Institutio*

Regardless the teacher's character and ability to maintain decorum in class, bodies are apt to act out, as a point of their nature, and so "it is none the less desirable to keep the weaker members separate from the more mature, and to avoid not only the actual charge of corruption but the merest suspicion of it" (2.3.14). For Quintilian, bodies are likely to do the most unexpected things. Or not; even so, they're liable to *look* as if they have.

The body's general tendency to betray the mind (or the soul) in these examples runs counter to other perspectives on the relationship between the two[43]. In terms of this imperative to oversee the body, though, movement educators have very clear claims to the contrary. Mabel Todd assures us of the physical body's tendency towards knowledge when she argues "The whole body, enlivened as it is by muscular memory, becomes a sensitive instrument responding with a wisdom far outrunning that of man's reasoning or conscious control." For Todd, it's not actually the conscious mind that dictates control over the body, but a complex interplay of cellular, neural, organic tissues. In particular, she points to "The neuromusculatures of skeleton and viscera interact[ions]" (3), as identifiable locations where stimulus is received, evaluated, and acted upon.

Consciousness is aware of these evaluations perhaps, and maybe even aware of the stimulus, but not prior to, and certainly not *in order for* the material of the body to act. Quintilian's and Plato's concerns that the body will 1) act in discordance with our mind, or 2) "jumble" everything together, resulting in an unknowable truth, are founded on a very particular worldview, clearly. This worldview, which comes to us via the ancient Greeks and Romans, but

[43] Chapters 3 and 4 will investigate these in greater detail, but for now, when I say "other perspectives," I mean only that our classical western enlightenment view of mind as hierarchically superior to the body is but one perspective. In fact, it's but one perspective that's "classically western," meaning it is not, in fact, universal, not in fact, accepted as the ultimate.

through the European philosophers of Early Modern Europe, is one which is necessarily built on the premise of control.[44]

It's an admirable aim, control is, but in this view, control is still negotiated as *power over,* not *power to.* In Movement Education, at least, power is nearly always defined as *effort*, not coercion.[45] When Barbara Mahler describes herself as being "very untalented" and her change as being "complete,"[46] she is also identifying an important aspect of the goals of movement education. These goals, in Mahler's view, "depend on what somebody wants to do … the way they *want to move*" (my emphasis) and "to have the person be fluid enough, to be resilient as a mover." Power in this case isn't dependent on forcing will on particular body parts, or situations. Power is a quality a body can manifest, its parts *in relation* to each other, "fluid." Fluidity doesn't allow for dominance; in this worldview, control is made up of motion, and in that motion, "resilience." Fluidity and resilience are, in this case, not synonymous for "power," but instead are crucial elements of power – whether we are talking about power over, or power to. In either case, these elements became ways of *describing* it, and allow for some depth in the kind of impacts and objectives power might contain.

Desiring Bodies

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[44] Many other scholars have articulated this genealogy of how Early Modern Europe translated and thus reclaimed and revised a Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition at length. My intention is not to reprove their arguments, but to stand alongside them, adding to it an emphasis on the impact this has, currently, on what we believe we know about bodies. For more details, see Walter Mignolo's The *Darker Side of the Renaissance, and The Darker Side of Western Modernity*. Also, see Malea Powell, "Rhetorics of Survivance: How American Indians *Use* Writing."

[45] At this point, I'd like to restate the definition of rhetoric I am working through, and which is stated in Chapter 1: the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships.

[46] As I reference in Chapter 3, this change came as a result from her many years of work in re-

Gorgias, Plato, Quintilian all worry about bodies' eventual betrayal of the soul, its impropriety or unconstrained desire corrupting the soul's tempered, reasonable nature. In comparison, Aristotle wrestles with the notion and location of desire, attributing it varyingly to the soul and to the body. Hinting at a general mistrust of bodies[47] and what to do with them, he ascribes the desire for pleasure to the realm of the body. There are other desires, according to Aristotle, ones he terms "rational", which include those things we have heard of or seen, things we have been convinced[48] are pleasurable. Therefore, pleasure is a thing that can be experienced as a "certain movement of the soul […] a natural state." Note that he also uses this word "natural" to describe those desires which inhabit the body (*On Rhetoric* 1.11.5).

In a subsequent section of the same text, Aristotle's tidy categories get blurry. He explains things differently, namely, that different bodies, in different states of being, experience different kinds of desires. He remarks:[49] "For if the young happen to be irascible, or passionately desire anything, it is not because of their youth that they act accordingly, but because of anger and desire" (1.10.9) It's not the physical nature of the young that motivates their passion. It's the emotion. Previously,[50] Aristotle claims that emotion gets experienced in the body, but is a quality of the soul. Does this place the anger in their body, or in their soul? I

Education Technique

[47] in keeping with Gorgias, Plato, and Quintilian

[48] through discourse, presumably

[49] I'll explicate the passage in excerpted bursts rather than tackling the whole section at once, for clarity's sake. The excerpted bursts are taken from *On Rhetoric*.

[50] From the paragraph just above, that pleasure is known as a "certain movement of the soul."

think what Aristotle is getting at is that the "irascibility" is in the body,[51] but the anger, the desire, is in the soul.[52]

Just after, Aristotle's logic of desire argues that it's not the material reality that creates desire for wealth, but *desire* itself: "Nor is it because of wealth or poverty; but the poor happen to desire wealth because of their lack of it, and the rich desire unnecessary pleasures because they are able to procure them. Yet in their case too it will not be wealth or poverty, but desire, that will be the mainspring of their action" (1.10.9). Again, it's not the physical state that motivates the man. If it were, by Aristotle's logic, the poor would be motivated to seek wealth, and the rich would not, since they already have it. Differently from young people, in this case, anger may not be the only motivating emotion, and indeed, Aristotle doesn't name that motivating emotion specifically. What *is* important is that he qualifies the motivating agent as something not limited to the outward manifestation, not limited to physical experience.

And then, just as it seems as if he's arguing that the body that looks and sounds like a duck may not, in fact, be one, he states: "Similarly, the just and the unjust, and all the others who are said to act in accordance with their moral habits, will act from the same causes, either from reason or emotion, but some from good characters and emotions, and others from the opposite" (1.10.9). Clearly, Aristotle is trying to reconcile acts with intentions, and to do clearly and consistently in categories that can be known. What's not clear is how he has reconciled inconsistencies with his categorization.

He's just claimed that a body doesn't act solely from the physical self. He's also claimed that sometimes, it does. Conveniently, whichever the case, that physical body is consistent with

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[51] as in, the physical cues

[52] and so, the separation of body and mind is maintained - the understanding lives in the soul,

it's correlative soul. In other examples, the physical body indicates some "truth"[53] about the worth of the human, as in the following syllogism: "Virtues and actions are nobler, when they proceed from those who are naturally worthier, for instance, from a man rather than from a woman" (*On Rhetoric* 1.9.22) or "Customs that are peculiar to individual peoples and all the tokens of what is esteemed among them are noble; for instance, in Lacedaemon it is noble to wear one's hair long, for it is the mark of a gentleman, the performance of any servile task being difficult for one whose hair is long" (*On Rhetoric* 1.9.26). Regardless the location of desire in any particular body, and the subsequent relationship to that body's soul, there are some bodies that are "naturally worthier." Because of the subsequent relationship to the soul, that too is worthier, but note that it's not the soul that carries the distinguishing mark - it's the body itself.

The self is marked by its body, and so being, is at the mercy of a particular worldview which identifies the individual self as necessarily good or evil, saved or doomed. Earlier in this chapter, I noted that this worldview is linked with the imperial expansion practices of Early Modern Europe. In order to see the world as a site of potential *power over*, some selves (and their correlative bodies) must be "worthier" than others. This isn't a new argument, of course. What I want to add to it, and emphasize is the way in which we leave this concept of the soul and body and distinguishing markers of value generally unquestioned, at least in our discipline.[54]

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not in the body.

[53] In the following two quotations, there seems to be some discrepancy about the absolute nature of reality – in the first, the sex of the body in question indicates an essence (to Aristotle, of course) that is more or less noble, however in the second, the culturally specific norms are the indicators, in which case "truth" is not universal. Hence, my quotation marks around the word.

[54] As an example, note Hawhee's justification in her introduction to *Bodily Arts*, that "the cultural, conceptual, and corporeal connections between the arts of rhetoric and athletics, not unlike the shipwrecked statue, have been more or less submerged since ancient times. To account for this submersion, though, would require a long meditation on disciplinary division, overspecialization, and mind-body separation, all of which this book labors, for the most part, to

Consider again my point about power as a quality of fluidity and resilience. If the soul and body are constantly located in each other, as Aristotle is attempting to understand, then what results, what's visible, is also less fixed, more fluid.

Mahler tells a story about one of her earlier teachers to illustrate one way of "reading" bodies in which Dorothy Vislocky[55], Mahler's teacher,

> would point out things that nobody could really point out. She'd say, 'Look at that dancer's stage presence, or look at that, that quality.' She could see way underneath, way beyond what was presented in front of your face. It's not just the choreography. Watch the body in motion; watch the presence. See the person come out.

What Mahler is recalling is something that's notoriously difficult to articulate, of course, and has to be understood through many different filters - Mahler's professional training and background, as well as cultural definitions about "personhood" and "presence." I don't mean to imply otherwise, neither to bend our conversation inappropriately[56]. The importance for me in this

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forget." (4) This amnesia Hawhee aims for, and she is certainly not alone, is something I will take up in more detail in Chapter 5.

[55] Mahler's teacher

[56] These definitions can vary, depending on disciplinary associations (as in literary studies, and the Romantic or Modernist traditions), theoretical frameworks (as in psychoanalytic theory or deconstruction), etc. In our interviews, Mahler and I talked at length about what this "presence" or "personhood" might suggest, whether there is an individual essence, or something less so. My suspicion was that in a performance-based field such as dance, ideas about what makes a body a person might be significantly different than we, in the Humanities, are accustomed to thinking. Mahler contends that the "person" as an "essential self is completely buried, [that] what we see is culture, and parenting, and environment." The more we pushed on this topic, Mahler eventually asked me "How can you know what the essence of the person is?" As a follow up, she added "You get to know the person. You see the person. They communicate, they're loving, they're compassionate, more that those are qualities of humanity." While Mahler admits that her early teacher (Vislocky) may have had particular ideas about a "person" emerging through dance (Mahler says at one point "seeing choreography beyond what's just placed in front of you"), Mahler's own negotiations of this word/idea is more tied to the ways a body moves, how it has learned, patterned, and been taught to move in the world.

detail is two-fold: *motion* reveals a person "beyond what was presented in front of your face"; and that *person* arises from her body, her body's relationship to space, and her body's parts in relation to itself. The worth of a person can't be reduced to that person's body, but neither can it be separated from it.

Vocalizing Bodies

For ancient Greeks and Romans, physical markers like one's hair, or body parts indicating biological sex aren't the only things signifying character and subjectivity, of course. Of particular use to us in Rhetoric and Composition Studies is a body's voice, and the abstractions that have evolved along with our disciplinary conversations. In Rhetoric and Composition Studies, the notion of voice as something more than literal seems intuitive. After all, we draw our trajectory beginning from an oral culture, where Rhetoric played out as spoken discourse. Rhetors spoke, and they did so as a matter of deliberation, for multiple purposes. They had to understand their voice as an instrument of delivery, one that could be modified depending on the context – the audience[57] and the intention.[58] An effective orator used this instrument in order to shape the speech, not only in order to reach his audience, but in effect, to create the knowledge itself.

Cicero remarks that the Romans, after hearing the Greek orators, "were inflamed with an incredible passion for eloquence" (*On Oratory* 1.4) and this characterization, eloquence, is something Cicero emphasizes again and again as requisite for effective discourse. He re-articulates Isocrates' call for range and breadth of knowledge, claiming that lack of it leads to a "volubility of words […] empty and ridiculous" (*Oratory* 1.5) and further, that

[57] the Senate, a Jury, the "people", students, visiting emissaries or nobility, etc.

> speech itself is to be formed, not merely by choice, but by careful construction of words; and all the emotions of the mind, which nature has given to man, must be intimately known; for all the force and art of speaking must be employed in allaying or exciting the feelings of those who listen. (*Oratory* 1.5)

For Cicero, the depth of understanding is intrinsic to the effectiveness of the speech, hence of the voice. Ultimately, this depth (and voice) is typified by character, "a certain portion of grace and wit, learning worthy of a well-bred man […]accompanied with a refined decorum and urbanity" (*Oratory* 1.5). The move is to consider oration as an art, more than, as Plato criticized the Sophists, technical skill. Though writing may have been introduced for its functionality, thinkers like Isocrates and Cicero elevated the practice into something with aesthetic merit. This shift is described by D.A. Russell[59] as one in which rhetoric is transformed "from discourse to literature." (qtd. in Enos 28). Voice, as a device in rhetoric, may have its roots in physicality, but as we've moved from oral transmission and delivery, the notion has necessarily become abstracted to describe the persona of a writer.

The shift Russell and Enos note in this emphasis on the art of oration as directly tied to the character of the man is one that is still felt powerfully[60] today. We refer to "voice" and maybe mean "character." Or virtue. Or worth. Status. Privilege. Subject. Self.[61] And yet, as explicit or implicit the connection between a writer's voice and that same writer's self, her[62]

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[58] argumentation, jurisprudence, instruction, praise

[59] in Enos' *Ancient Writing Instruction*

[60] pun intended

[61] all of which are also indications of power

[62] The gender pronoun, as in earlier sections, is intentional here, for two reasons. 1) I am the

body is expected to remain invisible, or at least unmarked. Persistent questions about how much of this person's self should be revealed revolve around observations of the writer herself as indulgent, or narcissistic. Even Peter Elbow, father of expressionism in first year writing, doubts himself and his writing pedagogy when he admits

> I'm afraid that I invite first year students to fall into the following *sins*: to take their own ideas too seriously; to think that they are the first person to think of their idea and be all wrapped up and possessive about it - even though others may have already written better about it - I invite them to write *as though* they are a central speaker at the center of the universe - rather than feeling, as they often do, that they must summarize what others have said and only make modest rejoinders from the edge of the conversation to all the smart thoughts that have already been written."[63] ("Being a Writer" 497, my emphasis).

If voice is a quality resonant of a physical body speaking, it is also resoundingly critiqued for making this same connection all too obvious. Students of writing today still come to class ingrained with the value of "objective writing"[64] and a belief that successful writing[65] actually *obscures* the writer and the writer's body.[66]

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author of this text, and I identify as female, and so to use the reflexive pronoun associated with my identification is important; and 2) female bodies are, as we already know, presumed to be silent, and inappropriate for rational language use.

[63] I want to be clear that I understand Elbow is reflecting on a tension in his teaching, and not lambasting himself, or his students, for being naive, too proud, or too permissive. I understand that Elbow is considering this tension as a common one in the field, and a difficult one to negotiate. Still, his word choice suggests to me that there is a heavy subject to this tension, that perhaps we do not recognize often enough. That is, to place yourself as a writer at the center of your text is a sin, likewise, any posturing at the centrality of your own self, voice, persona, and I add, for the purposes of my dissertation, **body,** is only pretense, something to do in practice, or as a novice, but not something to aspire toward.

[64] Of course, many of us in Rhetoric and Composition work to revise that sense that there is no writer visible in "good writing." Elbow is one of those, certainly, and there are many more. See Brandt, Cushman, Ruggles-Gere, Herrington, Miller, and Villanueva's "The Politics of the

Enter Peter Ramus. Ramus' particular annoyances with Cicero and Quintilian reveal more layers to what has been suggested as a modern sensibility for objectivity in writing – a voice we might describe as "sterile" or "detached" or "distant." His argument is mostly against Quintilian's pedagogic instructions, in particular of those "for stirring the emotions, and then for causing delight." For Ramus, such things have no place in the teaching of Rhetoric, "arousal and delight [having no] proper arts, […]especially drawn from moral training, where you learn to recognize what is virtue, what is vice, what things please honest men, what things delight the wicked, and likewise what offends each." ("Arguments in Rhetoric" 125). Arousal and delight are unavoidable elements of composition to Ramus, but have no place in the instruction of Rhetoric. For him, these things belong to philosophy perhaps, or ethics. In Ramus' world, grammar and dialectic serve rhetoric primarily, and "the remainder – dealing with embellishment by means of tropes and figures and with grace and dignity of voice and gesture – would be explained by definitions, divisions, and examples" ("Arguments" 129) –all being things that are delimited by logic, reason, and in our parlance, "objectivity." These distinctions recall the "known body" as well as the troublesome "desiring body" in both bodies' vocalized selves. To know the body in speech is to strip it of its desires, and to parse it through categories. Recall Plato. Recall Aristotle.

Personal: Storying our Lives Against the Grain." See also, Royster's "When the First Voice You Hear is Not Your Own." See also, Rose's "The Language of Exclusion: Writing Instruction at the University". See also Villanueva's "Considerations for American Freireistas". See also … the list is long.

[65] or, rhetoric.

[66] Chapter 5 connects some of these ideas to performance theories as another possibility for how to include in our own disciplinary conversations the impact of writing on bodies, as well as writing as a bodily experience.

But, surely this "objective voice" is a voice too? Even this one signals the presence[67] of a body within the text, whether it is the one speaking, or the one speaking for "the Other".[68] What to make of Ramus' voice, one marked by rational language, language not intended to excite response for its readers, but to stimulate courses of logic in his mind? This too is a felt presence, one of the state, perhaps, to recall Bender and Wellberry's[69] claims about the use of the speaker to bind the "physically demonstrative social systems that so powerfully institutionalized its doctrines" (7). Michel DeCerteau's concerns with the work of historiography as a colonizing and stabilizing force also illustrate the connections between "objectivity" and "authority." He speculates on the binary supposed between the Authority (History) and the Literary:

> Surely only this language 'authorizes' the historian's writing, but, for the same reason, it becomes history's absent figure. An *Infans*, this Voice does not speak. It exists only outside of itself, […] but it allows him to become a 'popular writer', to 'jettison' pride and, becoming 'rough and barbaric'."[70] (2).

The voice of authority exists in its absence. The distance itself creates a voice, a felt being that is "outside of itself." This distant voice, while pretending at civility and objectivity, is also violent. Of course, all of this is reminiscent of Foucault's panopticon, and the discursive structures of language which discipline - which maintain *power over.* For a voice which is characterized by

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[67] Recall Mahler. Recall Vislocky.

[68] this rational voice, one marked as Ramus would have it, by reason and objectivity, is one that gets used over and over again to justify the silencing/erasure of bodies marked as less equipped for such rationality, to justify the colonial model, and to justify acts of extreme bodily consequence, conquering lands

[69] more on Bender and Wellberry in coming pages, particularly when I discuss the connection between cultural and cellular borders.

reason and logic - all elements of "the mind," this same characterization takes on a particularly physical, I might suggest *bodied* existence, along the lines of Mahler and Vislocky's claims about the emergence of a *person* in motion. Even as "voice" aspires to remove the bodies from speech and knowledge, bodies persist, sometimes in especially insidious ways.

Whether thinking of voice, or the body in general, the deferral and surveillance I've described above can be experienced and made visible in two particular ways. First, the body becomes an entity that is important primarily for identifying Goodness. Second, deferring the physical body facilitates a categorization of groups of bodies, easily recognized in language, and named according to institutions such as republics or states. The next sections help to point out these manifestations, according to the goal I set out in the opening to this chapter – to build our awareness of disciplinary patterns, in order that we might also work towards integrating new ones.

Manifest Goodness

Aristotle addresses the body extensively,[71] identifying it as a place where "goodness" lives – through behavior, through speech, and through expression of emotion. Lived experience is a necessary factor in a particular body's ability to act with reason, morality, and prudence. The old body, in particular the old male body, is the one with developed facility in rational thought and speech, which we've already seen is the desired state.[72] We've also already determined that the body is the physical expression of the intellectual (or philosophical, or spiritual), is worthy of

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[70] from *The Writing of History*

[71] In the following sections, I rely particularly on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *On Rhetoric*, as texts where Aristotle makes his arguments and counter-arguments about the relationship of the body and the mind.

relish, and reveals the soul. Importantly, as being the site of goodness, the body is also something to be protected. Aristotle positions the body as more vulnerable than the mind,[73] given the way it is susceptible to the senses and emotions. Also, if the body is susceptible and vulnerable in ways that the mind is not, then bodies need to be defended, avenged, supported. These needs are not just needs of physical survival, however; they are in service of the soul, of the Good Man.

This susceptibility to the senses leads to the next quality of bodies, according to Aristotle; that bodies are something to be relished.[74] Through bodies, we experience pleasure and desire – two things that Aristotle claims motivate Man to act. While it's the soul that must be relied on for making "good" decisions and deliberations, the body is the site on which we cultivate consciousness about what pleases us and what doesn't. In the excerpt I quoted from above, Aristotle names "desire" as "the mainspring of their action" (*On Rhetoric* 1.10.9) and previously he has equated these desires, resulting in pleasure, with a "natural state." Yet, it's not the physical body where desire can be identified, but in the soul, or more accurately, the soul's consciousness of the body. So, a "natural state" is in the culmination of the soul knowing the body.

Finally, this conflation of "natural" indicates to Aristotle that the body is something through which the soul is revealed[75], something more than simply an outward manifestation of it. While Aristotle recognizes some elements of character that are recognizable in the physical

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[72] of being, of the republic. Pun intended.

[73] For the rest of the chapter it's safe to presume that mind is equated with spirit or soul. In later chapters, making distinctions between "mind" and "spirit" will be fleshed out, if you'll pardon the pun.

[74] consider this alongside my claim in chapter 2, that there are "no good bodies"

[75] Compare this to my discussion of Mahler's story and theory about the "person" as a bodily entity, relative to her teacher's observation about the "person coming out," earlier in this chapter.

appearance and/or behavior of a body, so it would seem he is working to reconcile the ways these two aspects (the body aspect and the soul aspect) are wound around each other. Further, he equates inheritance of character and achievements with moral character[76] when he argues "it is probable that virtuous parents will have virtuous offspring and that a man will turn out as he has been brought up. […] Achievements, in fact, are signs of moral habit; for we should praise even a man who had not achieved anything, if we felt confident that he was likely to do so." (*On Rhetoric* 1.9.33).

Manifest Language

For Cicero, as much as the body may be an indicator of character or worth of a man, so are the words an indicator of the body. Cicero makes an analogy in which he connects language-thought to body-soul. In this comparison, language and thought are unable to be split from each other, in much the same ways that body cannot be spliced from soul. This equation suggests to me that Cicero feels language is a phenomenon manifested bodily,[77] "exertion and exercise of the voice, of the breath, of the whole body, and of the tongue itself, they do not so much require art as labor" (1.34). Similarly, thought belongs to the internal being-ness of a man, the soul, the "essence" of the citizen. Cicero's citizen is critical to understanding the role of the body, now. Where Plato and Aristotle emphasize the soul as the supervisory element to a person, Cicero emphasizes the role of the person in the republic. For Cicero, bodies aren't just bodies, and aren't just souls, but are members of a governing and governed structure. These citizens then, use their

[76] what we would now name "genetic inheritance"

[77] Again, more of this conversation about the bodily relationship to language, writing, and in particular, "voice" is taken up in Chapter 5.

bodies, and in particular *speech* to express their goodness, their truth. These expressions are necessarily connected to the same citizens' inherent superiority or inferiority:

> But since we are overwhelmed by opinions, not only those of the vulgar, but those also of men imperfectly instructed, […] who sever the language from the thoughts like the body from the soul, neither of which separations can be made without destruction, […] I will only signify briefly, that neither can embellishments of language be found without arrangement and expression of thoughts, nor can thoughts be made to shine without the light of language (3.6).

In some important ways, movement educators might help us to understand this relationship differently. Irene Dowd, who relies on metaphor and image particularly for accessing new movement and alignment patterns in her clients, states outright that "the English language is not very rich in describing sensation - kinesthetic things […] I would get crazy trying to put down things I *knew*, but didn't have the language to express at the time" ("A conversation with Irene Dowd" 92). Mahler emphasizes the distinction between language and knowledge in some similar ways, and goes further to say that knowing the language for the experience, in her case knowing the bones, muscles, and ligaments, doesn't result in a more effectively arranged and expressed body. That knowledge "needs to be learned in the body, with the body, and not just with words."

In the Voice, the Empire

Cicero's representative nature of "bodies" as political, something resembling our modern sense of "nation," turns the physical manifestations to entities that have rights and

responsibilities to a larger, more abstract entity - the republic. As well as rights and responsibilities, *citizens* include a distinct character that separates them from other bodies of other republics or similarly bounded places. In erasing the physical body, as I argue in the opening to this chapter, *groups* of bodies can also be "erased," dismissed as ultimately unknowable, irrational, or unnatural. Language, as Cicero has already pointed out to us, is one of the more visible and obvious markers of citizenship, and excellence, that "The abilities of our countrymen […] far excelled those of the men of every other nation" (*On Oratory* 1.4)

In the same excerpt,[78] Cicero cautions us "to be particularly careful whom we imitate and whom we would wish to resemble" (1:34). I offer this selection to suggest ways Cicero's claims hint at nationalist[79] ideals – or will be taken up as such, in later centuries. Cicero remarks that Romans have a natural talent for effective speaking, a talent that is not observable in bodies of other states in a way which also allows for future thinkers and nation-builders to articulate Subject-Other identification. He suggests that there are some bodies which are born to speak, others which, while they may be taught and may labor to improve, are simply not capable of it. *The inability is in their body:*

> what will he say of those qualities which are certainly born with the man himself, volubility of tongue, tone of voice, strength of lungs, and a peculiar conformation and aspect of the whole countenance and body? I do not say that art can not improve in these particulars […] ; but there are some persons so hesitating in their speech, so

[78] In the next breath?

[79] It's inappropriate to use this term in the context of Cicero's Rome, I know. I use it anyway, to foreground the ways in which these readings of Cicero come to me through 18th century England and Scotland, and have been revised to suit that era's political agenda. While Cicero doesn't mean to be Nationalist, I'm sure, I think he is presenting a case for a state-subjectivity, understood through the entire text. The accumulation of claims points to his call to use rhetoric

> inharmonious in their tone of voice, or so unwieldy and rude in the air and movements of their bodies, that whatever power they possess either from genius or art, they can never be reckoned in the number of accomplished speakers; while there are others so happily qualified in these respects, so eminently adorned with the gifts of nature, that they seem not to have been born like other men, but moulded by some divinity (*On Oratory* 1.25).

From the Greeks' preoccupation with and concern for power over individual bodies to Cicero's expansion of that power to the sort that can be held over *citizens*, Quintilian adds to the discussion of bodies in rhetoric a layer of propriety and the relationships between teacher and students. Especially cogent to my argument is the way that Quintilian claims these relationships configure appropriate discourse. Quintilian's concern about power, is one over discourse, speech, language, and the ways that this kind of power contains and constrains bodies' inherent *power to*. Individual character is as much a factor as the dynamic between bodies/characters, shown in the way he argues "the purity of the teacher's character should preserve those of tenderer years from corruption, while its authority should keep the bolder spirits from breaking out into licence" (*Institutio* 2.3.3). Simply, some bodies are more pure, and are obligated to carry the responsibility of protecting other, more susceptible bodies. In Quintilian's example, the teachers' bodies ought to look out for the younger "tenderer" bodies of students.

In Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Belles Lettres and Rhetoric*, we see how he uses Cicero and Quintilian's ideas about elocution for a systematic defense of "taste," "the sublime," and "progress." It's discourse of empire, in particular, English empire. His agenda is to assert the need for "good men, speaking well" not just for effective speaking and writing, but to assert the goodness of his countrymen, the Scots, recently colonized by the British. His lectures are

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in a way that expresses the superiority of one group – the Roman citizens – over others.

intended to be used widely as instructions, edifying and justifying one group's mastery over all others. Not only does Blair call on Cicero's "good man" to "speak well." He also draws on Quintilian's insistence that those who are "naturally" superior and truly good should endeavor to teach and therefore lift up those who are "tenderer" or less "dignified" in their speech, but also, in their character.

Words, for Blair, are not the source of the sublime, neither are they a source of taste (read: civility) – they are affect, and truly good speech will arise from a truly good man: "when the thought is truly noble, it will for the most part, clothe itself in a native dignity of language" (Lecture IV 48). The "native dignity of language" is something peculiar to English, in Blair's estimation, as he specifies in Lecture IX: "The English tongue possesses, undoubtedly, this property, that it is the most simple in its form and construction of all the European dialects […][which] renders the acquisition of our language less laborious, the arrangement of our words more plain and obvious, the rules of our syntax fewer and more simple" (99).

Blair speculates that early iterations of language "must have been extremely barren," consisting of few words, and buoyed by "many exclamations and earnest gestures." This dearth of words made necessary other modes of explanation for "rude, uncultivated men", modes such as using a variety of intonation, matching different tones to different gestures, variety in "emphasis and force, as along as language was a sort of painting by means of sound." (Lecture VI 63). While his speculations are yet another rhetorical strategy to insinuate the importance of language's civilizing force, he does also re-inscribe the connection between voice, speech, and composition. Before we had language, he is saying, meaning English, we had to use our vocal instruments. Now that we have English, we transfer the need for those instruments into our language. In this use of the word "language," I offer also, "writing" in order to make visible

another place in which physicality gets obscured. Language, or writing, or composition, or rhetoric comes to be synonymous with the mind, an abstraction belonging to consciousness. At the same time, language[80] becomes a powerful tool in the service of colonization and empire expansion, systematically cultivating material consequences on millions of bodies.

These goals aren't initiated by Blair; in fact, they've been around since at least the 16th century, claims Don Abbott. Richard Brinsley's[81] *Consolation for Our Grammar Schools*, lays out key guidelines for the American colonies. The list encompasses elements of writing and rhetoric, but in particular, I note one item on the list:

> To grow in our owne English tongue, according to their ages, and growth in other learning: to utter their minds in the same both in propriety, and purity, and so to be fitted for divinity, law, or whatever other calling or faculty soever they shall be after employed in (qtd. in Wright, Halloran 214).

Brinsley's *Consolation* was published in 1622, and well pre-dates Hugh Blair's *Lectures*. What I want to signal with this inclusion is not so much a causal relationship, as an existent atmosphere that is sustained or revised over time, a discourse of power. By the time Blair makes his pronouncements about the superiority of English, there has been another big shift, not from discourse to literature in this case, but from God to Nation. For both the Scots and the European Americans, colonization necessitates proper English to be spoken by any who wish to belong.

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[80] or writing, or composition, or rhetoric

[81] An educator/scholar examined in Don Abbott's "Renaissance Rhetoric and Writing" and Wright and Halloran's "From Rhetoric to Composition: The Teaching of Writing in America to 1900."

Bender and Wellberry[82] describe this shift as one which transfers the "sphere of face-to-face encounter" to an "entity to which one relates abstractly through the internalization of its laws and concretely through its bureaucratic apparatuses" ("Rhetoricality" 22). In America, then, as in Scotland, cultivating one's English voice is a matter of state, the material body is erased again, and written[83] over it is *rhetoric*.

As a result of these continued and layered deferrals, as well as the imbrication of power into abstractions about voice, the physical body has become, in the study of rhetorical theory, an entity without agency. Even the bodies of those in power[84] are marked as in need of constant supervision, by the mind, if not by other bodies. Language has been pulled in to save us,[85] it seems, from certain chaos and embarrassment. And, as I mentioned in the opening to this chapter, our current disciplinary practices do little to make these markings and imbrications transparent. In the coming pages, I will offer another story about the role of bodies and rhetoric, one which includes identifiable categories for describing this role that allows for the body as an *agent* of knowledge production, an agent with power to *use*. Reorienting our own intellectual habits and patterns also provides a way of continuing our scholarly interrogations about the body, the relationships between them, and the implications this has on our daily practices.

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[82] Already mentioned once in this chapter, Bender and Wellberry write about the connection between rhetoric, and social and power structures

[83] or spoken

[84] as in, *power over*

[85] I would add, to police us.

Chapter 3: "Righting the Pelvis: Orientations and Tropes from Movement Education and Rhetorical Bodies"

One of the most important principles in many movement education techniques concerns where and how a body's bones align with each other, and how they work to distribute the force of gravity through them. This principle allows a body to connect more fluidly and efficiently to the ground, which also facilitates the passage of the same gravitational forces back up the bones, and out the head. In this way, then, a moving body is connected, we might say "grounded" as well as able to move upward. This oppositional movement through a body's skeleton has a function that supports powerful connections through all the moving parts - the spine into the arms and legs, and these into the hands and feet. It's the accumulation of these forces and the positioning of the bones that I will focus on in this chapter, and will describe how a detailed understanding of these relationships can influence and energize scholarship on rhetoric and writing.

Generally, considering and reconsidering the relationships between bodies and gravity, as theorized by key innovators and practitioners in Movement Education, can reveal significant lapses in our discipline's own understanding about the role and value of bodies. Even more, this level of consideration can suggest to us some other ways of revising our understandings, as well as an invigorated and complex manner of approaching what is a growing interest in the notion of a subfield, Embodied Rhetorics. Specifically, this chapter elucidates the relationship of gravity and bodies, and argues this relationship is foundational to work in Rhetoric and Composition Studies. By looking to existing scholarship in the field, I will illustrate the manner and effect of different orientations, and describe visible and felt patterns of these orientations. I argue that resulting *re*orientations and patterns also help to further explain in what ways we can fully

understand the body as a system of power, leading me to name three elements of Embodied Rhetoric: instability, centeredness, and reevaluation.

Bodies in Gravity: A Re/Orientation

Last week I was on my way to the pilates studio where I teach when I decided that we needed to start the class standing up, this week. Every week, for the last couple of years, I have begun this class asking participants to lie on their backs, with their knees bent and feet flat on the floor. We do this in order to find what Irene Dowd and Lulu Sweigard[86] call the Constructive Rest Position,[87] in order to experience our skeleton's weight into the floor and so we can breathe. Week in and week out, I've begun class this way, explaining that one thing that's so beneficial about this is that when we lie on the floor, we've reoriented our bodies and gravity. In fact, for the almost 15 years I've been teaching Pilates, I've started classes by asking students to lie on their backs.

But last week, as I drove the 20 miles into town and towards the studio, it occurred to me that this reorientation to gravity, while a "kinder" position for the skeleton, may not necessarily *allow* people to feel the way forces in the universe can travel through their skeletons, through their joints, into the floor and back up. Lying down does help people to let go of many of the muscles they need to, in order to connect to the floor. Also, lying down means you don't have to worry about falling over. And at some point, the reorientation to standing would become

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[86] Irene Dowd is a student of Dr. Lulu Sweigard. Sweigard is considered one of the founders of a branch of movement education called Idiokinesis, though it's early conception is often attributed to Mabel Todd. See also Sweigard's *Human Movement Potential: Its Idiokinetic Facilitation*, Pub. Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1978.

[87] For more details about CRP, see Irene Dowd, *Taking Root to Fly* "Visualizing Movement Potential" p. 6

necessary, just as a matter of fact, since most of the exercises we do in that class involve moving from a prone position. But just because we'll have to get on the floor, on our backs, eventually, there is certainly no chance we'll be able to stay there forever. At the end of the hour, we'll all have to get up and walk out of the room, into and through gravity. It will always be there waiting for us.

A contemporary of Dr. Sweigard, Dr. Ida Rolf emphasized the inevitability of gravity in her stark claim that gravity "is the omnipresent, all-powerful, unremitting determinant of [a person's] uprightness or lack of it." (163)[88] An even finer point - even when we are lying down, either on our backs or on our bellies, gravity is still there. I often joke that this position[89] offers us the experience of being *out of* gravity. But it's not true. We're just different, in it. There are lots of ways to talk about this difference - as a mathematical equation, perhaps - a geometrical re-assembly of the surface area of our body in relation to the omnipresent physical force which is then distributed through a larger plane, resulting in a more diffuse sensation of the way that force pulls on matter, *our* matter, our *bodies*.

There are also neurological ways to talk about this difference - as a shifting of stimulus and the way our brain might process the different stimulus, the view of the ceiling (rather than the wall opposite us) providing new input to our nerve centers, the sensation of the hard floor under our shoulder blades, our skull, the back of our pelvis simultaneously offering support to our skeleton and information for our nervous system about where we are in space, and how we fit into the room. All this new information, in the form of sensory input (visual, auditory, tactile)

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[88] from an interview with Ida Rolf. The selection appears in an article "Gravity: An unexplored factor in a more human use of human beings"

[89] lying down

sends new messages through the synaptic gaps and our body makes different decisions about where or how or what to move.

All these reorientations to gravity are important, good even, and instructive for how to move with greater ease, more power, less pain. But, I was thinking, what about when we do have to get up and walk out of the room? There is a common phrase in yoga practices, that a person "comes to the mat," meaning that a person's yoga practice is both intentional and spatially directed. You bring your practice to the mat, and commit that time to breathe, to draw your focus inward, to extend your body through space from that inward focus. There is also a variation of the phrase which goes something like bringing your yoga practice "off the mat." To bring your practice off the mat is *not* to stand around in a zen-like trance with your legs spread apart in a warrior position, arms reaching to the front and the back of you, all this while you're in line at the grocery store. To take your yoga practice off the mat means that the inward and outward focus/extension moves with your physical body through the world, as you interact with other bodies, in other places - *in other orientations to gravity*.

I am not asking you to take up a yoga practice, or pilates, or marital arts. I *am asking us* to begin to consider our orientations to gravity, to consider them as multiple, and to consider them as *critical* to the way we pursue our intellectual work. Very often, we might think of our work as doing just this, for example the way many of us ask our students to try writing from a different ethos, or towards a different audience. In our research, we might think of the ways we redraw the scope of our projects to include participants or objects of inquiry that have not yet been recognized as significant. In our writing, we might attempt some of the same tasks we ask of our students, or we might look to other sources of distribution or experiment with form and arrangement in the production of our texts.

All these options, as just a few general and unspecific ways, are excellent possibilities for the kind of work we could take on, and suggest the extent and range our scholarship has already revised itself. However, these tasks don't reorient our relation to gravity as much as change the manner in which we maintain the standard orientation. Writing from a different perspective is more akin to shifting the hand with which you hold your pen; likewise, writing to a new audience is more like turning to face the people who are standing behind you, rather than in front of you, and shifting your research gaze from a traditional site of inquiry to one previously unnoticed is similar to shifting your position, while still standing. Changing the form of your text might feel like standing on one leg, instead of two.

As I've already pointed out, all of these adjustments and revisions in scholarship in rhetoric and composition studies are admirable, interesting, and worthwhile. I've also claimed that these same adjustments and revisions are not as much a reorientation as they are a shift in manner. Therefore, because they maintain a standard relation, or an accustomed relation in any case, the nervous system is not challenged, not asked to make new and different and confusing decisions. Without challenging the nervous system, without new, different confusions, our bodies and our resulting scholarship practices the same patterns, already well rehearsed, well substantiated at the level of our cells and tissue.

To challenge the nervous system requires changing the sensory input; it requires an element of surprise. One radical way of doing such a thing involves changing what the body (and its nervous system) expects to be up, and what to be down, or right and left. It's radical in that this one change creates an entire network of changes in how the body has to perceive its position in space, in relationship to other objects and bodies. Simply put, if you stand on your head, everything is suddenly different: the way your body experiences force is different, as you are

now bearing weight into your skull, rather than your feet; the way you hear sounds changes; the things you see are different. Obvious, maybe, but perhaps what is less obvious is the overall effect this has on the system that is your body. All these changes mean that your nervous system can no longer rely on what it assumed to be true, what it assumed to be *natural*, based on the patterns your body has practiced over and over again, in your customary orientation to gravity.

Practicing patterns in itself is a productive task, in rhetoric studies as well as in muscular training and movement education. Indeed, it's the practice itself which builds the pattern and accumulates into a well integrated knowledge base, whether this base is expressed in our scholarship, or in our bodies. However, consider the way your lower back might ache at the end of a work week, or the crunching sensation in your knee as you climb the stairs day in and day out. Neither of these sensations are inherently bad, neither are they necessarily imposing limitations on your movement. Even if your lower back aches at the end of the day, you may be able to get in and out of a chair, or go for a bike ride. Similarly, your knee's crunching could certainly be irritating, but may not prevent you from getting up and down the stairs, or bending down to pick up the pencil you dropped.

Both of these examples are expressions of a movement pattern, one which is composed of multiple and specific layers: lower back pain could be a configuration of the alignment of your particular skeleton, as well as the related muscular contractions, tightnesses, weaknesses, and imbalances, as well as the compression or restriction of circulatory pathways for blood and lymph through, as well as a reduction in your breath capacity in your lungs and respiratory diaphragm, etc. All or some combination of these things could exist, none of them necessarily limiting this particular body's ability to move and interact with the world; and yet, all or some combination of these things also continue to work together, over time, to rehearse and perform

the same patterns over and over again. Eventually, these patterns become so strong that they move the skeleton and the body as a whole into a position where it is no longer organized in gravity. Gravity acts *on* the body, of course, but the fluency and coherency of these forces distributing themselves *through* the body is disrupted, and so this same body is *subject to* gravity, at the mercy of it, rather than *in relation to*[90] gravity.

Often, we, in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, talk about embodiment in ways that embrace our previous knowledge, our history of understanding knowledge and discourse. This makes sense of course; we want to begin with familiar patterns.. These embraces, or patterns, involve several different tropes I've identified: embodiment as affect; embodiment as inscription of material acts; and embodiment and language as respective metaphors for each other. In the following sections, I will point out instances of each of these tropes, and explain how the patterns serve a constant orientation to gravity. As I've argued already, this patterning, while familiar and therefore strong, has effects on our disciplinary practices, of course, but perhaps even more importantly, has resounding effects on bodies themselves.

Trope: Embodiment as Affect

We may talk about embodiment through the valence of affect, which includes feeling, sensing, emotion, basically something beyond language that is to be valued in the way that we value meaning. Naming this "thing" affect makes it separate from meaning, necessitates

[90] The concept of relationality is one which deserves much more attention, and which many other scholars have theorized in ways I am grateful to acknowledge. Many of these scholars are those who locate themselves in and beyond multiple disciplines, and who are discussed in greater detail in an article in progress, by the Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab at Michigan State University. For particular detailed descriptions of these theories of relationality, refer to Qwo-Li Driskill, Andrea Riley Mukavetz, Malea Powell, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Emma Perez, Shawn Wilson.

language, intellect, the mind, in order to equate the two. In this equation, *affect* is different than *meaning*, ultimately. It is the Other Meaning,[91] the one which lives in the body, in senses, in intuition, in the part of the brain dictating emotion. Those scholars who want to claim that embodiment is equivalent to affect might disagree with my earlier statement: that affect is different from meaning. The cornerstone of their argument, I think they would say, is exactly the opposite. I honor this argument, and trust that their intention is to validate this "part" of knowledge which is not first organized through intellect, through words. I believe the argument continues along these lines: we feel something in our body, a response to someone else's body perhaps or an act of our own,[92] and that feeling is what counts as meaning. That feeling is not necessarily made into meaning by words; the meaning is contained in the feeling itself.

As an example, consider Sondra Perl's integration of Gendlin's "felt sense" with respect to writing. For Gendlin, felt sense describes a kind of knowledge that exists in the body, something that exists before it is named through language, something which is experienced physically. Gendlin, a psychologist, used this theory of knowing to describe phenomena such as intuition, or to assist in the task of focusing, not as we might intend it in academics as forming a research question, but as a somatic and cognitive process of reckoning. Perl uses Gendlin's theories to apply to the task of writing, as a way to find the right words or to come to a better understanding. Along these lines, Perl has developed a system of writing and thinking which encourages a cooperation between the body and the mind, in which the writer cultivates an awareness of her physical body, while she is writing. This awareness facilitates an intervention

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[91] [*sic*] Capitalization here is intentional, referring to the way in which "Others" represents specific groups marginalized, and set apart.

[92] or something else entirely

by the writer, and potentially, by the writer's body, to assist in the composition and linguistic processes.

Perl's revisions of the composition process are significant, and, for many people, have also been revolutionary for the intrinsic admission of things like feeling, intuition, and bodily reaction into a task which has often been charged with the expectation of objectivity, reason, semantic precision, clarity, and the like. Still, at the center of Perl's process is a preoccupation with the product as the ultimate site of knowledge; the body is a tool towards refining that knowledge, but in the end the knowing comes through finding a "better understanding" - the "right word." Even in this admission of the sorts of knowledge Perl and Gendlin concede exist, these must be expressed finally, with the word, with logos, with the mind. The mind is still the arbiter of reason, of "the good, the true, the beautiful." No matter the value of the body, our Early Modern version of Plato resonates. Indeed, not only does he resonate, he hunkers.

However, what if we could defer this resonance, just reroute around it a little bit, and look at Gendlin and Perl's notion of felt sense, as a movement educator might? For example, Barbara Mahler tells me about how she was an "untalented" dancer. In this story, she describes her difficulty with common dance techniques[93] and the kinds of changes she experienced through the work she now teaches and has innovated. In her reflection on exactly these changes, the "meaning" in her dancing wasn't something inherent in her body, but was something that her body produced and developed over time, through a particular practice that involved a neurological patterning.

[93] such as extension of the leg in the hip joint greater than 90 degrees, or flexion of the spine, or rotation of the trunk, etc.

This patterning and practice included taking 3 classes a day, from Susan Klein, the woman she later worked closely with in building their Re-Education Technique.[94] During this time, Mahler explicitly states now that she "never felt anything." The emphasis she places on this comment is vital, especially in the context of the work: classes are typically 90 minutes to 2 hours long, and involve slow, sustained positions which demand that the student's body lengthen muscularly, articulate deeply, and re-position skeletally.

For example, in one 45 minute period of the class, students may start from a standing posture, and incrementally roll the top of their head towards the floor, paying very careful attention that the pelvis maintains the appropriate relationship with the femoral head. Without thinking of other variables in this activity, the pelvis/femur relationship is one which necessitates an extreme lengthening of the hamstring muscles, as well as the release and lengthening of the quadriceps and hip flexor muscles, which for most people, and certainly for Barbara at the time of her story, were particularly short, tight, and strong. The experience of asking those muscles to cooperate in the "hanging down" as this exercise is called in Re-Education Technique, almost universally results in an intense sensation; some people describe it as painful.

Understanding this, let me repeat Barbara's commentary on her own learning process: "I never felt anything."

Regardless her lack of sensation, she also describes the change her body underwent during this period of time as "complete." Whether or not she was aware of the change her body was absorbing, the learning process her body was going through, that change (or learning) was happening. Also, that change was profound - not just for the way Barbara felt from day to day,

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[94] For the duration of this book, when I refer to Re-Education Technique, I am including all the work that Barbara helped to develop and innovate, as a working partner with Susan Klein, beginning in the 1970s, and ongoing.

but also for what she was capable of doing physically, what kind of movement she was able to produce and sustain in her dancing.

For this reason, I argue knowledge lives in the body, is made by the body, articulates itself through the body. It may be affective, by which I mean that it is something "felt" as a "gut feeling" or a "vague sense" or simply "just known." Also, it may not be. Embodiment as knowledge doesn't require our affective consciousness to communicate itself. It doesn't need feeling, as a sensorial element, neither does it need be felt, in terms of emotions at all.

Affective Knowledge, as we talk about it in Rhetoric and Composition, maintains a divide between meaning as it is understood through consciousness (the mind) and meaning as it is understood through the body. Affective Knowledge sustains a Western desire to privilege one kind of meaning over another, rather than to see it all as one. It may seem like a small point to fix on, but my experience and research spanning 10 years of working simultaneously in one field governed by the word[95] and another one primarily concerned with the physical practice of bodies in space[96] pushes me to my argument.

Trope: Embodiment as Material Acts

Affective Knowledge isn't the only way we talk about embodiment, however. We also use the trope of embodiment to describe material acts which are inscribed with meaning, through language. These material acts tell a story, we may say. Or, our everyday practices, practices committed with our bodies, make meaning, meaning we can describe with our words. As one particularly striking example, think of the act of a sexual assault, with undeniable consequences

[95] and everything that "the word" entails - language, intellect, reason

[96] similarly, everything that "bodies in space" entails - coordinating limbs and trunk with neural

for bodies, that of the attacker and the victim both[97]. The "practice"[98] is committed in movement, but also with a kind of inscription. Depending on the bodies involved, the signification takes place in a dark place, or a well lit room; it may be unplanned, or the opposite; it may take place between two or more people who know each other intimately, superficially, or not at all. The material objects associated with the event, bruises perhaps, or rape kits administered by medical personnel, or police reports, etc. are ones which interact with other material objects (the bruises and kit documented in the report, the bruises being covered, the rape kit refused and noted in a report, etc).

The accumulation of the event, the interactions of material objects, and the changed physical body carry a story. Still, this story is one we understand, and tell, in words. Again, depending on the people involved, the material act and bodily effect may tell a story of abuse, of oppression, of betrayal, of punishment, shame, ritual, sacrifice, endurance, survival.

As in the case of Gendlin and Perl, the meaning is located in the verbal language about this material and performative act. JL Austin would also emphasize the verbalization as a signifier of meaning, the constitutive element of "I am a rape victim" or "I am a rape survivor" and similarly "I am a rapist" marking and changing the physical person. The event also changes the person, certainly, but it's the naming with language which carries the burden of the story. After all, we say "bruises heal." We say "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me."

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patterning and muscular conditioning

[97] and indeed the bodies of other people indirectly connected to the assault, in the form of legislation and policy regarding criminalization, curfews and restricted access, prosecution and acquittal, cultural standards for public and private behaviors - sexual or otherwise.

[98] I use "" around this word for some acknowledgment of the sensitive nature of talking about these kinds of acts - but also want to maintain a conversation about physical and material events as entities which are, indeed, practiced in social groups and communities.

As a direct counter to this axiom, Michel De Certeau argues that, in fact, the words are precisely the things that hurt us, as instrument of empire and colonization.[99] The *story* of rape creates a rape that lasts and implicates everyone long after the event itself. This point is not to suggest that we should steer away from telling stories about rapes, not at all. Instead, we should be aware of the stories we tell, all kinds, and consider where the body exists in these stories. "Bruises heal," while true, effaces a knowledge about the effect of violence on the body, as if once the contusion disappears, the visible damage is rendered inconsequential. But what lingers is what really matters - the story, the language of the practice. Too, the story the attacker and victim tell produces the significance, the consequence. And still, this consequence is manifested in the body. Attackers must announce themselves to new neighbors, inviting scrutiny about their living conditions - where they can live, how they can live, what kind of jobs they can have, how they will participate in a society, physically. Victims will have to decide whether they are indeed a "victim" or a "survivor" and then experience the physical effects of whichever name they adopt. The story goes that whichever name the person adopts will determine this person's future health and happiness - victims are depressed, survivors are empowered.

As I said, I'm not critiquing the people involved in such an act, as much as I'm hoping to call attention to the power that we've afforded language not only in discourse about the event of rape, but the materiality of that event itself. To understand this act as an embodied act would require attending to the bodies themselves, both of them, all of them. I'll return to this event, the images associated with it, and the various perspectives on how to understand them in coming pages. For now, I emphasize the entanglement of physical act/movement with story/inscription.

[99] in particular, in *The Writing of History*

As one attempt to reconceptualize materiality and image, Kris Fleckenstein advocates for a new logic, a new poetics of meaning, of the "imageword" in her recent book *Embodied Literacies: Imageword and a Poetics of Teaching.* Fleckenstein argues that the discipline's incorporation of images into composition practices has relied on a textual imperative. I agree with her on this point. She calls us to recognize how "imagery is more than just another text, more than a separate mental system that interfaces with language, more than a one-dimensional strategy" (22). If we use Fleckenstein to understand the material and "imaged" version of an act of sexual assault such as I began above, then we would need to understand the objects, as well as the image of the bodies involved in this act as multiply tangled. Rather than the fairly linear narrative version of the story, which we tell with words, through language,[100] the event would, according to Fleckenstein, be more akin to an "ecological system" (22) comprised of the "imagery's' corporeal *is* logic and words' discursive *as if* logic" as well as the interrelated, looping dynamic between these two logics. In this way, then, Fleckenstein sees images as bodily entities, or corporeal in any case, and *linked to* words, but not *of* words.

Yet this corporeality of images sustains the distinction between self and other, where the "subject matter of imagery is *feeling*" (22, my emphasis). What I understand this to mean, in the assault example, is that while the image/bodies/materiality of the event necessitates an alternative logic to the meaning produced within the act itself, one which is attempting to resist the textualization of bodies, that same meaning production is still embedded in the verbal

[100] The story usually goes something like this: Attacker approaches Victim. Victim resists and refuses. Attacker persists and forces victim to participate in sexual acts against victim's will. Attacker uses violence along with sex to coerce and pacify the victim. Victim reports/does not report the act to friends/authorities. Victim prosecutes/does not prosecute attacker. Attacker is found guilty/innocent. Attacker is punished/set free. Victim goes to counseling. Victim suffers PTSD. Victim's body heals. Victim has trouble maintaining relationships until victim "gets over" trauma of event. Attacker attacks again/never attacks again/goes about life as usual/lives with the

storytelling of the event. Even with Fleckenstein's interrelated logics (the *is* and the *as if*), the meaning of the assault is primarily understood through language, an interpretation and inscription upon the images.[101] The image is still an image of the body, not the body itself. The body still gets written on, as De Certeau would claim, in words, but also in images. I claim that this continues to enact the assault itself, language being laid over the body in ways that render it invisible, insignificant without that language. The body needs language, then, in order to be recognized as viable. It's "self" and "other" all over again, a bedrock of our Euro-American understanding of the universe.

Reroute again, around this "bedrock" of self and other as distinct, albeit related elements. Todd, considered by many as the originator of the term and technique, Idiokinesis.[102] One of Todd's foundational premises is that the way a person understands her or his relationship to the universe occurs at the level of the bones. She argues that the bones' relationships to each other instigates postural patterns, which then allow for neurological transmission, which engage muscular support and movement, which feed the body's cognition – about place, about relationship, about the universe.

Barbara Mahler describes something similar when she talks about how a body stands, "using the floor." This phrase is a common one among dancers and movement educators, but to

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name "rapist".

[101] Of course, language is inescapable, and a vitally important instrument to recognizing bodies, the worth of them, the existence of them, the roles they play. Indeed, this whole project is a "languaged" manifestation of my theories. My bone to pick is less with the notion of language itself, as an arbiter of understanding, and more to do with the ways in which we privilege it, or use it as a model on which we base other modes of understanding.

[102] A form of somatic education practiced by physical therapists, kinesiologists, dancers, athletic trainers, etc. The term "idiokinesis" was later coined by Dr. Lulu Sweigard, mentioned earlier, and who was a student of Todd's. Irene Dowd, a practitioner I've referred to already, is a contemporary of Barbara Mahler.

actually feel the floor, to use it requires a skeletal relationship that is not nearly as common. All of us, as bodies, have what Mahler refers to as "places of disconnection [which could be the result of] muscles holding, or the structure being pulled out of line for a particular reason." These places of disconnection interfere with the fluency with which gravitational forces can pass through our skeleton, to the floor. Gravitational forces, for Mahler, as for Mabel Todd, are critical, not only as part of the physical laws of the universe, and so being undeniable elements with which we have to contend. These forces are the very things that connect us to the earth, to the floor, the us being explicitly our bodies. Mahler explains:

> when gravity comes down from the heavens, or from the head, or from the sky - whatever you believe - and it hits one of these places [of disconnection], there's this eddy that builds up - and so some of the force that should be trickling down to the floor - ideally 100% - is caught up in this eddy. Let's say 10% goes. And then there's 10% less going down. If there's one disconnection, chances are there's another, so you run into another one - like hyperextended knees - and some [more] energy spills off. Depending on how many [disconnections] you have, less and less force is able to get all the way down to the bottom. And then, in terms of physics, everything that goes down must come back up. So this 5% that you have to push off the floor with, doesn't grant you a lot of power.

While Mahler is talking about harnessing gravitational force falling down through the skeleton into the floor and back up, we might understand this as Todd would ask us to - as a force which connects us to the universe, and as a force which allows our body to make meaning from this connection. What we understand from such a connection includes the distinction between our self and other selves, or our self and the rest of the world, but also, importantly, our relationship to the world, to other bodies in the world.

Therefore, to return to the material practice of an assault, and to attempt to "read" it in Mahler's perspective on gravitational force as a connector, the bodies and the material objects present in this event are wound together , their musculo-skeletal and neural selves, through gravity, and through the material ground which they use. The experience connects them by matter, as well as by image, and feeling, and word. In this view, the material act is not inscribed with meaning by the words that surround the event or those that are carried through our imaginations, during and after the event. The meaning rises out of the connections forged through neural pathways, which invites inscription as well, but is not separate from it, neither is it a tool of such inscription.

Trope: Embodiment as Language–Language as Bodies

Rhetoric and Compositionscholars invested in notions of embodiment are, of course, preoccupied with the interactions between discourse and materiality. In most cases, these interactions are more likely to be metaphorical relationships; for example in the way that James Wilson and Cynthia Lewicki-Wilson articulate what they see as a natural connection between composition studies and embodiment. In their introduction to *Embodied Rhetorics: Disability in Language and Culture* they claim:

> Composition's long history of pedagogy scholarship and its position within the academy in the nearly ubiquitous first-year literacy course set it apart from other disciplines as situated and 'embodied,' a field which serves other knowledges, as the body 'serves' the mind, and whose subject, student writing, is uniquely and closely aligned with its object, the student writer" (8).

Certainly I take their argument to mean that composition's *relationship* to other disciplinary practices sets it apart from other fields, and that this *relationship* involves a systemic and complex series of identifications and significations. But, they describe an embodied field of study as one which 'serves the mind' and one which is clearly identified in terms of subjects and objects, which does little to expand our understanding of the role of bodies and minds. One serves the other. In this case, it is the body that serves.

Embodiment, to Barbara Mahler, involves something different, something along the lines of *function,* which brings to mind the definition of rhetoric I offered in Chapter 1.[103] Rather than using language to talk about bodies, or vice versa, Mahler suggests that the two are quite distinct, and rely on multiple modes of experience to move through them. Embodiment suggests *possibility* to Barbara, and *doing*. She says "If you read some of the stuff on my website […] about what the work is, you know it's intellectual, it's smart. That's not going to *change* you. It's not going to make you a better dancer, a better mover, it's not gonna put you more in touch with yourself." It's in the *change* where meaning lives, when we talk about embodiment, change and "doing, finding and experiencing. And allowing for possibilities." Embodiment necessitates an action, and movement between. It's not the body's relationship to the mind that marks something as embodied, but the body's relationship to space, time, and other bodies or objects.[104]

This is a common enough belief in dance studies, in arenas where spoken and written language is either absent, or significantly less important. Another theorist, Rudolf Laban, developed space-harmony theories to describe effort, movement, and bodies. A student of his, who later developed her own continuations of these theories, Irmgard Bartenieff helps to explain

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[103] from p. 7: "I believe rhetoric to be the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships."

these theories as something "[Laban] saw that in the situation of survival you have to make use of space and energy. You are forced to. From there, he developed the interrelationship of energy and space to what we call our Effort" (224[105])

In some ways, composition scholar Belinda Kremer suggests this kind of relationship in her advocacy of the "infection" trope to describe writing. Infection, for Kremer, doesn't necessarily imply something negative, not necessarily pathological. Instead, it allows her to think of the borders between things (whether they are genres, texts, organisms, bodies, and on) as fluid, and not discrete. One "thing" can infiltrate another, and impact it, change it, *infect it*, making it something else entirely. And so on. She uses the concept of infection in the form of her own writing on the subject,[106] tries to make the messiness transparent, and claims that an academic mistrust of this messiness[107] is grounded in the insistence on a scientific objectivism, a distance[108] from the text/subject/ body. Kremer speculates that what might be at the root of this distance "stands right behind the avowal that subjectivity makes critical thinking impossible, that fear is part of what drives this distance from the text? It seems excruciatingly difficult, within universities, and particularly within the liberal arts, to justify the worth of, or even admit to the existence of, arguments that can't be solved" (104).

But still, Kremer is using bodies as a trope for writing, an image for it, and this image is one which certainly *exists* in bodies, but is perhaps not thought through fully. Infection, as a

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[104] Ibid.

[105] from "Interview with Irmgard Bartenieff" in *Bone, Breath, and Gesture: Practices of Embodiment*, Ed. Don Hanlon Johnson.

[106] in "So It Was, This Beautiful Night" in *Alt:Dis Alternative Discourse and the Academy. Eds. Bizzell, Fox, and Schroeder.*

[107] *read*: subjectivity

[108] *read*: cleanliness

phenomenon, is something that is fought, in and by bodies. Sometimes that fight is successful and others it's not. I don't intend to obsess on the image, but as a potentially desirable quality to writing, I think 'infection" denies a particular understanding of how bodies react to them. White blood cell counts elevate, lymph accumulates around the area, circulation increases, all to allow the body to diffuse and absorb the infection, or to embrace it. With or without the stigma of a pathologized infection, Kremer's metaphor disavows bodies of the kind of agency she claims to want for them.

Her point is fixed on a way to *use* bodies in service of writing, "infection" being a way to move from the sanitized and falsely objective voice of academic prose. The intention is compelling, yet her result is still largely invested in a way for us to think of writing that is not "normal" or "conventional" and naming it something bodily, "infection." Kremer's theory places one subject over top of another - to recall, she has changed the manner in which she maintains her relationship in gravity, rather that reorienting it. Her own essay, one she models as a kind of "infected writing" is really language about language, language which mentions bodies. What has been infiltrated, impacted, changed in her essay? An academic essay has been collided with personal narrative, email text, and transcribed personal conversations, infused with a biological image to shape it. My question about what has been changed is not intended as insult, but rather to ask of us all, what does our language do, when we use bodies to give it shape? In what ways are these moves really advocating for a newly patterned mode of being. I feel confident that Kremer's intentions are to validate the kinds of writing she is modeling for us, but what is at stake with her naming it bodily, naming it "infectious?" These aren't easy questions, to be sure. And I'm not sure I have a simple answer for them. I only want to point out that while "infection"

may seem like a provocative metaphor for talking about discourse, there are many bodies for which infection is something more than provocative.

Until now, I have insisted that our discipline has nearly consistently shied away from physical bodies and their functions, even in work that purports to be emphasizing the rhetoricality of these things. I've also called on us to reorient ourselves, as a discipline, but also as individuals working in the discipline, to reposition our understanding of embodiment as one which includes and even integrates knowledge about how bodies are organized and how they exist in the world. Rather than leaning on our proclivities towards abstraction, in language and consciousness, I ask us to envision a view of rhetoric that is innervated and coordinated[109] among systems of thought, of cultures, of disciplines. This would entail a view that imagines both what is known, and what is not; that enlists multiple faculties, rather than relying on what is most accessible; and utilizes the system with appropriate distributions of labor. Insofar as we can learn from Movement Education, I've identified three elements of Embodied Rhetoric that I believe can help to more clearly understand what an innervated, coordinated view of rhetoric looks like. These elements – *instability, centeredness*, and *revaluation* – and some related examples follow.

Unstable Bodies

The abstraction I describe above can make it seem as if bodies have been wholly erased[110] from our scholarship, but too, the body, even in cases where it is more visible, is

[109] Recall my articulations of an embodied methodology, from Chapter 1, as one which recognizes the relationships between bodies, space, and time as rhetorical, but also constituted by layers.

[110] As I've detailed in the previous chapter.

stabilized, stripped of its systems and layers, its *rhetoricity*. In some ways, we might understand bodies as stable things, given that they tend to maintain the same form, generally. They also tend to act and react in predictable ways, in controlled circumstances. For example, we know that in order to breathe, the respiratory diaphragm is in a particular position at rest: it "domes" upward into the ribcage, helping to support the lungs and heart. Too, we know that in order for the lungs to inflate, the diaphragm must displace itself, contracting by dropping into the abdominal cavity, making room for the lung tissue to expand and fill with air. At the same time, the ribcage must swell, giving the respiratory diaphragm a pathway for it's movement downward and allowing the spine to lengthen and move, also to accommodate the filling of the lungs. Then, in exhalation, the diaphragm pushes itself back into the thoracic cavity, the rib cage "shrinking" (as opposed to its "swollen" position during the inhale), the lungs deflating, and air moving upward and out the trachea, the mouth, the nostrils.[111] This is a fairly predictable course of events, and one which occurs over and over again, without our consciousness supporting it, without even an awareness of this course of events. Yet, how many times does this predictable course of events go wrong? Many times. What leads to a strayed path of breathing?

Anything, really. Perhaps the lungs are losing their elasticity, and so do not inflate easily, making the movement of the ribcage and diaphragm generally unnecessary, and similarly disrupting the spine's potential to flex, extend, or rotate. In this case, what happens to the heart, without constantly being massaged via the inflation/deflation cycle of the respiratory apparatus?

Or, perhaps one rib gets a little twisted in its insertion point either into the sternum (in front) or into the spine (in back). This twist makes the ribcage's swell more difficult, inhibiting the diaphragm's ability to descend into the abdomen, failing to make adequate room for the lungs

[111] More detail about the physiological phenomena associated with respiration is available in

to inflate, resulting in less movement around the heart, drawing less oxygen into the bloodstream, and preventing the spine from lengthening, therefore keeping the nervous system relatively un-stretched, un-invigorated.

Maybe instead of this, the body in question spends all day sitting at a computer, folded forward, closing off the area of the spine which keeps the diaphragm compressed inside the thoracic cavity and disallows movement into the abdomen. In turn, this compression of the spine/diaphragm prohibits movement through the ribcage, and full inflation of the lungs. The scenarios could extend forever, and can easily cover a range of severity - from life threatening, emergency dis-ease and injury to slow and eventual deconditioned muscle tissue; this one small yet crucial bodily event breaking down over time and disrupting our expectations for how a human body breathes.

My point is not that we are bad breathers, though we may be. My point is that the physical practice of breathing is involuntary, and on paper, a completely unified occurrence. We know how it is supposed to happen, and yet, it is often not exactly so. If we look at this through our classical Early Modern Europe Greco-Roman lens (as we so often do),[112] these mis-practices are understood as perversion, distortion, deviation, disease, malfunction. These mis-practices are seen this way because our bodies are intended to be predictable, understandable, and importantly - controllable.[113]

So far, I've primarily focused on breath as a mechanism for connection or reorientation in gravity, but this is not entirely accurate as a statement. It's not "the breath" or "oxygen" or even

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Irene Dowd's *Taking Root to Fly*, "On Breathing"

[112] More of this claim will be taken up in the next chapter.

[113] As with the phenomenon of erasure, I will point explicitly to the false predictability of bodies in the following chapter.

the flow of air that is the mechanism, singularly. There is no singular mechanism, actually, singularity implying a unity or stability to the process. The act of breathing is the thing that's important here, and this act is an intricate, deeply layered one.[114]

Breath is rhetorical.

Breath is rhetorical, of course, in the ways it is employed in oration, or performance. Consider the effect of a long pause finished with a deep and heavy sigh, indicating anger, resignation, contemplation, frustration, relief, joy, etc. Or think of how so many people describe the use of commas in writing - as a textual pause, a moment to "catch your breath." Neither of these things are the sort of thing I refer to when I claim breathing is a rhetorical act.

First, to understand my claim about breath as a rhetorical act, you should know that when I say "breath," I mean "respiration." Respiration includes the filling and emptying of the lungs, as well as the contraction and release of the respiratory diaphragm, extension and flexion in the spine, expansion and tensing of the ribcage, elevation of the collarbones, rotation of the shoulder blades, widening of the pelvis and pelvic diaphragm, and opening and constriction of the trachea, nasal passages. More for reasons of space than anything else, this list leaves out actions like pulmonary contractions, involuntary reflexes sent from the brain through the nervous system, circulation of blood and lymph and synovial fluid through all the tissues of the body, et cetera. The act includes all of this in one shape and function or another. Really, the only way to understand this act is in terms of all these functions; none of them can be separated out as inconsequential, or accidental. They all participate towards an identifiable and changeable *purpose*: to oxygenate the body, to settle the nervous system, to provide power for the vocal

[114] Recall my third and fourth claim, in my logic from Chapter 1: The body can be understood entirely as a system of power; and The body is rhetorical.

chords, to *persuade* the bones to move. Depending on which of these purposes takes precedence, a body may make a series of adjustments, executing particular *strategies* to achieve its goal.

The accumulation of all of these events results in rhetorical breathing, in the way that I define rhetoric to mean the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships. Breath as an act helps orient and reorient us in gravity all the time. But it doesn't act alone. In fact, it acts according to other systems and structures, also rhetorical, and in service of particular and identifiable (if not always conscious) purposes

How does this serve us, when thinking about our disciplinary practices, however? As just one example, I'll share with you an experience from an upper level professional writing course I was teaching, one focused directly on grammar and style. The course is a required one for undergraduate majors who are specializing in a track for Editing and Publishing, and it's not uncommon that most students come into the class either completely intimidated at the prospect of having to study grammar for an entire semester, or overly confident and practically giddy at the prospect of being able to "take apart, cut up, and bleed all over bad writing"[115] to show their skill. My primary goal for the course was to reveal to them the ways in which grammar is merely a system, with its own logic, varying of course, according to the language and cultural context in which it "lives."

So many of these students seemed to believe that grammar was a list of "right way" and "wrong way" and that these ways could be determined in simple and direct fashion. Much as I described breathing as an act which may present itself as straightforward, following a clear set of occurrences, in a clear order, grammar to these students was a matter of knowing the rules and

[115] These are all phrases various students in the different sections I've taught have used with me,

then applying them. In some ways, I believe, they were right. But as we came to find out, it was generally more complicated than that, depending of course, on all the sorts of things we know as teachers of writing. Was the document the students were editing one for a trade publication, or an academic audience? Was it bound by conventions of social science, or journalism? What was the writer really trying to say, in any case, and how could you help the writer to see the multiple meanings suggested by simply moving parts of the sentence around?

One student in particular had studied multiple languages, and had always scored very highly on her verbal exams, had consistently been praised for her command of the English language. She burst out in frustration one afternoon. I can't recall exactly what element of grammar we were working on, or what the specific document was, but I do recall her utter exasperation that she could no longer remember what she used to know. "I can't keep it straight anymore," she told us, "it all keeps changing!" And in that moment, I thought "Exactly."

It's not that I wanted this student to despair over her once very stable knowledge of language and all its arrangements, not at all. Instead, I empathized with her frustration, at the same time that I could see she was developing a much more nuanced understanding about how meaning gets made through relationships, between the words and sentences, between these things and the document, and between all these things and the audience, the writer, the culture they inhabit. Even more, these relationships *move.*

Centered Bodies

In movement education, "getting centered" has more to do with cultivating an awareness of a system, a rhetorical entity, in which no one part does more work than it is required to do and in which all parts working together create the whole. In fact, this *center* also maintains a

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when talking about what they expect out of the class.

connection to similar systems within the body, continuing the relationship model in order to move the body, to propel it in space, and in gravity. A common starting point for identifying "the center" is the pelvis, as it is relatively halfway between a body's head and its feet, and the way the spine inserts into it, and the legs reach out of it. The shape of it also insinuates a container, cradling our visceral organs.

There are a million images to use when trying to see and feel your pelvis - a bowl, an arch, a suspension bridge, a wheel. Irene Dowd alternates between these images, but elaborates particularly on the pelvis as wheel as "the point around which the entire body weight balances equally above and below, and to all sides." (19). This notion is a common one in movement studies, whether dance, physical therapy, kinesiology, martial arts, athletics, theater, yoga, etc. We talk about "getting centered" and "moving from the core" but whether or not we can see this center as a *wheel*, the metaphor is intended to reorient our physical intentions from distal initiation (our hands and feet, or arms and legs) to a proximal one.

Often, this movement towards center can be interpreted as something that moves us inward, as in away from the "real world" or that forces us to move smaller, closer in, and with less attention to the outer edges. This is a false interpretation. Possibly, this orientation towards the center could be understood as an insular movement, or a withdrawal, or even protectionist. All of these interpretations are misinformed. Much as bodies are fundamentally unstable, the "center" is something that is constantly moving, and in relation to other connected parts. It's not easily located as a single place. Movement inward is directly proportional to the movement outward, even if the feel of those movements feel "smaller" or as "less attention to the outer edges." Moving from the center needs to be re-conceptualized as movement with greater *power*.

According to Mabel Todd,

"Man's bones play a large part in his sense of control and position in the world. How he centers them, determines his degree of self-possession; they are continually centered and *ex-centered* in his rhythms of movement. Mechanically, physiologically, and psychologically, the human body is compelled to struggle for a state of equilibrium." (2)

Moving from the center is a search for equilibrium, and it occurs at the level of bones. Barbara Mahler emphasizes the bones as "the deepest and densest tissue [that] conducts the most energy, gravitational force." Conducting gravitational force is inevitable, as I've already explained, so it seems the best practice involves how to use it. Using gravitational force supports a body in space and time, and also helps to project it.

What is the connection between moving to/from the center and embodiment? Above, I suggested that moving towards center is something that repositions our attention inward, and away from what's happening outside of ourselves. Maybe we talk about this as concentration, and in order to concentrate, we limit the kind of external stimulus our nervous system has to process.

In the previous section of this chapter, I referred to an argument about composition studies being an "embodied discipline" - one which 'serves other knowledges […] and whose subject is uniquely and closely aligned with its object" (Lewicki-Wilson and Wilson 8). This take on embodiment, therefore, seems sympathetic to the notion that to be of the body also means to be closely focused on its inner workings, and to assist other "bodies." If we were to manifest this understanding of embodiment and attempt to locate the "center" of our discipline, then, we might note some of the options described below.

Maybe we would locate studies for First Year Writing curriculum as the center, as it is often perceived as "on the ground" research, with "real world implications" that have lived

consequences for many real people. These studies and implications for the work therein get conceived and distributed as research that effects a larger population of individuals, as well as for multiple disciplines, institutions, and industries. These kinds of research projects - about how students learn to write, how faculty and administrators assess student writing, how faculty and students can effectively engage each other in the production of texts - are certainly projects that do have all kinds of effects on all kinds of people and organizations. Some proponents of a robust First Year Writing research agenda might claim that this is indeed the wheel around which the vehicle of Rhetoric and Writing Studies operates.

Perhaps scholars of digital writing and rhetorics would take issue with this claim, marking their intellectual territory as central. Now, they might argue, as the production of texts moves from paper and ink to pixels and code, our discipline's locomotion is even more reliant on a critical understanding of an expansive and "new" while simultaneously "old" definition of writing. This definition has to include the ways we produce text visually, how text gets used in various mediums, what functions these texts take on as products and agents of meaning making, community building, and negotiations of power. Maybe *this* is the "wheel" of rhetoric and composition, the organizing principle that coheres the various spokes of our interests and research and teaching.

And now rhetoric history scholars speak out about the centrality of our inherited traditions and theories which have infused into and laid groundwork for all the various modalities in which we all work. What holds us together, they might insist, is the wheel of time, all the layers of rhetorical theory that have accumulated into this SUV of disciplines - one that can traverse multiple terrains, and carry multitudes of people through their present lives. This is our wheel, historians could claim, this is what propels us forward and through.

All of these arguments are accurate, and there are others. Arguments for Basic Writing, or Writing Center Theory, or Technical Writing, or Writing as Community Based Practices, or Social Action and Justice, etc. The problem is not the arguments. The problem is the metaphor. To say "center" is to suggest something much more complex, less singular than a wheel, or even, a bowl. In movement studies, we've seen how the concept of "getting centered" usually refers to an entity less unified. Plenty of people may use the image of a wheel or a bowl or a bridge, but the key is that this image never works alone. A wheel is powerless without its relationship to other parts - the chassis, the axles, the transmission, the fuel line, and on. Same with a bowl. An empty bowl is only that, but when it is holding something(s), and sitting on something, and next to another thing(s), then the bowl carries a much deeper and richer function. Likewise, a bridge.

No Good Bodies

In traditional-canonical rhetoric studies, our discipline maintains its inheritance of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, via the Scholastics and Early Modern Europe, even locating this as a kind of "center" of our discipline. There is room, we say, for Other Rhetorics,[116] but these other rhetorics are always in relation to our defined and easily locatable center.[117] Our belief in this inheritance requires an attitude toward the body that it[118] is 1) subservient to the mind, 2) in need of salvation and redemption, 3) understandable as always better or worse than another body

[116] African Rhetorics, Asian Rhetorics, Native Rhetorics, Chicana Rhetorics, Disability Rhetorics, even this dissertation - Embodied Rhetorics

[117] which we know, from the previous section, is a fallacy.

[118] the body

(usually that of the "speaker"). As common and diffuse as this worldview is,[119] it is not a universal worldview, not a default stance about bodies, not even in Western traditions.

I say not even in Western traditions because the general presumption is that cultures and communities that take a "different" stance on bodies are those in "remote" places, or the "3rd world" - where people have "primitive" relationships with the land, who use their bodies for daily labor and subsistence. This view is a problem of course, for myriad reasons, not the least of which is the racist and orientalist code which goes unsurfaced.[120]

I say not even in Western traditions because I come from the west; my ancestors are from Eastern Europe and Germany, England and Wales, New York and Ohio. I am educated by public schools and universities in the United States. I have worked in modern dance and movement education, fields which are distinctly western albeit certainly influenced by thinkers and cultures from all over the world. I come through all these traditions, learning and practicing through them all to accumulate an "other" stance on bodies. Where I come from, the west, I have learned that bodies are always in relation to the world around them, to the other bodies, and that, truly, there is no good or bad body.

There is only body.

This is a bold statement, a frightening one to make, even. To say there is no good body means that I am no longer equipped to feel pleased with myself, in respect to another body. I am no longer able to say "I am good because I recognize what is bad." I am able to walk across the

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[119] As I argued in the previous chapter, these attitudes are visible, though often not noticed explicitly, in our own discipline's canonical history and adoption of particular texts and translations.

[120] This argument is one which is made consistently by theorists working in post-colonial and para-colonial studies. It was perhaps first articulated by Said, in Orientalism, but has been noted by many others, such as Spivak, Minh-Ha, and Bhabha.

room without the aid of a crutch, a walker, a wheel chair, a prosthesis, a limp, a guide dog, a caregiver, a paid assistant, a nurse. I am able to do this, and yet, this does not make me good. While we may be uncomfortable admitting it, the general perception is that anyone who is able to walk across the room with assistance of one of the aids I listed above is *not good*, relative to someone who does not use these supports. What term, then, do we use to describe this body that uses such aids? In our good and bad frame, we call this person disabled; in fact, we call any person who uses an aide to locomote herself across a room the same thing, since we "know" that a good body is able to accomplish this task without such an aide.

But for Barbara Mahler, there's no such thing as good. She says she teaches "people how to stand up. How to find a relationship with gravity in the simplest way possible, through their body. It's not just about mobilization, it's about mobilization of body parts to reach the particular aim of righting the pelvis on top of the legs so that force and direction are much more clearly facilitated through the legs." The aim is not to cultivate a good body, but a moving body. This revaluation dictates that how that body moves is inseparable from the materiality of the various parts of that individual. These parts can be stacked or organized in ways that facilitate the distribution of force and energy through them. Barbara emphasizes that it's not stable, not linear; "It has to do with how clearly one bone transfers weight through the joint below to it to the next bone to the next bone to the next bone, without having an "optimum" skeleton - 'cause none of us have an optimum body."

Considering your own individual orientation to gravity connects you into a system that is much larger than your self, and much larger even than a relationship with another person. Focusing on your bones, and your body and these things' relationship to the ground, to the sky, through gravitational force allows you to feel the ground under your feet, and the way the ground

participates in your uprightness, or whatever orientation you presume. This *participation* connects YOU to the PLANET, in a way that suggests you are part of it, not on top of it, and not separate from it. This *participation* also makes everything much easier, more powerful.

To illustrate my point, I gesture again to a recently published book, *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horions for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies,* co-authored by Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E. Kirsch. Early in the book, both authors reflect on their own intellectual stories, meditating on the motivations, methodological choices, and various impacts both have had on themselves as well as on each other. I've referred already to some of Royster's reflections, particularly to her use of the landscape metaphor to describe methodology in the opening chapter to my book, which has its own resonances with what I describe as an orientation to gravity that ensures your *participation* in it. But I'd also like to include some of Kirsch's insights here, to build on it.

In particular, Kirsch points out a tension in her historical research, a historiographical question about how to "speak" for the dead, and how to negotiate difference and boundary crossing. Kirsch says "I realized that when we study women who are no longer alive, who can no longer speak back, explain, or set the record straight, questions of ethics and representation take on an increased urgency" and later, of her work with a very much alive Royster, "our differences, as well as our common concerns about the necessity of trying to do good work together, have centered on the challenges of engaging historical women's lives respectfully and meaningfully – for their day and our own" (7). I want to splice these two comments together to try to show how I believe these two scholars are working not only to consider their own orientation to gravity, but to consider their orientations to other bodies (as in, each other, as well as their research subjects, as well as to their disciplinary conventions, etc). It's striking to me too,

that both Kirsch and Royster see these orientations as unstable, and as variations which profoundly root them to a structure in which they can sustain their scholarly and collegial lives.

What I mean by *participation in gravity*, then, is pretty simple: The subversion of physical bodies in conversations about discourse systems is incredibly easy to do, and also easy to ignore, but only because of the way Ancient Greco-Roman rhetorical theory has been universalized. And this phenomenon, via the imperial project of Early Modern Europe, is in many ways, entirely inconsistent with how bodies are arranged, presented, and re-presented in other venues, particularly in dance and movement education. In the next chapter, I will position some of these consistencies and inconsistencies alongside one another to reveal some of the ways classical Greco-roman rhetorical theory has been enacted to defer physical bodies, and what real and imagined effects we can still feel today. These effects get articulated in individual bodies, as well as onto groups of bodies, as well as in between these groups of bodies – creating connections, disruptions, and obfuscations. Erasing the body makes other things possible – a whole list of -isms that insist on one kind of body as the best kind.

Breath: Seated

Close your eyes and return to your balloon lungs. See them fill and empty, and notice the differences between the areas that expand easier than others.

As you are sitting comfortably in your chair, with your eyes closed, feel the weight slip down again, into your hips. See your pelvis as a bowl filled with water, and notice where the water tends to collect in that bowl. Is there more contact between your pelvis and the chair towards the front, or the back? Can you feel a stronger connection on one side or another? Does water spill over the edges of the bowl anywhere?

As you fill the balloons of your lungs, try to notice whether the bowl pulls up out of the chair, or if it falls deeper into it? What part of the bowl pulls up, or falls down? How does the water move in this bowl, as you fill the balloons?

Now watch the balloons empty, and feel again how the rib cage gathers inward. Notice what happens to the bowl when you do this. Watch the water slosh or pool in the bowl. Feel what happens to the bowl itself. Does the front or back dip lower than the other? Do the edges of the bowl pull in towards each other or do they stretch away? What happens from side to side?

When you are ready to inhale again, try inflating the balloons in a way that supports the bowl in it's upright position, resting on the chair underneath you. See how the balloons' pressure against the bones of the rib cage suspends the upper rim of the bowl. With the rim suspended this way, more water can pour into the entire bowl. With more water inside the bowl, your pelvis can hang more fully into the chair.

Now, use the balloons' deflation and the inward movement of the ribs to sustain that feeling of suspension, and to encourage an upward drift of your spine, between the deflating

balloons, through your throat and out the crown of your head. Check in with the bowl of your pelvis again, and notice if any of the water is spilling out, and where you can see it.

Open your eyes and look around the room where you sit. What do you feel, sitting in the chair? What do you feel in your belly? In your shoulders? What do you feel in your legs and your feet?

Chapter 4: "Axial Elongation": Cellular Culture and Rhetorical Bodies

In the voice, the white people

In the opening to this book, I told you my story of Sharon Crowley's keynote address. In this story, I recounted the well-meaning questions she posed about the kinds of historical work our discipline sustains, and about what I see as a continued reluctance to negotiate questions of race and coloniality in our scholarship.[121] The difficulty for me, in the audience of that address, and in telling you the story of it, was not to do with Crowley's invocations, or what I believe were her intentions, but in the difficulty our discipline has, to risk an easy generalization, with locating bodies, skin color or other markings included, as physical sites of rhetorical agency.[122]

As I sat in Crowley's audience, all these troubled thoughts were in my skin. I want to say they were in my mind, but that's not what I mean at all. What was in my conscious mind was how hungry I was, and nervous, and how hard it was to hear her words, since she seemed not to be too comfortable with the microphone. In this situation, and in others beyond it, it was my skin that responded. What I refer to here is less my culturally constructed skin,[123] than my cellular one. I acknowledge there may be some of the culturally made version in the physical tissue, but

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[121] I am definitely not the only one to notice this. In the chapters that lead up to this time, I've named a number of scholars working in Rhetoric and Composition Studies who are doing just that, and in addition to "noticing" it , are offering examples of projects that do, in fact, negotiate and revise relationships to coloniality, imperialism, and racism. Via this book, and my own project, I hope I am joining them in this effort.

[122] Maybe even the Humanities has this difficulty.

[123] in the way we are accustomed to talking about it, as an object that is the focus of discourse, and so is understood via that discourse, in the manner of Judith Butler. for example

then,[124] as I sat in the audience, something made a prickling sensation. What was it, I came away wondering, that made that sensation, if not my conscious mind?

Remember Mabel Todd, and her theories about the body as a structure which arranges itself skeletally and viscerally,[125] making sense of its arrangement as one individual in the universe, as well as its relationship to it. On an even smaller scale, Todd explains the body in terms of its cellular systems, that "All the myriad cells of the body have characteristics in common, but each lives a somewhat independent life of its own in a fluid medium." She emphasizes the various elements of these independent lives - breath, assimilation, irritation, reparation, reproduction - and the ways that all cells, regardless their independence in turns of function, participate in discrete roles for the entire structure. Todd says, of the multiple cells and resulting groups and systems, that "The reactions of all parts are so coordinated and integrated by several different factors, chemical, physical, and nervous, that we perceive the individual as a whole, rather than as a collection of parts" (24).

Given this sense of cellular organization, as a system of parts, integrated, assimilated, and stimulated, which is often perceived as a whole, might we consider the cellular body a kind of culture? It's a stretch, I realize. But not impossible, especially once we think of the ways that culture (whether we are referring to that of a particular body, or that of many particular bodies) dictates behaviors and movement. Rhetoric describes a study of particular systems of meaning-making behaviors, and in Chapter 2, I have emphasized how our discipline's canon of rhetorical theory has made sense of bodies. At this point, I'd like to shift my orientation in gravity, as I recommended in Chapter 3, to re-contextualize some of the trends I've discussed in Chapter 2, as

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[124] as in, in that moment in time

[125] Among the other systems in the human body, these two are ones Todd refers to repeatedly, as

elements of cellular and cultural activity. This re-contextualization serves several purposes: one, an understanding of the body as a cellular and also a cultural mechanism allows us to defer, instead of the physical body, the tendency to avoid it; and two, looking directly to the way the body functions as a site of rhetorical power as well as cultural practice helps us to identify different models for naming the process of knowledge production.

These trends I named in Chapter 2 include, to sum up, naming the body as a thing to be controlled, protected, and ultimately, obscured. They also include understanding the body as a container in which the soul, character, and overall value of a man can be seen. The body is inferior, in all cases, to the mind, or the soul, or the consciousness. The body is something to aspire to have power over, rather than the body being seen as something with power to use. Finally, the body is a site through which language emerges, as in the sound of it, in speech, along the same lines as it being a container for the soul. Language is somehow connected *to* the body, but not bodily. The re-contextulization I mention in the paragraph above insists that the body, however, is a rhetorical entity, in particular, a body in motion involves specific qualities – Balance; Weight Transfer; and Range of Motion – which we can use, explicitly to understand how rhetoric and language is, in fact, *bodily.* Not only are the qualities useful for understanding, but they are ones that are useful for developing a theoretical model for studying rhetoric, one that resists the reinscription of the colonialist paradigm.

These are only three possible qualities to use, which I borrow from movement education, and all three of them necessitate an understanding of bodied selves which are constantly in relation to other bodied selves. This suggests the development of a cultural mode of being, in that the relationships are developed through systematic practices and behaviors, and which share common organizational strategies. The qualities I identify are also deeply entrenched in

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those through which a person senses herself, neurologically, in relation to the world around her.

understanding the function of a body on a cellular level, as systems of arrangement and purpose, which I have already claimed are *rhetorical*. Underneath this premise, rests Bender and Wellberry's modernist explanation of rhetoric as an ultimately social, institutionalized, and physical act involving a speaker, a system, and its doctrines.[126] The qualities (Balance, Weight Transfer, and Range of Motion) are woven together; you can't understand one without some sense of the others, and yet there is not an identifiable origin for these relationally understood phenomena. Therefore, I begin with balance more as an arbitrary decision than anything else, though it might be said that balance follows conveniently from a discussion of gravity, as in the previous chapter. Each of these qualities is described and illustrated next, both as principles from movement education, and with examples of how the quality/principle can be understood to exist in rhetorical theory/scholarship, as appropriate decolonial interventions.

Bodies in Balance

The notion of balance is a tricky one. There is a tendency to think of it as an identifiable place, something fixed, and a destination we arrive at clearly. But the truth about balance is that it's constantly moving, not fixed at all. Balance is something we look for, and when we find it, we are especially aware of how easy it is to move out of it again. In fact, many times, as we are seeking balance, for example, when we lift one leg to put our pants on in the morning, we are probably moving back and forth and side to side, maybe even bobbing up and down on our standing leg, or in our torsos. But balance indicates things other than standing on one leg. In

[126] In "Rhetoricality: On the Modernist Return of Rhetoric", they describe the significance of the Speaker to the ancient Greeks in two ways: one, the modification and adaptation to different occasions by the speakers affords them a semblance of mobility, in regards to social position; two, the physicality of the act, speech or voiced-ness, binds rhetoric to "the physically demonstrative social systems that so powerfully institutionalized its doctrines: city-state

movement education, a popular goal is to strive for a balance between strength and flexibility, or balance around a particular joint - the knee, for example. Both of these types of balance are just as fluid, or wobbly as in the example of standing on one leg. One body's relative proportion of strength to flexibility will likely not stay the same, over time or in different moving situations. The same goes for balance around a joint.

One key component of moving is something called reciprocal innervation, a phenomenon that exists in muscle action; generally, this exists when a muscle contracts on one of many sides of a joint, and the corresponding muscle on the opposing side of the joint releases. This reciprocity of contraction and release creates a condition in the joint where the bones are held in a kind of equilibrium, something that you may recall Mabel Todd pointed out is a state for which the human body is "compelled to struggle."[127] Whether you think of this notion as reciprocity, or equilibrium, the implication is a kind of balance between work and rest, and one which occurs between bones and the connected musculature. Because this principle dictates *movement* however, it does not ever stay the same. The condition of reciprocity exists in a state of flux, and therefore is also reliant on some constant decision-making force to assist in direction. That decision-making is a complex of parts, which are, Todd says,

> Moving definite distances in space, in a scheme perfectly timed, and with the exact amount of effort necessary to support the individual weights and to cover the time-space movement. These delicate, accurate, and intricate regulations are made in the substrata, below the 'threshold of consciousness'." (22)

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democracy and its republican redactions, as well as aristocracy"

[127] I introduced this idea in the previous chapter, as one fundamental idea on which Todd builds her theory of the thinking body: that a person knows herself and her position in the universe at the level of her bones.

In the body, according to Todd and her peers, balance[128] exists *below consciousness*, not in it, and happens without our awareness. These "perfectly timed" schemes, "with the exact amount of effort necessary" might help us understand some of what rhetoricians argue language affords us, a kind of usable power, through both written and spoken language.

For example, consider Isocrates' intentions behind instruction in rhetoric. His belief that students, as emerging rhetors, should be versed in as many different sources of knowledge as possible, and be able to converse about them (whether in speech or writing) was key towards effective discourse. For Isocrates, fullness in understanding allows the subject to "[speak] in a manner worthy of his subject and yet is able to discover in it topics which are nowise the same as those used by others" ("Against" Sect. 12). This same fullness of understanding helps a subject make effective choices about which elements from the various material to include, how to organize it "and also, not to miss what the occasion demands but appropriately to adorn the whole speech with striking thoughts and to clothe it in flowing and melodious phrase" ("Against" Sect. 16). Good rhetoric, as an embodied rhetoric, is constantly assessing the decisions necessary to cultivate balance around the joint, able to know the subject, as well as to understand new elements in it. Finally, good rhetoric does all these things, appropriate to the situation. It's not a new idea, in fact; it's one many of us are entirely used to. What I ask is that we consider it from this other perspective on the role of the body, however. Rather than seeing the body as an obstacle towards propriety, and so something to be manipulated and controlled, *balance* allows us to recognize the complex nature of knowledge production.

As a contemporary example of this principle at work in scholarship on rhetorical theory, I gesture to the work of Jacqueline Jones Royster, in particular to her book *Traces of a Stream:*

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[128] again: or reciprocity, or equilibrium, or how we know where we are in the world

Literacy and Social Change in African American Women. Royster articulates a theoretical framework through which we can attempt a more effective, I suggest a more fluid and resilient,[129] analysis of rhetorical theories as developed within and by African American women's communities. In her preface, Royster recalls and responds to what had become for her typical reactions to her scholarship, reactions characterized by surprise and disbelief that the rhetorical theorists she was identifying were largely unheard of in our discipline, and in others. Royster's response is admirably restrained; her responses coolly affirming that yes, these women were prolific in their public personae, and yes, there are many others to note.

To my point regarding the quality of *balance* as a way of recognizing the embodiment in rhetoric, however, I want to emphasize Royster's explanation of the filters and barriers that historical approaches to rhetorical theory have facilitated society's[130] ability "to discount, ignore, and disempower" these many rhetors and theorists. (*Traces* 4). These obfuscations lead into other consequences, namely an ease at noting the "exceptions" to what has been perceived as "the rule," and in Royster's words, "neutraliz[ing]" their value and achievements (4). She answers this observation with a straightforward claim, that in fact, African American women's "rhetorical prowess" (5) has *not been neutralized*; it only looks that way because of our flattened and out of balance methodologies. She says, "the theory begins with the notion that a community's material conditions greatly define the range of what this group does with the written word and, to a significant degree, even how they do it" (5) and "we need not just a long view, but a kaleidoscope view" (6). Material conditions have a significant impact on the rhetorical prowess of a group of people, material conditions including their bodies and the bodies

[129] For more on "fluidity" and "resilience," refer back to Chapter 3.

[130] both public society, and academic society, in this case

of others' in relationship to them, and conditions being subject to change, constantly, hence the long, as well as kaleidoscopic view. Conditions, rhetorics, and communities of people can't be seen, not well, as static and linear entities. They must be understood as varying elements all stacked and in relation to each other, constantly shifting according to the turn of the kaleidoscope, to the light filtering through the far end. They are constantly arranging and rearranging themselves in gravity, reciprocally contracting and releasing in order to keep the entire system's structure in tact.

Indeed, reciprocal innervation is not the only quality important to a movement-based understanding of balance. Critical to that understanding is a refined comprehension of the various qualities of muscle contractions. Generally, we may think of a contraction as a shortening of muscle tissue, but this is only one of three possibilities. Muscles may contract by shortening (called a concentric contraction), but they may also do so by lengthening (eccentric), or maintaining the same length at rest as at work (isometric). Different muscles and different activities require different kinds of contractions, of course, much as different audiences, or different purposes require different arrangements, inventions, deliveries, etc. in our rhetoric. In the most general way, an eccentric contraction tends to support the weight of the body in space, as in maintaining posture, where concentric contraction tends to support the weight of an object on the joint, as in performing bicep curls, and isometric contraction tends to support the weight of the body in space, as well as an object on the joint.[131] The idea of balance, then, incorporates this multiplicity of contraction, stipulating that the body in question would need to be able to

[131] These are completely generalized descriptions of the three contractions, not intended to be used as definitive and fixed, but rather to illustrate some of the different possibilities a body might choose a particular sort.

assess a given situation, and act on it, variously, triggering multiple sorts of muscular work in multiple muscle groups, in order to achieve a given task.

Imbalance, much as its opposite, is multiply understood, and complicated. It may include a constantly contracted[132] muscle, an overly flexible[133] one, or a muscle which can only contract by shortening.[134] It may also describe a joint, and therefore a *system* of muscles, ligaments, nerves, etc, which could fall into one or some of the above criteria. Or, it may describe another system of the body, perhaps the cardiovascular system, being out of relationship to another one, perhaps the endocrine system. Let's continue with the example of a joint, according to Dowd: "the imbalance at a joint that is 'out of line' does not just involve muscle weakness. It involves a relative imbalance in mass, endurance, and flexibility, as well as strength. If a joint is being held in 'perfect alignment' all the muscles are contracting just to hold you up and are therefore at a great disadvantage when called on to move" (4).

Imbalance then, describes a situation of disadvantage, in so far as movement is concerned. Perfect alignment is not the goal, Dowd is suggesting, if you can't move as well. The function of the body is to move, and I argue that this too is a function of rhetoric. The goal of rhetoric is not to perfectly fix my self, my body, my speech with my audience.[135] In Chapter 1, I offered my definition of rhetoric as "the study of motion and function, the relationships between bodies, space, and time, and all the resulting change that inhabits these relationships. Given this defintion, I argue that a goal of rhetoric is to *move* my self (and my connected body and speech) and *to move* my audience, in order to "discover […] topics which are nowise the same as those

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[132] or constantly resting, of course

[133] or overly inflexible, similarly

[134] as above, or by lengthening, or by maintaining a constant length

used by others."[136] In this claim, I intend the verb "to move" in its more basic sense – to create, invoke, spur *motion.* Another way of understanding this word, from a movement education perspective, would be "to change."

How might this "situation of disadvantage" translate to notion of voice in our discipline? How might this help us to re-contextualize some of our inherited values about the writer's presence in a text? We've all heard and used this word "voice" with students (even with ourselves and our colleagues) at some point or another to describe a necessary and also troublingly ambiguous aspect to "good writing." [137] We may feel it is recognizable, individual, adaptable, collective, or authentic. We may feel it is some combination of these things. The trope inspires a series of connotations – among them presence and authority, but also orality, speaker, persona, visibility, self-reflexivity. Given our multiple histories and traditions, our confusion about the word is understandable. In some ways, I believe we are "out of balance" with all this word suggests.

As we've come to use it in our 21st century classrooms, many of us like to think we are advocating for increased subjectivity and diversity in who gets represented in text. In so many ways, important ones, I believe we are doing just that. Look to our national professional organization and journal, the CCC's resolution for Students' Right to Their Own Language,[138]

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[135] "Fix" as in "stabilize"

[136] Isocrates, see above selection.

[137] or, good rhetoric

[138] Reprinted here, from the Fall, 1974 issue of *CCC*: We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language - the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of

as well as texts such as Kirsch and Rohan's *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process*, and Gilyard and Nunley's *Rhetoric and Ethnicity* for evidence that our origin story of the ancient Greco-Roman and European rhetorical tradition has expanded in other directions. Recall some of the pieces referenced in the previous chapter, the likes of Peter Elbow, Villanueva, Rose, and still more, collected in an often used text for composition theory, *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory.* All of these artifacts I list now, to illustrate multiplicity of the representation of voices has made excellent and important strides in alleviating the colonialist imperative.

Still, I feel it's important to remember in what ways this notion of voice has been written and re-written, and by whom. Regardless the inclusion of NCTE and CCC policies, canon expansion, and the popularity of expressionism in first year writing classrooms, "voice" still carries with it the heft of Cicero's "good man, speaking well" and Blair's "native dignity" of English. *Other voices* are still othered, despite our best intentions, as long as we ignore the manner in which we have relied on imbalance to define our movement. Dowd again, simplifies this understanding of balance and innervation, when she urges us to be multiply directed, not just in our thinking, but in our practice: "Practicing one kind of contraction enables you to do more of just that kind, but it doesn't help you with the other two kinds. In other words, what you practice is what you can do. There is no one all around exercise that prepares you for everything else." (4) In other words, as a discipline, we have practiced the exercises we know so well to this point that we can reiterate a humanist, colonialist agenda without even knowing we are doing so.

Even Quintilian argues for the necessity of balance to a speaker's art, "that it should be neither dry nor jejune […]; nor on the other hand must it be tortuous or revel in elaborate descriptions" (*Institutio* 2.4.3). Proper "voice" is one which vibrates between poles of sensation

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its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to

and reason. Certainly, we know already that Quintilian is always advocating for *propriety* in all things, and a particular flavor of propriety, as I've articulated in earlier pages. It's inappropriate to overlook the ways in which our European narratives about rhetoric have naturalized the way we define "good writing" and "voice." For Quintilian, in our naturalized reading, the emphasis in his claims toward balance, is on balance between what he sees as two separate things: sensation and reason.

But perhaps we should emphasize instead, the *vibration,* in terms of our movement oriented definition of balance. A speaker's art has to be fluid, acting and reacting according to the stimulus that exists both within and without that speaker, much as a knee joint (and all its parts) must constantly make choices about how to flex, extend, bear weight, and connect the bones of the upper and lower leg. Whether one of these categories can be qualified as sensation and another as reason is ultimately an unproductive distinction.

Balance (and imbalance) is transformative, then, either as restorative[139] or progressive.[140] In turn these restorations or progressions facilitate new rhetorical situations for new opportunities of balance/imbalance. For example, Blair maintains that voice is a necessary tool for climbing the ladder of Power:[141] "to be entirely devoid of relish for eloquence, poetry, or any of the fine arts, is justly construed to […]being prone to low gratifications, or destined to drudge in the more vulgar and illiberal pursuits of life" (15). A speaker must be aware of and have some facility with "eloquence" in order to be recognizable as one of the elite, or at least, as

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respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language.

[139] as in building new, efficient movement patterns which help to repair damage resulting from old, inefficient ones

[140] as in, building new, efficient movement patterns which lead to greater power and more sophisticated movements

[141] In this use of the word "power" I mean, of course, socio-political power, generally referred to

civilized. However, while these familiarities are of great use to a speaker, as in the development of particular kinds of muscular contractions, Blair cautions his audience not to overdevelop such sorts of contractions, similar to the Ancient Romans.[142] As I pointed out in earlier sections of this chapter, Blair's intention is entirely to justify and fortify a vision of English as inherently superior, naturally superior. A good man, therefore, would not overuse, or even have to "[hunt] after tropes, and figures, and rhetorical assistances" but that they "must come unsought, if [they come] at all; and be the natural offspring of a strong imagination (Lecture IV 47). The naturally superior English speaker doesn't need to "practice" the arts of good speech; it arises out of him naturally.

As with Quintilian, I suggest that the importance to Blair's assertion is *not* in the sustained vision of a naturally superior English, but in the sense that facility in multiple modes of articulation is merely a practice in multiple modes of effort. Also, as with Quintilian, we mustn't overlook the nationalist, colonialist imperative in Blair's discourse.[143] Overlooking it merely supports an imbalanced movement pattern, as we've already practiced this one to the point of not being able to sense it once it's engaged. We have an opportunity, now, to build a new pattern through our re-contextualization of Blair and Cicero and even of Plato, through our bodies, through the joints of our canon.

Malea Powell describes several such experiences, in her essay on, among other things, her archival work she has undertaken.[144] In one library archive in St. Louis, Powell reflects that

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in the sense of "power over."

[142] meaning Cicero and Quintilian

[143] and that of his contemporaries - Adam Smith, Richard Sheridan, and Richard Whateley, in particular

[144] specifically, from "Dreaming Charles Eastman: Cultural Memory, Autogiography, and Geography in Indigenous Rhetorical Histories," included in Kirsch and Rohan's *Beyond the*

"it wasn't the people in that place that tore at me and filled the articulated bones in my body with inflammation; it was the words, the writing, the documents, and their presence in that place that ate at me" (118). In my interpretation, the archive and Powell's body interrelate in that moment,[145] the words and space, and her physical presence "articulating with inflammation." The vibration, in other words, is like friction, the surfaces of each rubbing against each other, heating each other, swelling and aggravating. The distinction between which of these surfaces is sensation, and which is reason, distracts us from understanding the manner in which knowledge is made, for Powell, for her readers, for me, and for you, now.

"Voice" in writing instruction can't be boiled down to a simple transference of oral culture to print, neither can it be reduced to a straight forward assertion of the colonizer over the colonized. However, we can attempt to understand it as a series of choices and assessments, made by a complex interchange of systems, and transferred through these systems in relationship to other ones. These transferences shift from imbalance to balance and back again, over and over, in Todd's words, in "relation with the forces of gravity and inertia, constitut[ing primary patterns of behavior millions of years old, and all are dependent upon nervous reflexes" (30).

Bodies that Transfer

Mabel Todd's fundamental premise is that "we should use the muscles mostly to *move* the bones, and let the bone support the weight."[146] As with rhetorical theory, there are many other movement educators with variations and different premises, all having to do with the ways

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Archives.

[145] and likely, after

[146] as stated by Andre Bernard, a current practitioner of Todd's techniques with acting students, in a 1999 documentary called *The Thinking Body: The Legacy of Mabel Todd*

in which a body moves, and how it deals with weight. Ida Rolf, a contemporary of Todd, and the developer of Structural Integration, takes a somewhat different view, that

> Man consists, more of less, of stackable units. The agents of this balance are the bones and soft tissue (myofascia). Bones determine position in space, but bones are held by soft tissue. When the myofascia is repositioned, bones spontaneously reorient. When the tone of the soft tissue is balanced, there is a sensation of lightness in the body. The masses of head, thorax, pelvis, etc. are no longer dragged out of true by their weight; the structure presents less resistance, and gravity can 'flow through'." [147] (163)

Do I want to argue that the bones are the initiator of movement, or that the muscles are? Neither actually. This difference in opinion is one that movement educators are familiar with, and negotiate in all their daily practices. It's similar to the differences we negotiate, in Rhetoric Studies, between Aristotle's theories of rhetoric, as one example, and Toulmin's. Instead, notice what's similar between both Todd and Rolf: gravity. For both women, the musculo-skeletal body is constantly arranging and rearranging itself according to gravitational forces, physical force, and inertia. Movement occurs as a result of these rearrangements and the transfer of this energy through the bones.[148] Weight transfer, or this passage of gravitational force through the skeleton, is the second quality of a rhetorical body in motion.

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[147] This selection comes from an article by Rosemary Feitis, a student of Ida Rolf, in which Feitis helps to explain some of the important elements of Rolf's theories about the organization of the body.

[148] Of course, Todd and Rolf are not the only ones interested in this frame for understanding movement. Refer to the previous chapter for more description of the movement of gravity through the skeleton, and the resulting effort and freedom to move.

The transfer of weight builds on our understanding of balance, meaning that balance is an important prerequisite to efficient transference. Also, balance builds on an understanding of weight transfer. In some ways, we might say that the two categories have a reciprocal relationship to each other. Dowd argues for the imperative in clear weight transfer through our bones, when she points out the reciprocity[149] this way: "if weight is habitually never transferred through the center of a joint, some of the muscles that cross the joint are constantly being stretched while others are more contracted and unable to stretch nearly as much. Stronger muscles may be more massive than weaker ones, but if they are too massive they get in the way of full movement range."[150] (3) In other words, in order for weight to transfer through the skeleton appropriately, the joints must be in balance; also, in order for the joints to be in balance, weight must transfer through the skeleton appropriately. Much as the speaker moves herself through the audience, the audience moves itself through the speaker, and what results is a new understanding.[151]

Return to my discussion of voice as a trope in rhetoric studies, to think of this transfer of weight. So far, I've mostly argued that voice is traditionally taught as a tool of Empire, that it is a desired element in rhetoric to assert a subject's right to belong, and inherent superiority over other subjects. Of course, this isn't the only way we think of voice in our discipline. Even in Cicero, we hear the assertion of Self. He declaims the power of voice as one which evinces autonomy: "a great task and enterprise for a person to undertake and profess, that while every one else is silent, he alone must be heard on the most important subjects, and in a large assembly

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[149] Whether in terms of function or dysfunction, the relationality still exists.

[150] More details on range of motion follow this section.

[151] Much as I did in the section on balance, I refer you back to my definition of rhetoric, from Chapter 1, and recall my claim about the necessity of *motion*.

of men" (*On Oratory* 1.25). To give voice to something is to make it known, make it public, make it felt. Even more, to give voice to something is to make your *Self* known, to make your Self public. Voice acts as a gravitational force, perhaps, transferring through the skeleton of the speaker's body, connecting her[152] to the ground underneath her, and to the public space in which she is speaking.

At this point, recall my reaction to Sharon Crowley's address, my prickly skin. Add to this image my description of the cyclical nature of speaker and audience, and my claim about balance and weight transfer from above. Crowley was pointing us to our bodies in that space, attempting to make her self known, harnessing the gravitational force of history, and W.E.B. Du Bois, along with the photographs of Elizabeth Eckford[153] in order to cultivate a vision and felt experience of the multiple bodies present and absent in that room. And yet, my skin prickled, my interpretation of that prickle indicating an inability of the audience to be able to participate in that transfer of weight. What would it take, I was wondering then, for us to do just that?

Given the accumulation of what we still hail as legacy in our field, Crowley's question then[154] seemed to me ignorant of what else our legacy has offered us. What I've offered in the accumulation of these pages is by no means an exhaustive, or even a representative, sample. What I've offered does, however, reveal sentiments about the role of bodies that are felt even today. If the body is not to be trusted, neither to be acknowledged as indicative of agency, I think my experience at Crowley's address signals to me the interruption of the passage of force, a

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[152] I am aware that Cicero did not intend for the speaker to be a she. Still, I insist on using the female pronoun. Perhaps I am reorienting my own skeleton in gravity here, in history as well, making my Self public.

[153] famous photographs of Eckford, an African American girl trying to enter Central High School in Little Rock, AR, in 1957.

[154] and still does now

disruption. To use Mahler's explanation about being taught how to stand up,[155] I believe we are unable to feel the floor.

Feeling the floor is directly tied to the ability of our bodies to transfer weight, for if weight can't move through the bones, it also can't make contact with the ground. It's the contact with the ground that also, as Mahler puts it, bounces back up through the bones, and provides our bodies the power necessary to push off, moving in whatever direction and capacity we intend. Weight transfer, and likewise, balance, is, according to Mahler, "not just about mobilization, it's about mobilization of body parts to reach the particular aim of righting the pelvis on top of the legs so that force and direction are much more clearly facilitated through the legs." If we, in Rhetoric Studies, are so accustomed to assuming the role of the body as something which is an obstacle, I liken this to Mahler's description of how many of us, in an imbalanced body, tend to move. She says, "we just learn how to haul ourselves around, from any possible muscle group, or part of the body" and that this "hauling around" actively prevents us from being able to use our feet.

The obvious benefit, as I've already stated, is that the force of that push back through the feet gives us more power to move,[156] but there's more than that, too. In much of the same cyclical ways that balance and weight transfer support each other, the movement of gravity through the spine and the rest of the skeleton simultaneously creates the conditions for more

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[155] See my description of this explanation in the previous chapter.

[156] Note two important aspects to this phrase: 1) the *power to* rather than over*;* and 2) *moving.* Also, remember the repetition of my final statement in my logic, from Chapter 1: The body is rhetorical.

gravity to move through the spine. It sounds like an obvious point, maybe, or a teleology, but as Mahler explains the anatomical function in the "hanging over"[157] from ReEducation Technique,

> [Gravity] goes through the body; there's more space available, and the muscles have a chance to release because the bony structure, the skeletal structure, starts to change. The shoulder blades start to release, which effects the entire rest of the girdle. And, some people touch the floor, some people never touch the floor, but it's really a question of this connection. I can just kinda bounce off the floor.

In this moment of the interview, Mahler is demonstrating the "hanging over," and when she mentions bouncing off the floor, her torso appears to float away from the floor and her feet. After this demonstration, she offers the alternative movement, from a position where she is still hanging over, but not transferring the weight of her body through her feet, into the floor. In this version, she is modeling what she described as "hauling" herself around, contracting the muscles of her legs and back and chest in order to both maintain the shape of the position and lift her torso away from the floor and her feet. The difference is pronounced, the second demonstration being markedly *rigid* and labored.

This distinction might sound like what Blair is advocating regarding voice and balance, but I want to emphasize a key difference. For Blair, the facility and ability to move effortlessly in speech comes from a superiority in one kind of body over another. For Mahler, this facility exists in *any* body's relationship to the ground. Accessing that facility is one that develops over time, in practice, and requires a view of one's body as not only powerful, but a requisite element towards cultivating that power. It happens through the skeleton, not through consciousness *about* the skeleton. Bodies DO, more than BE.

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[157] I described this activity in closer detail in Chapter 3.

As scholars of rhetoric, then, in Crowley's audience, I was unconvinced that we had enough balance through our collective skeleton to facilitate that transfer of the gravitational power through us, in order to move in the directions Crowley seemed to want for us.

Bodies in Motion

Range of motion is pretty much exactly as it sounds, describing the extent to which a joint, a body part, a body in entirety can move. Imbalance, however it is expressed,[158] culminates as inappropriate priorities, we might say. Stronger muscles are just that, stronger, but that generally means they are bigger, and so disproportionate to the system to which they belong. This means they will take up more space, perhaps crowding a joint with overdeveloped tissue, prohibiting movement through that part of the joint. Similarly, weaker muscles, while smaller, don't take up enough space, and so allow for too much movement through the corresponding part of the joint. This leads to an unclear transfer of weight through that joint, which creates a situation imbued with less power, as well as the accumulation of patterns of misuse, and resulting imbalances. And, as I've already pointed out, the existence of all these conditions work cyclically on each other, sustaining a system where imbalance and unclear weight transfer each encourage more of the other. Hence, restricted range of movement. Not to beat a dead horse, but that same restricted range of movement encourages continued imbalances and unclear transfer or weight.

In Chapter 3, as I called us to reconsider our orientation to gravity, I suggested some ways that many of us in the discipline are attending to our work as hopeful reorientations. I also argued that this is a false metaphor. The kinds of work I noted, while important, useful,

[158] as in, in terms of the proportion of strength to flexibility, or the musculature around a joint,

interesting work,[159] tends to rely on a standard orientation, rehearsing familiar patterns, encouraging the already strong muscles to stay strong, ignoring the underutilized ones and allowing them to stay slack, facile. As I've illustrated in the previous two sections of this chapter, in movement education, these patterns are built on a system that is imbalanced, and don't facilitate a clear transfer of weight. Both of these conditions work together to maintain their persistence, and also to restrict the range of motion. In the work of our discipline, this presents as what I called the sustained and continued reluctance to negotiate questions of race and coloniality.

So I suggest we are rehearsing familiar patterns, and that this is not, in fact, a reorientation in gravity, not encouraging our disciplinary work to innervate reciprocally. These familiar patterns I allude to might look like this: rehearsing a linear narrative of discovery and progress in first-year writing; asserting that bodies are a text to be read and consumed by an invisible subject; ignoring the way our language about bodies enforces a Cartesian priority of consciousness over physicality; overlooking the way bodies are implicated in policies and procedure; or co-opting the idea of bodies as a method and instrument to access the mind, trumping once again an ultimate – language, consciousness, the enlightened, the sign of the civilized. Our familiar patterns are keeping us entrenched in a colonial system of discourse, not just about bodies, but about people, groups of people, and culture. What I have hoped to reveal here is how we have been lead to believe bodies exist, in our discipline, "hauling ourselves around" through our traditional canon.

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or between systems, etc.

[159] Generally, to recall, some of these included writing to a different audience, redrawing the scope of our research projects, looking to other sources of distribution, or experimentation with form and arrangement.

This haul has resulted in embodied rhetoric scholarship which rewrites our imbalances and inefficient patterns, endlessly. Bodies are important to understand, we look as if we are saying, when they are *markedly ab-normal?*[160] As sites of rhetorical exigency, however, bodies are still fundamentally an obstacle, unless we can approach them as we have learned to do with text − things which are stabilized, and subject to the same kinds of logic as language. Rather than looking to and feeling bodies as instruments of power, not power over remember, but power to, we emphasize them as objects we can discourse *about* instead of *with.* Despite our best intentions, we hesitate to locate bodies as identifiable, and movable, sources of the production of knowledge.

Such a hesitance might be cleared by considering what other scholars[161] with other legacies have to say about bodies and about knowledge. I believe our field is understandably anxious about bodies, and perhaps I could even venture to say here - about embodiment, after having looked closely at some of the words of those whom we claim as significant contributors to rhetoric theory. Still, some attention to particular other theorists might help us to broaden our view a little, and to weave our European roots with a more complicated perspective. In the next chapter, I will offer one way to mitigate our canon of rhetorical theory with performance theory, and describe particular claims I've identified about the role the body plays in the production of knowledge.

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[160] I use the word "normal" cautiously here. What makes a body normal, besides that it is missing from scholarly conversations? The bodies that gets mentioned in intellectual discourse are primarily those which are considered "noticeable" which is of course code for "not like the dominant group of bodies" in which case, "dominant group of bodies" comes to mean bodies which don't make themselves known in rational ways.

[161] There are many scholars of rhetoric today who are investigating just such a thing. My intention is not to overlook them, nor to suggest what follows in this chapter, and dissertation, should supplant these other investigations.

Breath: Standing

In your bare feet, find a place to stand, away from any walls or furniture, and bring your feet directly under your hip sockets, about two, maybe three inches away from each other. Make sure your heels are lined up directly behind your second and third toes. If you can, arrange your feet so they are weighted equally, inside to outside of each foot, and front to back. You should feel contact at the balls of both feet, and the center of both heels, as well as the inside and outside of your arch. Once you have your feet under you and positioned this way, stand upright, and focus forward. If you can, close your eyes. If you'd prefer not to settle your gaze straight ahead, but soften it slightly, so you are not creating any tension in your facial muscles, or your eye sockets.

Put your hands on your hip bones, and return to the feeling of your balloon breath, and the way this breath affects the weight of your upper body over or into the bowl of your pelvis. Notice how this feeling is different when you are standing, than when you were seated. As you inhale, feel you can use this action to slightly move the bones of your pelvis back and forth, over the tops of your thigh bones. Notice how these shifts correspond to shifts in the way your weight distributes in your feet, perhaps increasing the weight on one side, or more in the front or back, of your feet. Perhaps you feel the weight move more easily on one side than another.

Bring your attention to your knees, and notice what sensation you have there, as you breathe and gently move the position of your pelvic bones. Imagine the weight of gravity pouring down through your torso, into the bowl of your pelvis, and spilling through your hip sockets, into the bones of your thighs. Does that weight slip through the space in your knees, or does it get stuck in any part of this pathway? Can you feel the weight pour through your knees, into the bones of your lower leg, and into your feet?

Chapter 5 - "Feeling the floor": Exposing and Transforming Ideological Discourse Through Performance and Rhetorical Bodies

"*Using the floor is much more than a phrase. It's a reality.*"
- Barbara Mahler

In the last few pages, I've stated I don't think we, in Rhetoric Studies, are standing in our historical traditions in ways that orient us efficiently in gravity. I've claimed we can't feel the floor, to use Mahler's phrase, and that this inability is leading to a resistance in our scholarship. Resistance, you might be wondering, to what? I've suggested some possibilities in the kinds of patterns we are all too accustomed to already, and in closing the previous chapter, introduced a question about the kind of intellectual work in our discipline that focuses on bodies. This work, I suggest, is usually primarily about bodies that have been marked as "abnormal." What I mean in this observation is that for the most part, the kinds of research and other public work in rhetoric studies that deals explicitly with material bodies are the sorts whose objects of inquiry are "other bodies." "Body research" is usually focused on marginalized groups like those populated by people of color, or LGBTQ folks, or dis/abled bodies, or non-traditional student bodies, etc. Perhaps there is an indication in work of this kind that all bodies can benefit from these kinds of research, and I certainly agree. Yet, I'm perplexed by the continuation of a colonialist and racist paradigm when it comes to locating the physical bodies. Still, it seems, Foucault's panopticon and De Certeau's distant and violent voice of authority exist, observing all these marked bodies.

In this way, similarly to my reactions to Crowley's speech at the RSA convention, I rely on my reading of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of the European impulse to erase the dominant bodies in order to sustain the hierarchy of reason. In addition to preserving this hierarchy, negating bodies as key sites of rhetorical agency, *as bodies primarily*, our disciplinary hesitance resists an understanding of the material body as a site of culture. The cellular/cultural body is an

idea I will continue to investigate in this chapter, but as we've seen, our own lineage of European rhetorical theory does, at times, restrict our understanding. Coming to us as it does, through the filter of imperial expansion, we have difficulty reconciling some key inconsistencies,[162] ones we can't afford to overlook; neither can we abandon them.

To pretend these inconsistencies don't exist is impossible, and irresponsible. I've alluded to it before, and I mean only to remind us now of De Certeau and his description of the "rough and barbaric" voice of history, the distant voice. While he is speaking specifically of the authoritarian voice of objectivity, the barbarism is apropos in my current predicament as well. To "look the other way" when teaching or studying Cicero, or Blair, or others, and avoid the ways in which these works have been translated and used in particular cultural contexts with rhetorical motive every time, is not the same but similar to pretending objectivity as a writer in a text. Objectivity is impossible, we believe now, and much of our current practices reflect a desire to make the writer's presence more visible, more integrated[163]. However, without examining the ways in which our historical legacy has shaped these current practices and operating theories, simply making the writer's presence more visible isn't adequate.

In fact, even this phrase, "making the writer's presence more visible" is evidence of the kind of colonialist paradigm I argue we have become numb to. The writer *is* visible. Talking about practices that *make* her so is redundant. Though, as I've pointed out, our failing to recognize the materiality of the writer's body, as well as the artifacts produced by that body insinuates that body needs some external force to *make her seen.* Maybe this seems I have

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[162] These inconsistencies are laid out explicitly in the previous chapter.

[163] In particular, I am thinking of feminist research practices, as in those Gesa Kirsch outlines and calls for, in *Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research: The Politics of Location, Publication, and Interpretation,* and Victor Villanueva's "Memoria is a Friend of Ours: On the Discourse of

become overly fastidious; maybe this seems like another instance where I am over thinking things, where I "know too much."[164] But the whole of this book has been intent on helping us to recognize the vitality in a body, the presence, the visibility and more than this – the power within it. I admit I have used this phrase "make the writer visible" more times than I can even count, and it's only here, at the close of this book, that I realize to what extent I have left some of my own assumptions unnoticed. It's as if the text itself has the power, now, to "make the writer" – the text being the site where ideas are "brought into being" or "made real." The words make the man, or something like it. Not, the man makes the words.

But this is exactly what I'm saying, that the *person*[165] is the agent of this making, and by making, the person is present. Writing comes from our bodies, and in our bodies fill up our writing. So much of what we have inherited and adopted from the traditional canon of our discipline obscures and even denies it. Words *will* hurt us, whether they are explicitly intended to do harm,[166] or not.[167] It seems to me now, that the question is not how to make the writer visible, but how to *see* the writer. This is another instance of what I mean when I say we cannot feel the floor. To feel it requires sensory information, as well as bones which are stacked appropriately, allowing gravity to drop through them. To feel it requires that we believe it is there.

Several times, I've claimed that our disciplinary hesitance disavows this floor, as much as it does of our bodies connection into it. If this is true, if it's unavoidable given the dominating

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Color." *College English,* Vol. 67, No. 1. 9-19. Web.

[164] Remember my reaction to my yoga teacher and her white light image, from Chapter 1?

[165] I choose "person" for two reasons: 1) to avoid a gender specificity; and 2) to echo the conversation about personhood and self and body as in Chapter XX.

[166] in the case of legislation and ideology bent on power over other people

lineage of our discipline, why not, you may be wondering, simply discard this lineage? Because just as it's impossible to overlook the ways that intellectual lineage has worked to protect and serve a particular ideological design, the truth is that our discipline *has* been created on these premises. In some ways, this disavowal *is* the floor.[168] My intention isn't to do away with the floor on which we stand, but to *feel it.* Recall my discussion of the necessity of orienting one's physical self *in gravity* rather than *subject to it.* An orientation which requires a physical body's participation in the physical world also allows for that physical world to interact through the physical body, rather than merely exist near it. Gravity always exists; the floor is always there. There is no choice not to experience it, so why not benefit from that omnipresence?

The question is how.

One answer to that question follows in this chapter, and includes some key insights from performance theory to assist. These theories hold at their center a couple of crucial premises: that the body is a necessity to the production of knowledge; that both the body and knowledge are ephemeral; and that both bodies and knowledges are transformed through each other. In order to show how these notions of performance can help us in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, I will rely on two specific examples for performance artists and their theories. Both of these examples help to expose ideological discourse as it is experienced on the body and to reveal more complex understandings of "the individual" as a modern entity; these two phenomena in turn help me, as I suggested above, *see* the writer, and *feel* the floors on which I, and they, are standing.

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[167] as in erasure of histories and entire groups of people, deemed irrelevant, or unimportant

[168] At least, it's part of it.

Considering bodies as entities which move through and are moved by external forces is, I've pointed out, not a new argument. By considering these modes of framing the world,[169] we can expand our conversation about how we see bodies in the world, and what changes as a result. I don't want to replace rhetorical theory from the Ancient Greeks and Romans, and Western Europeans. I want only to acknowledge the ways in which it's ineffective to try to remove those theories from the gravity in which they exist – the cultural, political, social machinations that produced them. At the same time, I want to provide some theories of how else we can contextualize our intellectual ancestry so that we might cultivate balance, facilitate the transfer of the weight of both that ancestry and our contemporary desires through bodies which have significance. I want to resist the narrative that there are particular bodies with significance, and particular bodies without it; I want to suggest that we all *have* bodies, all of which contribute to the meaning we make and circulate, all of which *move* us through space. To that end, along with describing the ways performance artists/theorists have worked with these notions of the rhetorical body, I will outline ways Rhetoric and Composition Studies have already and can continue to sustain embodied scholarship and pedagogical practices.

I begin by defining some fundamental frameworks in performance theory, and comparing them to our own disciplinary foundations., as well as pointing out some helpful intersections between both of these and with concepts from movement education. At this point, it's helpful to remember the elements of an embodied methodology I outlined in Chapter 1: proprioception (knowing where and who you are), innervation (stimulating body parts with nerves), coordination (the integration of parts and stimulus to the point of perceived effortlessness) , and

[169] My objective is not to assert that these performance theorists are *more* right than rhetoric theorists; in fact, my objective is to stay away from "right/wrong" types of dichotomies altogether.

locomotion (movement as effected by all three of the above). Generally, in order to have a fuller sense of gravity, of the ground underneath us, and our impact and connection to the world around us, we need all these things working together. Specifically, while disciplinary boundaries allow us to see particularities and help us to focus our energy, they are also constraints which limit the extent to which we can challenge our bodies, our systems of thought, our patterns of doing.

When performance scholars write about performance they could be referring to one of three general categories: performance as theater;[170] performance as a mode to be evaluated;[171] or performance as coded practice. For the sake of my arguments, I am particularly interested in performance as coded practice, which means exactly what it sounds like, as rituals or other actions that carry with them cultural or social meaning, for example different dress codes in different cultures. These practices could be coded as performance in themselves,[172] or they could be what Judith Butler calls *performative*, meaning the practices may not look like a performance in the literal fashion, as a wedding might, but the ways in which these practices are used and/or modified creates an alternative meaning, or an additional one. Butler's classic example of this is drag.[173]

No matter how the term "performance" is being used, all of these categories share the following elements: the performer/spectator dynamic; the phenomenon of a thing being

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[170] just as it sounds, is any mode which involves a stage, actors, an audience, props, costumes, lighting, in whatever form those might occur

[171] the way in which someone or something fulfills obligations of a job, or another event which involves assessment by outside source - a supervisor, or clientele, or perhaps an oversight committee

[172] for example, memorial ceremonies, rites of passage, spiritual unions, etc

[173] see Butler's *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*

rehearsed;[174] and the necessity of bodies to the production of knowledge. As I see it, the first two of these three easily relate to rhetoric, as they suggest a highly contextual way of creating meaning. Where performance scholars name "performer," rhetoric scholars would likely say "writer;" and in place of "spectator," "audience." Think of Schechner's "twice behaved behavior" as revision, perhaps, or even invention, in the ways the two work together to make a text and resulting meaning.[175] Last, the third element I mentioned above, the necessity of bodies to the production of knowledge, is one which I argue is equally related though as I've pointed out, figures more as a problem than as an agent in ancient Greco-Roman rhetorics. In these pages, I will describe all three of these common threads as combinations that help us to see daily negotiations between bodies and power. Too, we can see how performance helps us to see the way these negotiations are transformed. Both of these things culminate in a revised sense of rhetoric - as something experienced and performed with, in, and on the body, always cellular and always cultural[176].

As I mentioned previously, in this chapter I will rely on the performances of two artists as examples: Orlán[177] and Anna Deavere Smith.[178] For the purposes of this chapter, I am drawing

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[174] Schechner uses the phrase "twice behaved behavior", which has become a kind of mantra for scholars working in performance studies, to delineate what he (and we) intend when we say performance. Schechner and Victor Turner, considered two of the "fathers" of performance studies, combined their two disciplines of Theater and Anthropology in the early 1980s. In their work, and in Schechner's in particular, behavior is understood as existing separate from those who "DO" the behavior, and so the actions themselves can be understood as "symbolic and reflexive […] harden[ed] into theater of social, religious, aesthetic, medical, and educational processes. Performance means: never for the first time. It means: for the second to the nth time. Performance is "twice-behaved behavior." ("Restoration of Behavior" 37)

[175] I point out these commonalities at the risk of seeming to be "textualizing" performance, when my motive is more concisely the inverse - I'd like to "performatize" text.

[176] from my logic: The body is rhetorical.

[177] Orlán is a French feminist performance artist whose work has spanned several decades and

primarily on Orlán's projects investigating what she terms "carnal art."[179] One series of these, from the mid 1990s, involves a number of cosmetic and prosthetic surgeries in which she undergoes multiple operations to change her body according to various specifications. Significant details about the surgeries include, but are not limited to, live videography of the operations, signed legal contracts by the surgeons and operating room staff agreeing to the modification procedures stated by the Subject (Orlán) as well as her denial of using general anesthetic. Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror* is useful to my own purposes here for three reasons: she is explicitly interested in the role of speech and bodies as sites of knowledge production; she offers a detailed explanation for her research and performance processes, as well as the methodological reasons for both; and her project itself can reveal to us some relevant and portable intersections between performance, rhetoric, and culture.

Both of these artists suggest meaningful conversations about the role bodies play, the *significant* role they play, as carriers and agents of knowledge. These roles get expressed as individual and deeply layered agents, but also demonstrate how performance as an analytic can both *expose* ideological discourses as they play out on the material body and *transform* that material body as well as the discourse itself. This relational impact is similar to the sorts I claim exist within the body;[180] therefore, performance as an analytic works to destabilize and

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usually centers around representations of female bodies, sexuality, and western ideals for femininity and beauty.

[178] Deavere Smith is an American actress, playwright, and educator. As just part of her long career in the performing industry, she has produced three one-woman shows as part of her *On the Road: A Search for American Character* project. One of them, *Fires in the Mirror*, is a collection of monologues she performs from interviews she conducted exploring the Crown Heights riots in Brooklyn.

[179] For more details about this concept, see Orlán's official website at http://www.orlan.net/texts/

[180] See my discussion of balance, weight transfer, and range of motion in Chapter 4.

simultaneously help us to see the rhetoricity of meaning and culture as bodied practices - the embodiment, if you will. Seeing these rhetoricities is a valuable objective in its own right, but too, seeing them helps us to look differently at our own projects, too, and helps us aim for similar objectives.

Exposing Ideological Discourses/Gravitational Force

Regardless whether you thinkof performance as *theory* or *practice,* knowledge production is a phenomenon which occurs in and through the body. Philip Auslander[181] identifies the body as an element which "exposes the ideological discourses producing it, through performance that *insists* on the body's status as a historical and cultural construct and that *asserts the body's materiality*.' (286, my emphasis). The body isn't just a thing that is likely to misbehave, or require constant supervision by the mind. Instead it reveals the cognitive processes - language, ideology, cultural structures - which work within it. The materiality of the body, in other words, makes the abstractions of the mind more visible. Even more, in so doing the materiality of the body builds knowledge about these abstractions. These abstractions could include any number, but as I am emphasizing the use of performance theory in terms of European narratives of rhetorical theory, and the role of the body in it, I have restricted my discussion of which ideological discourses to two: the valorization of individualism and independence; and the body as an obstacle in the path towards enlightenment.

While Mabel Todd is not speaking about the body as illustrative of *ideology*, she is stating that the body *is* a site through which abstractions and cognitive processes exist.

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[181] This explanation of body and discourse comes from an article by Tanya Augsburg, in which she describes and analyzes the performance art work of Orlán. Auslander is an important contributor to performance studies, as a theorist whose work has centered on performance art and

Remember her claim that the body's sense of self is at the level of the bones, that cognition and consciousness develop through the neurological balance below consciousness. As a corollary to these notions, add her emphasis on function over form: "thinking preceded mind, the verb preceded the noun, *doing was experienced before the thing done*. Everything moves, and in the pattern of movement, life is objectified." (3, my emphasis). Life is objectified, for Todd, after the condition of doing. Through the doing, or through the body, understanding is solidified through language, through structure. Ideological discourses then, might be could be understood first as an external force, as gravity perhaps, a force which always exists, at once outside of us, and then also distributing its weight through our skeleton, connecting us to the ground and environment around us. Performance theories and practices are concerned with locating the simultaneous exteriority and interiority of that force.

(Composite) Individualism/ Weight Transfer

Recognizing discourse, especially ideological discourse, as something which exists both inside and outside a body also helps us to revise our notion of the individual as a discrete being. If we can think of ideological discourse as something with weight, as gravity, then its distribution through our skeleton, the ground, and then back up, either through our own bones, or those of another body shifts where we locate boundaries between ourselves and others. What "individual" stands for is less discrete in this view. Where a humanist "individual" is characterized by self-determination, will, and the strength of the conscious mind over the body, a performative idea of a person individual depends on both the body and the mind in a correlative relationship, as well as forces not limited to inside the body's cellular structure. The individual,

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postmodernism.

in this case, is more of a collaborator, all the parts of its "self",[182] with each other, as well as all these parts with outside forces, such as ideological discourse, other selves, the floor. In the first meaning of the word, the individual is contained, singular, in control, True.[183] The latter, the collaborator-individual, however, complicates this viewpoint, in that knowledge is produced in the midst of multiple agents, whether these agents exist in one person, or among them. A humanist tends to see this relationship amid as one filled with conflict, an either-or scenario. A performative lens recognizes the midst is a foci, a site which can't be fixed in place, but which travels between many places; it allows for meaning to take place, not in an autonomous individual, but in relation to other bodies, things, and places.[184] Classical Greco-Roman Rhetoric makes it difficult to talk about this foci; while there is some intention to represent it in the relationship of the rhetorical appeals, for example, the appeals still stabilize the meaning makers as discretely understood *selves*. Further, these selves can be read, much in the way that texts are. Texts, in this light, are products of logic and reason; they are stable; meaning is preserved.

But if "self" is produced as a shifting relationship between mind and body, body and body, or within one body - say, between cells - logic and reason have little to do with the cultivation of it. If not "little to do," then at least "less." Antonio Damasio, a contemporary neuroscientist,[185] asserts that the self, and cultivation of such, is a biological process, one that

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[182] I use "" around this difficult word to highlight the difficulty. In this instance, I don't mean Self (as I've used it in other places in this book) to indicate an autonomous soul, but rather as a conglomerate of many parts and systems.

[183] in the Platonic sense of the word. See Chapter 4

[184] and not necessarily in a superior relation

[185] Damasio's work on neuroscience and cognition has been an influence on several performance theorists, such as Rhonda Blair, but also has impacted work in Philosophy, for

begins in the brain (as opposed to the mind):[186] "The sense of self depends [...] on the brain's ability to portray the living organism in the act of relating to an object. That ability in turn is a consequence of the brain's involvement in the process of regulating life [homeostasis]" (qtd in Blair 253). It's the brain which negotiates understanding the body in relation to other bodies. It's just this relationship that is a mainstay of performance. Further, it's not just the relationship between *bodies* that's significant here, but the relationship *within* the body; the brain is fundamental to the entire organism's understanding. In the place of "understanding," substitute "meaning." Performance allows for bodies, not necessarily as regulated by minds, to be transmitters and makers of meaning too.[187]

Performing Bodies

At a casual glance, Anna Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror* may look as if it is attempting to enact a powerful statement about individuality, as Deavere Smith's body[188] is the

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example in the work of Lakoff and Johnson's *Philosophy in the Flesh.* I'm including Antonio Damasio's work for two reasons: 1) he is a contemporary neuroscientist and 2) his work is considered significant by several theorists in Performance Studies. I'd like to point out that much of what he discusses is a continuation of Mabel Todd's theories, while they lineage is not direct, and its possible Damasio is unaware of her work in movement education. Todd predates Damasio, of course, and her work is just as relevant to contemporary practitioners, as I've already pointed out.

[186] meaning, in the physiological organism we call a brain, and not the abstracted notion of it, which we refer to when we say "Mind" or "Intellect" or "Consciousness." To say "brain" includes the material fact of it.

[187] Recall this incident I shared early in the book, where a fellow graduate student "corrected" my understanding of mind to mean "consciousness, not bodies." Also, recall my realization about the extent to which my peers in Rhetoric Studies assumed this differentiation to be universally accepted.

[188] For those who are not familiar with Deavere Smith, she is an African American woman. I point this out for a couple reasons: one, the ways in which her body is made visible by race is a participant in the meaning-making, especially in a show focused on race riots; and two, as I will discuss in this chapter, much of the critique of her work has exactly to do with "what it means"

one performing each of the multiple characters in the script. But Deavere Smith herself is careful to point out that this[189] is exactly *not* what she is performing. She explains that what is visible is *difference* - between the character (the performance) and the audience (the spectator), as well as between the interviewee (the performer) and Smith (the spectator). Meaning is made in "the obvious gap between the real person and [Smith's] *attempt* to seem like them." (xxxvii-xxxviii).[190] Her comment speaks directly to concerns that others have voiced about her project's role in perpetuating stereotypes, and in essentializing identities. Deavere Smith's argument centers on one particular quality of performance, one with related currents in rhetoric,[191] which is to question who can speak *for* or *as* whom else.

These questions are important ones, and I take them up with more detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter, but for now, assume critics of Smith's work are worried that much of the agency that's been forged by particular groups of people,[192] may be damaged by what Smith seems to be claiming. What she *may* be claiming, is that she can speak for anyone, and that a person's experience, be it cultural, or individual, can be replicated easily. However, underneath this claim is the warrant that any given body/person has a fixed self, one that doesn't shape shift, or modify. The Humanist belief is that we have one self, and that this self is what makes us "individual", again recalling self-determination and free will. Performance theory and

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for a woman of color to enact bodies of multiple genders, orientations, ethnic or religious backgrounds, etc.

[189] individualism

[190] I will return to Deavere Smith's explanation again, in coming pages, for more insight into the function performance plays as an analytic.

[191] In this case, I use the lower case rhetoric to refer to capital R rhetoric, as well as a more general field of study. I don't intend it as a critique, as much as to recall that this concern about who can speak for whom is as viable a concern among the traditional Greco-Roman canon as it is among many rhetorical traditions, past and present.

practice, as Deavere Smith's project articulates, unsettles this warrant. What makes us "individual" is the combination of performances we play from moment to moment. Deavere Smith says "If we were to inhabit the speech pattern of another, and walk in the speech of another, we could find the individuality of the other and experience that individuality viscerally" (xxvii). Of vital importance to Deavere Smith's point here is the first part of this quotation – "to inhabit the speech of another." This has to do with a studied practice of listening to another person's speech patterns and repeating them in your own mouth. The emphasis on the repetition is physical – attempting to make your mouth a home for the sounds. This entails listening for physical cues – like breath, aspirated consonants, positions of the tongue against which teeth, or palates, speed, rhythm, an identified location in the throat for vibration, etc. It's an attentiveness to the materiality of speech, rather than the idiosyncrasies, dictated by an understanding that all speech is material – no kind necessarily better than another.[193]

Much earlier, Cicero cautions us to "be particularly careful whom we imitate" (*On Oratory* 1:34), motivated not by the worry that a speaker will perpetuate damaging stereotypes, but that the imitation itself can muster enough power to make a person into someone he[194] would not wish to be. Smith counters the arguments in her defense and explanation of theater, as illustrated above, and also comments that "If only a man can speak for a man, a woman for a woman, a Black person for all Black people, then we, once again, inhibit the *spirit* of theater" (xxix). Her argument is not to undo the critical work that's been done among marginalized and

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[192] groups who have been marginalized and silenced by public discourse, undeniably

[193] Deavere Smith states "The act of speech is a physical act. It is powerful enough that it can create, with the rest of the body, a kind of cooperative dance. That dance is a sketch of something that is inside a person, and not fully realized by the words alone. […that] could create the illusion of being another person by reenacting something they had said *as they had said it*." (xxvi).

oppressed groups to build recognition and power around multiple subjectivities. Deavere Smith believes that to move beyond stereotyped characterization of individuals (some of whom belong to exactly the groups I refer to, previously), a performer[195] should attempt to enact the "subtleties in real-life behavior [… the] linguistic as well as physical details that make a person unique" (xxx). Even more, the performer's goal is not to make the highly visible "subtleties" obvious to the audience, but also "to portray what [is] invisible about that individual" (xxxii).

Rather than her monologues being seen as mere memorization and repetition of what one individual said in the interview, her performances reveal what is visible about the interviewee, as well as about Deavere Smith, but also what's not visible about both. She describes the "spirit of theater," as something "which lives in the *bridge* that makes unlikely aspects *seem* connected. The bridge doesn't make them the same, it merely *displays* how two unlikely *aspects* are *related*. These relationships of the unlikely, these connections of things that don't fit together are crucial to American theater and culture if theater and culture plan to help us assemble our obvious differences." (xxix). Much as I argued a few pages ago, performance creates a possibility to acknowledge composites, or collaborations, rather than reductive equations. I believe Smith's point is not that differences are "assembled" to make them (and us) more similar, but to help us see the multitudes, to present the seams as part of the whole, rather than to erase them. In what may seem a contradiction, Deavere Smith's work identifies individuals, and in the process, creates meaning about the differences between them and her, and her audiences. Instead of a series of individuals, bounded within the frame of a physical body, and grouped together to compose a society, performance theory helps us to see a composite body - the general/social within the particular/body.

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[194] Again, the "he" here is purposeful.

While Deavere Smith's work is clearly grounded in theater and performance studies, some might also say her work is still connected to the colonial paradigm, seeing Deavere Smith as a removed agent of power who can validate the experience and knowledge of the Other, colonize it for her own purposes. I think there are resonances, however faint, with Gloria Anzaldua's theories of *mestiza* consciousness. Deavere Smith's proclaimed primary goal is to attempt to enact difference, not as a stabilized entity, but as a phenomenon. Perhaps what is missing from this attempt is a recognition of the external forces (that become also, simultaneously, internal) that work through and within the bodies in motion. Anzaldua's theories require an admission of these forces – ones of colonialism, racism, sexism, and homophobia – as instrumental and powerful shapers of *la mestiza*:

> Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, *la mestiza* undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war. Like all people, we perceive the version of reality that our culture communicates. Like others having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes *un choque*, a cultural collision. (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 100)

Ideology and its discourses, as well as cultural practices are experienced in the body, making another "kind" of body, *la mestiza,* in the process. Importantly, these impacts, these makings are not assimilations, not unifications, and also not rejections or refutations; she states "the new *mestiza* copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. […] She

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[195] *read*: Speaker. *read*: Writer.

has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode – nothing is thrust out, the good, the bad, and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned" (101).

Here I would like to return to a claim I made in Chapter 2, one grounded in movement education, that there is *no good body*. I add to that discussion a version of what Anzaldua and Deavere Smith are talking about, that while we may have multiple and unique differences across bodies, there is not one of those that is good, and likewise, not one that is bad.[196] The lack of valuation is critical. Self-determination and individualism requires a drive to "better oneself" which also requires a perspective built on striated experience ranging in goodness. In a composite body, that range of goodness and badness doesn't stand still long enough for a self to be identified consistently on it. What makes a body unique are the never ending decisions, actions, and reactions that a body carries out. Some of these, as I hope I've pointed out already, are the result of voluntary reflexes and conscious decisions, and some are involuntary. Whichever the *type* of decision making, our bodies are active in that process.

What Shall We Do With All these Bodies?[197]

Recall ancient Greco-Roman rhetoric, in particular the ways in which the body is considered to have agency, as in Aristotle's perspective on the experienced man, or Gorgias' explanation of a kind of "body logic."[198] Remember too, however, the urgency and primacy placed on the supervisory nature of the soul, how the body was ultimately translated via another,

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[196] To be clear, there are some behaviors and actions that are definitely *bad.* This statement about lack of valuation is only relative to the assignation of value to a particular kind of body, not to decisions people make about what to DO to other bodies.

[197] See also, Sharon Crowley's Address at the 2010 RSA Convention, or my description of the event, in Chapters 1 and 4.

[198] Both of these examples are explained in Chapter 3.

higher order. Certainly, our European narratives admit the persuasive nature of the body, but closer to my point is this - the inherent, or at least, desirable, separation between the body and the mind. Performance theory offers a glimpse of the knowledge living in a body, but it also questions the extent to which the mind/soul act independently of the body. It suggests an alternative to the Cartesian hierarchy, in that whatever bodily knowledge exists, performance theories insist it is not only knowable by the mind.

In fact, not only is this knowledge visible and understandable through the body itself, it *needs* the body to be known, and *needs* it to reveal the knowledge inhabited in the mind. The two work together, neither one replacing the other, nor does the body subvert the hierarchy. In performance, meaning is made as the result of a cooperative relationship between these "two"[199] elements. The cooperation isn't necessarily equitable, neither is it static, as it appears to be in discourse from ancient Greece and Rome and Renaissance Europe. Regardless, performance theories can help us to articulate these phenomena, especially when looking to representations, images, or conscious practices - all of these being *compositions*[200] of one sort or another.

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[199] I use "two" in order to suggest a falseness to the easy categorization of parts of a self - the mind and the body. There is also a soul, spirit, psychic energy, depending on your worldview, as well as what may be referred to by some as mindbody or bodymind. And if you're willing to acknowledge extrasensory experience, there may be other elements as well. Barbara Mahler describes one such view in which a person is assumed to be made up of three elements: body, mind, and spirit. Each of these elements is also constituted of the same elements, whereas a body is made up of body, mind, and spirit. Then body's body is also composed of body, mind, spirit, and so on. It's difficult to imagine, perhaps, but the general sense is that the distinctions between these three elements are so finely expressed to be not so useful in and of themselves. Instead, we could talk about the mind of the body, or the spirit of the mind, or the body of mind's spirit, etc. It's confusing to write out, in this linear fashion, but also illustrates exactly how limiting are our easily demarcated boundaries, coming through Descartes and others.

[200] My use of this term is purposeful, to draw parallels between the work I am talking about in this chapter, with the kinds of work we, in the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition, are primarily engaged with.

Deavere Smith's project relies on her body as well as the bodies of her interview subjects, in ways I've alluded to previously, and in ways I will expand on below. Orlán's "plastic surgery project"[201] clearly also must involve bodies, her own, as well as the bodies of the surgeons who perform the procedures, the camera people, etc. Indeed, the very content of her exhibitions are multiple and bodily - her own changed body, and in many cases, the biological matter[202] that is removed or altered from her living body. Meaning for Orlán doesn't live solely in the discourse about the body, but in the tissue. The meaning rises out of the relation of each to the other. The body is *important.* It *participates.*

For both of these artists, the significance is in the presence of, and in the interplay between the body and soul.[203] It's not as Quintilian says, "the good man, speaking well," not the character/soul of a man coming through the physical voice, but perhaps more as Antonio Damasio puts it: "Imagination, a result of our brain's evolutionary development, is essential to the fact of our physicality, not just our psyches" (qtd in Blair 255). Or, 70 years earlier, consider again, Mabel Todd's assertion about the location of "knowledge" as being "not in man's 'command,' but in the various systems cooperating with the neuromuscular mechanism to establish right conditions." (6) Damasio's and Todd's work reconsider what has become the common assumption about the relationship between body and soul, an assumption we have

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[201] For simplicity's sake, I've falsely combined various installations and projects under this name. It's far too general to be sure, but Orlán has taken on a series of various surgeries and resulting products as the artifacts of such, and all have different names and dates. In an attempt to be succinct, I've reduced them to this "plastic surgery project."

[202] I list some of this in a later section about the kinds of consequences bodies experience, and which are made explicit

[203] It bears repeating - between all the bodies and all the souls - of performers and spectators alike.

inherited[204] from Descartes. Think of it this way: instead of "I think, therefore I am," invert the active verbs.

I am, therefore, I think.

Of course, the dilemma with this is that the inversion is exactly that – a replacement of one with the other, but, as I noted in Chapter 3, a maintenance of the original manner of orientation. Consider this inversion as an exercise in investigating possibilities, how easy it is to invert, and still make meaning. This, in movement education is one of the significances of inversions, in which a body's head comes to be in the usual position of the feet, and the feet in the position of the head. The point is not so much to be able to stand on one's head, but to feel, in your body, what is possible and different in this orientation. If this position can suggest other opportunities that a body can adjust to and make meaning from, then the body becomes more fluid, more resilient in all positions.

Mediated Body (Not Used)

Orlán's performances, including the various elements I've described above, reveal how the lived act is *not* the primary signifier, as far as what her work means.[205] The surgeries are certainly a critical part of the significance, but equally significant too are the video recordings of the events, as well as the resulting changes to her material self. The meaning is definitely understood in ways that are abstracted, ways we might consider "cognitive," as in when we read about her intentions of composing her body after the ideals noted by Western art "masters" to

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[204] and until recently, in certain disciplines in the sciences, have left primarily unquestioned

[205] These surgeries include cosmetic and prosthetic operations, in which the performer's body is modified, permanently, to take on the physical features of female bodies as represented in Western art. For example, one such surgery adjusted Orlán's mouth to look like the Mona Lisa's

reveal western ideals of beauty. But the deep critique and irony of this beauty, and of European artistic ideals, isn't fully realized by these abstracted ideas alone. Orlán offers her "lopsided smile and bumpy temples" (Augsburg 290), not just as a text, but as the body she lives and moves around the world in. This body is her present body, the "real" one, but it is also a living representation of other representations (the Mona Lisa, for example) of this abstraction, beauty.

The body and the image of the image of the body [*sic*] all work together to make an often made argument about the commodification of bodies in the name of art. Instead of looking to the body as a canvas, or as a text, as we often do in Rhetoric Studies, Orlán maintains the body as *her* body, as one which is still living, breathing, and commencing in all other bodily acts. Alongside the specificity and materiality to her work lies the series of citations;[206] in Augsburg's interpretation, "evidently, the female body for Orlán is unintelligible without the mediation and materiality of representation" (295).

As Tanya Augsburg reads it, Orlán[207] is not done *to*, or done *on*, but does the doing. This recalls the literal use of "body" to manipulate our conventional notions of self/subject, and our conventional assumptions about how the body is written/represented/rhetoricized:

> To engage in a visceral critique of the discourses and institutions that 'create' the ideal female medical body by one's own volition […] seems to entail making a spectacle not only of medicine and of beauty culture, but also of oneself - in other words to make visible the tensions between one's social restraints and one's personal choices (287).

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smile, another one adding tissue to the sides of her forehead, creating protrusions at her temples.

[206] as Derrida would intend it

[207] When I use Orlán's name in this description, I intend her body, specifically, in a performance context, not to refer to her self as a construct of her consciousness primarily. I believe this is how

Given the crucial role the body plays in performance, and the resulting correlations between the body and the mind, as well as how both of these things reshape an understanding of the individual, it seems obvious to suggest now that, in performance, the site of meaning production happens *between* bodies. Indeed, this event occurs as a visibly *changeable* one, and perpetually *changing.* These bodies may belong to multiple performers as well as to spectators, and in any permutation. Recall Deavere Smith, that what is visible is *difference,* not caricature, not stereotype. Difference in her work includes that between the character (the performance) and the audience (the spectator), as well as between the interviewee (the performer) and Deavere Smith (the spectator), between multiple characters, between character/performance and Deavere Smith/performer, etc. Meaning about the characters is made in "the obvious gap between the real person and [Deavere Smith's] *attempt* to seem like them." (xxxvii-xxxviii).

Performance gives us a language to talk about enacting difference; even, more than to talk about it, we can describe the *attempt*. The word "attempt" is key to understanding performance, both in the active construction, and also in the meaning of the word - the *endeavor* is where meaning is made, rather than in a seamless imitation, or in a metaphorical replacement. Smith attempts her performances, to *seem* like the people she interviews, and what occurs may be within some range of success or failure. No matter which, the attempt is the point of interest. Not only is it the point of interest, but it's the point of visibility, for difference as well as the seeming. These moments are where we see ideology most easily, we can feel it, even, as we watch Deavere Smith enact the gestures and sounds of an Orthodox Jewish woman, alongside her enactments of the gestures and sounds of Angela Davis. In these moments, ideology as a discursive formation has texture, and weight. It can, as Mahler instructs us regarding gravity, drop through the bones of our skeleton, into the floor and back up.

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she intends her work to be understood.

Transformations: Bodies, Boundaries, and Ideology

Much of the work I emphasize here focuses on a premise that neurological patterns located in a body have signifying power in ways that refutes much of what we accept from the Ancient Greeks and Romans, via Scholastic and Enlightenment thinkers. Rhonda Blair relies on this understanding of the importance of the biological brain[208] in her theories about performance and the process of acting. She argues that Stanislavksy[209] himself believed consciousness lived not just in the mind, or the imagination, but in the body too, "in which voluntary and involuntary processes and behaviors are not so cleanly separated from each other." (253). Specifically, Blair notes that Stanislavsky's later theories about acting emphasized more the "given circumstances and behavior" than the emotional experience of a character. This method, "the 'method of physical actions'," dictates that actors research physical movements and actions that help them to integrate the script's and character's positions, "rather than, for example, relying on an emotional memory, sense memory, or inner monologue." (253)

While "inner monologue" or narratives we have assumed to be true[210] is certainly a powerful motivator for channeling further textualized understanding, it seems that performers and performance theorists also rely on action, behavior, movement for composing what I call, rhetorical situations. Earlier in this book, I've claimed that *power to* is a direct force through which new understanding is built, and exists in the material form. Todd articulates this meaning of power in her opening argument, that "Living, the whole body carries its meaning and tells its own story, standing, sitting, walking, awake or asleep" (1) and Mahler recounts an experience in

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[208] as opposed to consciousness, a term often used to separate the body and the mind

[209] considered the "father" of Method acting

a class she had recently taught, when one of her students spontaneously began to weep. This experience isn't a frequent one, yet neither is it unusual. Mahler says "sometimes feelings come up; you can't pin a name to them, you can't pin an idea on them. You can't pin necessarily an event on them."

The importance of this experience is simple: our bodies carry information, and they process that information in ways we can't always be aware of in our conscious selves. Mahler's Re-Education Technique is not psychologically therapeutic; it is distinctly physical, and explicitly attends to muscles and bones. And yet, these muscles and bones have reactions, at times, which are not constrained to feelings that can be expressed as pain, or stretching, or physical effort. These reactions can be understood as transformations of stimulus, of messages, whether the physical quality changes, and leads to a shift in emotional or intellectual experience. What results are new neural pathways, and patterns which offer different perspective, different understanding.

There are other kinds of transformation evident in the performance artists I've included as examples. Obviously, one of these is the changed physical body, as in the case of Orlan. In her plastic surgery performances, she has made her body into one which is, most people would say, deformed. She is certainly scarred, but also the arrangement and features of her material self is "distinctly UNnatural," (Augsburg 290), UNbeautiful by our present cultural standards. She has transformed her body into Kristeva's abject self,[211] composed to reveal disorder, rather than to order it. Her body works as the subject, or the author of the text, as well as the text itself, and

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[210] based on memory, on ideology, on cultural norms, etc

[211] "The abject is not an ob-ject facing me, which I name or imagine. Nor is it an ob-jest, an otherness ceaselessly fleeing in a systematic quest of desire. […] It lies outside, beyond the set, and does not seem to agree to the latter's rules of the game. And yet, from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master." Kristeva, Julia. "Approaching

yet, resists Quintilian's directive to become the "good man speaking well". Orlán's body can't be reduced to a text, neither can she be granted full agency as the sole creator of meaning. Meaning is made in the spaces between the agency she's maintained (her refusal to be anesthetized, the contracts her surgeons must sign in order to proceed) and the outcomes that play out through her material self, as well as how society responds to her.[212]

As I've already argued in the previous section of this chapter, performance theories reveal these discrepancies and discourses, but they also facilitate a fuller understanding of this transformation. Rather than a replacement, or a metaphorical relationship between the abject/object/subject and Orlan/surgery/beauty, multiple identifiers and bodies can be layered. On/In a body, it's easier for us to see these accumulations, and the effect of them, whereas on paper, in text, those layers are lost. How can we see it? Perhaps it's a question of dimensionality, our interactions with bodies occurring in three dimensions, as opposed to our interactions with paper being limited to two. I think too, we can see a body or other reasons, reasons I have hinted at throughout this dissertation: bodies are unstable, and one advantage of this instability is that change becomes more noticeable. What my body looks like in the morning, is not the same in the evening. When I come home from work or the grocery store, I can see that I am not standing as straight as I did in the morning, my shoulders are starting to roll forward with the weight of my workbag, or my groceries, and of course, of gravity. What Orlan carries in the results of these surgeries is an accumulation of meanings from the works of art she is citing, the experiences of the surgeries, the experiences from one procedure to another, but also the accumulations of movement through her daily life. As a text, Orlan might exist only in a museum, or in a library, on a bookshelf, inanimate, and not subject to the world around her, not in the same way. We

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Abjection," pp.1-2

can't only see the bumpy temples as isolated oddities; they accumulate with the lopsided smile, as well as every other part of her body. Of course, the way we see these accumulations is just as informed by our own bodily experiences and cultural, gravitational forces.

Forging New Patterns/Neural Pathways

This building, or accumulation, necessarily describes rhetoric as an always embodied practice, as cultural practices enacted by and on bodies, with explicit consequences. The inversion of Descartes I inserted above sets in motion a re-contextualization of many more assumptions about the relationships between a person's soul and that same person's body. More than that, it requires we rethink the relationships between bodies and souls, as in the republic, society, or culture. That is to say, the neurology of a particular body suggests an agency in the body itself, but this is not limited to the individual; we might consider this kind of bodily knowledge as existing among *groups* of bodies, similarly. "Culture" could come to include the body/bodies, in relationship to the minds, but not secondary to them, as much of the Roman rhetors' work maintains. In Elizabeth Wilson's words,[213]

> "[The] gesture to a nonneurological culture or environment not only misrepresents the complex relationship between neurology and its outside, but also, by locating malleability, politics, and difference only in the domain of culture or environment, it abandons neurology to the very biologism it claims to be contesting" (qtd in Blair 250).

Neurological knowledge, in other words, is not constrained to the nerve cells inside a "closed system" of an organic body. Instead, neurological knowledge extends beyond and within that

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[212] Again, when I say "her" I mean explicitly her body.

[213] Wilson is another neuroscientist, self-classified as a feminist scientist. Her work revolves around psychoanalytic theory, affect theory, feminist and queer theory, and contemporary

body, to others, and to environments outside it/them. Not only might this shift how we come to think of groups of people, and their bodies, but also how we consider the relationships between bodies and spaces, and consequently, offer us a complex understanding of culture as something fluid, in the ways organic matter is fluid.

This fluidity, whether we are speaking in terms of the fluidity of a body or of culture, refers to the constantly shifting, moving qualities we experience and struggle to write about. Rhetoric attempts to describe this movement, yet so often, the process of describing, naming, and qualifying it results in an artificial stability. The same happens in the ways that Ancient Greco-Roman rhetorics treat the body as something that, while likely to behave (or misbehave) unpredictably, frivolously, and/or messily, ought to be looked after by the mind. The desire is to control the body and its wily ways, to fix it.[214]

As one example of a neural pathway created in our own discipline, consider Jay Dolmage's "*Metis*, Mêtis, *Mestiza*, Medusa." As I have, Dolmage emphasizes the ways in which our popular version of rhetoric has erased the material body, instantiating as "normal" a view of embodiment that is feminized, disabled, and fetishized. What I am particularly interested in at this point, however, is the way in which he attends to his project, a way that I argue is embodied in practice. In this project, Dolmage uses action, behavior, and movement to get through his questions, in his own words, he "exhumes the myths of the Greek goddess Metis, [enliven] an embodied rhetoric […]" all to connect, reconnect, remythologize, and "choreograph new rhetorical possibilities" (2-3). Is an embodied practice as "simple" as choosing active words to describe your methodological choices, you may be wondering. In some ways, the answer is yes. That assumes however, that you consider that action as simple.

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neuroscientific data.

I've spent a fair amount of time discussing the relationship between language and bodies, and I don't mean to rehash it here. What I do mean to discuss however, is the way that the idea of performance shifts the agency located in a text to the writer(s) who produce that text, and similarly, creates an agency for the text itself. However, this kind of textual agency isn't located in a text's *power over* other texts, or other bodies, but instead in the materiality of it, the action of it, the possibility *to do,* for change. Dolmage's approach is important, and embodied, precisely because he is clear that his text is both an accumulation of bodily practices and a bodily practice in itself. It's choreographed. It changes histories, and it also changes *us.* Dolmage sees his scholarship as an expression of his movement through the world, as well as the movements of others through that world too.

We know, or believe we know now, that language, discourse, and the culture that arises among both of these things are all dynamic, processual. Differently than in rhetoric studies, where meaning is often codified in texts, in performance, knowledge is ephemeral. The in-betweenness of meaning makes it difficult to locate and recreate, predictably. Meaning is constantly moving around; it's momentary. Both Deavere Smith's and Orlán's work, as multiply mediated objects, events, recordings of the same, and their living bodies carry different meanings, depending on the media, the temporal circumstances, and of course, the spectators. This could be true in rhetorical theory as well, yet in the way we've read the Greco-Romans traditionally, the ephemerality of meaning gets interpreted to mean something a little closer to "contextual." This is satisfactory, as long as we are thinking of discourse as it occurs in a textual frame, where bodies are unpredictable entities and elements, and so, not useful for interpretation. But in performance, it's exactly that unpredictability that is central to production. Again, Kristeva's "abject" helps us to reconcile the self as a subject and the self of its objects; that the

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[214] double meaning intended. "Fix" as in to stabilize, as well as to correct an error.

self "has but a precarious existence, since it must be constantly, inexhaustibly posited as a defense against the threat of disorder and bodily dissolution." (Augsburg 299).

The self is precarious. It must be constantly posited as a defense. Disorder and bodily dissolution threatens it. Still in this argument from Kristeva, self and body are sustained as separate, and their relationship still characterized by threat. While Augsburg is referring specifically to Orlan's work when she claims "That which is uncertain is neither subject nor object; it is that which can be expelled from the body; fluids, excretions, tears, vomit, menstrual blood, and so forth," we can draw from it generalities that inform our relationship to material bodies. The physicality of meaning, in this case, is often perceived as being "excluded to the margins, [but which] nevertheless remains a constant threat as it is what makes the constitution of the subject possible." (Augsburg 299).

Take Orlán's performances, live productions, videos, representations and products which have been composed of the matter of her surgery, whether of digital representations of the events, or tissue, fat, skin that have been excised from her body during the events. Both the representations and the "left overs" carry a distinct meaning of Orlán's self, of Orlán the individual, body and language and consciousness all in relation to each other. At first glance, it may be possible to view her surgeries as melodrama or gratuitous "self-mutilation in the guise of art" (288), especially if we think of rhetoric as something which strives towards persuasion through reason and governance of the body by the same.

However, if we look at Orlán's surgeries as " multimedia surgical theatre" (288) and remember that performance negotiates the knowledge-making practices which necessitate bodily presence, we might see, as Tanya Augsburg does, that Orlán is "self-consciously exploring a means of identity transformation that is currently glamorized in our mediatized society without

much reflection." (288). Orlán is foregrounding the abject, moving it from outside the frame to within it, not to exclude the subject, but to complicate the ways we conceive ourselves as Selves [*sic*]. Further, our selves are not recognizable as separate from what is expelled from our body. The individual is more than the physical self, more than the intellectual self, more than an easy equation between the two. The individual includes both the physical and the intellectual, along with the multiple excesses, ruptures, gaps. The individual, through a performance lens, is never wholly visible as a contained, singular unit.

In Rhetoric Studies, look again to Dolmage's choreographed remythology, in particular to his story of Hephaestus,

> most often depicted as having a physical disability, his feet twisted around backwards or sideways. Yet both his bodily difference and his craftsmanship are evidence of Hephaestus's *metis.* Having feet that face away from one another doesn't necessarily entail 'impairment' – it means he can move from side to side more quickly. In turn, this side-to-side movement had symbolic value. His thinking could also be lateral, slippery responsive. […] These abilities allowed him to harness fire and invent metallurgy (70).

Dolmage's shows us how Hephaestus' body transforms from an abject self to a body characterized by cunning, strength, fluidity, resilience. Dolmage is also careful to point out that this transformation is not imposed on Hephaestus, and so on history, by modernity, or postmodernity, or even by the writer himself. Instead, Dolmage and his text show us the ways all the external forces I name above have settled on these myths to stabilize them, to unify them according to our expectations, our previous patterns. Dolmage the scholar and writer has performed an act of remythologizing for his spectators, changing himself, his subject, and

ourselves in the process. The performance asks us to see Hephaestus differently, even more, it asks us to see *ourselves* differently too.

Accumulations

Out of this experience and subsequent questions and attempts to explain, I understand that my interest in bodies and rhetoric can join, and perhaps even begin, some pressing conversations in our field. What follows in this dissertation is an accumulation of questions and answers, the only way I see as appropriate for working through some of these issues. To flatten them, to suggest there is just one way to make sense of all the layers of history, knowledge bases, and disciplinary pressures is not only ineffective, but irresponsible. For woven through all these things are people, bodies with minds and spirits, and as complicated wholes, these bodies bear the weight of all the layers. Sometimes, they are broken underneath them. Always they carry with them the stories of this weight, their breaks and bruises, their multiple healings.

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