ASK AGAIN:
A NOVEL EXPERIMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD KNOWLEDGE RELATIONS THROUGH A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF CLAIMS ON THE THINKING CHILD'S WORDS AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Early childhood, and the wild and tender moments of its care and education, has been depicted by those who love it. Thus, in a profession inscribed by the throngs of love surrounding the work of care and education, early childhood presents an urgent problem for knowledge. The significance of the inquiries explored through my dissertation project are posited on the idea that at the core of debates about how best to care for, educate and respond to young children participating in institutional life, is a constantly communicating child. Communication—as that which both transforms and describes the world—is treated as a horizon for experimental explorations between body and language. This dissertation draws upon phenomenological description as a method that addresses the ways the study of the child has contributed to the humanizing of the child and goes beyond to speculate new methodological possibilities.

The dissertation's central question, which asks how to undertake a description of the child from the child's perspective, is explored through three scenes animated by the questions of communication between children and adults. The first delves into the lectures of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2010) through debates on the nature of knowledge, research, teaching, and learning that shape the history of approaches to the world of childhood. The second turns to the artistry of children's literature to think with Maurice Sendak's methods for animating the depths and vicissitudes of children's experiences. The third explores relations of meaning in interviews with children and how the researcher can attend to structures of symbolization that open beyond words. The dissertation contends with the problematic of how caring for thinking has been handled in the fields of early childhood education, phenomenology, psychoanalysis and in the craft and study of children's literature.

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

The dissertation brings historical, literary and developmental framing to the changing picture of the child. Descriptions of the child's explorations of the world grant access to the political, cultural and familial horizons through which children enter into relations with others. These tensions between family, profession and politics, are representations of the problem described for Canadian childcare advocates as residing in a profession that "has been, and continues to be, a patchwork—tattered and bare in spots and in need of attention throughout" (Langford et al. 2013, 302). Children are the driving force around which the field organizes, and of course also complex people in the throes of the emotional vicissitudes of early life. Yet, early childhood, and the wild and tender moments of its care and education, has been depicted by those who love it. Thus, in a profession inscribed by the throngs of love surrounding the work of care and education, early childhood presents an urgent problem for knowledge.

The dissertation's central question, which asks how to undertake a description of the child from the child's perspective, is explored in three scenes animated by the questions of communication between children and adults. The first delves into the lectures of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2010) through debates on the nature of knowledge, research, teaching and learning that shape the history of approaches to the world of childhood. The second turns to the artistry of children's literature to think with Maurice Sendak's methods for animating the depths and vicissitudes of children's experiences. The third explores relations of meaning in interviews I conducted with young children and asks how the researcher can attend to structures of symbolization that open beyond words.

Set out as an inquiry into the stakes of thinking about knowledge of the child at a time of expansion of institutions of early childhood education, my dissertation proffers a broad framework for exploring how early childhood educators come to learn about the child's psychosocial development. The significance of the inquiries explored through my dissertation project are posited on the idea that at the core of debates about how best to care for, educate and respond to young children participating in institutional life, is a constantly communicating child. What do these dynamics of communication offer to our understanding of the ways in which adult-child relations can be opened to the emotional situations of exploration, play and thinking within relationships of teaching and learning? My project returns these emotional situations to questions of how children enter into contact with the world and others. I present these complicated psychosocial interactions as the basis of adult-child conflicts that create important openings for how we understand our work with young children in institutional settings.

Claiming Intimacy: A way into the Descriptive Methods of the Study

Over the course of writing the dissertation my project has not been immune to the conflicts of representing the intimacies of professional knowledge of the child. Early on in the conceptualization of this work I found the double-edged question of how to describe the child from the child's perspective coextended two seemingly incompatible projects. In one direction was a critical approach that strived to make visible the violence and absences implicit to descriptive work in psychology, ethnography, and pedagogy. This was not the direction of my project but rather an insistent companion question that worked through my research. In fleshing out the debates that have characterized the historical, literary, and methodological sites that this dissertation explores, mine has become a project haunted by the distancing effects of description through which developmental and other scientific figurations have categorized, disembodied, and

decontextualized the child.

Even as I was excited by the ways words and experiences met in the various scenes of childhood I was exploring, earlier conversations that have shaped the study of the child did not seem so far from my novel experiments with words. Thus I held tightly to description as a method that could both address the ways the study of the child has contributed to the humanizing of the child and also go beyond and speculate new methodological possibilities. Here was the potential of description I encountered as I began to read the lectures on child psychology and pedagogy by phenomenological philosopher Merleau-Ponty (2010). Phenomenological description appeared to offer an address to the distancing effects of language as it manifests for children in the agitation of the literariness of early imagination.

Merleau-Ponty's 1949-52 lectures on child psychology and pedagogy at the Sorbonne have been overlooked in theorizations of childhood and in his own field of phenomenological philosophy. These lectures stand as examples of the ways in which well-established fields of social thought can see their knowledge problems reflected anew in the figure of the child. As an early childhood educator and a reader of psychoanalysis, I was interested to read what a thinker outside the field of education had to say to university candidates of teaching, counseling and child psychology. To meet the phenomenological philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1962; [1964] 2007) through his other more well-known texts would be to recognize a theorist who changed the web of reference for understandings of how the apperception of knowledge and subjectivity are entangled. To meet Merleau-Ponty instead through his lectures on child psychology and pedagogy was to be immersed in arguments that started in one field of thought and ended in another, reorganizing bodies of knowledge along the way. Perhaps, as a reader of psychoanalysis, it should not have been a surprise for me to find the child at the center of this work. And perhaps, for readers

of Merleau-Ponty's ([1964] 2007) phenomenology it is not surprising that early experiences offered a central question for the French phenomenologist. Indeed, there is great significance for Merleau-Ponty to the ways the infancies of perception precede—and give room to speculate on a time free from—the interpretative orders and arts of philosophy and science.

Admittedly, the other reason I had turned to the lectures of Merleau-Ponty was because I had heard they included extensive discussions of psychoanalytic theory.[1] I have since been reminded through my research that many familiar figures in the developmental theorization of psychology and pedagogy have had interactions with psychoanalysis. Yet there was and still is something exciting about the idea of a course taught by a phenomenological philosopher that included an audience of teacher candidates addressing psychoanalytic theories. This may have to do with an assumption I bring to my readings of psychoanalytic works as contributing to rich theorizations of the depth of the child's emotional world in education.

I had previously looked to psychoanalytic theorizations of the child (Aulagnier 2001; Phillips 1998; Rose 1992; Steedman 1994) to probe the demands language presents for the child. The child's entry into the symbolic order of words had opened up in my work considerations of the great confusion between adults and children surrounding the language of immediacy. This is communication that proceeds words and is rooted in reference to the body. Hunger, absence and presence, excitement and exhaustion, are expressed for the infant through the immediacy of the body. Yet these facts of the body still call upon adult interpretation with the potential for meaning to get lost or take time. I had approached this earlier work through a great interest in the mark left by words; I left this work thinking about the ways the urgencies of the body do not go away.

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[1] For further discussion on the relation between Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological scholarship and psychoanalysis, see Merleau-Ponty ([1960] 1993) and Pontalis ([1961] 1993).

The tensions that accompany the enterprise of interpreting the body as a site of communication have carried over into this dissertation project. The working title of this dissertation for a long time was, "our youngest thinkers." This is not a title that calls to mind the immediacies of the body or the problems of communication. And In the unfolding of this work I became increasingly uneasy about this title's shorthand address to the problems this dissertation raises. I was reminded recently that the title intends more than a description of the child's experience of thinking, but rather responds to the site of concern in pedagogical relations where we are still left to ask, 'does education really consider young children thinkers?' And what of the educator's knowledge made in proximity to the child (Farley 2018)? This project does ask how thinking has been disavowed in the work of teaching and learning with young children. It also asks what is claimed when the young child is claimed as a thinker. What bodies of knowledge are at stake for the adult who asks about the thinking child? In fact, this working title evoked the power of a seemingly false syllogism to enact the function of words as saying both more and less than their literal meaning.

It was a title that echoed a series of seemingly false syllogisms that the psychoanalytic scholar, Aulagnier (2001), draws on in her text *The Violence of Interpretation* to illustrate the cost of meaning made through the intersubjective dimension of experience: "every satisfied need is a source of pleasure, every cry is an appeal to her who is absent, every movement is a sign of intelligence addressed to the mother" (94). I wondered, could this working title name the crisis of relationality at stake in what Aulagnier terms the "violence of interpretation?" (85). The toll exacted in making meaning proper to words illustrated by these only seemingly false phrases and by my working title echoes the ways teachers sometimes sketch out the image of the child in descriptors imagined as having the capacity to transform classroom relations and the status of the

profession. In recent times, early years approaches have witnessed the fierce defense of descriptive pictures such as the 'competent child.' And we don't have to go back very far to recognize the resonance of such descriptors with the Piagetian image of the 'child as natural scientist.' Piaget's descriptor pictured the child as a curious innovator of knowledge; this figure fitted children's empirical explorations of the world to their development of logic. In fact, the translator of Merleau-Ponty's lectures chose a similarly responsive descriptor for the title of her own book-length study of the lectures, *The Child as Natural Phenomenologist* (Welsh 2013). This title unfolds from an argument in the lectures where Merleau-Ponty (2010) picks up on the ways the children of Piaget's studies point to the head or the mouth when asked about the locality of their thoughts and ideas. His point is that Piaget never asked again to learn more about the meaning the children attributed to their answer. To suggest that something else is going on here beyond the child's developing understanding of self, Merleau-Ponty invokes this qualitatively different descriptor of the child's relation to knowledge; rather than a material relation to thinking, the child holds "a notion of the phenomenal body undivided between thought and extension" (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 384). For Merleau-Ponty, the child's answer situates the body in the world. That is to say, when Piaget's interviewee points to the head or the mouth, the child gestures towards a recognition of the felt experience of thinking and the thought itself as undivided.

As promised, beyond discussions on phenomenology and debate with Piaget, Merleau-Ponty's (2010) lectures on *Child Psychology and Pedagogy* included discussions of psychoanalysis that extended far beyond Freud or Lacan. They feature one of the earliest commentaries on Melanie Klein's work outside the field of psychoanalysis. Merleau-Ponty's words call to mind the description of the phenomenal body when he attributes a "global" perception to Melanie Klein's theorization of the Oedipal complex:

> It is not so much the child's relationship with one rather than another parent; it is more about the relationships between the two parents. The mother's body is conceived as a totality containing all the objects with which the child can have relations. (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 289).

In this vein of global relations, Merleau-Ponty takes great interest in what he terms the psycho-sociological and among the lectures there is an entire course devoted to this topic. The psycho-sociological field of thought, following Freud's pursuit of anthropological research, features the works of great transgressors of methods, from the psychological narratives of the clinic to the structural accounts of culture told by ethnography: The works of Margaret Mead, Helene Deustch, Abram Kardiner, and Bronislaw Malinowski (to name only a few) are all discussed at length.

I was also introduced to unfamiliar figures of French child psychoanalysis in reading the lectures. These psychoanalysts have only been translated into English on rare or recent occasion: Merleau-Ponty includes brief mention of the formidable figure of Francoise Dolto, referencing the specificities of childhood drama through the analyst's paper on flower dolls. He also discusses two cases working with interpretations of children's drawings by Dolto's teacher, the psychoanalyst Sophie Morgenstern (Geissmann and Geissmann 1998). One case involved a mute young boy in an analysis done through the technique of drawing interpretation. The second case from Morgenstern that Merleau-Ponty conveys is the strange story of a 5-year-old girl who had been sent away upon the death of her mother, only to return home and find a replacement mother had married her father. It was expected that the child would not notice and so she was not told anything. The girl confessed to her step-mother that she recognized the absence of her real mother and together they agreed to keep her knowledge secret. Both are cases that hinge upon problems of knowledge and communication between adults and children. And through these clinical dilemmas

we are witness to some of the ways the lectures give shape to descriptions of the child.

These descriptions are windows into a vast array of sites of knowledge of the child. The lectures follow the detours of description, case study, history and philosophical reasoning to bring together large pictures of adult-child relations. Together Merleau-Ponty's courses depict searching lessons on the stories and logics of child development; the kinship of disciplinarity in questions of adult, child, and culture; and methodological inquiries that give form to debate on the organization of the child's experiences. This method of furnishing a larger picture of adult-child relations through the cohesion of discipline, method, and narrative form is an approach that lends itself to the threads and detours of this dissertation project. The literature surrounding chapters two and three delve into situated narratives of the pictures of knowledge of the child they explore. This brings both historical and personal insight to the questions of how methods for understanding (Merleau-Ponty 2010) and drawing (Sendak) childhood experience unfold amidst the larger dilemmas of communication. Although separate, the backdrop of these explorations informed the historical and experimental understanding I brought to thinking about conversations with children in the interview chapter. This fourth chapter extends from the work on methodological concerns that threads through earlier chapters to return to scholarly explorations within current studies in early childhood (Maclure 2011; 2013; Maclure et al. 2010) where I join in the theorization of speculative methods for the study of the child.

A Way Outwards: If the Canvas is Large Enough Could We Be Interested in What Has Already Happened Here?

My dissertation takes up a method of description to develop three pictures of childhood. What I refer to as a picture or scene, is the broader canvas of meaning made from the disciplinary kinship, debates, histories, and explorations surrounding descriptors of childhood. If the canvas is

large enough, discussions that picture the making of knowledge of the child might address the limits and excesses of words for describing relations with children. And it is here that my dissertation picks up a new thread from my earlier preoccupations. What happens when the messiness of communication and miscommunication between adults and children is utilized to interpret the purposes of institutional care and education? What is involved in trying to claim something that has been disclaimed? And when what has been disclaimed is thinking, what becomes of the subject who has been disavowed by proximity? What happens when a profession looks to claims on the child's thinking or competency to transform not only the stature of the discipline but also the very nature of communication for education?

Against the backdrop of these questions I turn to the psychoanalyst, Wilfred Bion's (1959; 1962), discussions of the site of disaster uncovered in the history of development when the frustration of thinking cannot be tolerated. The puzzles of thought that Bion's clinical and theoretical works extend puncture the scenes of childhood that this dissertation animates with the riddle of why it matters to describe the sites where knowledge relations have been forgotten and destroyed. I include this discussion in the introduction as part of defining the questions and terms of my study because it offers two overarching connections for thinking about why the discussions that follow matter precisely for the ways they have been overlooked in the educator's professional knowledge. The first relates to the ways the pains of thinking complicate relations of communication from the very start of life (Klein 1946). The second pertains to grappling with pedagogy's relations to a body of knowledge and the links between disciplinary bodies that have been made and unmade. The second connection comes a little later in this section and builds off the insights derived from Bion's clinical thought to extend the terms of pedagogy at stake in Merleau-Ponty's (2010) lectures.

Bion's (1958) reading of the riddle of the Sphinx in *Oedipus Rex* shifts away from the play's emphasis on the sexual taboo to the question of what comes from the desire for truth at all costs. Let's recount: Oedipus is fleeing a prophecy when he arrives in Thebes to find a city cursed by the Sphinx's plague. To answer the riddle does not only solve the problem of the plague (temporarily) it also leads to the destruction of the sphinx who had posed the question. The rest of the play is preoccupied by the drama of what becomes of the knowledge made from desire and left unanswered by the resolution of the riddle. Bion's reading notes the dispersed meaning-sites of disaster that might render intelligible the riddle of pursuing and recognizing truth at all costs. He lists the Sphinx's self-destruction, the blinding of Oedipus, and Oedipus' path of curiosity against advice that links the question of the insistent search for knowledge to disaster.

Picking up on the question of disaster in the clinic, Bion (1959; 1962) turns to the workings of projective identification to think with why these sites of meaning cannot be linked. The concept of projective identification has been interpreted "from the angle of anxieties and their vicissitudes" (Klein 1946, 100), but Klein also conceptualized projective identification as a very early part of the baby's relation to symbolization through unconscious phantasy with the mother (Klein 1946; Spillius and O'Shaughnessy 2012; Spillius 1988; Ogden 1982; Britzman 2017). Unlike projection in general, in projective identification a relation is maintained with the split off part of the self that has been invested in another, communicating a sense of oneness between the self and the other invested with this part of oneself (Ogden 1982). This link brings the phantasy of control of the other through the castoff part of the self, but also the worry that, if the object is bad or turns bad, there will be persecution and retaliation.

Working from Klein's theorization of the concept, projective identification is interpreted as communication in Bion's clinic (1959). Bion describes the way language fails in his work with

the patient. Subject and verb start to get lost in the communicating pair of analyst and analysand. A story is told; it is not clear who was involved. And although language appears to be the problem, the analysand refers to something else going on that Bion identifies as an object in the room. Part of the problem of communication involved here is the difficulty of recognizing the object. If Bion, as the analyst, is to be able to contain the split off part that the analysand tries to put in him, there is a question of identification at stake for both sides of the couple.

When these moves of the psyche are put into the terms of communication there can be greater clarity to the relation at stake. Aparna Mishra Tarc elicits the idea of "the baby's mental gesture" from Klein's concept of projective identification to evoke the term's communicative significance in her work on early literacy (Mishra Tarc 2015, 62). Cast in the gesture of communication, Bion's clinical exploration of the problem of things being projected and not received evokes the loneliness of a gesture made with no response. Perhaps more than the experience of words met with silence where the body and face may still express response, it is like sending an email and receiving no reply. One is left to wonder if the email has been received, or should I try sending it again? Bion's clinical account also tells of a much longer backstory of the analysand's history of projection without reception. The problem of communication here resembles Oedipus' insistent search for truth, where the search for meaning remains far apart from the disaster site where the Sphinx, the half-woman half-lion bringer of questions, is destroyed.

The link that is the communicative gesture that meets response is indeed hard to find. It calls upon the pain of symbolization. What Bion (1959) refers to as disaster animates the dispersed sites of meaning where things don't link up and emotion does not connect. To attend to the disaster sites of knowledge of the child I move away from the framework Bion's thinking offers this project. I read into sites where the depths of links and missing links for the communicating relation

are explored. Yet the problem of communication addressed through the concept of projective identification suggests there is a different kind of intimacy in the work of describing the conflicted sites of knowledge of the child against the backdrop of the "patchwork" and dispersed field of early childhood care and education (Langford et al. 2013, 302). The scenes of childhood I work with do not describe the field head on. Perception is an uncanny thing. From the vantage of other disciplines, other lives and other times and places we might ask what has happened to foreground certain kinds of knowledge in our field. This is the situated historical opening offered through the debates on child development and pedagogy that begin from within Merleau-Ponty's (2010) lectures.

The Teacher, the Psychoanalyst, and the Experimenter Share the Problem of Communication:

Merleau-Ponty thought that to understand the concept of pedagogy at stake in his lectures students would first need to understand the uses that the perspective of pedagogy had been applied to in other disciplines. Merleau-Ponty (2010) first names the perspective granted by pedagogy: namely, "the description of the image the adult makes of the child," an analogous discipline that "seeks to know how the adult establishes relationships with the child and the nature of these relations in different periods of history" (69). The second perspective is morality which is oriented by the perspective of rules. The third perspective is the vantage point of psychology. Child psychology "sees things more from the child's position" yet still cannot overcome the fact that "there is no way to access the child's world" (69). It is this impossibility that brings the three disciplines so close, as sides of the same coin, where the child's position can only be thought through his or her responses to what is presented by the adult. This rhetorical tool of the lecture does perhaps simplify the ways we might understand the interdisciplinary applications of pedagogical perception. This simplification, I believe, was part of the lecturer's intention. To arrive

at a definition of pedagogy suitable to the explorations of his course, Merleau-Ponty first names the risk of a cursory application of a pedagogical perspective across disciplines. Without a cohesion or kinship of disciplinary perspectives on the child, there is the risk that education be subjugated under the morality of rules and the science of psychology in the strata of interdisciplinary methods. Under the pressure of moral and scientific facts, the kind of knowledge that pedagogy might open to thinking appears already under the sway of assumptions, now made into proceedings of teaching and learning.

In more recent times, many scholars (Burman 2008; 2017; Dahlberg and Hultqvist 2001; Walkerdine 1998) of childhood studies, including many in the specificities of the Canadian context (Pacini-Ketchabaw 2011; Farley 2018; Silin 1987; 2018) have made arguments that have advanced Merleau-Ponty's point through critical discussions of the ways schools have seen the proliferation of psychological and governmental[2] knowledge as the discourse of expertise. For many scholars in early childhood education, work at a critical distance from psychology invokes more than naming the violence of scientific psychology, this is scholarship that also presses for the recognition of the distinct situated emergence of pedagogy (Nxumalo, Vintimilla, and Nelson 2018; Edwards and Nuttall 2009). The problem of description for Merleau-Ponty is that, for his definition of pedagogical perspective and the relations this perspective forms, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish child psychology from pedagogy.

Merleau-Ponty begins by referring to pedagogy as the technique that applies the methods of psychology. And in this way, by reducing the distance between disciplines, the distance of observation and interpretation is also reduced. The lecture continues: the teacher's work changes

[2] Questions of democratic citizenship and neoliberal concerns around "the safe, secure and healthy child" now often replace the discourse of morality Merleau-Ponty referenced (Holmes and Jones 2013; see also Holmes and MacLure 2010).

the relation between adult and child and also changes the child's world. Yet in this language of disciplinary kinship, the teacher's work is then understood by Merleau-Ponty as indistinguishable from other professions working with children. He tells his students that,

> the teacher's problem is the same as the psychoanalyst and, more generally, the same as all experimenters: the teacher modifies the subject. This is only problematic if one ignores the proper sense of intervention. Intervention should only be understood through the child's reaction. Therefore the adult simultaneously learns to understand [her/]himself and learns about the child" (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 69).

The pedagogical work of relationality is thus defined by a problem of trying to understand that orients adult-child relations in specific ways. Between the three disciplines—pedagogy, psychology, and morality—Merleau-Ponty proposes a single image of the child is constructed between and across the three modes of perceiving the relation.

If pedagogy has a story to tell about how we participate in, and experience, the world; it is through stories of relations, which Merleau-Ponty suggests are simultaneously oriented by other disciplinary perspectives. The lecture summarizes what this means for the teacher candidates, audience to the phenomenological philosopher. The implications hinge upon a shift Merleau-Ponty indicates in the guiding star of education's reference point for understanding the child; "the connection between observation and action, between theory and practice, is never a matter of pure knowledge, but one of existence" (69). This is not quite the final word on pedagogy, yet Merleau-Ponty does not circle back in the lectures to define pedagogy on its own terms. And after deeply entwining the logics of these fields we might ask if a return to purely pedagogical description is possible. Indeed 'child-centered pedagogy' might be mistaken for an apropos descriptor (Walkerdine 1998; Spyrou 2018) if we were not privy to the larger picture of intersubjective

relations at stake in the lectures. Now we read into the relations of the lectures where pedagogy emerges in questions of existence *between* subjects. That is, any approach to understanding the world of childhood must be considered as the "royal road" to arguments over the nature of understanding in research, pedagogy, and self/other relations.

The idea of the single composite image of the child suggests that each of the three disciplinary perspectives grapples with a simple fact: namely, that children have uniquely organized situations, not yet known, to which pre-established values cannot cater. To insert experience within these relations restructures our view of the fields of psychological and pedagogical knowledge. If taken as intertwined vantage points, the disciplinary kinship between psychology and pedagogy addresses knowledge as an entry point into inquiries of how the unknown world of the child's experience might be taken as a question for exploration rather than an end point for explanation and judgment. The project then weighs in on the complex question of governmentality in search of grounds where knowledge and experience can come together on indeterminate concerns. For Merleau-Ponty, when pedagogy is taken alongside its counterparts, child psychology, and social upbringing (morality)—read as the psychosocial orders of the picture of the child—we can formulate a space to respond to the indeterminacy of existence through an attention to the child's situation which surfaces in adult-child conflicts.

By working with various perspectives to picturing adult-child relations, including those that ride a somewhat artificial line of staying close to either the adult's or child's perspective, I read into the impacts felt in literature, psychology, pedagogy and interviews through the common conflicts of differing perspectives and temporalities that are then heightened by the thinness of language when the subject is a child. At the heart of these distinctions resides the central dilemma that my dissertation explores: How to undertake a description of the child from the child's

perspective? More than a matter of design, these distinctions will help us stay close to both the pedagogical and psychosocial concerns at the heart of the two places where adult-child conflicts flourish: namely, the school and the home.

Method of Descriptive Proximities: Three Pictures Entering into the Work of Caring for Thoughts in Adult-Child Relations:

There is no other way to access the child's world. One must slowly extricate what comes from oneself and what properly belongs to the child. In summation, the connection between observation and action, between theory and practice, is never a matter of pure knowledge, but one of existence.

—Merleau-Ponty, "The Adult's View of the Child," 1949-50, 69

The dissertation extends a discussion of Merleau-Ponty's (2010) lectures and also draws its methodological perspectives from this source. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological approach to the conceptualization of child development provides the methodological design of this inquiry. This method seeks to understand the depth of experience by attending to phenomenological themes, the same themes that are tied together spontaneously in life. In his lecture on "Method in Child Psychology" Merleau-Ponty offers a set of five methodological rules that guide the design and analysis of my findings: 1) "Rather than solely focusing on the child's own nature, we should describe the child's relationship with the adult" (2010, 373). 2) Read for the logic of the child: the directions of imitation, imagination, and worries. 3) Read for the logic of the school: the responses to authority, time frames and lessons. 4) Read for shifts and changes to avoid the tendency to pin down the child's condition with an infantile mental structure that is opaque to the adult perspective. 5) Study language for its repetitions, condensations, over-determinations that signal the conflicts of misunderstanding and misrecognition that take place when our primary techniques for communication are thrown into question.

These rules are designed to lift up the ordinary dimensions of adult-child relations and help sift through the texts as ways of asking after the child's polymorphous modes of relating to and interpreting the world. Through a reading of an earlier translation of Merleau-Ponty's lecture on "The Child's Relations with Others," John O'Neill ([1973] 2005) adds to the discussion of how these methodological understandings are informed by the disciplinary framework of research. Clear attention to the ordering of relationships, their reversals, sites of misunderstanding, dominant discourses and asymmetrical conditions, is vital to research that hopes to first question the forces that motivate our attachments to current knowledge:

> Where the object of science is a human relationship or set of human relationships, a custom or institution, [in] the 'ordering' of the relationship it is not merely a scientific construct. It is first of all a pre-theoretical construct which is the unarticulated 'commonsense' knowledge of others as 'relatives' who experience dependable needs and wants expressed through the 'relevances' of the human body, time, and place. (O'Neill [1973] 2005, 114)

My methodology has first addressed this difficulty between the spontaneity of relations and the order constructed by description and other scientific methods in the selection of its texts. I want to first touch briefly upon the ways each of the three pictures of the dissertation works with this methodological tension. In the chapter descriptions that conclude this introductory chapter I move to more extended descriptions of each picture.

The lectures of Merleau-Ponty take up the question of moving from the general to the situated and bodied as a problem that frames professional knowledge of adult-child relations. How the phenomenological philosopher is affected by these debates on professional knowledge is much more difficult to distinguish. I turn to the insights of moments of learning to teach in Simone de

Beauvoirs memoir. I also take up Piaget's view on the affecting situation of teaching and researching on the subject of the child.

In the second picture, the catalogue of Maurice Sendak's works move from the situated depiction of a child who has a dream towards the atmospheric evocation of the phantasy experiences of childhood. For the fiction to hold, the order of the human relation in the story seems to require more than the phantasy. This is chapter visits the artist-author who condensed together the family context of the child's world and the force of the child's communicative gesture in phantasy. Sendak brings us to the conflicts of the home in his fictions that recognized the bedroom as the site where the child's not so private dramas play out. For Sendak, the creation of a book and characters is not so much a question of construction, but rather how the experiment of word and image can evoke the force of feeling of childhood.

The final picture in the interviews, then, brings to the fore the ways in which what appears as common sense or speaks through a very literal interpretation of the question says a great deal about finding relevance in words. The responses children gave in the interview identified with literal responses to the question and this made asking the question again a source of frustration for the interviewee and a problem for the interviewer. Meaning in the interviews thus moved from words to bodily expressions and this scene attends to the body as the communicating site and situation of the child's words and experiences.

A Preliminary History: Lecturing After "The War Has Taken Place"

Outside the peaceful garden of our school where the fountain immemorially and everlastingly murmured, there awaited for us for our vacation of '39 that other garden which was France, the France of walking trips and youth hostels, which was as self-evident as earth itself—or so we thought. —Merleau-Ponty, The War Has Taken Place, 1945

The summer before the war, Paris was warming to long hazy days of freedom reminiscent of a childhood flight from classroom lessons that will have to be relearned in the fall. Only ten

years later Maurice Merleau-Ponty would begin teaching courses as the chair of Child Psychology and Pedagogy at the Sorbonne in Paris. After "the vacation of '39," came the strange interval of the phoney war, seven weeks of invasion and defeat, and then occupation (Merleau-Ponty [1945] 2007). At the end of the war, when the occupation is over, Merleau-Ponty wrote ([1945] 2007) of this feeling of peace in the time before the outbreak of war, not by evoking the comforts of nostalgia, but with some combination of disbelief and the urgency of hindsight.

In the new peace France was left with the question (Kaplan 2000) that opens Merleau-Ponty's famous 1945 paper, "how could we have waited so long to decide to go to war?" (41). Reflected in the views of hindsight, where the safest paths forward have the clarity of an established future, decisions and actions could now be prescribed with ease by the political commentator (Roudinesco 2008). Yet what focuses the return made through Merleau-Ponty's paper published by *Les Temps Modernes*, the journal Merleau-Ponty co-edited with Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and others after the war (Schrift 2006), is the doubt cast on knowledge. History makes intelligible that in 1939, before the war in Paris, "[they] lived in a certain area of peace, experience, and freedom, formed by a combination of exceptional experiences" (Merleau-Ponty [1945] 2007, 41). Through the writer's look to the past, however, the assurances and comforts of prewar peacetime become tainted by suspicions that a France at peace and enthralled by happiness was naïve to the interpretation of historical facts: Freedom and the apparent range it granted to thought offered a dilemma for consciousness and its defenses. In the consciousness of the terrors of Nazism prior to the war, there remained questions for how such facts might have been known in ways that could have evoked the urgency of meaning, over the compliance that did occur. As it did for many other non-Jewish Parisians during and after the war, life, for Merleau-Ponty, continued.

That he would take up his tenure as a lecturer of child development and pedagogy only four years after the end of the occupation with all its questions for freedom of thought and its envoys of action, already signals the assumptions being reoriented in the lectures. We might read into the fact that the child has been seen as a notably free thinker. Play has been the field upon which the associations of imaginative thought are both given license for exploration and are taken up as the grounds of interpretation for knowing the events and meanings of development.

It has been difficult to trace the circumstances that brought Merleau-Ponty to the Sorbonne as a chair and lecturer in the field of psychology and pedagogy. Numerous commentators (Schrift 2006) mention that Merleau-Ponty was less comfortable during this period as a chair of psychology than in his later position as chair of philosophy at the College de France. And so we might read these events through interventions on both sides resulting in one of the great minds of French philosophy taking up the work of lecturing on child psychology and pedagogy.[3] All this is to suggest the uniqueness of these lectures and the series of events that rendered them possible. These

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[3] I include the brief section of Jean Wahl's obituary (a well-known Hegelian scholar and colleague of Merlau-Ponty (Schrift 2006)), where an intervention on the hiring panel for the job at the Sorbonne is described in the original French along with my own very rough translation. This document offers an interesting clue to the kinds of interventions that must have been necessary for a phenomenological philosopher to be granted this lecturer's position both for Merleau-Ponty in the midst of his philosophical pursuits and for the Sorbonne. To keep the circumstances of these lectures in mind as 'interventions' also might help in considering why these lectures were left un-translated for so long, why we are left with a version based on students' notes, and why these works by Merleau-Ponty have been largely neglected by all, including the fields addressed directly by the works—psychology and education:

> "Il avait à la fois une grande absence de préjugés et de rancunes, et un vif sens de la justice, qui le rendaient très convaincant. Ainsi je me rappelle une séance du conseil de la faculté des Lettres de Paris, alors unique, où ce furents ses interventions pressantes et motivées qui assurèrent l'élection de Maurice Merleau-Ponty à la Sorbonne" (Schuhl 1974, 400; He had at once a great absence of prejudice and resentment, and a fierce sense of justice, that rendered him very convincing. Thus, I recall a session of the faculty council of the *Lettres de Paris*, unique at the time, where it was his pressing and motivating interventions that would assure the appointment of Maurice Merleau-Ponty to the Sorbonne.)

contexts also foreground this dissertation as an exploration of the reception of key thinkers who have at times wandered and waded into the field of childhood and left commentaries that reorient ways of thinking about the child's psychology and the adult's pedagogical relationship to conflicts of development.

At intersections of knowledge and experience: Where do we begin when we begin again?

Oddly, the depictions Merleau-Ponty ([1945] 2007) uses to evoke the frustration of what could not be known before the war return us to school: The students of the First World War had become the teachers of those who would fight the battles of the second. With a formulation that evokes complaints of youthful discontent, Merleau-Ponty offers a question of how experience might be passed on when knowledge is felt as being outdated. Where might we look for a form of protection open to negotiating the defenses, anxieties and projections that accompany the freedom of thinking? The lessons from the First World War were not those that applied to the next war. Yet this was part of the experience of being a student of the social order: In the interwar years, in his seat "attending an *old* school in which generations of socialist professors had been trained" (41; my emphasis), Merleau-Ponty found relationships of teaching and learning characterized by a gaze oriented to the past. Haunted by the failures of learning and not learning, war tied the difficulties of thinking to a wish for better knowledge that might hold the capacity to prevent such agonies. More pointedly, the suspended days under occupation, where one's thoughts came to be reflected in the restrictions imposed on others, was felt as a kind of haunting. Through the return of the past the youthful socialist, Merleau-Ponty, evokes the feeling of wanting to throw off one's education. The desire cast in Merleau-Ponty's politics of hindsight is oriented by the dispersed generational logics of pedagogical relations: He wants to name the blind-spots of past teachers in order to claim a different kind of relationship to knowledge and its meanings for the future.

Lyndsey Stonebridge (2007) too will talk of the impact felt by second-generation psychoanalysts and modernists. As she examines the legacy these analysts inherit, with legs carrying it forward to the end of the century, Stonebridge describes those "who had cut their teeth on the expressive verve of their war-shocked elders, only to find themselves having to re-invent an aesthetic not only for another war, but for the prolongation of a state of war consciousness that was to last for the remainder of the twentieth century—and beyond" (1-2). Before the war and since much had been made in political discourses of the ties linking thought and the refusal to know between the pains of reality, consciousness of violence and oppression, and the problem of personal and group involvement in obstructing the forces identified as responsible for the agonies of human suffering.

But that thought arises out of the frictions of experiences, and still calls for thinking (Bion 1962), remains an ongoing concern in addressing what might be attributed to consciousness now formulated as a question of how we learn from the still tender parts of our histories. Particularly among the vacillations of early learning (Britzman 2016), where infantile and then childhood experiences are taken in through the uncertain associations of exploration, play becomes the ground where infantile histories incubate. Play is thus cast not simply as the child's game but as means to elaborate relationships to two complex worlds, those of thoughts and experiences. Venturing onto the precipices of uncertainty where education both recoils and finds its vitality, Britzman (2009) gives us a clue to all that thinking can entail when we try to trace its roots in experience: We are reminded that "experience cannot protect us from our conflicts and uncertainties since experience itself is conflictive and uncertain and requires our speculative interpretations" (xii). Elsewhere, looking to experience as a formulation of the long philosophical history bringing together suffering and thinking, through Britzman's (2016) discussion we enter

at the beginning. With the psychoanalyst Melanie Klein, experience is made from the pains and anxieties of first relations that are already felt before understanding. In this formulation, even "the infant inherits [this] struggle between meaninglessness and meaning" (15).

Questions of Words, Objects, and Phantasies When Oriented Towards the Other

Knowledge conditions for new teachers have long served as examples of how the renovations in institutional conditions can be used to think from engaging the child's developing uniqueness. Merleau-Ponty's lectures spanned a time that was central to developing scientific methods in disciplines of child study: His stewardship of the position preceded Jean Piaget's tenure of the chair at a time when Piaget's theories on child development were gaining popularity in the United States and with other English-speaking audiences.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, delves into questions on the production of psychological knowledge and the directions opened through psychological understandings of human relations. Studies of intersecting fields of knowledge are most often imagined as pathways to new thoughts and collaborations. Merleau-Ponty brings us into the opaqueness of the secret thoughts of others, carving out philosophical nuance at times alongside the denial of a capacity for curiosity in scientific inquiry. His concern is that scientific knowledge might focus on the parts of self and other that fill the spaces we perceive most readily. The ego takes center stage and can leave little room for questions. The psychologist whom Merleau-Ponty's critical stance often faces in the lectures is Jean Piaget, who held the same chair at the Sorbonne only a few years later. With Piaget we arrive at ideas of what the child can do when… and so we miss what the child does to have experiences. To engage with Merleau-Ponty's work as a theorist of childhood recovers a philosophical orientation to the problem of the other, an orientation that addresses the ongoing

social, emotional and historical concerns waiting in the wings as a cast of characters already familiar within the affecting situations of pedagogical relations.

Positioning the child's experience as the grounds for developing relations with others sets out a view of child development as rich in interest, appetite, and incidents, requiring indulgent descriptions. Here, where the work of description is important precisely for the ways it influences the relation, we are reminded again of the problem faced by teacher, analyst and researcher:

> The notion of experience brings to light what is original in our relationship with being; the same is true for the other becoming a problem. It is not necessary to pose this question absolutely, but as a progressive experience. In reality, the two problems are not only parallel, but are connected internally, since all evidence is that in the world we have the chance to have an experience of the other. Hence, it is not for us to presume certain conceptions of the ego or the world and to see what thereby results from their relation to the other, but to examine how to conceive of the world so the other is thinkable. (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 435)

Merleau-Ponty's suggestion—part master key, part lure; part exile, part embrace—turns the question of knowing the child, to a question of what the child does to know the other. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology pursues an interest in the failures of representation, captured in the study of the child's encounter with the world: Do children learn from observation and act out repetitions of the patterns and results they see adults perform? Or does behavior first pass through the playground of phantasy in which the child imagines the other's desires, wishes and commands presuming them to call forth action? Beyond socialization, what is left to the work of representation when phantasy takes hold?

Following from Merleau-Ponty's more generous reading of Klein and Isaacs in contrast to

his reading of Freud, to think psychoanalysis in this way calls to mind a bodily social of the psyche. We are reminded of the significance of Kleinian descriptions that reimagined the child's emerging relation to the social whereby "phantasies of the body *created* the social world that emerged in childhood and afterwards" (Evans 2017, 66). Here the organizing features of embodied experience intersect with Merleau-Ponty's reading of childhood as organized and meaningful. And we might wonder about the child's beginnings taking place within what Britzman poetically depicts as "a world of small toys and gigantic feelings" (2016, 56) and ask: What propels the body in its orientation towards the world and others? In one form, Merleau-Ponty's approach can be seen as embracing the unconscious, called into discussion through relations with others, where notations of conscious and unconscious experience are invoked in the body (Pontalis [1961] 1993; Welsh 2010; 2012). Here the range of phantasy meets the reach of bodily perception: Merleau-Ponty insists upon what phenomenology and psychoanalysis permit to make recognizable for one another, stating, "phenomenology and psychoanalysis are not parallel; much better, they are both aiming towards the same latency" (Merleau-Ponty [1960] 1993, 71).

If the child is not the other in question, if the child is engaged within relations, then a phenomenological study of the child's exploration of the world can open onto my study of the horizon of the child—a horizon that stretches the descriptive boundaries of experience to include psychical, bodily and literary explorations.

Chapter Descriptions:

The dissertation is organized around three forms of description of adult-child relations found in the lectures, the interviews, and Maurice Sendak's picture books. It offers an exploration of the attending problems of representation that arise for theories of phenomenology, psychoanalysis, literature and pedagogy.

Chapter two introduces Merleau-Ponty's lectures to student teachers (which spanned four years and which are collected in a volume slightly slimmer than 500 pages). This chapter will stage a discussion of the debates with Piaget, invoking contemporaries of Merleau-Ponty (Isaacs 1933) and then staging a return to the pedagogies of the child's play through a series of qualitative scenes (Britzman 2006; Evans 2017; Corbett 2018; Kind 2018). This larger discussion of the lectures serves as the first picture of knowledge of the child. The lectures offer extensive discussions of key thinkers both in fields directly pertinent to caring for the pedagogical and psychological developments of young children and in fields essential to larger explorations of human development and knowledge. The publication of the first complete translation of these lectures in 2010 has highlighted the general tendency to overlook these works in fields concerned with children[4] and in discussions on phenomenology. I attend to these lectures as holding commentary on enduring conflicts in adult-child relations and pertaining to the study of education, psychology, literature and philosophy. And I ask after the ways in which these descriptions might sustain new thinking in the study of the child today.

The picture of the child in chapter three picks up on questions posed through the difference of observation and description by the hand of the artist. Looking to Maurice Sendak's early works, I explore the drawing and storying methods he developed inspired by the play of children in the streets of Brooklyn where he grew up. This chapter involves an examination of the methodological significance of Sendak's literature for its attention to representing the inner lives of fictional

[4] While this work is not widely discussed in the fields surrounding early childhood education, an earlier translation of one chapter was published in the Chris Jenks edited volumes of classic texts in the sociological field of child studies (Merleau-Ponty [1964] 2005) where it is included alongside many of the well-known scholars. In this volume there is also a reprinted article by John O'Neill ([1973] 2005) that gives a close reading of the methods for studying adult-child conflicts at stake in Merleau-Ponty's lectures.

children. I extend these discussions of the artist's creative relations with childhood to explore how Sendak conveyed the depths of child's world as rooted in both phantasy and reality in concert with a larger cultural moment in American postwar children's literature. Like with the chapter on Merleau-Ponty's lectures, the literature that informs this chapters brings in the unfolding contexts of Sendak's life and works, situating the artist's method in a larger canvas of meaning.

Where the Wild Things Are (1963) has been adapted for film and opera; its reference elicits signs and anecdotes of recognition everywhere from the university classroom to the grocery store lineup. The book's presence in both pop culture and art worlds contributes to Cech's (1995) argument that it has become more than a supremely successful children's book and so its significance can be more clearly read through the text's status as a cultural myth. The myth, for Cech, is a narrative that feeds cultural beliefs by offering a satisfying resolution to a conflict or paradox, or those *things* which are beyond reason. What conflicts do these mythologized tales satisfy for early childhood education? These books are well-rehearsed narratives that have storied early years classrooms and this is part of their contribution as pictures in my study. Sendak's work enters my dissertation in view of the story of Max and the wild things as mythic figures of early childhood education. To think about what these stories bring to readers I ask about what Sendak's method of noticing the inner and outer world of the child brings to stories and pictures of childhood.

Chapter four is explored through interviews with young children. There I examine ways children's words serve as points of contact with the world and others. The idea of the child as constantly communicating that orients this dissertation, although informed by psychoanalytic thinking (Klein 1946; Bion 1959; Isaacs 1948), speaks from my experience with interviewing young children. In the interviews I was called upon to speculate with new qualitative methods

(MacLure 2011; 2013; MacLure et. al 2010) in response to the surprising ways the participants joined in the interviews with responses of body, drawing and silence that went beyond words. How can the strong emotions, tastes, textures and images we attach to words help in our interpretations of the attachments that characterize the child's developing relationships between internal and external worlds? How do the ways children evoke these attachments intervene with and extend the communicating qualities of the interview subjects? My interviews include three 15-minute sessions with 3 children around 3-5 years of age. The interview protocol consists of two simple inquiries searching after words the child likes and dislikes to explore how children negotiate relations to words and the psychical and emotional experiences that accompany the formation of these attachments. My interview is composed of conversations beginning with questions that lean towards the associative horizons of words. I analyze how education can think about the nature of misunderstandings, imaginative leaps, and the ways the excitement and anxiety of early learning and symbolization can be cared for in adult-child relations.

First imagined as a literal take on the part words play in object relations, in this chapter I work with small pieces of data from interviews—perhaps better described in their broadest capacities as play sessions—with 3 children between 3 to 5 years of age. True to the phenomenological form of this study, I picture these interviews as adding to the narrative of the dissertation by continuing the experimental inquiry into the child's experience that is the thread throughout this dissertation.

Chapter five, the conclusion of the dissertation, will reflect back on the work of the dissertation and further explore the background that renders the need for this kind of research with children. This short chapter seeks to situate the theoretical and research implications from the dissertation's inquiry in the question of how educators think with knowledge of the child.

Chapter 2

Two Tales of Child Development

This chapter returns to a unique and parallel account of the historicity of child development through the lectures presented between 1949 and 1952 on Child Psychology and Pedagogy at the Sorbonne by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2010) to teacher candidates, educational counseling students, and students of the broader psychological professions. This chapter thus returns us to old debates. Yet, if we are too quick to dismiss child development theories and see them only as methods that have explained, categorized and regulated childhood through a singular perspective, we risk narrating our novel curricular beginnings by omission of our institutional histories. Child development here is treated as an exemplar for understanding how the meanings of "science" and human nature have become a contest between objective and subjective research.

Merleau-Ponty 101: A Phenomenological Approach to the Conception of Language

There is little to draw on to confirm the style and performance of the lecturer but we can certainly see the play of ideas Merleau-Ponty brought to his syllabus on child development and pedagogy. Because these lectures were documented in student notes and published by students with Merleau-Ponty's approval in the journal, *Bulletin de Psychologie,* before being translated into English in 2010, it is difficult to know how the pages sync with and skip over the orations of the lecture hall. In the translator's introduction to the three courses on nature that Merleau-Ponty later gave at the Collège de France, the post he took up directly following his time as chair of Child Psychology and Pedagogy at the Sorbonne, we are offered some insight into how Merleau-Ponty presented his lectures:

> Merleau-Ponty did not extensively prepare and then later rework his lecture courses as did Heidegger; rather, he had the habit of jotting down a few notes, sometimes developed,

> sometimes telegraphic, and using them as written props, lecturing more or less spontaneously from them. (Vallier 2003, xiii)

Upon the publication of an earlier translation of this first lecture Madame Merleau-Ponty expressly wished "that the nature of Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language be indicated to the reader" (Silverman 1973, xxxiv). To emphasize this point the translator points to the assignments and expectations for exams that were published in the journal alongside the course transcript. There were essay topics students might choose from such as "magical elements of child consciousness" and course expectations that extended beyond the theoretical. The translator, Silverman, notes that while, "it is common in American psychology for students to be aware of techniques, yet not understand the theory of history underlying the operation […], in France the reverse is more likely to occur" (xxxv).[5] This may have accounted for the clarifications Merleau-Ponty requested be

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[5] This may also indicate some of the shift brought by having a philosopher as a chair in the faculty of child psychology at the Sorbonne. When Merleau-Ponty was a student at the Ecole Normale he met Simone de Beauvoir, who was studying at the Sorbonne. Merleau-Ponty came third on the general philosophy test and wanted to meet the two women who achieved the top spots (Beauvoir had scored second place). In their first meeting they went to the gardens at the Ecole Normale and Simone de Beauvoir gives a sense of the difference between the schools, "for a mere student from the Sorbonne," she describes how the Ecole Normale "was a rather awe-inspiring place" (Beauvoir 1958, 246). Later in her memoir Simone de Beauvoir sheds further light on why it may have been viewed as a disappointment for Merleau-Ponty's first chair to be in psychology. In her time as a student at the Sorbonne a couple decades prior she notes:

> at the Sorbonne, no one attended the lectures in sociology and psychology, so insipid did they seem to us. I only went to demonstrations which, with the help of a few madmen, George Dumas gave every Sunday and Tuesday morning at Sainte-Anne. Maniacs, paranoiacs, schizophrenics, and people suffering from dementia praecox paraded on a platform; he never told us anything about their case-histories or their mental conflicts; he hardly even seemed to be aware that things were going on in their minds. He contented himself with demonstrating that their anomalies were based on the patterns he had outlined in his Treatise. He was clever at choosing questions which would provoke the effects he required, and the malice in his waxen old face was so infectious that we had difficulty in repressing our laughter: it was almost as if madness were an enormous lark. Even as seen from this angle, it fascinated me. (Beauvoir 1958, 261-262)

Merleau-Ponty's lectures return to critiques of Dumas. He emphasizes how "Dumas posed the problem in psychophysical terms […which negate the] internal relationship [that] exists between

issued in the journal with regards to the psychological tests, play and drawing techniques, and behaviours that students were expected to be familiar with for the exam.[6] Following a list of the psychological tests and presentations of children's explorations that students were expected to learn an additional remark was included: "Note: In all cases, it will not suffice to know only the theory. Candidates must be able, for example, to interpret the results of a Rorschach plate, or be able to analyze a drawing" (as cited in Silverman 1973, xxxv). The emphasis of my return to the lectures, then, is not so much to carve out their significance amongst Merleau-Ponty's body of work (Rojcewicz 1987). Rather I note the early contribution of these lectures to rethinking how children's communication and explorations have been interpreted in pedagogy and psychology. Translated and transcribed, the lectures leave us searching for the events around which the course materials were enlivened. In this case, I read into this work as the event of a phenomenologist's considered commentary on the language, development, relations, and historicity of knowledge of the child.

To extend the larger picture of how the debates exemplify the conflicted sites of knowledge of the child I work with a series of extended footnotes. These notes bring in the scenes of Merleau-Ponty's days learning to teach with Simone de Beauvoir in conversation with Piaget's reflections on teaching and learning. They also document the efforts of the cohort of students who organized the notes on Merleau-Ponty's lectures to be published for their classmates. Some of these discussions do wade quite far into the tensions of collegial dispute and perhaps verge on gossip.

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the expression and what it expresses, a meaningful relationship" (2010, 446-447). And he was not the only one in the faculty to take up critiques against Dumas. Lagache, a psychoanalyst who was at the Sorbonne when Merleau-Ponty arrived also critiqued Dumas. Politzer (1994; see also note 9 of this chapter), also viewed Dumas as representative of the problems with classic psychology. Canguilhem (whose work features later in this chapter) also attended these presentations by Dumas and found them uninspiring (Roudinesco 2008).

Indeed, the material of the footnotes offers more than background information. These are meeting points with other texts, relations, and politics of the times around the debates. In this sense the footnotes offer a picture of the community and personalities surrounding the lectures and some of the bureaucratic and conceptual questions that occupied the times.

In Merleau-Ponty's first year as chair of Child Psychology and Pedagogy at the Sorbonne he taught three courses. The courses were all held on Thursdays: "The Adult's View of the Child" met at 11:00am, "Structure and Conflicts in Child Consciousness" was at 3:00pm, and the evening course, "Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language" began at 5:00pm (Silverman 1973; Merleau-Ponty 2010, viii).[7] In the recently translated text of these lectures, the opening chapter transcribes the material from the evening course. Thus we begin through the question of understanding approaches to conceptualizing the being of language. Merleau-Ponty's opening remarks overview a search for an understanding of language that attends to language's relation to consciousness. Merleau-Ponty deftly reviews a range of approaches spanning the fields of psychology and philosophy in a way that will become familiar over the course of the lectures. These searches survey a problematic, highlighting key points of contention in the first and sometimes second approach, before arriving at a key turn made available by the final method. At times the structure capitulates in the charm of rhetoric, but the insights and eloquence of phrase

[7] Students at the Sorbonne took exams in a variety of subject areas as qualifying exams (aggregations) to teach at the Lycées (high schools). University Professors first completed this training before going on to graduate work so the relation between secondary and postsecondary education in France tended to be a more tightly bound tapestry. The lecture series on "The Adult's View of the Child" and "Structure and Conflicts in Child Consciousness" were foundational requirements for the "Diplôme de Psychologie Pedagogique [Diploma in Educational Psychology]". And all three courses were offered as part of the "Licence de Psychology [Bachelor's in Psychology]" (Silverman 1973, xxxiii). I return to the debates around these qualifying exams later in the chapter in my discussion of Piaget and the disciplinary divisions between philosophy and science in the study of psychology.

are complex. Taken together, the lectures make a profound case for questions of relationality, the methodological dilemmas spanning philosophy and the human sciences, the search for a vocabulary that can describe the child's experience, and the multifaceted explorations of body and perception.

First, Merleau-Ponty situates language between philosophy and psychology. The initial construct of philosophy returns to Cartesian philosophy where consciousness is a form of being to which language is external. Here is the split to be resolved: Language, as something outside consciousness, can be viewed as a thing. The lesson poses the problem of words as mere "clothing for thought" (5). Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the significance and risk of treating language as a garment rather than integral to the gesture of the self. Thought has no contact with the world when enclosed in the clothing of words. Merleau-Ponty swiftly outlines a number of approaches. In his elaboration of the third, the phenomenological approach, Mearleau-Ponty situates language as the meeting point between philosophy and psychology. Through language, and its perceptive qualities of description he argues that the philosopher can "reconstitute the world that the physicist sees, but with the 'fringe' that the scientist does not mention that is furnished by his contact with the qualitative world" (7). Mearleau-Ponty reimagines the interdisciplinary relations between psychology and philosophy through this reconstituting form of contact. The constellation of thought, words, and adult-child relations form the entry point for the study where, "psychology is always an implicit, beginning philosophy and philosophy has never finished its contact with facts" (7). It is from this stage of disciplinary kinship that Merleau-Ponty moves into exploration of the world in development with the child's efforts towards language.

The baby's exploration that precedes the child's learning to talk makes contact with the first felt facts of life in the poignancy of babble. In the child's coming to be in language Merleau-

Ponty refinds the philosopher's wonder for the spontaneity and relationality that structures the infant's beginnings of communication. In her own phenomenological book on human development titled *To Be Born*, Luce Irigaray (2007), too, engages the protracted concerns of infancy. This book links the developing human to those networks of relations beyond the human. In conversation with Irigaray's discussions, Merleau-Ponty's narrative of the infant's developing language resounds in monologues of concerned parents grasping for explanation and answers: Are these first sounds and movements mirrors and mimics of the family's expressions? What direction does the environment provide for the starts and stagnation of babble and the incubation of first words? By breaking language down to its parts found in phonemes, and gestures, Merleau-Ponty also begins to describe the child's relation to these parts. Mearleau-Ponty thinks that the earliest experiences of language are best described, not in the specificities of relation or sound or experience, but in the richly simplistic inference that first "the child tries to speak 'in general'" (Merleau-Ponty, 8). In her own investigation, Irigaray skips back before these worries over speech. Iragaray is also travelling back to a more general starting point. Back even before the question of meeting the infant's needs and vulnerability Irigaray locates the vitality of breath.

The two starting points are similar. Both are efforts to speak of the beginnings of the self where need does not have to be the primary concern. Yet the ways our beginnings are still tangled up with our need for others mean that the primacy of misunderstanding endures. There is an avoidance of the body immersed in the mystification of infancy and its vulnerabilities. Irigaray is more insistent on this point:

> But if the newborn in a way has already all that it needs for being, it remains dependent on others for its needs, and this will maintain, for a long time, not to say forever, a confusion between its immediate requirements and its potentialities. In order to realize the latter, it

> must win autonomy and a place of its own. It must free itself from the common space and time into which it entered, which are particularly represented by those who provide for its needs, and work out a place which suits its own way of inhabiting space and time. To this end, it is probably essential that it experiences its own potential for moving so as to discover the manner in which it can dwell. (Irigaray 2017, 9-10)

This exploration of the self facilitates the movement between body and word. The baby explores not only the movement of the lips or the contact of skin, but the general atmosphere of communication. The totality of speech brings together the particularity of space and time in feeling and meaning. The very young child's first expressions cohere with the transformation away from cries and demands that speak from the particularity of a single part or organ towards the more general quality of language. Speech, for Merleau-Ponty, pronounces all these parts and so is encompassing of the bodily movements of gestures and the reach of the mind in mimicry, repetition or imagination to interpret the motions of others.

It is a statement that could be said of a number of ways in which language acts on the speaker but it is in the way speech moves the body that Merleau-Ponty makes the statement: "language transforms. Already it uses the phonation organs for something that is not natural for them. Instead, language does not have organs, as Edward Sapir says: all organs that language uses already have another function" (Merleau-Ponty, 8). This description evokes the ways communication happens between bodies as explored in my introduction chapter with Mishra Tarc's phrase of "the baby's mental gesture" (2015, 62). The question of how the organs of language speak through the metaphors we use for communication also returns in the fourth chapter on the interviews. These threads through the dissertation speak to the larger idea of the child as constantly communicating. The ways organs serve other functions presents most clearly in the

ways the gesture of communication can add great confusion to the question of conveying need. In moving further into the lectures, I am thus also trying to hold in mind Merleau-Ponty's methodological suggestion that adults learn about themselves and children by listening and noticing children's responses.

The otherness quality of speech is most easily heard in the way its sounding in babble reverberates through this initial general effort to speak. The way that the child's phrases may be formed from babble that awaits the apprehension of words, becomes part of a lifelong effort with words that gather together more than the singular spoken dimension of communication. We say more than we know, words falter to express what we mean, and the body adds meaning when a confident disposition may stand in for empty speech or a shift of the gaze may suggest something more to speaker or audience. These are unfamiliar ways to talk about words and communication. The interviews that follow in chapter four of my dissertation open onto questions that pull at this tension of communicating the meaning of words.

I want to briefly foreshadow some of the discussion to come in chapter four to extend the ways we read into the relation between experiences of the body and the large question of communication. With the interview I was interested to hear how children talk about the meanings they give to words and this gave form to the provocations of my interview protocol. I was also curious to talk about the feeling of speaking and how it shaped the ways the young participants in the interviews thought about words. To bring the provocation of sensory metaphors into my explorations with the interview I extended the sensory connection at stake for communication to my questions: My questions evoked the ways language is entwined with the bodily processes of the organs. My questions played with the other purposes of the mouth: I asked about the pleasure of ingestion and the bad taste that is expelled in a prompt that invited the interviewee to name a

word that tastes good or a word to spit out. These questions called upon the mouth as the organ of feeding, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and sensation. The answers that the 3 to 5 year-old children gave surprised me because from early on in the interview it became very difficult to talk about words.

The interviewees named foods they liked and didn't like, and our conversation faltered. It was hard to communicate with words in this exploration and experiment in naming terms of attachment. It was only by getting away from this direct metaphor for the multiple purposes of the organs of speech and away from the literal responses this line of inquiry invited that things shifted in the interviews. However, in asking instead about the emotional side of the experience with words, our conversation circled back to the expressions and feelings of the body in other ways. Erica, the participant who I focus on the interview chapter, named letters she liked and disliked. Her favourite 'word' was the first letter in her name. The letter she disliked, however was Z. She explained that it is hard to write and by this I understood that she meant that it is a letter that she spells backwards sometimes. It was no easier than before to continue the conversation after this point but the faltering of words drew out the frustration of being asked about a difficult situation. Erica sighed and sighed again when I asked more questions and these kinds of bodily expressions are ones I return to in the chapter. Here, I want to note a simple shift of perspective that my focus on the mouth as the organ of communication had not permitted my questions to anticipate. When we began to speak about words through their difficulties, the hands as organs that write and draw entered the picture. This shift also brought other body parts, such as the eyes, in the question of how we perceive and visualize words on the page. Although we were still reaching to try and find ways to think about the questions I posed and how to talk about the words that were meaningful to Erica, along with these searching conversations there were other gestures of communication.

And it is these gestures that so often pass unnoticed in the efforts of children and adults with language.

For Merleau-Ponty, as we saw in the introduction, the question of the communicating child is also a question that holds relevance in the larger social. Merleau-Ponty describes the relational potential in the efforts of institutional life in a piece he wrote while still teaching courses on child psychology and pedagogy at the Sorbonne.[8] Merleau-Ponty locates the language of institutions through the body, with its history, touch, and the ambiguity of meaning felt through first person experience.[9] He writes that the vitality of institutional life becomes a pedagogical question

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[8] This text (published posthumously as an untitled chapter (Merleau-Ponty 1964a)) was a form of job application offering a prospectus of his past and future work to the faculty committee of Philosophy at the College de France, where Merleau-Ponty would hold the chair from 1952 until his death, after his tenure at the Sorbonne. The job-letter was initially published in France in 1962 upon Merleau-Ponty's death.

[9] Politzer (1994), the writer of *Critique of the Foundations of Psychology: The Psychology of Psychoanalysis* and resistance intellectual executed by the Nazis in France in 1942, had a great influence on Merleau-Ponty. Drawing on psychoanalytic readings from Satre, Lacan and Politzer "Merleau-Ponty attempts to [f]ormulate the Freudian unconscious as a 'complex' of actual and possible attitudes. In other words, a psychoanalytic complex is not an actual childhood event retained in memory traces. It is a general dimension of experience, originating in childhood, to which the adult assimilates present events" (Friedman 1975, 477). Politzer's is a reading that tries to reclaim the dreamer as first-person subject. Just as Merleau-Ponty wants to question times when "distinctions that are property of adult psychology" are applied to understandings of the child, Merleau-Ponty (2010) also finds that "Politzer […] asks if psychology does not apply to the dreamer the concepts of the waking man" (294). Thus, both for the child and dreamer meaning is immanent (rather than seeing symbolization through a question of understanding formulated between object and symbol) and Politzer calls into question the concepts of the latent and manifest (175). Politzer was an important figure of the resistance and he stood out as one of the most well known intellectuals held to account for his words and actions under occupation (Giorgi 1994). Alice Kaplan (2000) cites Politzer's death her account of the fascist writer Robert Brasillach. Kaplan's book delves into the trial that took place in the immediacy of the end days of occupation. Politzer is raised as an example of Brasillach's public silence when he tries to claim that he wrote private letters to protect some intellectuals of opposing views. Brasillach, of course, was not silent on many issues, and the violence of his words published in the newspaper he edited included the call to deport children to concentration camps along with their parents and publishing the names of Jewish people who had changed their names and addresses in the flight from Nazi persecution.

formulated in the essential "risk of communicat[ion]" (Merleau-Ponty 1964a, 9). Communication—as that which both transforms and describes the world—is instrumental to the ways Merleau-Ponty conveys his phenomenology as oriented by the situation of perception. Merleau-Ponty (1964a) is working to link the expressivity of life in the question of the freedom of the other to the vitality of our institutions, by claiming "institutions […] have ceased to live when they show themselves incapable of carrying on a poetry of human relations—that is, the call of each individual freedom to all others" (9). Here, "in the poetry of human relations" (9), is a beautiful framing for the idea that there are questions upon which Merleau-Ponty and Piaget can meet and bring light to methodological insights.

Given the tone that these debates sometimes take it is probably better that the messy poetry that follows is confined to the page. It is after all a strange poetic meeting between young and old. Merleau-Ponty is writing his critique when the occupation has ended and he has landed his first chair position in Paris. Piaget (1971), on the other hand, includes these reflections in a book he wrote near the end of his very long writing career when his interlocutor is already deceased. My intention here is not to write a counter-narrative to critical scholarship in early childhood reconceptualist work that has worked to deconstruct Piagetian influence in early childhood (e.g.Cannella 1997; Walkerdine 1998; Silin 1987). Indeed in the meetings of this debate Piaget sometimes speaks outside what we might recognize as the Piagetian discourse that is the subject of those critiques. Yet I do want to think with these debates as poetry for the ways they return us to meanings that have been kept apart and dispersed in the fields of study of the child.

In particular, these debates open onto a picture of the contested views of the child around the methods of the human sciences. Each side makes a case for the living science or the bodily existence of the teacher, psychologist and researcher. I claim, through my own interviews in

chapter four, which join in thinking with speculative methodologies in education (MacLure 2011; 2013) that these are significant times for rethinking methodological orientations in studies of the child. It matters too that we return to think with earlier projects that transgressed philosophy and science. By returning to the debates between Piaget and Merleau-Ponty we notice, not only the poetry of these eventful meetings but also the "ruins" (MacLure 2011).

Two Directions in Child Development: Between Merleau-Ponty and Piaget

Merleau-Ponty's lectures were part of a larger debate on how we study and explore the child's psychology and the adult in relation. We have learned about some of the ways Merleau-Ponty embarked in the lectures on a search for subjective meaning in philosophical inquiry in relation to Piaget's categorization and organization of life and the manifestations of living through scientific technique. What, then, becomes of Merleau-Ponty's contact with psychological facts made through questions of communication in adult-child relations? The chair at the Sorbonne, although perhaps peripheral to these debates, was a position where these controversies were brought to bear on the fields of child study, and the professional practices of education and psychology. A unique debate occurred here that articulated the contested relationship between child psychology and pedagogy.

Merleau-Ponty's critiques of Piaget were read by the Swiss experimental psychologist and did not go without response. Piaget wrote rejoinders to the discussion of his work formulated in the lectures. And, when he took up the chair at the Sorbonne after Merleau-Ponty left for the chair in philosophy,[10] Piaget addressed the conception of his work that the students had learned from

[10] For summary and discussion of Piaget's lectures at the Sorbonne ([1954] 1981) translated as, *Intelligence and Affectivity: Their Relation in Child Development*, where he presented the motivating stages of affective development alongside the structuring stages of cognitive development see Lester's (1985) book review. These lectures were also initially published in the *Bulletin de Psychologie.*

the phenomenologist. Aware of the transition at stake for the students from the lectures of phenomenological philosopher to experimental psychologist, Piaget may have been a little unsure of what kind of reception he would receive among the philosophers of the department. Surprised by a warm, if not seamless reception, Piaget wrote:

> Some years later, when Merleau-Ponty was appointed to the Collège de France, I was called to succeed him in the chair he occupied in the Faculty of Letters at the Sorbonne. This was, apart from the joy this great honor gave me, one of the greatest surprises of my life. I do not refer to the delightful welcome of the students, some of whom asked if this Swiss would know French (nor do I refer to my first correction of the examination answers, for some candidates, not noticing that the professor had changed, explained that Piaget had understood nothing whatever, "as M.Merleau-Ponty has demonstrated": I, nevertheless raised their marks). I refer to the reasons for this appointment, for I have never known whether they rested on misunderstanding: I have, in fact been welcomed in the most friendly manner, and the most moving for me, by my new colleagues of the philosophy section, but as if I bore the stamp of the psychologist-philosopher. (Piaget 1971, 24)

Piaget had concerns about the approaches to psychology that operate at the intersection of philosophy and psychology. He viewed phenomenological psychology and the way it gained popularity after the Second World War as a new iteration of the philosophical psychology that had been a generative discipline in the aftermath of the First World War (Piaget 1971, 22-23). In Piaget's reading of these events, he suggests philosophy is changed by its context and so outside the realm of facts.

In France, and in his experience of teaching at the Sorbonne, Piaget finds "a sociological verification, so to speak, of [his] hypotheses, and no longer by means of individual observations" (24). With the prevalence and high esteem of philosophy in France, Piaget observes the development of psychology is pushed to the outer edges of official institutions. What is interesting in this matter for our discussions of the relation among the fields of psychology, philosophy, and pedagogy is the critique Piaget formulates of the French education system. He argues that schools are modeled on the intellectual priorities of the elite who privilege philosophical inquiry. And, searching for a structure where students can access scientific methods and experimental techniques, Piaget insists that the development of psychology remains a particular struggle in France because University students in psychology have limited vocational options after graduation: Only those students in psychology programs that were combined with studies in philosophy (Letters) were eligible to take the qualifying exam to become teachers.[11]

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[11] Piaget notes that only a couple University programs in France had managed to coordinate scientific psychology programs that lead to teaching certification:

> Only a few of the provincial Faculties have successfully organized teaching in the subject (Aix-Marseilles and Lille in particular), as this in large measure depends on the interests of the professor of philosophy: both Rennes and Montpellier, where Bourdon and Foucault have respectively been professors, have been research centers, of which the former alone exists. (Piaget 1971, 25)

To be sure, Piaget was not the only one concerned with the questions of the vocational options afforded by a degree in psychology at the Sorbonne. One of the first directors of the *Bulletin* (Turbiaux 2009) proposed that one of the primary topics for the journal to debate was the matter of what kind of employment the degree made available to students upon graduation. From the students' perspective, the primary concern was the lack of practical training within the degree. At stake in both views was the question of disciplinary expertise. On this question the students were aware that there was a problem of certain kinds of work being conducted and published under the umbrella of psychological practice by those who were not trained and they found this 'mysticism' jeopardized the profession and their career opportunities as it created confusion for employers of this new profession. In the early years of the journal the editors of the *Bulletin* set their critiques against one particular journal, *Psyche*. They published essays that accused this journal of printing errors and contributing to "the 'intellectual depravation' of psychology" (Pétard 2009). *Psyche* responded with a lawsuit claiming one million in damages. When the case came to trial in June 1950 the editor of *Psyche,* Mrs. Mary Choisy, withdrew the suit. The

The text in which Piaget develops these critiques begins with a compelling story of his personal history as a student of philosophy. It is narrative written later in his career reflecting back on his early education. Piaget's memoir takes us through his University education to the early days teaching in philosophy where Piaget makes the transition, fueled by disenchantment, to the scientific method. As a child Piaget was an apprentice with a biologist and at the age of eleven published his first work on mollusks. His godfather observed the singular focus of his studies and wanted to introduce him to broader scholarship, particularly to philosophy through Bergson. Bergson, of course, is also a significant figure for Merleau-Ponty who hinges his interpretation of the phenomenological method on Bergson's descriptive approach, stating at the outset of the lectures: "we propose to apply a method Henri Bergson defined but scarcely practiced" (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 7). Merleau-Ponty suggests it is the descriptive work of the philosopher to "reconstitute the world" with what the scientist does not mention but still observes, as the scientist's description is "furnished by contact with the qualitative world" (7).

What ensues for Piaget in his introduction on the problematic of philosophy within the work of psychology is a story that follows his developing interest in Bergson to the University where he begins his studies in philosophy. Piaget speaks of how he gradually branches out into explorations in experimental methods in ways that return him to the excitement of his earlier studies as a young biologist working with mollusks. It is after his doctorate is complete, when Piaget is participating in research with the purpose of restandardizing intelligence tests in Binet's

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Bulletin de Psychologie published an update of these events for its readers that included lists of those who submitted letters of support and the witnesses prepared. Merleau-Ponty was listed among the witnesses. We see in this case both the support the journal received from the institution and the ways the journal and faculty were involved together in these issues around course credits, professional possibilities and conditions, and the disciplinary tensions in psychological practice and theory.

famed laboratory in Paris, that he finds instead that the study of classes of intelligence permits the analysis of the child's logic. These findings synthesize the directions of Piaget's interest and he enthusiastically reports:

> I finally had the feeling of having found a way of reconciling epistemological research with respect for the facts, and a field of studies intermediary between the domain of psychological development and the problems of normative structures. (Piaget 1971, 10)

When we read Merleau-Ponty's brief discussion of Binet's work in the lectures, the response is not dissimilar from the questions that animate his engagement with Piaget's experiments. Merleau-Ponty insists upon the dynamic quality of development. This is a mode of engaging with the child through a developmental lens that casts a much broader outlook than a test that measures the child's actions as performances that succeed or fail. It is the insistence that,

> the test ought be close enough to the child's total way of being in order to measure the general state of his behaviour and not merely the consequences of a particular state. We must grasp the totality of the child's becoming. We must reconstitute the dynamic development and not just enumerate a certain number of performances that the child either succeeds in or does not succeed in a given moment. (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 388)

Binet transfers the problem of intelligence as a quality to a question of comparison between children of the same age. Merleau-Ponty suggests what gets lost in this research as well as the response to the child it had proposed, is the question of what intelligence is. The work of comparison transposes the effort to define the qualities of the intelligence through a test to a specific moment in time and defines a moment in development that cannot be projected into the future.

Here Merleau-Ponty's remarks recall the ways he speaks of Piaget's later experiments where the capacities that children exhibit or fail to exhibit are defined by the structures of adult thought and development. Having begun his work as a student in philosophical psychology and sociology, Piaget (1971) insists this historical contact with the philosophical discipline accounts for his position in denouncing any place for philosophy in the work of psychology. Despite his experience, Piaget's view of philosophy seems quite limited. He describes the method of philosophy as "speculative reflection" (11) then refers to the techniques of "phenomenological intuition" as characterized by norms and subjective certainty (88). Thus, Piaget maintains that the only valid "function of philosophy is […] the coordination of values" (17).

We can see all that is left out of the education Piaget is proposing when he supposes that the relationship between scientific psychology and access to experimental methods in pedagogical institutions matters above all else that is subject to the school's syllabus of development. As much as this story of a philosophical education is a narrative of Piaget's development as a student, it is also a story of learning to teach. In a narrative that resonates with the difficulties of teaching and learning, Piaget intertwines his concerns about producing verifiable epistemological studies with the teacher's worries over truth, expertise and authority:

> In short, two ever deepening convictions were forced on me at the beginning of my teaching career. One is that there is a kind of intellectual dishonesty in making assertions in a domain concerned with facts, without a publicly verifiable method of testing, and in formal domains without a logistic one. The other is that the sharpest possible distinction should at all times be made between personal improvisation, the dogma of a school or whatever is centered on the self or on a restricted group, and, on the other hand, the domains in which

> mutual agreement is possible, independently of metaphysical beliefs or of ideologies. (Piaget 1971, 12)

This is a chapter written in retrospect and its title in translation, "An account and an analysis of a disenchantment" reveals much about Piaget's approach in reflecting on the subject (Piaget, 3). Piaget's frustrations with the place of philosophy in institutions of learning are transparent. The two main reasons for his disenchantment with philosophy are sourced from experiences in education:[12] First from the vantage of the teacher who Piaget feels should work with verifiable facts. Then from the vantage of students who Piaget worries are deprived of the explorations furnished through laboratories of scientific technique. The concern here, for Piaget, is that students

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[12] Merleau-Ponty too was somewhat new to teaching. However I was not able to find an account of his experience in the classroom. The closest view we have of his start as a high school teacher some years prior is in the memoir of Simone de Beauvoir (1958). The two, along with Lévi-Strauss, did their teaching practicum together under the same supervising teacher. However, the experience teaching in an all boys' school was certainly quite different for Beauvoir. In Beauvoir's account of her first days teaching we see another way that the reach of the mind accompanies the communication of ideas in teaching and learning. In her associations it seems to me that Beauvoir's curiosity remains intact in the face of the uncertainty of reception in trying to think with others:

> In January [1929/30?] I did my teaching practice at the Lycée Janson de Sailly under the supervision of Rodrigues, a very sweet old gentleman: he was president of the League of Civil Liberties and killed himself in 1940 when the Germans entered France. My fellow-pupils were Merleau-Ponty and Lévi-Strauss; I knew them both a little. The former I had always admired from a distance [this disguises their emerging friendship in the memoir through which Merleau-Ponty's part is recounted under the pseudonym Pradelle]. The latter's impassivity rather intimidated me, but he used to turn it to good advantage. I thought it was funny when, in his detached voice, and with a dead-pan face, he expounded to our audience the folly of the passions. There were foggy mornings when I felt it was ridiculous to discourse upon the life of the emotions to forty boys who obviously couldn't care less about it; but when the weather was fine, I used to take an interest in what I was saying, and I used to think that in certain eyes I could catch glimmers of intelligence. I recalled my former emotions when I used to pass by the Collège Stanislas: all this had seemed so far away, so inaccessible—being in a classroom full of boys! And now here I was out in front of the class, and it was I who was giving the lessons. I felt that there was nothing in the world I couldn't attain now. (294-95)

are introduced to the work of group explorations through philosophy whereas Piaget looks for learning and agreement to be networked to values rather than independent domains.

Despite the tone of Piaget's chapter, we know there is great methodological complexity that persists in the question of the child's participation in research and the problem of describing the child's thinking in learning and development (Greene and Hogan 2005; Danaher and Briod 2005). The tensions and questions Piaget raises remain relevant and there is a striking irony of the critique of old approaches and praise for new participatory methods as Hogan's overview of research in child psychology notes: "Piaget's principal method of inquiry, the clinical interview, and his close observations of the minutiae of everyday lives of his own children, have much in common with the methodologies espoused by the new social studies of childhood, and indeed with an ethos of respect for children's perspectives" (Hogan 2005, 32).[13] These are indeed interdisciplinary questions that open onto the parallels of history. Deciphering a parallel history of child development in Britain through changes in the treatment and understanding of autism, Bonnie Evans's (2017) exploration of the medical, educational, and state discourses of expertise shows also how complicated Piaget's research methods had to be to delve into descriptions of children's thinking. Evans explains that:

> Unlike Gessell, Piaget's aim was not to explore the progressive stages of cognitive development in infants and children. Instead, he sought to explain *why* children thought how they did, rather than simply *how* children thought. He often questioned children about their reasoning in order to do this, claiming that this was the only way to generate the knowledge that he wanted. [Susan] Isaacs and others argued that this method was

[13] This is particularly significant for my study and for the interviews with children I conducted that are discussed in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

> ‘suggestive’ and could potentially influence responses in a way that direct observation did not. However, Isaacs and other dynamic child psychologists in Britain took a similar approach in that they attempted to unearth the motivations for children’s thought, yet they focused much more on unconscious than descriptive thought. (59-60)

In these two points of focus—the unconscious and descriptive thought—we read along the parameters of the research method. We are reading intothe ways the method aligns with the contours of description and thus also with the rough outline of the subject as defined by the problem posed. The question of how the child can be understood is so closely aligned with the ways the child has been described. Except, and here we do well to recall the variety of ways children *have* been described, these descriptions are formulated at the border of knowledge where it meets its limits.

In these two directions we see distinct ways of handling the large question of living that looms over the human sciences, which Foucault ([1966] 1978) punctuates in his introduction to the work of influential French philosopher and science historian Georges Canguilhem in the statement, “in the extreme, life is what is capable of error” (22). These are not the kinds of errors that derail experiments but rather they are expected mistakes. These are the facts of living. In contact with the range and reach of experiences and development, our theories of the normal develop by description of errors. Foucault’s discussion elaborates this dilemma for the scientist (and through Canguilhem he too addresses the biologist):

> The biologist must grasp what makes life a specific object of knowledge and thereby what makes it such that there are at the heart of living beings, because they are living beings, some beings susceptible to knowing, and, in the final analysis, to knowing life itself.” (Foucault, 20)

In the search for knowledge what cannot be known must be navigated from within. While the interdisciplinary lens casts a larger scope it also risks disturbing the pole calibrated through the orienting field of disciplinary, institutional and methodological guidelines.

Between these two poles of interpretation, with unconscious materials on one side and the description of behaviours and cognition on the other, the nature of participation is called into question. For Piaget these questions can be addressed by the technique of study in the deliberate limiting of scope to the observable, measurable, and verifiable. The clinical interview addresses children directly yet they are not participants in interpreting the meaning of the answer or given much room to interpret the question in their own terms and vocabulary. In the directions of psychoanalysis, the clinic has a different reach and limit. Isaacs (1948) attends to an emotional and social body and leans upon a relational constellation to describe what is less visible or observable. The unconscious is not beyond the scope but rather belongs to that part of human experience that is unknown or beyond description, entering through slips, play, dreams and phantasies but also carrying with it the soft impressions left from first relations. Evans (2017) explains how, in these early formulations of a psychology of the child, Isaacs and other analysts and researchers, sought to bring "the intensity of bodily experiences into the theory of psychology and to revolutionize the way that child development was conceptualized. [They] were trying to answer the rather complex questions of how early infant and child psychological experiences were mediated in the development of a social instinct and a relation to reality" (67). The participants shaped the theory and technique of psychoanalysis—and we could liken their part to the formulation of the research question—yet the child in psychoanalysis is still subject to the ways words and play perform more than conscious intentions and thus these enactments partake in the interpretation on new terms. The boundary between what is known and not known, and between what can be studied and what

can be experienced is formed from a softer material here, with stretch and give, so language—and the positions where subjects are formed in description and definition—is not an enclosure.

Foucault's introduction to Canguilhem helps us to understand the terms through which the two sides speak to one another and the larger contribution to the human sciences afforded through these debates. Foucault positions Canguilhem in opposition to Merleau-Ponty and other French phenomenological thinkers and in doing so describes "two modalities according to which phenomenology was taken up in France" (Foucault [1966] 1978, 8). These two modes emerge from two distinct readings of Husserl's (1970) famous 1935 paper on "The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology."

Foucault suggests that the line that divides these two camps is one of the most significant social and institutional splits in postwar France:

> Without ignoring the cleavages which, during these last years after the end of the war, were able to oppose Marxists and non-Marxists, Freudians and non-Freudians, specialists in a single discipline and philosophers, academics and non-academics, theorists and politicians, it seems to me that one could find another dividing line that cuts through all these oppositions. It is the line that separates a philosophy of experience, of sense, and of subject and a philosophy of knowledge, of rationality and of concept" (Foucault [1966] 1978, 8).

Merleau-Ponty and Piaget are also split along this line and we understand more of the existing debates that drew Piaget into this engagement and discussion on philosophy. If both Piaget and Merleau-Ponty can be read as searching for a theory of child development that is not limited to cognition, this meant different things from their respective approaches. The history of science formulated through the concept, for Canguilhem, developed from an interest in norms and how they are formed.

There is an association between norms and the ways children's behaviours and thinking have been grouped by ages. Canguilhem's interest, however, draws the question *On the Normal and the Pathological* from a great concern of his time, to ask how things become normalized and how norms are lived. His thesis addresses the fields of medicine and biology, but these are questions asked against the background of dark times when Europe is threatened by the risk of fascism as the new political norm (Roudinesco 2008). By way of philosophy Canguilhem strives to critically reopen the "thesis according to which pathological phenomena are identical to corresponding normal phenomena save for quantitative variations" (Canguilhem 1978, 8) and thus we see the faultline that extends from the cleavage described by Foucault carried through the concerns this chapter:

> Phenomenology could indeed introduce the body, sexuality, death, the perceived world into the field of analysis; the Cogito remained central; neither the rationality of science nor the specificity of the life sciences could compromise its founding role. It is to this philosophy of meaning, subject and the experienced thing that Canguilhem has opposed a philosophy of error, concept, and the living being. (Foucault [1966] 1978, 23-24)

Piaget, although certainly on the side opposing Merleau-Ponty, approaches development through the work of the scientist and so enters these discussions somewhat belatedly and from further afield, affirming the greater contrast of his position. He does, however, write appreciatively about Canguilhem's cohort of philosophers of science such as G. Bachelard and Cavaillés. And, writing in 1971, Piaget offers a clue to his belated engagement with this debate on these terms: "I had to

my shame not read a single line of Husserl until recently, dismayed by what Sartre and Merleau-Ponty had derived from him" (Piaget 1971, 106).[14]

A New Story of Child Development: The Organization of the Phenomenal Body in Pedagogy

Although Piaget devotes an entire book, *Insights and Illusions of Philosophy,*[15] to the discussion of the tensions between philosophy and science within psychological research,

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[14] Roudinesco (2008) also takes up Canguilhem's work through this division described by Foucault in her book on the postwar landscape of French thought. Roudinesco asserts that there was also a third reading along the middle ground. She writes, "Jacques Lacan […] would choose a middle way between these two orientations, defending both a theory of the subject and a form of rationality dependent on unconscious determination" (Roudinesco 2008, 9). The middle ground was indeed a meeting ground as Roudinesco adds to the complexity of the division by noting that the second reading taken by the philosophers of science does not preclude the first reading. Canguilhem himself also brings the two sides together in the preface to the second edition of his book. He writes about a number of works, including Merleau-Ponty's *The Structure of Behaviour,* that he regrets he could not add to the discussion in his text as the edition was to be reproduced in the initial form of his thesis. He also responds to a criticism of his initial work that sets a different tone for the debate between philosophy and science. Noting that critics suggested the brevity of his conclusions left the work open to philosophy, Canguilhem responds with intention:

> I had wanted to lay the groundwork for a thesis in philosophy. I was aware of having sacrificed enough, if not too much, to the philosophical demon in a thesis on medicine. And so I deliberately gave my conclusions the appearance of propositions which were simply and moderately methodological. (Canguilhem 1978, 32)

[15] My discussion of Piaget's (1971) work focuses largely on the first chapter where he engages directly with phenomenology and his experiences teaching at the Sorbonne after Merleau-Ponty. Here we see largely his treatment of philosophy as illusion. In the later parts of the book the insights of philosophy feature more prominently. And in these parts we could say that Piaget does bring psychology to meet philosophy in that he explores how a scientific problem might also be a philosophical problem or might switch fields through new methods on the side of science and new thinking on the side of metaphysics. The split becomes clearer as Piaget makes a case for the continued contact between philosophical and psychological problems, stating "a problem not having present meaning from the cognitive point of view is nonetheless, in many cases, a problem having a permanent human meaning and is consequently a legitimate philosophical problem" (Piaget, 41). All this is to say the subjective cannot be approached scientifically, but those problems of greatest concern to the human subject may, in Piaget's view, be best explored through scientific measures. Here he points out that Aristotle and a number of "the great philosophical systems owe to the kind of science which has given them their epistemological orientation" (47).

arguably, this work for the most part amounts to a dismissal of philosophy. It seems to me that, in this work Piaget treats interdisciplinary tensions as a debate to be won, where science gets the prize. In this frame, the institutional support for the scientific project of psychology appears to be at stake and tied to this is the question of how students are introduced to psychological thinking and questions. The status of psychology seems to hinge on the strength and specificity of its methods and this poses for Piaget the particular dilemma of how students learn about psychology in the French postwar context where many were being introduced to psychological research through phenomenology.

Piaget seems to be saying that we cannot leave the big questions such as life and meaning to philosophy. And at times it is as if philosophy encroaches upon Piaget's vision of his discipline. Yet this assumption follows Piaget's lead and imagines the two fields as in contest. It is at the points in his argument where Piaget speaks of those areas outside scientific psychology, reserved for philosophy, that his meaning becomes clearer. Insofar as it could be true that the register of the meaning of science and scientific facts is reserved for the work of philosophy (Piaget 1971), the facts of experience are to be organized by description and interpretation rather than experiment and classification. Thus, between Piaget and Merleau-Ponty I place the question of organization—the question of the developments of the parts and whole of body and self and their relations—in debate. In this debate we see the organization of experience can be rationalized but there is also another way we can speak of this structuring, as the order and disorder of organization, where the constellation of all that a person is can be the basis for a dynamic understanding of development.

After this protracted discussion of Piaget these next steps may seem fleet-footed. We are moving from the ways research makes contact with facts to explorations of another subjective world of learning and not learning. And through this move I want to carry with us these disciplinary

tensions, the dilemmas of the researcher's subjectivity, and the ways the questions of contact with facts are reformulated in the pedagogical specificity of adult-child relations. It is important, then, to be reminded of the ways other scholars have mediated the questions stirred from the debates on the subjectivities of research and knowledge.

In education these are anxious questions. Britzman (2006) reads into the worries required in our work with others through the question, "Yes, but is it research?" that was formulated as the topic of an educational symposium (149). With the researcher's question she suggests the importance of attending to the anxious emotional questions of what research is while pressing towards another framework for our anxieties. Within disciplinary frameworks we come to ask, what kind of life (so often termed as 'practice') can be described? What kinds of experiences are available to the empirical? Leaning upon the interdisciplinary pedagogical fact as a different kind of containment for practice, Britzman articulates a new question that emphasizes the ways our methods, both scientific and literary, can qualify the intersubjectivity of research. The difficulties of representation do not negate the necessities of engagement and description in Britzman's guiding question: "How does one represent the subjective experience of learning and not learning?" (149).

By formulating the debate in other terms, we are beginning to see what is at stake is the question of how to work with and represent children's developing experiences in the relational constellation of psyche, body, and affectivity. We are moving against the current of inquiries that search for the ways scientific psychology can render concrete the pressing uncertainties of infantile and childhood theories. Although we could ask, as Britzman (2015) does in her account of learning new theories, if we would "remember the theory we already hold—the wild forgotten one forged in a childhood of passionate sexual research" (49), we take note of the ways theories of scientific

psychology more often narrow our view to a search for biological markers that focus in on a singular capacity imagined like the isolate organ of speech, behavior, mobility or cognition.

Here there are two directions that give context to the new orientation of our debate. The first is significant for understanding the ways the subjectivity of both the researcher and the subject of research remain a problem for practice at its most basic level in the human sciences. I return here to the example of autism, in part because of the role Piaget's work played in introducing this term to professionals of child psychology (Evans 2017, 41) and largely because of the ambiguity autism presents in "the tangle of biological certainty and diagnostic ambiguity" (Fitzgerald 2017, 4). Early on, autism contributed to the descriptive range of psychoanalysts and psychologists working to understand and explain children's social development as linked to a developing relation to reality. In relation to Isaacs's explorations of the phantasies and unconscious lives of infants and children, Evans (2017) explains that there was a sense that, "psychologists knew nothing about socialization if they could not explain how the child's body became a social body" (67). In this descriptive work there were great difficulties that highlight the tensions for a field of practice in attending to the limits of its own theories and ideas.

The second direction takes us further into the relations that structure our earliest theories—the taking in and spitting out that is the bodily psyche of infancy. For when Piaget speaks of the illusions of philosophy, turning away from the correspondence thoughts must travel to conceive of what is going on with the other, he instead insists upon the concrete that can be observed, measured and confirmed. I wonder about the ways this turn towards what can be observed did first appear to be a suitable method of interpretation for learning and the child's growth. Indeed, from the pivot point of the infant's first relations within the family "we never fully exit the minds of others" (Corbett 2018). In Winnicottian terms this is to wonder about how we negotiate the fact of

our earliest susceptibility to the other. Ken Corbett (2018), in his discussion of Winnicott, turns the question of illusion, which Piaget has been treating as a problem, to a matter of necessity. It is the illusion of understanding that facilitates the beginnings of the relationship between the baby and first other where patterns of communication at first rely a great deal upon the imagination. The device Corbett leans upon to understand the vitality of illusion is play. It is borrowed from Winnicott and his young patients from whom we learn that "play changes reality" (Corbett 2018). It is the data of science, and the technology it poses as knowledge advancement, that Merleau-Ponty ([1948] 2004) suggests makes "sensory illusions" of the world that passes before our eyes (41). Piaget is deeply interested in the child's perception of reality but we must look elsewhere, to the play of body, psyche and inter-subjectivity to recognize the capacities of play to bend the realities of time and material.

In the early childhood classroom these links between body and communication, and bodies and thinking, have felt like missing threads of pedagogical description that belatedly tie into the already ongoing movements of care and education with young children. But these theoretical insistences do also offer up missed explorations. In her work as an artist-researcher-teacher (Irwin 2013) with children and pre-service early childhood educators, Sylvia Kind (2018) writes of the time and difficulty involved in developing a studio space in an early childhood education center. Her work names a similar tension between representation and experimentation as a question of bodily involvement in art. In the beginnings of setting up a studio with children and educators Kind found that "the bodied, textured, haptic, sensational *experience* of the arts and affective knowing was missing, or had been very underdeveloped, in favour of more instrumental and representational purposes" (7). Yet as they built a community of practice together with time to experiment, the question of representation did not go away but rather became a problem to explore.

Kind's chapter explores a project that emerges 8 years into the collaborative building of the studio space. The group of four-year-old children Kind works with are deeply interested in a storybook about a nightmare in the closet that features a boy sleeping in a bed (Mayer 1968). It is a story that has been worked with in the childcare center for a number of years in various ways. This time it presents a new question for the children, one that introduces a broader exploration of drawing as a problem. The children are trying to draw the boy in the bed and while they had few difficulties with drawing people standing up, lying down poses different problems. We might imagine that the difficulty could lie in the stillness of the figure, eyes closed, folded within blankets and furniture, and so the figure becomes hard to distinguish, and will require features. As one of the children who is posing for others to draw remarks, "draw my eyes, I don't want to be invisible" (13). Something else stands out, however, in the way Kind describes her work with the children and educators. There is movement and communication that transpires as they set up tables as a bed and one child or teacher lies atop, and is tucked in, for the others to gather around to draw.

They meet in the studio one morning each week and return together to these positions and explorations. The movement begins in a to-and-fro as the children then consult the person in the bed and discuss their drawings. The child in the bed is not only a model for the drawing but also takes up the marker when she is consulted and her interventions most often propose new problems to be explored. The striking nature of drawing as experiment is cast in a moment in the chapter when Kind briefly describes a day when another teacher proposes that, rather than draw a child in the bed, the bed could be left empty so as to draw the nightmare in the bed. Surprisingly, the nature of the discussion and exchange between the children changes tone: "the rhythms of drawing repeat but this time evolve into heated discussions and arguments as children notice others appropriating what they consider to be their own ideas and imagery" (18). It comes to the point where the

educator exclaims, “I think I made a mistake. We need someone in the bed!” (18). Is this a difficulty posed by the new drawing problem or has the collaborative method of the experiment been upset? What holds together the subject of experiment amidst the diffuse movements of pedagogical exploration? When drawing is also a method to observe and study the environment, what does the body offer to the play of ideas, communication, and imagination?

In the photographs featured in the chapter we see a number of bodies in relation where the orientation of the camera looks over the shoulder of the children with their drawing boards to capture both the drawing-in-process and the child on the makeshift bed amidst a circle of children drawing. Except for the movement, Kind notes, the scene does “evoke images of other life-drawing studios” (13). And with the child lying as if in a bed I find there is something, too, in the way the children surround the bed—drawing, problematizing, and exchanging perspectives—that calls to mind a strange association to the medical theatre where patients and illnesses were studied for their symptoms. This work for me evokes another set of questions: How to treat a nightmare? How is the experiment given definition in explorations with figures, fictions, pen and paper? How to mark your presence when your eyes are closed? And, in this short phrase the body enters on new terms. We are deeply immersed in the problem of participation in a history of child study and pedagogy where the development of the child’s world has been linked to the gradual entry into that world through experiences, explorations, family and culture.

When the adult, looking back through a childhood of their own and projecting forward through the presumed progress of development, tries to give words and materials to describe the child’s perception, the adult observes more than can be known, formulating an extension that is wont to deny the inner world of the child. Perhaps it is the way drawing involves making marks where previously there were none, but we have entered that strange experiment of object

permanence. Yet it is an experiment with quite different parameters: We are not in "a permanent world in the adult sense; nor a world of vanishing objects" (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 143). When the model is not there, it is as if the children are asking and arguing with one another about where ideas come from. This we might suggest has been part of their movement all along. They have been tracing problems together and taking a deep interest in where their thoughts and movements lead them, in image, with body and through conversation.

When Piaget (1929) asked children where thoughts came from, children under six or seven years of age exhibited what he referred to as materialist thinking by pointing to the body. Thoughts came from the head or thinking was done with the voice. Piaget formulated three stages in the child's conceptualization of thought. The third stage Merleau-Ponty explains, occurs when "first, thinking becomes localized in the brain; and second, thought gets characterized as immaterial (detached from matter)" (2010, 142). The change Piaget could show in the way children characterized their thinking did not extend to explain the relation between thoughts and bodies as children spoke about the parts of themselves from which their ideas emerged. There was a relation expressed between thinking and speaking an idea when a child spoke of thoughts being located in the voice; the child references a story of interiority when situating thoughts in the head; Piaget interprets both responses literally to the exclusion of the ways children have learned with others through a constellation of impressions that shape understandings of self and other.

Conclusion:

The question of how to draw a person lying down, a material problem, brings us into experimental ways of describing the child's world. There is the play of repetition, the surprise of the way a new frame reveals the tension of other curiosities, and there is the soft impression left by interpretations that can be revisited. In the studio we find a crucial restructuring of the

experiment in the way the problem is redefined again and again by all participants and marked down not in definition or diagnosis but in the play of curious representation. Kind's analysis of such play of the studio evokes Merleau-Ponty's turn towards the phenomenological body as way of response in the debate between experiment and description. Both the play of the studio and the debate between phenomenologist and developmental scientist propose that the question of multiple perspectives is contested: Merleau-Ponty wants to draw our attention to the way Piaget brings the senses of experience together like adding pieces to a puzzle, so the new whole of perception, is not without cracks.

The problem of a language and vocabulary for describing the world perceived by the child is one that does not go away and is a central theme of the lectures, and to the debate between Piaget and Merleau-Ponty. We cannot ignore that the lectures served a specific purpose for the students pursuing credentials with expectations to take exams based on a number of texts to qualify as teachers and psychological professionals. However, in the question of how children speak about and represent their world, the poverty of theories and narratives that address the child's perception of the world also adds another dimension to how we can interpret the wide range of disciplines Merleau-Ponty references. The lectures speak from amidst a wide range of disciplines (from Gestalt psychology, to psychoanalysis, linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy, among others) and Merleau-Ponty consults and interprets a range of descriptive and experimental methods at length (from ethnography, to autobiography, and clinical case studies, to name a few). Merleau-Ponty's reference to the problems that Piaget's thinking pose for our understanding of the child relations are a pivotal part of this larger discussion:

> One must concede that Piaget has not found this neutral language which allows us to avoid adult categories. [….] Piaget fails to ask what the child means by "thought comes from the

> mouth or the voice." The child neither possesses the adult notion of the psychic, nor does the child have the adult understanding of the physical: for the child "mouth" and "voice" are by no means physical phenomena. What the child understands by "body" is not the physical body, but the phenomenal body: a body which the child experiences intimately. The child uses the body as a system of means in order to enter into contact with the external world. The same goes for the voice: it is a verbal phenomenon. Children refer themselves to the virtual objects of thought in their interior experience. It is not at all about a "materialist concept." (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 143)

This pivot outwards from phenomenology and experimental child psychology does not so much suggest a new vocabulary. Instead it suggests that taking a step away from the categories of adult thought that our theories of child development lean upon can open novel experiments and explorations. For those who are children no longer, the question of perception suggests the novel question of response for thinking alongside the communicating child.

Chapter 3

On Maurice Sendak's Method for Animating the Child's World

Maurice Sendak can be remembered as an author and artist who gave words and images to match the enormous expanse of the child's emotional world. The themes condensed throughout Sendak's works anticipate our difficulty with imagining a biography for the past and future of childhood. It is a difficulty surmised in the response Sendak recounts in his interviews to a frequent query from his readers that unflinchingly named the joke of anticipation subtly alluded to in his works. Sendak recounts how "people often say, 'What happens to Max?' It's such a coy question that I always say, 'Well, he's in therapy forever. He has to wear a straitjacket when he's with his therapist'" (Sendak, 2004; interview by Bill Moyers).

Sendak's response speaks to that desire to know the fate of Max's flight—the request for a weighing of words and wishes in the aftermath of emotional upheaval that to many appeared unmatched to Max's size and years. It is a response that addresses the author's capacity to imagine a fate for his words and images made in stories that act on the reader. And, it captures something of the full-bodied exclamations of Sendak's works: The excitement at play, the intensity in defiance, the devastation of meeting the mother's refusal, and a magnification by phantasy that articulates the wild loneliness of childhood and defies the wish to know what company these feelings might find. *Where the Wild Things Are* is Sendak's (1963) best-known book and among the best known of children's books. Sendak's works feel familiar in this sense and in the way they trade in a familiar world of feelings so big or strange that they are difficult to sense and thus carry shadows couriered in larger confusions about self and other.

When we imagine or worry over Max's difficulties as being left unresolved, we find that Sendak aims to shock and make a joke of this question that asks for resolution to Max's situation.

If the joke can be entertained, it is in large part because the book itself does not make light of these concerns and concludes with a caring environment and the enticing smell of a hot supper that recalls Max to his bedroom and nourishes his phantastic flight.

Sendak often spoke of the tension between Max's safe return over the seas and in and out of time to a hot supper waiting and his own experience of childhood, lived and noticed, as a time of survival where that containment of waiting nourishment was often missing. The mother at the beginning of the book who flings the words of recognition "wild thing" at Max in form of biting banishment is the mother Sendak spoke of more closely resembling his own. It is with the same sensitivity shown in his stories to the blistering endurance of words and silences that Sendak apprehends the audience of his literature: Sendak would acknowledge the rarity of these wild emotional expressions meeting such a loving gesture. He claimed that he could not have given any other ending for his readers as "the fantasy has to be resolved […] so the book doesn't say life is constant anxiety. It simply says life has anxiety in it" (Sendak, as quoted in Hentoff 1966). It is perhaps Sendak's praise of this important form of love formulated in explorations which engage our worries over its constancy that have left art and scholastic critics searching for the mother who

is not pictured.[16] With parents dispatched these worries become part of the story's frame rather than its focus.[17]

The focus on the steaming bowl of food in the final illustration and the final line of the book reading, "and it was still hot" (Sendak 1963), sits as a response to Max's conflicts that can symbolize more than the mother's presence. These five words are revisited in Maguire's (2009) thematic exploration of Sendak's art in ways that showcase the significance of this ending both for the story and for enhancing a primary tenet of Sendak's narrative method for working with stories of childhood. The conflict is returned to reality and choreographed between word and image, and we find the depths of Sendak's observations and the rhythm that animates the acuity of his vision. Sendak spoke of his works in many forms, from biographical and artistic inspiration to the ways he maintained the complexity of the story in interviews, describing how "fantasy makes sense only

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[16] See for example Richard Gotlieb's (2009) article in which a finding from the archive of Sendak's experimental drafts pictures Max's mother standing outside the doorway of Max's bedroom. She is drawn bare-breasted and Gotlieb sites this sketch as confirmation of the story's theme of losing and finding the mother's love. Yet this picture also showcases a drafting technique Sendak played with in the early stages of bookmaking. Sendak would often sketch the dramatic extremes of his stories. When working with playwright Tony Kushner on Brundibar (Kushner and Sendak 2003), Sendak drew up the first draft with the tiny tyrant depicted as Hitler. Kushner was taken aback by this quite literal interpretation of the villain. And he saw, too, how Sendak suffered his work. Together they "agonized over the results" of this first version. "It was too horrible, and it raised all the old questions" (Kushner 2003, P). Next they tried Hitler in clown costume but this too was jarring to see this well-known figure in disguise and wonder how children would learn the terrible history being referenced. They later settled on the child-figure with small mustache and a Napoleon hat.

[17] This is perhaps part of why the sadness and loneliness of Max's character struck so many when the story was cast for the big screen in Spike Jonze's 2009 film. The other difference that carried through to this cinematic emotional display was one Sendak had long protested. Sendak firmly believed the story should not take the child out of his room (the place where the child sleeps and dreams) and this criteria had contributed to his reluctance to partner in adapting the storybook for film. The author's use of the page as a frame which as Maguire (2009) points out, resembles a theatrical staging, links up the frames Sendak draws to give form to his narratives with the spaces he observed framing children's lives, a link which accentuates the transitions of the art form that animate his explorations into the ways children travel between inner and outer worlds.

if it's rooted ten feet deep in reality" (Sendak as quoted in Hentoff 1966). Maguire's text returns to those final five words, "and it was still hot," as a second chorus, one that builds from the famous sequence of images without words that made up Max's wild rumpus. The words are repeated as the reader flips through a stack of more than 10 illustrations spanning Sendak's works. In this interpretation, even as a number of the images show the fantastic adventures of Sendak's characters, there is the undergirding question of the conflict's deep basis in reality, still hot to the touch, and so in need of both attention and fiction.

The Beginning of Misunderstanding:

The library of Sendak's works—encompassing more than 20 books he both authored and illustrated and more than 80 books he illustrated in collaboration with other writers—shelves a catalogue of classic childhood stories from the postwar period. His work has maintained a place in the hearts and minds of readers and critics: In an article surveying the 50th anniversary of the New York Times Book Review listing of illustrated children's books Eden Ross Lipson writes that "In one case, the work of a single artist encompasses the range of postwar American childhood experience. Maurice Sendak indisputably dominates the Book Review's list and the public consciousness of children's books in the second half of the 20th century" ("Children's Books," The New York Times, November 17, 2002).

The experience resounding in Sendak's work is one of recognition. With monsters composed of human faces and animal features, readers can assemble the parts and still wonder at the phantastic relation between these Wild Things and Max in his wolf suit with face and crown exposed. Later Sendak described how these monsters were drawn from other recognizable moments of family life. When aunts and uncles came to visit his childhood home, they would pinch his cheeks and whisper affectionate variations of those familiar words, "I'll eat you up I love

you so" (Sendak 1963). And in these words, there is a question of what exactly is recognized, the gnashing teeth of encroaching appetite or the embrace of love. While the ambiguity of language may be ever-present in the early years of life and our relations to it, it is also a time when those questions of misunderstanding can be most joyfully avoided.

The gap of misunderstanding intermediates a space of contact and closeness. Rivka Galchen joins the joke of anticipation tied up in the question of understanding back to that broad and all-encompassing mass of the mother's love. The resonance of the joke is distilled in a worry over the changing quality of understanding between mother and infant. It is as if to ask if there will soon be a rewriting of the relation between them when the associative reach made from the mysterious beginnings to communication gives way to disillusionment as the depths of the baby's cries, giggles and silences are reproduced in the toddler's short list of words and sentences. "I sometimes feel, as a mother," she writes: "that there is no creature I better understand than my child. This is probably because she can't really say anything. I am beginning to worry, as she is just beginning to speak, that we are entering the beginning of misunderstanding. (Though I understand that it is likely that before it was only a misunderstanding that led me to think I understood)" (Galchen 2016, 124).

When the artist covers over an image we imagine great intention yet it remains difficult to imagine the intention behind the child's covert designs. When we think of a child painting or drawing in great detail and then painting over the image the threshold of exploration, art, and intention bump against the thresholds ascribed to the child's age. In times punctuated by what is not yet, the child's immaturity is linked both to the details of the present and the horizons of the future. Taken this way, we might note the shift in focus that asks, is it the child's drives, evidence of his or her incompleteness, absorption in process, fascination with what can be hidden or left

unseen, or simply the matter of cares that diverge from the adult's attention to details and differentiation? Our questions add categories to the behaviours that appear to differentiate the periods of development and, although they are inquiries into the ways children relate to the world, these curiosities place a wedge between descriptions that characterize how children come to experience the world and the implications of the child's introduction situated as a beginning among others.

We might say, then, that a detailed story of emotional life is drawn and covered over in Sendak's works (Roiphe 2016). With a cast of characters who filled the page and grew to be larger than life over generations of readers, Maurice Sendak's method for picturing the child's world captures the uncanny proportions that determine in studies of childhood the problem of perception—a mooring for curiosities manifest and latent stirred from relational experiences. It is a method that forges our starting point for inquiring into the child's position in literature, the family, the clinic, and the institutions of the school and childcare center. Because children's emotional and imaginative worldviews are so often pictured to fit within the small body of the new human, this chapter looks to Sendak's early works and artistic practice to think with methods for picturing the expanse of the child's experiences and how the range of children's inner and outer worlds are bounded and unbounded by the body.

Why Look to the Artist's Biography for Methods of Picturing Narratives of Childhood?

The biographical perspective framing this chapter focuses on Sendak's work as a new artist and innovator. It constructs a method found in questions rendered from Sendak's development of a technique and art for noticing, representing and describing the depth of children's experiences that can contend with the far reach of both phantasy and reality. From Sendak's bedroom in Brooklyn to the postwar scenes of American children's literature publishing departments, and

through the battlegrounds of reception stationed in child study labs, libraries, and schools, we will explore the question of how Sendak came to develop his strikingly phenomenological art for picturing and describing the child.

This chapter explores the conflicts that organize life's beginnings in the social spheres of education, literature, and family and community life in materials and measures that traverse the experimental in both arts and sciences. My study of techniques spans: drawings made to accompany the words of children (Krauss 1952; 1954), fantastic questions storied from the worries and family drama of a therapeutic case study (Baruch 1952; Sendak 1956), sketches drawn of children at play in the 1940s streets of Brooklyn (Sendak 1960; Krauss 1952), the seamless introduction of the dreaming child as the stage for a new form of narrative play (Sendak 1956; 1963; 1970; 1981), illustrations that do not shy away from influence and showcase the artist's work as both novelty and collection (Sendak 1967; 1970; 1981; 2013), the work of narrative as deeply rooted in a personal history of experiences, crises, questions and events; and the operatic staging of terrible histories (Kushner and Sendak 2003). Across this range, Sendak's portfolio tells stories of the depth and surfacing of fantasy through which children live out the very real conflicts of their lives. These are stories that call for a quality of description that leans upon an intersubjective relation to the subject of the story. The proximity between words and their subject in Sendak's works is thus shaped by a method that is distinctly phenomenological.

As this chapter shows, close contact with the subject of childhood insists upon a great deal of attention to things that are often thought not to affect children. Description cannot be conceived simply as a chronicle of observed facts and events when in proximity to human experience, rather, close contact is method immersed in relationality and subject to the biographical experiments of interpretation. In the first of his lectures at the Sorbonne, opening on the subject of "Consciousness

and Language Acquisition," Merleau-Ponty emphasizes this qualitative work of description as the very novelty of the phenomenological method as it furnishes "the interior sense [of] facts":

> [The method] is about making contact with the facts, understanding them in themselves, reading, *and* deciphering them in a manner that gives them a sense. We will have to vary the phenomena in order to get out of these variations a common signification. The criteria for this method will not be the multiplicity of facts that serve as proof for advanced hypotheses. What will be proof is the fidelity to the phenomena, the precise hold that we have on the employed material and, to some extent, the descriptive "proximity."
>
> [….] The [phenomenological] method's newness consists in how it establishes that effective knowledge is not *only* measurable knowledge, but also qualitative description. This qualitative knowledge is not subjective, it is intersubjective: it describes what is observable to all.
>
> This is the method that we are adopting to study language. To study the facts, not in order to verify a hypothesis that transcends them, but in order to give an interior sense to the facts themselves. (Merleau-Ponty 2010, 6-7)

In ways that both mediate and underscore the surprise of his stories Sendak would speak about his own childhood and the things he knew adults could not dare to think a child understood. In his own way, Sendak can be seen as having shared in the difficulties of work involved with the intersubjective problem of communication that the child analysts encountered in the 1920s and beyond amidst their pursuits of novel therapeutic methods for working with children. Just as Britzman elaborates how the affective explorations of the child analysands were also lived emotional experiences of the child analysts, Sendak found in his art that the struggle he had already

endured and survived in childhood was one he needed to engage as a question of survival for the duration of his career:

> The psychoanalytic theories of Melanie Klein and Anna Freud were derived from their work with children. [….] Throughout their long careers, they would wrestle with all sorts of ordinary symptoms that were not, during their time, thought to affect children. Moreover, the significance of affective states—for example, feelings of unhappiness, suffering, depression, and of being unwanted and unloved—is only communicated indirectly and only approached intersubjectively. And precisely because their objects of research are so elusive—made up from dreams, play, drawings, fantasy, inchoate longings, and even through transference and counter-transference, and arguments with their young analysands—both women worked extremely hard to establish the relevancy of their interpretive claims.
>
> What made the labors of child analysis so difficult was that the affective experiences these analysts explored belong, as we will see, not just to the children; each analyst wrestled with these very human dilemmas in her own life and confronted these affects yet again when trying to convince others of her theory's authority. (Britzman 2003, 40-41)

If Sendak's works are written in emotional tenors true to his own experiences of childhood, those outsized emotions can also be carried over to describe the excesses of childhood felt by the adult looking back. Adults too identify with the uncertain fate of Max's emotional flight, insofar as the characters of the story symbolize internal object-relations of love, fear, desire, and aggression. The overlap between the two audiences makes it clear how difficult it is to name what it is that is being

studied when concepts of childhood are needed to mitigate research and explorations in experiences of childhood.

When narratives of childhood experience are shared, the pursuant questions nip at the heels of memory and interrogate the ways our descriptions can appear to chase after the subject of childhood. Maurice Sendak's first editor in the field of children's literature came to be renowned for her eye for talent and her bold instincts.[18] As the head of children's publishing at Harper's, amidst debates between librarians, psychologists, parents, and teachers, Nordstrom[19] defended her work as tied to a time of unforgettable things and thus requiring the attention of an editor who did not refuse to look back:

> A librarian once said to me, 'How dare you think you can be a children's book editor—you haven't been a teacher, you haven't been a librarian.' And I said, 'Well, I'm an ex-child and I haven't forgotten a thing. (Nordstrom, interviewed in Natov and Deluca 1979, 122)

The question of what form our methods give to the subject of childhood deals in a problem that stems from treating childhood as determined by its own rules in ways that sever childhood from adult experience to the point where the child is distilled in representations of children's lives as concept rather than lived experience. It is a dilemma that crops up in the peripheral explorations

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[18] Ursula Nordstrom was the editor and supervisory force cajoling, encouraging, battling, praising and befriending such writers of enduring children's classics as E.B. White, who published *Stuart Little* and *Charolotte's Web* with Nordstrom; Margaret Wise Brown, author of *Goodnight Moon* and *Runaway Bunny*; Louise Fitzhugh, who is best known for *Hariet the Spy*; and Laura Ingalls Wilder, among other well-known writers and illustrators of the Golden Age of children's books (Marcus 1998).
Nordstrom spotted Shel Silverstein's work in Playboy and presented him the invitiation to write for children and Nordstrom invited Sendak into her offices after being introduced to him when he worked at a toy store crafting window displays (Natov and Deluca 1979). For more on the dynamic editor and her network of authors see the collection of her letters (Marcus 1998).

of two distinct innovators of methodology: science historian Thomas Kuhn (1977) and phenomenological philosopher Merleau-Ponty (2010).[20] Both scholars puzzled the intersections of how knowledge of the world is received and perceived at personal and disciplinary levels. One shared counterpoint for both is the studies and experiments of developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Between Kuhn's and Merleau-Ponty's discussions of Piaget (1950; 1970), we get a sense of what is lost by treating childhood as a concept or equation through which a specific perception of the world is measured in relation to adult perception. In this equation the variable is the degree of error with which the child conceives the world. Piaget thus helps us to understand the child by relations of difference through which the adult determines the norm and the conditions of the

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[20] While these two thinkers had little to do with one another, it is helpful to note the intersection and divergence of subject oriented phenomenologists and logicians for whom the scope of the history of science became common grounds of philosophical and historical commentary particularly in France. Foucault ([1966] 1978) makes this case in his introduction to George Canguilhem's book *On The Normal and the Pathological.* Foucault's introduction also names an important divergence from Kuhn's work in the study of the history of science. For Foucault, the study of scientific history must be a search for process (method) rather than the resultant discovery (knowledge). While Merleau-Ponty (2010) is quite critical of Piaget and Kuhn offers lofty praise it is significant to note in following this divergence between a focus on experience and resultant discovery that Kuhn was most captivated by the children in Piaget's studies (perhaps more than by the theories or psychologist himself). In an address to child psychologists about cause in physics Kuhn (1977) begins:

> Why should a historian of science be invited to address an audience of child psychologists on the development of causal notions in physics? A first answer is well known to all who are acquainted with the researches of Jean Piaget. [….] There is, however, also a more personal answer, perhaps applicable only to this historian and this group of child psychologists. Almost twenty years ago I first discovered, very nearly at the same time, both the intellectual interest of the history of science and the psychological studies of Jean Piaget. Ever since that time the two have interacted closely in my mind and in my work. Part of what I know about how to ask questions of dead scientists has been learned by examining Piaget's interrogations of living children. I vividly remember how that influence figured in my first meeting with Alexandre Koyré, the man who, more than any other historian, has been my *maître.* I said to him that it was Piaget's children from whom I had learned to understand Aristotle's physics. His response—that it was Aristotle's physics that had taught him to understand Piaget's children—only confirmed my impression of the importance of what I had learned. (21-22)

experiment. When Kuhn discusses this case we get a strong sense of the significance for understanding the child made by rendering concrete the degree of difference in perception. There is the child's vantage point, the method for handling the question, and from these specifics we can infer larger equations of development and theorize the changes that take place between childhood and adulthood.

Piaget's theories, which Kuhn attributes to his experimental insights, betrays a capacity to give form to difference registered in predetermined concepts. Kuhn's praise is not misplaced from the vantage of the scientist. We are dealing in a world of measurements where each experiment finds meaning in relation to previously established data sets or theories. Like Kuhn's view of the development of scientific fields advancing by experiments that give way to new knowledge Piaget presents the child as experimental, receptive at each stage to new knowledge that gives way to the sense that the previous worldview is incompatible with the new knowledge. Merleau-Ponty (2010) calls this development by "coup-d'état", a suitable description for the crisis of knowledge within a discipline but, for considerations of the child, he specifies that "this idealist attitude cannot make the execution of a behavioural order understandable and is even in contradiction with the notion of development itself" (197).

Yet there is a peculiar way that we lose sight of both the theorist behind the scenes and the child who is not subject to experimentation through Kuhn's discussion. While Kuhn is attentive to a developmental link that finds the generative beginnings of scientific thought in the experimental responses of Piaget's children, this tethering line does not cut through the dilemma of why the historicity of knowledge of the child splits so easily into attempts to understand along sides of similarity and difference. As Merleau-Ponty (2010) notes the idealizations concentrated in Piaget's

works he confronts a matter of "conceptions [that] place between the child and the adult too much as well as too little difference" (197).

The writer and scholar who so poignantly captures what is collapsed to the point of exclusion in a view of development as transcendent, where the new becomes incompatible with the old, is educational theorist Jonathan Silin. Silin's early scholarship (1987) is dedicated to critical readings of Piaget. And reading into the articulation of a peculiar parallel between the dimensions lost by views of development articulated through stage theories and the folds of experience shut out in overlaps of professional and personal life, with Silin (2013), we can wonder at the resources made necessary in the ongoing accommodation of loss. His works are encompassing of that paradoxical feeling of being at a loss as to where such pain might reside; the question surfaces as to what methods we have for meeting the conflicts of childhood that can convey the depths of children's experiences in life and interpretation. That his later works resound in the significance of loss in learning, then, is perhaps unsurprising. Looking to the methodological designs in art and literary technique is to begin with a view of loss and the expansiveness of life as intimately linked, presenting a case for finding methodological structure in the creative techniques discovered, written and animated through biography.

The Writer's Notes on Childhood: Noticing the Experiences that Animate

There is an uneasy relation between people who spend time with children and people who write,[21] one that parallels a strange myth of access to the child's perspective in stories, research and public life. The mother's perspective is a case in point and Rivka Galchen's (2016) book *Little*

[21] This is a question of reception most famously explored by Jacqueline Rose (1992) in her text *Peter Pan and The Impossibility of Children's Fiction* in which this uneasy dynamic is brought into terms of real and fictional children through a closer look at the author J.M. Barrie and the secondary literature surrounding his classic tale.

Labors explores the novelty of motherhood in terms of the difficulties of understanding what it is to spend all one's time with a baby and continue a professional and creative relation to a discipline such as writing. This of course was not Sendak's dilemma, though with Galchen's curiosity toward the baby and child and mind, I see a common predicament. While relations to children are expected in the discipline of childcare and education, the ways that time spent with children still slants the view looking to the outside world and the one looking in, is telling of a gap that remains difficult for teachers and parents to formulate. Somehow the teacher tends to elude this shock of newness experienced by the parent. Yet the surprises afforded by working in contact with children exerts forces felt—if sometimes latently—in teachers' modes of relating the profession to the wider world. Galchen's book is formed from an impetus to write after her first child is born which captivates a compelling tension: The baby, in all kinds of previously unanticipated ways, makes Galchen into a writer (although she was certainly also a writer before the baby's arrival), yet the preoccupations and demands of the baby keep the writer from writing.

Galchen's (2017) newfound preoccupation with how the writer writes when a child comes onto the scene or onto the page also crops up in a *New Yorker* portrait. Her article features children's book author Mo Willems, known for his humorous depictions of the emotional conflicts and reparations in friendships. There, Galchen reveals two theories of why authors write for children. She begins:

> I used to have a patchwork theory about the makers of children's literature: that they were not so much people who spent a lot of time with kids as people who were still kids themselves. Among the evidence was that Beatrix Potter had no children, Maurice Sendak had no children, Margaret Wise Brown had no children, Tove Jannson had no children, and Dr. Seuss had no children. Even Willems began writing for children before he had children.

> But what makes these adults so in touch with the distinct color and scale of the emotions of children?
>
> I now have a new theory: Tove Jansson began her Moomin series during the Second World War; Paddington Bear was modeled on the Jewish refugee children turning up alone in London train stations. Arnold Lobel, the creator of the Frog and Toad books, came out to his children as gay and died relatively young from AIDS. I wonder if the truer unity among children's-books authors is sublimated outrage at the adult world. If they're going to serve someone, it's going to be children.

To this I would add a third theory, one that pulls from Galchen's question of what these adults lend to their portrayals that captivates "the distinct color and scale of the emotions of children" (Galchen 2017). Writers of children's literature—as artists—appear to be resourced by a preoccupation with the events of childhood, their own and others, which tell of a mismatch between the experience of being young and the ways children are treated in the world and in literary representations. If Maurice Sendak was familiar with an experience of vulnerability and worried over his fate within a family that didn't always seem well matched to defend against the monstrous without and within (made from illness, accident, and persecution, and the limits of understanding and care within a family beset by these difficulties), he also drew from observations of the children at play in the street outside his family home. There were the emotional dramas of finding company, friendship and recognition. He indulged the interpretive leaps of drawing from the scenes of others' childhoods, matched by an experience he found recognizable, as he observed these kids being sent out of the house to fend for themselves. It is not so much that what is going on in the adult world drives these writers to address children; but rather, there is something about the way children are subject to the uneven relations of these contexts that amounts to a denial of

their capacities to feel and experience. And it is this erasure that seems to evoke response from these great animators.

To view these ways of animating so as to include the other parts and objects of childhood is to surmise a question of method from the larger contributions of Sendak's works. This question takes us to the beginning with the sketchbooks Sendak filled with drawings of kids at play in the Brooklyn streets that came to constitute the material for his first illustrations in the field in children's literature, made to accompany the poetic definitions of author Ruth Krauss (1952). Sendak was attending to experiences of children and the techniques he was developing at the start of his career informed the methods for describing and representing the child's world that spanned his lifework.

Once the Picture is Painted Over: Techniques for the Overlays of Experience

Amidst the cultural atmosphere of childhood we find experience carries depth that can confound descriptive faculties yet nonetheless be recognized as communicative. Sendak was producing books in step with the vanguard of popular, pedagogical and psychological postwar views of the child. These experimental works speak to the significance of his artistic outlook and his capacity to transform what he knew of the conflicts of growing up into descriptions rich in resonance. The scenes Sendak depicts are charged with emotional intensities and the significance of childhood objects condensed over time to unfold interpretive observations opening onto a methodological perspective on "thick description" (Geertz 1973, 6). Observation, portraiture and the pictures developed in literary details are rendered as more than the hidden experiences and cultures of childhood and are opened for narrative uncovering. Sendak thus inserts the difference of observation by the hand of the artist.

Ethnographic writer Clifford Geertz finds that debates that cast cultural experience as a situation to either be observed or interpreted write the field of study into descriptions that formulate reality as if in opposition to subjective experience. Interpretation, or what amounts to an analysis for an ethnographer such as Geertz working from field notes and other contextual material, "is sorting out the structures of signification" (Geertz 1973, 9). The context, then, will shape much for the ways we take interest in our subject.

While Sendak himself might catalogue the resonances and inspirations for his works through psychoanalytic theories—to connect these works to a phenomenological method asks for a different reading and instead requires an attention to the techniques that brought these texts to life and the nature of Sendak's engagement with and depiction of his subject. To look to questions formed from Sendak's apprenticeship as an author and artist of picture books, then, is to position the project as interested in the development of a technique oriented to the words and pictures particular to the animations of the child's world.

Imaginative Observations: Inventions in the Psychological Method of the Picturebook

At the outset of his career, the idea of art school, for Sendak, still held the associations and trappings of school life only recently left behind. And while Sendak's ambition to carry his childhood love for the art and game of drawing with him into adult life was not met with support and encouragement from his father, home was still a place where Sendak found sights and sounds to animate his explorations in illustration. The children playing in the streets outside Sendak's family home in Brooklyn were vibrant characters who supplied inspiration to fill Sendak's sketchbooks and resources that helped him negotiate some of the misery that marked that time in his life. Choosing to forgo formal training, these sketchbooks would be the material that promoted Sendak's reception into the world of children's literature.

The story of how Sendak came to meet Ursuala Nordstrom, the publishing great and head of the juvenile literature department at Harper & Row, is now well documented (Marcus 2008; Cech 1995): Sendak was hired to work as a window dresser at the famed New York toy store, F.A.O. Shwarz, after he and his brother Jack tried to sell their handmade toys to the shop. There, the head of the children's book department saw Sendak's sketchbook with drawings of Brooklyn kids playing in the streets and alerted her publisher friend to Sendak's talents. The introduction was set and Nordstrom, renowned both for her ability to recognize potential and openly welcome new artists—sometimes without ever seeing their work, was immediately receptive to Sendak's drawings. Nordstrom had an approach to literature for children that echoed Sendak's own outlook, often saying she was in the business of publishing "good books for bad children" (Marcus 1998).

With Nordstrom, Sendak began illustrating and then was introduced to children's book author and poet Ruth Krauss.[22] By authoring books from children's words, Krauss's books sometimes followed little or no narrative thread and took shape through more poetic forms. Her latest piece was a book of definitions made from phrases that were in many cases crafted by and in all cases approved by children. The unique form meant that other illustrators had turned down the work and so Nordstrom arranged a meeting with Sendak and Krauss. The young artist, eager to convince Krauss and Nordstrom he was right for the work, brought along his sketchbook filled with his illustrations of Brooklyn children. At a time when most children's literature still presented an idyllic image of children with generic English names and sunny dispositions, Sendak's

[22] However, Sendak's first published illustrations preceded his introduction to Nordstrom (Cech 1995). In high school Sendak drew for a book project co-authored by his physics teacher that was designed to introduce atomic energy to the general public and titled *Atomics for the Millions* (Eidinoff & Ruchlis 1947). And, upon being invited into the folds of Harper & Row's juvenile department Sendak's artwork partnered the works of two other authors (*The Wonderful Farm* (Aymé 1951) and *Good Shabbos Everybody* (Garvey 1952) before his collaboration with Ruth Krauss.

drawings of the children of immigrants playing in the streets of Brooklyn offered images of the uniqueness of modern childhood well-suited to the pioneering writing of Krauss's little collection of definitions. In 1952, when Sendak was 24 years old, *A Hole is to Dig: A First Book of First Definitions* was published to wide success and only mild controversy. Reading the phrase, "a face is to make faces," raised parents' and librarians' concerns that the book was an invitation for children to indulge in unruly behaviour. True to form, Ursula Nordstrom shot back, "well, they're going to make faces whether you want them to or not" (Nordstrom, as cited in Marcus, 1998, p.xxiv).

While Sendak's books would rarely be received without some form of controversy, his beginnings in the field of children's literature were felicitous as the postwar climate left audiences receptive to progressive orientations to education, psychology, and the general care of children. This was also a readership that could be curious about pressing works that explored new styles and questions to cut through some of the old views on children put forward in the media marketed to them. The work Sendak did with Krauss both contributed a new lens on the child's world to the scenes of children's literature and, as Cech recalls, positioned Sendak among a group of memorable artists and peers as this little book of definitions has "since [been] regarded as [Sendak's] first breakthrough in that imaginative revolution" (1995, 44).

Krauss and Sendak worked very closely together on their first joint projects. This tightly knit partnership led Sendak to characterize their early projects by saying, "[Krauss] was my school" (Selma Lanes 1980, P). In this remark we begin to see how Krauss mentored young Maurice Sendak through his introduction to the field of children's literature. Still, this introduction was grounds for more than debate over the aesthetic orders of the pages they crafted together. And, for the purposes of charting the methodological atmosphere that gives breath to the disparate texts

of this study, I pull questions from the overlapping techniques Ruth Krauss and Maurice Sendak employed for illustrating and giving voice to the expressions and experiences of children in order to suppose that a method was being developed through their work together and wonder over the ways this methodology was carried forward—with room for the addition of new interests and tensions—into Sendak's future projects.

In the collaboration between Krauss and Sendak we see Sendak bringing his illustrations developed from observations of children in the streets of Brooklyn to Krauss's words taken from interviews and observations with children in Manhattan schools. And while me might look upon Sendak's family home in Brooklyn as a studio opening onto venues for observing and illustrating the dramatic exchanges of children in the street, Ruth Kruass was invited into a more formal setting to observe and record children's words: Along with other authors on Ursula Nordstrom's list such as the Margaret Wise Brown, Krauss was a member of the writer's lab at *The Bureau of Educational Experiment* [23] run by Lucy Sprague Mitchell. Steeped within the art of

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[23] The *BEE* would later come to be called The Bank Street College of Education. In its beginnings the bureau was devoted to an experimental approach to art and literature as foundational to the education and upbringing of children. The school takes its inspiration from John Dewey and the emphasis on experience, extended through an attention to the "here and now," led Mitchell to view the progressive nursery school opened by the bureau as a lab school for both the group of children's book writers she supported and more psychologically oriented observations. The opening of the foreword to her collection of stories written for children and categorized according to their appropriateness for each age group roots an idea of writing for children in the conflicts of experience:

> Our school has always assumed that children are interested in and will work with or give expression to those things which are familiar to them. This is not new: the kindergarten gives domestic life a prominent place with little children. But with the kindergarten the present and familiar is abandoned in most schools and emphasis is placed upon that which is unfamiliar and remote. It is impossible to conceive of children working their own way from the familiar to the unknown unless they develop a method in understanding the familiar which will apply to the unfamiliar as well. This method is the method of art and science—the method of experimentation and inquiry (Sprague Mitchell, 1921, 7).

experimentation, these authors lead the charge into a devotion to the "here and now" in children's literature still popular today (Marcus 1999, 57). Sendak was enthusiastic about the work from the start and recalled, "it was like being part of a revolution," because "this was the first time in modern children's book history that a book had come directly from kids" (Sendak cited in, Hentoff 1966). So if Sendak's forays into phantasy life might at first seem to call for very different conceptions of the child's world, we might first ask what literary contact with children's experiences opens for the adult to explore through the inter-animation of reality and phantasy life?

What then is captured in the method that Sendak and Krauss form together? From Sendak's early career illustrating for Ruth Krauss we see a gradual shift from a direct naming of the phantasy, and where it is situated to a more metaphoric inquiry where the orders of time and space shift without the guiding headings of a narrator's directions. Setting out more than simple observations of children's behaviours and developmental norms, Sendak's method did require some introduction.

Early on, Sendak (cited in, Haviland 1971) had a clear sense of what it meant for him as an artist to transform an idea or story into a book. He spoke of the process as working with a dream and explained:

> In the way a dream comes to us at night, feelings come to me, and then I must rush to put them down. But these fantasies have to be given physical form, so you build a house around them, and the house is what you call a story, and the painting of the house is the bookmaking. But essentially it's a dream, or it's a fantasy. (265)

Mitchell's insistence on the "here and now" lead to fights with the public librarians and initiated what came to be called "the fairy tale war" (Marcus 1999, 57) staged between the psychologically oriented writers and artists on one side and the librarians interested in preserving the traditional fairy-tale literature for children.

In 1956 Sendak published the first storybook of which he was both author and illustrator by the title *Kenny's Window*. It is a book concerned with the idea that dream-thoughts may need a place to call home. This can take time and call for creative work—alike to finding a form for a story in a book or to searching for resonance in the hearts and minds of an audience. Yet this story also represents a rather straightforward beginning to Sendak's now famous explorations of the child's fantasy life.

Kenny's Window depicts a sequence of fantasies kindred to *Where The Wild Things Are* (1963), *In The Night Kitchen* (1970), and *Outside Over There* (1981). However, unlike its more fantastically ambiguous siblings, Kenny's Window directly depicts a dream both in name and form. Sendak, as a young illustrator had experimented with drawings of unseen emotions and the imaginative preoccupations of the child's world in his collaborations with writer Ruth Krauss. *Kenny's Window* presented the next phase of these explorations. In this book we find both a dream and the start of a new approach to the picture book that shines a light on the child's inner world (Bader 1976). This innovative approach was in step with a larger shift in the genre of children's literature which turned away from formulaic depictions of behavioural lessons and towards the frustrations of childhood depicted from the child's view.

Depicting a dream seemed to offer Sendak a point of access to the child's fantasy life—dreaming provides a playground for the imagination but interpreting a dream also provides a way to connect the narratives of childhood to larger psychological questions. Dream-feelings are given physical form in this storybook through illustrations, but what kind of introduction does a dream require? And, what else can be introduced through the animations of the child's dream life?

The book opens with the protagonist awakening mid-dream. Kenny remembers a garden with a train. The garden has two parts: one side is cloaked in the darkness of night and the other

bathed in the brightness of day. Kenny is enchanted by the possibility of living in a garden where he might spend days counting stars and his nights playing in the sun without ever having to sleep. The dreamscape promises comfort to a boy who is of two minds. But Kenny does not quite escape the demands of nighttime thoughts. Soon a rooster with four legs arrives on the train, bringing Kenny seven questions that he must answer.

Kenny wants to know if he can stay in the garden if he answers all the questions but he awakens before he learns if his wish will be fulfilled. The questions become tests and trials—explorations of the ways love can demand compliance, furnish loneliness, call for "good" behaviour that curtails the imagination, suffocate through the fear of its loss, obstruct the only routes traveling inwards or out, and make it terribly difficult to communicate our most basic needs and wants.

The dream, it turns out, makes use of things already experienced. To write *Kenny's Window* Sendak looked to the early experiences of a seven-year-old boy named Kenneth. The story borrows from a psychoanalytic case study published in 1952 by Dorothy Baruch called *One Little Boy*. Sendak's interpretation moves away from the specificities of family life and the unique dramas of Kenneth's situation recounted in Baruch's case study. Instead, the children's book invites us to explore the kinds of questions that might be asked of oneself through fantasies of the dreamworld. The context that could help us to understand Kenny's situation and why he might need to seek answers to these questions is missing from Sendak's book. Yet the absence of this explanation does not diminish the story. Instead Sendak presides over a rich exploration of one boy's loneliness without making the source of that loneliness part of the story. The context he substitutes is Kenny's dream.

Kenny's seven explorations are richer for their associations with the case material—the deep pains and play of reparation of one little boy. And this, Sendak has said, is what drew him to the case. On the recommendation of his analyst Sendak read Baruch's *One Little Boy*. The case resonated. As Barbara Bader (1976) has suggested, we might go so far as to imagine Baruch's book as if it were written for Sendak. The author himself described his response to the case this way: "I was blindsided by that kid, by his inability to communicate. Kenny's troubles suggested my childhood to me. I had been that lonely" (Zarin 2006).

The differences between lonely Kenny and asthmatic Kenneth can be difficult to disentangle. Despite the ways Sendak transposes the details of the sessions into literary form, leaving behind Kenneth's family history, difficulties at school, and memories of being sent to live with his grandparents during the war, this material still lends force to the questions and answers that spur Kenny's adventures. There are also clues that slip through. Sendak gives oxygen to Kenny's worries over love and the seven questions pique our curiosity over earlier situations lived in shallow breaths where air was felt to be too thin.

Many of the clues are apparent in the ways language slides into new ideas across the two texts. In their first session, Kenneth whispers to his therapist: "Please, Dorothy, I don't want to do anything.… Please don't make me" and moves to look out the window of the playroom (Baruch 1952, 12). Kenneth's first steps towards the window communicate a sense of the work ahead.

Kenneth will slowly move from his station at the window to communicating his needs to family members and, finally, developing friendships. The route out into a world of relations, paradoxically, will be a journey inwards for which the window frame serves as an ideal metaphor. From this scene we discover the answer to the question "what looks inside and what looks outside" that resounds in the storybook title (Sendak 1956, 49). It is a metaphor that Sendak will return to

in other books and that holds a special significance in for his beginnings as an illustrator entering the field of children's literature.

The pictures that lead to Sendak's start as a children's book illustrator come from drawings he made of children at play in the streets outside his parents' Brooklyn home, what Sendak referred to as his "out my window" series (Marcus 1998; Cech 1995). A little girl named Rosie lived across the street and often entertained neighbourhood children on her stoop. She was one of Sendak's favourite subjects and later became the title character (Sendak 1960) of his book exploring the creative resiliencies of children. Sendak took note of the effort Rosie put into holding the attention of the other neighbourhood children. Her creativity brought company, but she also wrestled with times when she was left without an audience. Rosie's book was published years later but Sendak once described her enduring inspiration:

> There is Rosie, the living thread, the connecting link between me in my window and the outside over there. I did, finally, get outside over there. In 1956, after illustrating some dozen books by various writers, I did a Rosie and wrote my own. It's called Kenny's Window and in it I paid homage to Rosie's street and house (Sendak 1988, 180-81).

While the answer Kenny finds to the question of what looks inside and what looks outside may be unsurprising, it serves as only the beginning of an idea that stretches into Sendak's entire body of work. The complicated idea set in a pane of glass is that for children too, looking deeply at both the personal conflicts of inner life and the disappointments and joys of being outside in a world of others can be most difficult. These conflicts mirror the confusion of pursuing a question which, once answered, may upset the ideals we hold for our most cherished relations.

In her book on the impossibility of children's fiction, cultural theorist Jacqueline Rose (1992) offers a close reading of Peter Pan and its various iterations. With reference to Sendak's

Where the Wild Things Are, Rose notes that this classic children's story can also be read as a dream, even if J.M. Barrie's play does not invoke this device. With regard to Sendak's fiction, what does it mean when the dream is invoked as aid to both finding and protecting the child and his wishes? We are in a situation where fantasies cut into the tense relations of the family, where bodies are already felt to be too big, and feelings are too much, and there is so little space to go. To "pull thoughts out by their tails" (Baruch, 178) as Kenneth accuses his therapist of doing, can sometimes feel like bringing that intertwining of fantasy and reality into a kind of clarity where the dream and its meanings illustrate demanding truths. When the rooster returns at the end of Sendak's storybook and asks, "What is a very narrow escape?" Kenny whispers back: "when someone almost stops loving you" (Sendak 1956, 49-50). This is the kind of enigmatic admission that is difficult to speak aloud, the kind of statement that evokes more questions than answers.

The question we are left with after reading *Kenny's Window* is how dreams organize children's experiences of the world. For all of Kenny's explorations—from finding a new friend, to the realization that a wish is something not yet fully known and so opens new desires and directions—the peculiar thought this book leaves us with is that dreaming seems to be a chief organizing feature of children's experiences. But dreams also seem to unravel the meaning of these experiences. In this way, *Kenny's Window* becomes the kind of object that games are made of—a place where things might slip to and fro between fantasy and reality.

Interpretive Readings: The Complexity of Characters Who Don't Grow Up

It's easy enough to find interviews and writing where Sendak speaks of those creative struggles involved in the shift from gazing out the window to climbing "outside over there." Yet it remains difficult to look inwards and read into some of the searching concerns that preoccupied Sendak through his apprenticeship at the window. He has commented on this period spent making

studies of life in the streets outside his home as a time of deep depression (Kidd 2001; Sendak 1988). And so we are also given a sense of the ways the windows that become recurrent themes in Sendak's work do signify more.

For Jennie the dog, the central character in Sendak's (1967) storybook tellingly subtitled "there must be more to life," having two windows, a round bed and a square bed, two bowls, eye drops, eardrops and an owner who loves her does amount to "having everything," yet she is still left feeling indifferent to all these things and so leaves in search of more. Quick to find a more satisfying pursuit, Jennie stumbles upon a theatre company in search of a lead actress. When she expresses enthusiasm for the role, Jennie is asked, "do you have…?" and without waiting to find what might be needed for the job she jumps to say, "I have everything." When it comes out that what is required is experience, Jennie must admit that she's never heard of it. Jennie asks how much time she has to get it and we learn experience both brings urgency and takes time as Jennie isn't given long—only until the first night of the full moon. In the search for experience, Jennie, with her insatiable appetite, takes a position as a nanny for a baby who refuses to eat.

Sendak wrote *Higgelty Piggelty Pop!* after his dog and soulmate, Jennie, died. It was the same year his mother passed away (Hentoff 1966). Uncannily, he had entered a field that initially had little appetite for materials he had to offer. He found himself having to build up experience while experimenting with ways to introduce his own ideas. Jennie's adventure can be read as a search similar to Sendak's own travels through the field from illustrator to author and on to great fame as an author and new explorations in stage design. The material that inspired Sendak's works—the conflicts, pains and play of the child's life, at first required the strong guidance of a narrator that may have felt a little like a forced feeding. Sendak came to know that the storybook

dream, if not carefully woven into the fabric of the book, too easily left the reader with the illusion of a split between the questions of fantasy and the more immediate worries of reality.

The joke of anticipation is that it deals in worries that are not easily answered and thus must be taken seriously for the time being, a time which is not easily dispersed. Maguire (2009) recounts how he asked Sendak to draw Max at age 79 (Sendak's age at the time) while interviewing him at a literary event. Despite his reputation as a curmudgeonly old man, Sendak agreed. He drew Max with a cane, wrinkles, and a slight hunch—still dressed in his wolf suit, and explained that Max still lives with his mother. In other words, a little worse for wear—but still the very same Max we know.

When I first read Sendak's comment about Max all grown up, still living with his mother and wearing a straightjacket with his therapist, I cringed. These are comments that at first appear to make a mess of the magic subtlety of Max's omnipotent flight. But I do think there is a lot more to this response. While his characters represent a great deal for the author himself, he continues to give them up to the readings of others. And as Sendak moved on to new iterations and developments of these figures and themes, the stories repeat and continue to give great meaning to the lives of his readers. If the question of anticipation confronts us through the subject of the child, it is because it exposes a desire to know that persists in the present even while the sought-after knowledge may not signify as we imagine. This conflict between wanting to know and not knowing engages us in the larger dilemma of how we can represent the significant world of intersubjectivity in between the adult and child, then and there, and here and now. Sendak's works persist in the difficulty of the desire to know what cannot be intuited and so require the slow unfolding of an artist's attunement to the conflicts that enmesh the human experience of fantasy and reality.

Conclusion:

The author who claimed his characters—as offspring, delegates of the self, or illustrations of personal anguish worked through in art and narrative—made a path between art, biography, and a kind psychological knowledge, navigable for his audience in literary travels. Sendak volunteered links between the plots of his characters and his own memories, historical events, and inspiration from other artists, writers, and thinkers. Yet his work began as a form of experimentation with little that is known in advance, the scene unset, and everything hinging on the artist's method for noticing and reproducing the child's spontaneity of play. It is a compelling picture and one that links up with a return to a narrative of freedom in thinking—a recurrent pursuit in pedagogical progressions. This idealism is spotlighted in a chapter in Britzman's *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects* where, in working closely with Maxine Greene's 1965 text, Britzman too is finding a method. The chapter is barometric in its reading of the pressure points where education's past and present cloud together to negate what is unthinkable in institutions of learning. It formulates "an insistence on the arts as a method for thinking the unthought of education, for exploring what the 'schoolmen' could not think precisely because of what they thought" (Britzman, 1998, 53). Britzman's method is distinguished as a relationship to knowledge and pictured in the experience risked through reading where the provisions of uncertainty resemble the conditions of experimentation. If only experimentation can falter in following the scientific tradition of isolation in the pursuit of what is known to not be known and, likewise, hold back from that "peculiar talent" it seems to share with education "for rendering banal the uncertainties of the lived" (Britzman 1998, 55).

While the child's bedroom may furnish comforts, reassurances and be a place of safe return, Sendak's literature, perhaps above all else, conveys that this dwelling of early beginnings, first

refuge and a starting place for sleep and dreaming, is not a peculiar place of uncertainty. This is a shared feature of Sendak's disjointed trilogy (Wild Things, Night Kitchen, Outside Over There), which, with no shared characters, unique styles, plots and settings, can be difficult to link at all. Still, each book in the trilogy begins in the protagonist's bedroom and the narrative hinges on the appearance of the bedroom as a residency bordering on phantasy. The point is not to look for phantasy at the margins of the child's reality, but rather to take note of the child's bedroom as a *position* where, spanning feelings of security and doubt, or the familiar presence of both the room and the dreamworld, Sendak illustrates the close contact between the child's personal space and phantasies.

The now familiar emotional rumpus of Sendak's characters makes it natural to wonder if there is a mirroring of development across his works or if the refraction is cast in memories tracing back to the author; if the budding confidence of the protagonist, Kenny, featured in Sendak's first book, is later expressed in Max's defiant "No", or if Sendak's writing is the rhyme of the child's position within the family and society. The animations of the child's expressions, telling of deep conflicts and the ways the culture of childhood is in no way immune to the sways of relational dynamics and ensuing emotional intensities, are the 'things' that have made a profound and lasting connection between Sendak's works and his readers. John Cech (1995) describes this cultural status of Sendak's texts as owing to their form, one he characterizes as an "archetypal poetics." Sendak captures the logic and culture of childhood in his characters while maintaining the approach of his early career: It is as if each work is emblematic while continuing to break that earlier form of children's fiction where the illustrated characters figured as models for good behavior. Or perhaps, Sendak is inventing a new set of rules, with the case of fiction resonating in the rule that is impossible to follow.

In looking at the pedagogical and methodological history of *Thinking in Cases* John Forrester (2017) describes an unexpected prompt that the science historian Thomas Kuhn received from a colleague. The remark made a case for Kuhn's study of methodological shifts. He was told: "now you've got to say in what sense science is empirical, or what difference observation makes" (as cited in Forrester 2017, 36). If we are accustomed to methods dealing in rules, it can be difficult to describe the relationship to knowledge implicit in science, art and experience without explicit methodological directions. Forrester reads this moment for its significance to Kuhn, his shock in finding something already described in his own work to be novel in the words of others, and to note these personal moments, for Forrester, is a way of thinking with Kuhn.

What renders Sendak's method recognizable is the material that resonates with readers as exemplar of experience, poetic in its subtle repetitions, that sound in the rhymes of childhood; Those recurrent themes, positions, and emotional explorations that are narrated each time as new adventures. The child pictured at the center of each story is thus telling of a storied life more than words and images made from artistic method. In speaking to the difficulty of giving order to the world of personal experience Thomas Kuhn in a way names what can be lost in pinpointing the pattern to rhyme:

> [In] speak[ing] of knowledge embedded in shared exemplars, I am not referring to a mode of knowing that is less systematic or less analyzable than knowledge embedded in rules, laws, or criteria of identification. Instead I have in mind a manner of knowing which is misconstrued if reconstructed in terms of rules that are first abstracted from exemplars and thereafter function in their stead.
>
> (Kuhn 1962/70, 192)

If part of the art to Sendak's method is in the way he gathers together pedagogical and psychological insights from children's experiences, what kind of difference might the developmental fictions of Sendak's narratives offer to thinking about adult-child relations in education? The answer, here, may lie in the very novelty of fiction. If Sendak's stories—lasting through repetition and ritual, as they are told again and again in classrooms, homes, on stage and in cinema—resonate as shared exemplars, their methodological insight is cast in the experiences of children that inspire and give form to a narrative that takes new form in experience after artist, muse and even childhood are gone.

Chapter 4

The Interview as Gesture Towards Miscommunication: Between Question and Composition in Conversation with Children

"'What does the moon do whilst you are walking?' [....] —'The moon looks at us and watches over us,' says Ga (8 ½ [years-old]), 'When I walk, it walks; when I stand still it stands still. It copies like a parrot.—Why?—It wants to do whatever I do. Why?—Because it is inquisitive.'"
–Interview in Jean Piaget 1929, 219-220.

This chapter explores the surprise of the research encounter for the researcher and engages with phenomenological (Merleau-Ponty 2010; 1964b) and psychoanalytic (Britzman 2003; Milner 1950; Pitt and Britzman 2003; Steedman 1985; 1994) discussions of language, method, historiography, childhood and intersubjectivity as ways of rethinking conversations with children and the afterwards of research for the researcher. In a series of in-depth interviews (Seidman 2006) conducted with three children 3-5 years of age, I asked questions that prompted explorations of the participants' thoughts and feelings around words. I had supposed that the children would have a great deal to say about words with which they associated such strong feelings. I found, however, that the interviewees responses were expressed in a surprising range beyond words, with gesture, tone, laughter, stutter and silence—indeed, in the fullness of conversation—and thus call into question the nature of being addressed by a question.

The interview questions prompted explorations of the participant's thinking around words in a series of three meetings spread over the course of three weeks. The interview protocol consisted of two simple inquiries searching after words the child likes and dislikes to explore how children negotiate relations to words and the psychical and emotional experiences that accompany the formation of these attachments. Each response offered up a word, narrative, or non-verbal response that became the subject of exploration for the interview. I had initially imagined these

questions to offer a way into the child's developing representations, and particularly the attachments that hold sway for the words we use to represent the self, experiences, and the emotional world. Thinking psychoanalytically, I had not conceived these questions as soliciting direct access to the internal world, or imagined narratives of self, others, words and objects as complete, but rather I proposed an inquiry into our diffuse intersubjective relations with words and things, and thus I had framed the interviews through a series of thought experiments.

Likes and dislikes are one way of evoking the narration of deeper questions, a difficulty for the interview best sprung open to the dilemmas of significance in Christopher Bollas's inquiry into the roles the qualities of physical objects could play in theorizing object relations. For Bollas, "it is not a question of picking an object which one likes, but choosing an object to which one is not indifferent, so that one is 'called,' so to say, into an elaborating engagement with the object" (1992, 24). This call, formulated in Bollas's words as a mode of associating and then attaching to significance by way of different objects encountered in the space of a day, appears as a call that could just as easily graft onto the space of the interview. Our attachments can be articulated through words and the interviews explore the residual significances that cling to words and are enlivened through communication. The request for the child to speak about words he or she loves or hates, is an open question that seeks to locate the passions felt through the joys and tribulations of symbolizing and communicating with an other. The interview builds on these feelings by inquiring into the history and textures of those attachments.

The word's texture, potentially accessed through stories of sound, taste, and invention, opens onto the presence of the word in conversations and in relations with others. The word carries a literary and representational quality of its own. But, under investigation here, is also the question of the emotional significance that can be made through the discussion of a particular object via the

lens of the word. The words and objects of the interview might be likened to Bollas' descriptions of the dream world's interpretation where the materials that return to words after the psychical activities of nightlife take the form of furniture that analyst and analysand might wander through. Bollas extends this wandering work to the dreams of what he refers to as "the day space" (22) and I imagine this walker's path might be stretched further still to the realm of the interview. My protocol thus necessarily leans upon two methodological approaches to the interview: the phenomenological in-depth interview method (Seidman 2006) and the psychoanalytic interview method (Pitt and Britzman 2003).

In the first interview I asked for words, in the second I tried to get at further context by asking what it is like to use these words and what else comes to mind when these words are spoken. And in the third I addressed meaning by asking for a story. Seidman's method helped me to think about the questions but also how to return to the silences, the giggles and other moments of affect in the interview. If I had imagined that asking children about words they didn't like might give them a chance to express their difficulties, I was also asking how this difficulty would be expressed.

The first approach structures the interview, looking backwards and forwards in order to also span across the patterns evoked in the meanings a person gives to experiences, histories and understandings. And while my project does take an interest in this phenomenological perspective of the meanings individuals bring to their narrations, my study also delves into the negotiations between imagining the research project as a whole and zooming in on the interview duo as a snapshot of that work. When the interview brings us into encounters with others, when it sometimes looks familiar to teaching and learning, and when the methodological dilemmas can closely resemble the questions posed by the research project, the interview might appear not simply

as data that plays a part in a larger study but rather as transcripts of the study itself (Pitt and Britzman 2003).

While all empirical research wrestles with the ways the conceptualization of the study plays out in the processes of data collection and interpretation, I found this problematic to be twofold in phenomenological interviews that ask after relations to words. Merleau-Ponty (1964b) describes those dynamics of words that catch us off guard as the horizons of language rather than tricks of the tongue. And he looks to the doubt and vision of the artist to bridge this mismatch between word and thing in communication. In his paper on the life and works of the painter Paul Cézanne, Merleau-Ponty explains, "words do not look like the things they designate; and a picture is not a *trompe-l'oeil.* Cézanne, in his own words, 'wrote in painting what had never yet been painted, and turned it into painting once and for all'" (Merleau-Ponty 1964b, 17). This play between reality, illusion, and the possibilities of a medium has most often been credited to the artifice of the artist. However, this metaphor of a *trompe-l'oeil* also resonates with concerns raised by the scholars of post-qualitative studies and early childhood research. Maggie MacLure et al. (2010), for example theorize the trompe-l'oeil in their paper on that which resists analysis in research. Here, perception copied on canvas calls into question what is being seen alongside the turbulent demands of presence and absence, reality and fiction, and wishes and worries over voice as authentic and performative. It is in this spirit that my analysis of the interviews pays attention to the action of the child's words, asking: what do the words of the interview transcribe?

It is perhaps not surprising that the question's call for response calls on more than just words. Words and body play with the expectations of question and response by forms resistant to analysis, the assumptions of discourse, and the primacy of listening and seeing as methods for recording the events of research. In the explorations of this chapter, I use the interview as way

station where the uncertainty of research meets the child's searching bodily language. It is a stop along the way. Yet more than a point of intersection, this metaphoric opening introduces the stops and starts of research where the misgivings (Milner 1950) that arise between ideal and pattern in educational frameworks syncopate to the stroke and beat of the question's address.

In the searching uncertainties that begin from the simple question of what it is that the interview transcribes, with researcher and psychoanalyst Marion Milner (1950), I take up the uneasy questions of presence and its copies that begin after research and that return us to our histories of learning. Milner (1950) digested her experiences of educational research by turning afterwards to her own explorations in learning to paint and the frustrations of not being able to paint. She had been engaged in 5 years of scientific research in schools. The conflicts of schooling were transposed through the postwar experience and, as Farley and Mishra Tarc (2013) write about Milner's 1938 text, *The Human Problem in Schools*, it was a "study haunted by students' anxieties regarding war, death, and loss" (844). After reporting on the problems of motivation and attention in learning, Milner was pressed to explore more intimate versions of the disquieting concerns first felt in larger educational frameworks by setting out to study a subject where she herself "had failed to learn something [she] wanted to learn" (Milner 1950, ii; see also Farley 2015). Milner articulated the sense "that if only it were possible to find out how to set about learning to paint it should also be possible to find out the basic ideas needed for approaching the general educational problem" (ii). Here, in the backwards glance of Milner's self-study of learning and not learning, I find a resonant proposition.

I am trying to read into the words of the interview with a broad and imaginative scope. And I have found great company in this work (Pitt and Britzman 2003; Jones et al. 2010; 2012; Kind 2013; MacLure 2013; MacLure et. al 2010; Mazzei 2013), even as my reading challenges a number

of standards established in the long history of experimental work with children where research methods and developmental narratives have become difficult to disentangle. Indeed, the epigraph taken from Piaget's (1929) interviews references these historical ties. It is one in a series of questions and answers Piaget used to explain how thought and thing are inextricable for the young child and can be linked to interpretations of the child's attributions of consciousness. Questions for the children of Piaget's experiments were often a test of belief (which is to say development measured against the logic of adult reality). This intertwining narrative of child development opens onto the thorny question of how the research methods of experimental psychology entangle with assumptions of development (Merleau-Ponty 2010) and the democratic self (Shapira 2013) in questions addressed to children. As David Jardine writes:

> Understood literally, Inhelder's[24] (1969) "the concepts and categories of established science" do not seriously require the continuing presence of the child's versions of the world and their various articulations except as a dim-witted remembrance of how its own true version finally safely arrived to replace them all with what Piaget (1973) called their "perfection" in the machinations of objective science.
>
> Taken interpretively, Piaget's work becomes returned to the full range of all the intergenerational voices that have also spoken of sun and moon and stars. (Jardine 2006, 77)[25]

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[24] Inhelder was a colleague of Piaget's.

[25] There are questions about the sun and moon throughout Piaget's (1929) text on *The Child's Conception of the World.* Although these employ different purposes in the interviews across that text, there is particular focus on the moon in the chapter devoted to elaborating the child's development of animism. This is the term Piaget uses to refer to how the child interprets the attributes of consciousness in others— from attributing consciousness to "all things, […then to] things that can move, […next] things that can move of their own accord, […and finally] consciousness is restricted to animals" (viii). There is something very beautiful about a theorist who follows up on the idea that children speak of their relations to the world through theories

To bring together the specificities of research alongside "the limit[s] of social science" (Britzman, Frosh, and Luttrell 2009, 774) invokes the ways child has been inscribed with sociopolitical meaning and answers from the question-spaces of far ranging sites of meaning (Bion 1959). If there are ways we might read questions into our edifice of knowledge of the child, there is also a more intimate relation at stake in our histories of teaching and learning.

Both the subjective and objective of question and response still leave doubts about our methods: What, indeed, does the adult make from questions posed to the soft form of child's theories? Rather than another question, this is the remainder made from a larger problematic of (mis)communication between adults and children which Britzman explores as the indisposition towards uncertainty between interpretation and question:

> The problem is that there is, what Ferenczi (1988) noted, 'a confusion of tongues' between adults and the child. The adult's language cannot gesture toward itself *as an interpretation,* and so language is received as if it is reality. Specifically, there can be no question-child when the adult resorts to premature explanations, defends conventionality, or wishes to enlighten. (Britzman 2003, 138)

Research questions posed between adults and children thus highlight a difficult dimension of adult-child relations. This, as we know, is to put it mildly as many critiques of developmental psychology note the ways experimental research with children struggles to look past the double-bind of the *trompe-l'oeil:* There is the trick of illusion that catches in the confines of reality, and the test of reality that tricks into naming illusions. It can be very hard for research to do more than describe

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about the movements of the moon and yet incredibly frustrating in reading what is made of these conversations afterwards; for further readings that return to these ideas alongside a new materialist/posthumanist inquiry into children's perspectives in educational research, see Aslanian (2018).

the nature of the artifice; for the artifice describes both the world posed in the question and the child's response; yet this is to miss both the world to which the child responds and the ties adults preserve and make with that world.

In the interest of prioritizing the explorations of children, current research often skips over these questions of relationality of research. Its efforts instead work towards intertwining research as a method of making room for children's voices, a means of contesting the power dynamics that marginalize certain experiences and narrate norms of development, and as a point of access to the overlooked complexities of children's experiences and interiorities. Indeed, the small group of educational researchers (MacLure et. al 2010; MacLure 2011; 2013; Kind 2013) who extend critical questions and trouble the ideals of research in their work with children and teachers all furnish rich accompanying methodological inquiries. This is research that stays with the data that does "not open[… its] mouth properly" (Freud as cited in MacLure et al. 2010), looks otherwise through the lens of the camera at the assemblages of children's and adults' play with photo sensitivities (Kind 2013), and gathers together the poignancy and pains of relationality made through the expectations of the child's learning with language and history (Steedman 1985; 1994).

In this chapter, I pair a series of vignettes from the interviews I conducted with themes through which I strive to think interviews and qualitative research otherwise. These pairings bring me into conversation with the novel explorations of the above-mentioned scholars of child studies and education who are innovating qualitative and post-qualitative research.

Vignette One—"People I Don't Know"

I met two of the participants in their homes and one in a public library study room. Because I was a stranger to the children and their families, the parents were either present in the room or waiting in an adjacent room while the interviews were conducted. At the interviews'

departure, I believe the concern of the participants, more than the nature of the questions themselves, was the implication of sharing their thoughts and words with a stranger. My position as stranger complicated our initial conversation about participation, where the interviewees were asked by me, the stranger, to share if they were willing to participate or not. I had reached out to parents as the primary contact when arranging the interviews. This meant that the children had already had some form of conversation about participating in an interview before I met them.[26] I found that all the participants were sensitive to the research purpose of our conversations, articulated as a question of sharing personal compositions beyond the dyad between us. Alex, age 4, said particularly of the songs he invents, that "oh, it's not just for me, it's for everybody." And in response to a question of clarification in our conversation about a word of her own invention, another interviewee, Erica[27] aged 5 ½, emphasized this pressing difference between questions that remain in the interior of a personal dyad and those that are shared with a larger public. With words that named the ways the novelty of our relation was on her mind, Erica responded, "Yeah, now I'm telling it to people else, people I don't know." This ambivalence of the participants towards the interview process and the interviewer remained part of the context of our conversation. And at the start of our second interview, Erica asked further questions about the audio-recorder, eventually exclaiming "why'm I in research?!"

The speed with which this was said made it sound, even in the recording, as if the question is "why am I research?" While we might ask questions about continuing the research after this emphatic response, I think it speaks to the difficulty of saying in advance what kinds of

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[26] In one case, a family I reached out to initially indicated a willingness to participate. However, after the parent spoke with the child the mother turned down the interview because her child said she did not want to participate.

[27] I have used pseudonyms in the place of all research participants' names to protect anonymity.

questions will be discussed. There is an emotional and even ambivalent response that characterizes this participant's questions about what the research is about and each of the three interviews began with questions along these lines. This admits to the difficult demands of being subject of the interview, but also the boredom of being asked to speak to questions after a long day at school. The way that some of the questions cause frustration and are refused demonstrates the importance of room for refusal within the invitation to speak to each question.

The first interview

Interviewer: Can you say his name again?

Erica: Fire tooting monster.

[….]

Erica: Like, uh, excuse me, but do you know that he was alive in castle days. But not these days. Um. He's gone. And you know there was a whole family of them. And the firefighters came to spray them all down. And then they were gone.

Interviewer: When did you first come up with him?

Erica: Um, um, when um. When somebody. When my broth[*indistinguishable: Mom later mentioned an imaginary friend and the mumbled word resembles the name of the imaginary friend*] told me about him.

Interviewer: Oh, you heard a story about him first?

Erica: Yeah, now I'm telling it to people else. People I don't know.

<u>The Imaginary of Conversations with Strangers: Or, The *Trompe-Mot*</u>

I begin here because the interview questions draw us into both the ethical and intersubjective dilemmas where the expression of conversation and personal composition intertwine. Carolyn Steedman's (1985) account of a 9-year-old British Punjabi girl's song composition made from the supplementary reading material Amarjit chose when Steedman worked with her as a literacy support teacher offers a powerful description of what children

might choose to leave out in rendering their words in explanation for adults. In the tensions of meaning and transcription are silences, giggles, stumbles of repetition and mishearing, and interpretations for a future rather than present, which are spoken together with decisions and questions addressed to the concerns of sharing language. With Steedman (1985) I liken the strange quality of words as both avenue of communication and protected vocabulary of personal exploration and composition to the surprising work of the teacher researcher (Greene 1978).

Steedman's chapter tells the pressing story of how children's creative compositions, what we sometimes refer to in more general terms as children's voices, are heard and not heard in schools. Amarjit had composed a song from an English fairytale. It was the beginning of the story that caught her interest —a part about a caged bird who sings such a sad song that the little girl in the story wishes to release it, but her mother says no and explains that the bird cost a lot of money—and it is this text to which Amarjit set her musical composition. When Amarjit returns the book to school she says, "I love this book. I don't read my reading book. I sing it in bed at night" (Steedman 1985, 139).

Steedman begins to think about the linguistic, social and personal meanings that Amarjit brings to this song composition. She records Amarjit singing the song and plays it for half the school at morning assembly linking it in reference to an earlier assembly that recounted the story of David the King as a shepherd who learns to play music fit for a king. Steedman explores the ways stories speak to us and gather together experience and knowledge by suggesting that the shepherd's kingly music was perhaps inspired, like Amarjit's song, by falling in love with a story. The song is met with embarrassed laughter from children and silence from teachers and Steedman explains how in many versions of writing this chronicle, that event has become "the point of the story." She adds:

> There is still a subterranean account here that goes like this, in which I read rejection in the faces of the teachers and children in front of me, believe that some of my colleagues think that I am comparing a 9-year-old Asian working-class girl with a reading problem to David the King, make an unspoken yet still quite improper act of identification with Amarjit, tell the head three days later that I wont do assemblies anymore, that I'll pull my weight some other way, and everyone in the staff room thinks that getting out of obligations is the desired end of making a great deal of fuss about absolutely nothing at all. But that is the wrong narrative. The point was the song; and the dual concerns—investigations of a language system, and of a social system on Amarjit's part—that it revealed. (142-43).

Steedman's account of "Amarjit's Song" thus is also an account of research that does the difficult work of staying with the child's explorations. And the subterranean account of the school assembly and her own professional status as the teacher remains as one part of the context of this social exploration. In this sense it evokes something similar yet dissonant in the teacher's work, where even as we attempt to speak about what the child's language brings together, things come undone.

To ask about words and their emotional atmosphere is to ask about stories and conversations told before. Yet to enter through the word, is to enter without context, to learn about a character without the beginnings and perhaps learn more about the aftereffects of a story's telling than the culture, history, relations and situations that inspire and hold narrative together. In this short passage of my interview there are a number of stops and starts. It is as if there is a story to tell and I keep asking the wrong questions. And there are missed connections: Although we had been laughing about funny words and "farts" just prior, I have trouble hearing

this made-up word and somehow don't draw the connection to tooting. The imaginary of words furnishes a complex backdrop to the relation of the interview as we flit between the very literal humor of the sounds and smells of the body and the inventions of language, where monsters fart fire. Yet, the realization of the close contact between these characteristics of words, like the function of *trompe l'oeil*, adds the significance of delay in the rush to interpretation and meaning.

This is something bodily. For even with the technological support of the audio-recorder, where hearing is recovered, the mishearing is transcribed—its awkwardness and stutters transposed into the conversation as the questions and answers go on. It is only when going through a third time that I hear how the words mumbled in response to the question of when the monster was first created resemble, "Brother Ronald." Erica's mother had written to me between the first and second interview because she thought that the imaginary friend may come up in later conversations and she explained that Erica is an only child and Brother Ronald is imaginary. When this character is not mentioned again, I forget to look for this friend until I zoom in on this section of transcription and am trying to decipher, at full-volume, the words that pass here under breath and out of the range of hearing.

And still, I make a small leap of uncertainty between the syllables I transcribe and recognition of the imaginary friend. It is this first leap that permits a second move to interpretation. For I wonder about the ways the conversation stops when I ask Erica about earlier stories she may have been told about the fire-tooting-monster. Our words seem caught between imaginary and literal accounts. Here the transcript's stutters and interceptions tell of the intimacy of words at risk.

In an interview exchange that MacLure et. al (2010) discuss at some length, the researchers first present the excerpt they are working with as one that evades the more traditional mediums of academic interpretation. Yet they note that this is a piece of research that MacLure (2003; 2006) returns to in writing on more than one occasion. In the transcript, the interviewee's responses contain self-mockery where the question is almost laughed-off and the seriousness of inquiry meets the detours of humour. It is an exchange the interviewer "seems strangely compelled to repeat" and, as such, it offers another kind of meaning for method (MacLure et. al 2010, 496). In revisiting this piece,

> [the researchers'] interest is not in *overcoming* the resistance to analysis in this exchange—in finding possible solutions to the puzzle of what it 'really' means or what 'caused' it [...]. […They] want to remain instead with the miniature ordeal of the double bind that the example presents.
>
> The problematic of this example—its capacity to deflect analysis and momentarily perturb the interviewer/analyst—has some similarities to *trompe l'oeil* painting and sculpture. The *trompe l'oeil* 'fools the eye' by imitating the depicted object so convincingly that the viewer is momentarily seized by an inability to tell the difference between original and copy, reality and representation. […] Unable to deploy the usual strategies for penetrating 'through' the picture to the meaning, object, or reality that lies behind, beyond, or above (in other words, analyzing it), the viewer is fleetingly trapped in a strange space where the usual distance between subject and object has suddenly vanished. (MacLure et. al 2010, 496)

I still find it hard to see if this is something of the order of what is difficult about recognizing the origins of the part words that combine eventually and clearly as the fire-tooting-monster. This

vignette shows a little of what it means to enter stories and compositions through the façade of words. To ask about words in this way—one by one—exaggerates the relation of learning about others as an emotional situation which, for Britzman (2006), inaugurates slow reading as "encountering what is illegible yet impresses psychical reality" (308).

Vignette 2—"How does his mom understand him?" "Crackle crackle crackle"

The second interview

Erica: Like, like each time, he farts, ummm, um, um, uh, um uh, um l-, um l-, um like he destroys a home.

Interviewer: Wow. That's a very powerful fart.

Erica: [laughter]

Interviewer: Does the monster speak?

Erica: No.

Interviewer: No? He just farts?

[pause]

Erica: Actuallyyy, ack, ack, actually the fire-tooting-monster doesn't speak like me. Um, uhhh, um aaa, the fire-tooting-monster um, crackles to talk with Mommy.

Interviewer: He does what?

Erica: He crackles to talk with Mom.

Interviewer: He crackles! Wow, what does that sound like?

Erica: crackle crackle crackle crackle.

Interviewer: And how does his mom understand him?

Erica: crackle crackle crackle.

Interviewer: How does she know what he's saying?

Erica: Ugh! [huff] uh! He knows it what he's saying because they *both* speak crackling! [said with an emphatic and frustrated tone]

Interviewer: Oh…[pause]….
So if the monster was going to say something in crackling, what kind of thing would he say?

Erica: Um he, uh, um uh he would say like fisho [this word is indistinguishable] in our castle.

[….]

Erica: Besides, de, de, besides. The Mommy fire-tooting monster looks like this [indicates the picture she is drawing of a person with long hair]
with with re, with red body. And red and orange hair.

Interviewer: ohhh.

Erica: I like drawing. […]

Interviewer: I can see that. And how does she, does she make her crackling?

Erica: Um, um, um the fire makes her crackling.

Interviewer: And she has fire all over her body?

Erica: yep. All over her body. Also her face and mouth: fire.

<u>On the significance (and substitutions) of answers that precede the interview:</u>

It is possible there is something intrusive that I could not anticipate about questions that ask after words that are loved, hated, and delve into personal compositions. In this way I did not anticipate how humour and the humour of the body becomes a resource for language. Over the course of the three interviews with Erica, I did ask questions that might appear to risk pinning down meaning and framing specific languages of response. Yet Erica's answers show how the plots of words impress upon the world beyond the frame of the interview.

Writing through the mediums of the artist-researcher-pedagogue, Sylvia Kind (2013; see also Tarr and Kind 2016) thinks with the ways photography with children slips from worries and concerns of capture and copy towards the intertwining "choreography of movements, compositions, and performances" (437). This slip looks beyond the frame of the photograph and

representational renderings to "photography as a way of worldmaking" (432). There are moments in Kind's studio work with children where cameras face subjects and objects, but there is also a searching and mediated perception as hands large and small pass the cameras between, as photos hung on the wall inspire reenactments, and as blurred photos become frames of interest. To articulate some of the ways the camera opens explorations with children in the studio, Kind turns to artists who have abandoned the camera itself and instead play with the impressions of light and other materials on photosensitive surfaces. In this world of soft and material impressions we are moved to recall the root words of photo-graphy, "drawing with light" (438).

If in the lines drawn by the question, there is the enactment of words foreseen, there is also a sustained dilemma. We cannot know in advance either how the question impresses upon the subject to whom it is addressed or how it resonates anew with the researcher in proximities of response. The blurry photo, and the kind of writing with light it gestures towards, speaks to the unassimilable qualities of research that cannot anticipate the intersubjective life of either question or response. This tension of the question is a pedagogical one, which evokes its continued presence as a "shadow," as Cristina Delgado Vintimilla writes of her work with educators. Here, with

> the endurance of uncertainty's uncomfortable touch; the shallow desire for an immediate reply, assertion, explanation, definition or solution is continually shadowed by the presence of the question – exactly what question, one may not even know. (2018, 22)

We are working at the blurred edges of communication, and there seems to be some "horizon of possibility" in the questions we might ask there (22).

Yet, in the proximities of the interview questions I worry over the ways the interview's meanings and refusals of meaning may be collapsed. Part of what is held open to interpretation in this vignette of the interview is the way the questions interrupt the intimacy of conversation:

Interviewer: He crackles! Wow, what does that sound like?

Erica: crackle crackle crackle crackle.

Interviewer: And how does his mom understand him?

Erica: crackle crackle crackle.

Interviewer: How does she know what he's saying?

Erica: Ugh! [huff] uh!

Later, Erica would elaborate the difficulty of communication at stake that she gestures towards here. There is a danger in trying to listen to the conversations of these monsters spoken in the crackling of fire even if we were to find a fire-tooting-monster willing to translate. I am left to wonder if getting close enough to the crackling fire to understand the monsters' meaning is the only risk of listening in on these conversations. I learn bit by bit, that the story of the fire-tooting-monster began when Erica went on a trip with her parents to another city. While they stayed there, they regularly passed by a restaurant wrecked by fire[28] that became a source of fear, fascination, and this funny character. Erica does caution me about the monster's destructive powers, explaining that, "all the things that have holes, he tore down a bit." And likewise our conversation is punctuated by the presence of these holes. At a few points when I ask about other

[28] Erica's mother filled in these details after the interview was over, confirming the origin story of the character. She also commented at the end of the second interview after we had stopped recording to say that she didn't know the fire-tooting-monster had a mother. However, Erica had mentioned in the first interview, albeit spoken quickly and quietly, that there was a whole family of monsters.

words Erica responds through the humour of the body and perhaps in conversation with the fire-tooting-monster saying, “fart, fart,” rather than speaking to my questions.

In the collapse between meaning and the wish of interpretation, MacLure (2011; 2013) finds something of what both the researcher and the teacher find difficult about the body. It is a question of interpretation that implicates the researcher in ways that turn on what the wish for education and research must exclude. In one instance MacLure writes of a young girl who draws the attention of the researchers despite not being in the research sample because she is continually getting sick. At first it is mainly at mealtimes and then “at the mere mention of food” (2011, 1001). The field notes describe how the teacher assigns blame—to the child for not trying to harder to stop and to the parents for not handling the situation. Yet MacLure notes:

> But notice also that we, as researchers, were trying to do the same thing, that is, asking what the vomiting means. We too wanted to “capture” the irruption of the body for signification—to draw it up into the representational regime of research, with its priorities on analysis and interpretation. The questions posed by the irruption of the body into the abstraction of meaning are unanswerable. Yet they cannot be dismissed. They produce, I think we could say, a kind of stuttering of interpretation itself. A small ruin of representation, which allowed us to think that a child might be affected by other bodies, that the external world of the classroom might impinge on her in ways that do not necessarily pass through language and that are not, therefore, susceptible to conventional practices of interpretation. (MacLure 2011, 1002).

Here, there is the echo of an earlier exploration of the wish enacted in research and its ruin. In an earlier piece on the stutters and silences in research, MacLure et al. (2010) evoke Freud’s “Dream of Irma’s Injection” (Freud 1913, 124). Freud’s dream of Irma is considered one of the

instigating dreams of psychoanalysis and the method of dream interpretation yet it also reflects a point of return as Freud notes "at the time [of the dream he] had the opinion (recognized later to be incorrect) that [his] task was limited to informing patients of the hidden meaning of their symptoms" (91).

This dream enters into the double bind of the afterwards of interpretation: It is a dream about interpreting the patient's symptoms that acts on a wish for the fate of interpretation. Irma was a former patient of Freud's whose condition had improved but she continued to suffer some symptoms. Freud had offered her an interpretation that "Irma had been unwilling or unable to accept" and consciously Freud voiced his frustration with Irma's refusal of this treatment (Felman 1993, 75). Then, in Freud's dream a biological explanation is substituted for his interpretation of Irma's condition thus requiring another doctor treat her. The dream also condenses the figure of Irma with two others (one, the figure of Freud's wife who he cannot analyze, the other a friend of Irma's who Freud imagines would be more forthcoming and more open to his treatment but who seems not to need analysis). In reading into these substitutions and condensations Freud notices a wish, which the dream fulfills, for him to be "acquit[ed…] of responsibility for Irma's condition" (Freud 1913, 100). In the dream Freud carries out consultations of Irma's condition with other doctors and they conduct an examination of her throat. While Irma does open her mouth hesitantly at first and then more easily, as Felman (1993) points out, she does not speak.

We see something here in the question of interpretation of the difficulty made in speaking between language and knowledge, particularly in asymmetrical relations. And I want to posit once more this small turn of question and answer:

Interviewer: How does she know what he's saying?

Erica: Ugh! [huff] uh!

This is to pose the expression of frustration when being asked to explain, not so much as resistance to the question or even as data resistant to analysis, but as the relation where the question and response turns and continues as the meeting and departure point of words.

Vignette 3—"And then, the end. He is gone"

A return to the first interview:

Erica: I don't really know how to draw it.

Interviewer: Ok.

[…]

Erica: We just talk about him. Besides, firefighters can just spray him with water and then, the end. He is gone. [this was said very quietly and it didn't surface until listening to the tape].

From the third interview:

Erica: Umm, the fire-tooting-monster's really tricky, so I just draw, um, a body of a man. It's usually wh- A fire-tooting monster is what usually an artist draws.

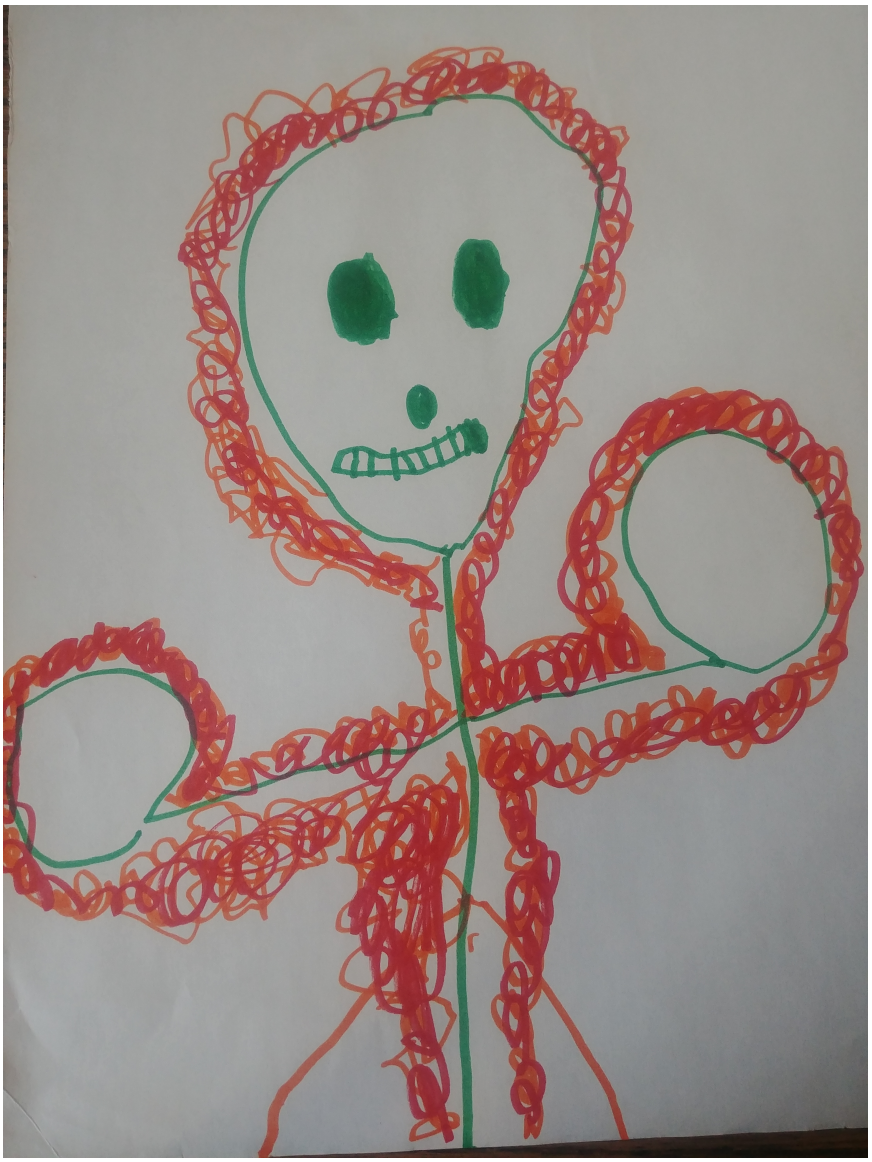
Interviewer: Ohh, you're, uh, you're like an artist because you've been drawing a lot—

Erica: No! I'm, ughhh!

Interviewer: —of pictures.

Erica: I know!

Erica: I'm. mm. I'm born thinking about drawing a lot of pink/pictures.



Later in the third interview:

Erica: See! Eh, eh, the, the fire-tooting-monster is usually not like this. When their grown up—um, uh, uh eh, eh, you know when I'm growing up, um I'm gonna draw the big one. This is going to b—This is the toddler one.

<u>Conclusion: "On not being able to [draw]" in the interview</u>

Erica drew pictures at each of the interviews. While we talked, she created elaborate images of figures. In the first meeting drawing was her primary interest but the picture did not

relate to our conversation. It was only in the second two meetings that her art was drawn into our conversation. And her art became the focus of our third conversation when she entered the interview and set out to draw the fire-tooting-monster for the first time. Erica speaks to the constellation of pictures not yet drawn, of the ways the narration of her characters changes and grows with her, and of lines and markings made and yet to be determined. Language has a present in the conversation about drawings but it is a present that speaks to various temporalities—Erica's own, the monster's as a character located in a past with a finished story and then, with a futurity in drawing.

Like Erica's interviews, Milner's (1950) *On Not Being Able to Paint*, is characterized by the author doing a great deal of painting in her explorations into "free drawings" which she describes as drawing "without preconceived purpose" (168). Thus for Milner the question of "not" signals here something akin to a question of what one is doing when one is trying to paint. In the afterwards of research Milner's explorations were marked by questions of learning and not learning, yet the nature of exploration contours the detours of affective questions. In the conclusion of her book Milner returns to the introduction to comment on the relations between questions drawn from a desire to know and learn about learning, and the orientations made from explorations into the misgivings felt towards education. Milner explains:

> The habit of thinking in terms of purpose to deed was still so strong that when writing the introduction, after the book was nearly finished, I had almost believed that it was a true statement of how this investigation had begun. […] I had almost believed that there had been a conscious decision that if it should be possible to both settle the vague questions simulated by the emergence of the free drawings, and to find out how to paint, then it would also be possible to answer the question of what was being left out of traditional

> education. But now I can see that this is not true. There had been nothing in the beginning but vague uneasy feelings and an urge to follow certain trickles of curiosity wherever they might lead. All the same, I have left the introduction as it was originally written, partly because books need introductions, partly because the fact that it seemed, retrospectively, that that was what I had set out to do from the beginning, was in itself an illustration of the later discovered truth that activity creates purpose. (Milner 1950, 168)

I return to Milner here, in looking at this portion of the interview because I want to conclude with thinking about the ways Erica gestures towards another kind of composition in this final interview when she says "I'm born thinking about drawing a lot of pictures [sic]." Even if we are to read this response against my prior comment about the artist, indeed as defense that states a prior knowledge and expertise, the comment hinges on the invocation of an imaginary of thought and gesture that calls to mind what Milner refers to as "the imaginative body" (128); here, made, but not yet drawn. The statement Erica makes here reaches back and evokes her earlier reasoning where drawing juxtaposes the impermanence of the monster. Thus there is some uncertainty about how the drawing can hold onto the complexity of this character. In this way the gathering gesture of this statement has a great deal to do with how the interview can hold together the presence and absence of body, thought, language, and affect.

If the question moves us towards silence and interruption as much as it addresses the activity of response, the interview contains in miniature the gesture of miscommunication that organizes the relationality of the question. Contained here, alongside a return to the histories of experimentation and expectation that have marked the methods of psychology and pedagogy, is a pause with the question of the action of the interview and its orientation towards meaning. My interest here is not so much to propose a new method for accessing and thinking with meaning in

the interview but rather to think with the lingering qualities and histories of intersubjective and intra-psychic relationality formulated in the proximities of question and response.

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Addenda

Interview Protocol
Interviews to be conducted with 3 children aged 4 and 5.

- Can you tell me a word you love?
  Can you tell me a word you hate?
  Interview Question #1: Can you tell me a story about how you started to like or hate that word?

  Can you talk about a special word?
  Can you tell me about a word that tastes good? Or a word that is so good to taste you could eat it?
  Can you think of a word that tastes funny? Sour? Disgusting?
  Can you talk to me about a word that you feel you want to spit out?
  Can you talk about a word made of sounds you like to listen to?
  Can you tell me about a time you didn't want to listen to a word?
  Can you tell me about a word you made? Can you tell me the story of how you made-up that word?

  The second and third interview would focus on one or two words of particular interest to the interviewee that emerged from the first interview.

- **Interview Questions #2:**
  What is it like when you use those words you like and don't like?
  What else do you think about when you think about those words?

  How do you imagine using these words in the future?
- **Interview Question #3:** What kinds of stories would like to share about your special word?

Verbal Script Participant Consent Form:

Your parents have allowed me to talk to you about a project that I am working. For this project I am really interested in learning about the strong ideas and feelings kids like you have when you are using words. I am going to spend a few minutes telling you about my project, and then I am going to ask you if you are interested in answering some questions as part of the project.

Who am I?

I'm a student at a University and I'm trying to learn more about the kinds of feelings people experience when they learn to speak.

Why am I meeting with you?

I want to tell you about a project that involves children like yourself. I want to see if you would like to be in this study too.

Why am I doing this project?

I'm really curious to find out more about what thoughts and feelings you notice when you think about words that are important to you. Sometimes there is more than one thing going on inside us when we are trying to talk and I'm excited to learn how that makes us feel about talking. This will help me to find out what else is going on in the bodies and heads of kids like you when kids are trying to tell people their ideas and feelings.

What will happen to you if you are in this project?

If you decide to be part of the project then there are a couple different things I will ask you to do. First, I will ask you to answer some questions where you can tell me a story about a word you really like or hate and more about the time when you noticed you liked or didn't like that word. I will also give you some paper in case making a drawing might help you tell me more about your word. Then I will ask you some more questions about other feelings you might have about words. While doing these things all you have to do is talk about whatever comes to your mind. Our conversation will take about 15 minutes.

Are there good things and bad things about this project?

What I find in this project will be used to help me understand more about how kids like you feel and think about words. Answering my questions will not hurt you and it will not make you feel bad.

Will you have to answer all questions and do everything you are asked to do?

No, If I ask you questions that you do not want to answer then you can tell me you do not want to answer those questions. If I ask you to do something you do not want to do then you can tell me that you do not want to do it.

Who will know that you are in this project?

The things you say and any information we write about you will not have your name with it, so no one will know they are your answers or the things that you did.

I will not let anyone other else see your answers or any other information about you. Your teachers, principal, and parents will never see the answers you gave or the information I wrote about you.

Do you have to be in this project?

You do not have to be in the study. No one will get angry or upset with you if you don't want to do this. Just tell me if you don't want to be in the study. And remember, if you say you want to participate now but later you change your mind, then you can tell me you do not want to be part of the project anymore.

Do you have any questions?

You can ask questions at any time. You can ask now or you can ask later.

IF YOU WANT TO BE PART OF The PROJECT, SIGN YOUR NAME ON THE LINE BELOW:

Child's name, printed: _____

Date: _____

Signature of the Graduate Student: _____

Date: _____

Date:
Dear Parents:

Early Emotional Attachments to Words Research Study:
I am writing to ask your permission for your child to participate in a York University doctoral research project being conducted by Lucy Angus, a PhD student in the faculty of education. The *Early Emotional Attachments to Words* research study is part of Lucy Angus's doctoral thesis project entitled, *Our Youngest Thinkers: A Phenomenological Study of Childhood*. I am interested in learning more about the strong feelings and thoughts children develop towards words. For reasons given below, my study focuses on children aged between 3 and 5 years old (36 to 60 months).

My study into Early Emotional Attachments to Words will be conducted at your child's childcare center, [daycare name], over the next two weeks. Graduate student researcher and principal investigator, Lucy Angus, will oversee the study at your child's daycare. To obtain an in depth picture of each child's perception of words and the stories they tell about their feelings towards words, the study is structured as a series of short interviews. These interviews will be spread over three separate meetings and each session will be 10-15 minutes in length. Thus, your child would participate in the study on three separate occasions. Ideally all three sessions will be held within a span of 1-2 weeks.

What the study involves:
The study on *Early Emotional Attachments to Words* explores how children express their feelings and thoughts around the struggles and joys of communication encountered through words. Because children are new to words, they often experience and use them in different ways from adults. The interviews begin by asking each child about words they like and dislike before moving into questions that look for stories about where those feelings come from. These interviews are seen as a way of exploring the feelings and thoughts going on behind the scenes of communication in order to investigate new ways of thinking about the social dynamics of literacy in early childhood education. The study, as described above, requires your child to participate in three interviews, each lasting for 15-minute sessions. Dates and times will be arranged in advance based on the convenience of your child, you (the guardians), and the educators and program coordinators of the childcare center.

The study involves two components: Your child will be asked to answer questions in 3 short interviews about their feelings and thoughts on words. Your child will also be invited to use drawing as a way of expressing responses to the interview questions.

Participation in this study is voluntary:
There are no risks or benefits for anyone who choses to participate in the study. Participation in the study is voluntary. You can choose to end participation at any time without penalty by indicating this decision to the researcher. Your child will also be invited to give verbal consent, and will be made aware that the interview is a voluntary activity so she or he may withdraw consent at any time. Information on what each child discusses in the interview is considered confidential and individual children's responses will not be shared with parents, the daycare principal or

educators. As a thank you for your child's participation, your child's daycare will receive a small gift (e.g., books, toys).

Audio recording the sessions:
The interview will be audio recorded, transcribed and this data will be kept in a secure place. Paper and drawing material will be provided as a way to focus and sustain the interview experience and relevant drawings may also be collected as data.

All collected data will remain confidential:
For the purposes of anonymity, when the interview is transcribed, pseudonyms will be used in the place of the research participant's name, any location names and in the place of the names of other persons who feature in the participant's descriptions. Once the data is transcribed (within 1-2 months of the interviews) the original recordings will be destroyed so that anonymity can be maintained. Your child's name will not appear in any thesis or reports resulting from this study. Analysis and results from the anonymized interview data will be published in Lucy Angus's doctoral research project and may be used in articles to be published in scholarly journals. Only the researcher, Lucy Angus, and her PhD supervisor, Professor Deborah Britzman, will have access to the interview transcripts. The transcripts of the interviews with pseudonyms in the place of participants' names will be stored for three years after the study is concluded in a secure place and then destroyed.

Returning the permission form:
Please complete the attached permission form, *whether or not you agree to have your child participate in our study*, and **return it to the day care by *(insert date)***. We have provided two copies of the consent form so you can keep one for your records. Only children who have parental permission, and who themselves agree to participate, will be involved in the study. There are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this study.

Questions about the research? If you have any questions about the research in general, your role, or your child's role in the study, please feel free to contact Lucy Angus or her supervisor, Dr. Deborah Britzman. (This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics).

Consent Form

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S DAYCARE BY *(insert date)*

I have read the information letter concerning the research project entitled '*Early Emotional Attachments to Words'* to be conducted by ***Lucy Angus,*** a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at York University.

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and receive any additional details I wanted about the study.

I acknowledge that all information gathered on this project will be used for research purposes only and will be considered confidential. I am aware that my permission or that of my child may be withdrawn at any time without penalty by advising the researchers.

I realize this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance, through the Office of Research Ethics at the York University, and that I may e-mail ore@yorku.ca, if I have any comments or concerns about my son or daughter's involvement in this study.

Child's Name: _____Child's Date of Birth: _____

Language(s) spoken at home: _____

Permission for participation

Permission Decision:____ Yes - I would like my child to participate in this study.

____ No - I would not like my child to participate in this study.

Name of Parent/Guardian:_____

Signature of Parent/ Guardian: _____ Date: _____

1. **Permission to audio record sessions.**

   I. **Audio Recording.** I agree to have my child's session be audio recorded. I understand that no portions of the audio recording will be heard by anyone other than the primary researcher, Lucy Angus.

   _____YES _____NO

Signature of Parent/ Guardian: _____ Date: _____

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Certificate #:	**STU 2016 - 067**
Initial Approval:	**05/20/16-05/20/17-**
Amendments:	
Renewals:	**05/24/17-05/24/18**
Current Approval Period:	**05/24/17-05/24/18**

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ETHICS RENEWAL

To: Lucille Angus

From:

(on behalf of Chair, Human Participants Review Committee)

Date: Tuesday May 24th, 2017

Title:Our Youngest Thinkers: A Phenomenological Study of Childhood

	☒	☐
	☒	☐
Risk Level:	Minimal Risk	More than Minimal Risk
Level of Review:	Delegated Review	Full Committee Review

I am writing to inform you that this research project, **"Our Youngest Thinkers: A Phenomenological Study of Childhood"** has received ethics review and renewal by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines.

Note that renewal is granted for one year. Ongoing research – research that extends beyond one year

– must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process by submission of an amendment application to the HPRC prior to its implementation.

Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research ethics (ore@yorku.ca) as soon as possible.

For further information on researcher responsibilities as it pertains to this approved research ethics protocol, please refer to the attached document, **"RESEARCH ETHICS: PROCEDURES to ENSURE ONGOING COMPLIANCE".**

Yours sincerely,

Alison M. Collins-Mrakas M.Sc., LLM Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethic

RESEARCH ETHICS: PROCEDURES to ENSURE ONGOING COMPLIANCE

Upon receipt of an ethics approval certificate, researchers are reminded that they are required to ensure that the following measures are undertaken so as to ensure on-going compliance with Senate and TCPS ethics guidelines:

1. **RENEWALS:** Research Ethics Approval certificates are subject to annual renewal. **It is the responsibility of researchers to ensure the timely submission of renewals.**
    a. As a courtesy, researchers will be reminded by ORE, in advance of certificate expiry, that the certificate must be renewed. Please note, however, it is the expectation that researchers will submit a renewal application prior to the expiration of ethics certificate(s).
    b. **Failure to renew an ethics approval certificate** (or to notify ORE that no further research involving human participants will be undertaken) **may result in suspension of research cost fund and access to research funds may be suspended/ withheld**.
2. **AMENDMENTS:** Amendments must be reviewed and approved **PRIOR** to undertaking/making the proposed amendments to an approved ethics protocol;
3. **END OF PROJECT**: ORE must be notified when a project is complete;
4. **ADVERSE EVENTS**: Adverse events must be reported to ORE as soon as possible;
5. POST APPROVAL MONITORING:
    a. More than minimal risk research may be subject to post approval monitoring as per TCPS guidelines;
    b. A spot sample of minimal risk research may similarly be subject to Post Approval Monitoring as per TCPS guidelines.

FORMS: As per the above, the following forms relating to on-going research ethics compliance are available on the Research website:

a. Renewal
b. Amendment
c. End of Project
d. Adverse Event