

Agnes Bolinska.
Agnes Interview 4
Sampling day 4

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the April 29 interview with Agnes that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/xLgMaV2CBoo>. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt
Agnes = Agnes Bolinska
MD = Michael Dickson

- 0:00 Russ comments: The comments that I have inserted in the transcript below are intended as commentary about what I think at the time I write the comment, which is generally within a day or so of the interview. They are not to be confused with the Truth with a capital T; there is no guarantee that I will agree with them if I review them at some later time, at which time I might revise or extend them; they are invitations to Michael and/or Agnes to disagree, or to amplify, or to say they don't understand, and so on. If they wish to insert their own comments, they should pick a color other than this green, and then do so. They should also feel free to correct the transcript.
- 0:04 RTH: And this is gonna be Agnes's fourth shot at this, counting the workshop as the third. Anything...
- 0:15 Agnes: I don't know how, how much better I'm getting at it.
- 0:19 RTH: I, my impression is, my impression is that you're fine at it. [Agnes: Well, thanks.] It, it is that your, that your experience... Some people's experience, some people have crystal clear things in their experience and some don't. And I don't, I don't think that's a, y'know, I don't have a personality ramification of that. I think that's just the way it is. And, uh,
- 0:43 Agnes: But I also think, I mean, one thing that I, in my experience, I feel like when the beep happens, I find it really hard to like remember what was happening before the beep fully, like to do it accurately, um, without letting what happened *at* the beep inform what was happening *be*, at the moment of the beep. Not always, but, um,
- 1:06 RTH: Well, we'll see as we go forwards. [Agnes: Yeah.] But, but I would say that, that, that, that is not independent of the nature of your inner experience. So for example, if you were saying to yourself in words, "I think I'll have a ham sandwich," (unquote) when the beep went off, then I don't think you'd have any trouble remembering that. But if your experience is somewhat more inchoate...
- 1:27 Agnes: That's true. Yeah. No, I agree. I agree with that. Yeah.

1:32 RTH: I, I think that makes it hard to, it, it makes, it makes it difficult to give a, a, an, an explanation that everybody would agree with that. That that's what I, that what I just said is true, I think is true. But I, but I think there are those who, who could contest that. And I don't think, I don't think that's a winning argument. I think it's, there's no end to that argument. [Agnes: Yeah.] Except, except that if we find some beeps where, where you find it easy and some other, where you find it difficult, then, then that might give us some insight into that.

1:32 Russ comments: See samples 4.4 and 4.5.

2:11 Agnes: Yeah.

2:14 RTH: So on to number 1?

2:17 Agnes: Yes. I mean, I have five beeps from this morning and one beep from last night. So should I start with...

2:23 RTH: So let's start with today's beeps. [Agnes: Okay.] Let's start with today's beeps. The fresher, the fresher beeps.

2:28 Agnes: This is number 2.

2:29 RTH: So this will be 2.

2:30 Agnes: Hold on. [looks at notebook] I, I like, I think I'm writing clearly, but I'm not, oh, no, hold on. Sorry. This is number... Sorry. The reason I got confused is I had two beeps from yesterday and *four* from this morning. [RTH: Okay.] That's why I was confused.

2:45 RTH: Okay.

Sample 4.3 discussion starts here (beginning with the samples from today)

2:48 Agnes: So we'll start with 3, [RTH: Okay.] which is the first one of this morning. Um, and then just as background, um, I was sitting outside with my computer on my lap and I was looking at, um, the calendar, my Google calendar on my computer, um, and I was focused on May 3rd, which is like the, the May 3rd square. And also that I had marked that as the grade deadline. So I was, I was seeing that square, um, that was in my visual field. And this is now part of my experience.

3:29 And, um, prior to the moment before the beep, um, I had been thinking about this one case of a student who I'm like 95% confident used AI for her final essay. Um, and I was, I had been thinking about whether I should report her to the Office of Academic Integrity before, and just kind of thinking about how that plays into the timeline of the grade deadline, like how that affects what I do for the grading.

4:09 Um, and so at the moment of the beep, I was visually seeing that square, and I had sort of like paused and was thinking was still kind of thinking about that *can I, can I, should I still report this* to the office of student, of Academic Integrity? Um, kind of like a, *what should I do?* But none of this thinking was in words. I wasn't

saying these things to myself. I had previously been thinking about this, and at the moment of the beep, I was sort of in this kind of like pause moment of, *hmm, what am I gonna do?* But I wasn't saying that in, in words, that was just kind of the character of the pause in this moment.

- 4:58 RTH: And by a, okay, and by a p, by a *pause*, do you mean *I don't really have anything in my experience?* or I am somehow pondering this, but it's just not conscious or something
- 5:11 Agnes: I am somehow pondering this. It's not like my experience was blank. Um, in fact, I mean the visual thing was there, that like, I was seeing that square in the calendar, the May 3rd and the grade deadline, but I wasn't really reading those things anymore. It just like, my, my attention was mostly focused there. And there was this pause, which was not blank, but still had this character of like, um *hmm, should I do this* [laughs]
- 5:44 RTH: Trying, trying to figure it out.
- 5:45 Agnes: And, and not even should I, like, *should I do this* is too precise. It was more of like, it was more inchoate than that because it was kind of some combination of grade deadline plus reporting the student plus what will happen. But it wasn't fully, like, it wasn't a fully formed thought.
- 6:07 RTH: So some sort of *mulling*, maybe we could call it.
- 6:09 Agnes: Yes! Yes.
- 6:11 RTH: And the mulling is quite present to me about what it is that I'm mulling: [Agnes nods affirmatively] I'm mulling about grade deadlines and should I, and what the ramifications are or whatever. That's the, that's clearly the content that's available to me then. [Agnes: Yes.] It's not, yes. It's not just, I know myself to be thinking about that, but I somehow apprehend myself to be in that ballpark.
- 6:33 Agnes: Yes.
- 6:34 RTH: Okay. And I'm seeing the square, and the square has significance for me because the square is the deadline about which I am mulling.
- 6:43 Agnes: Yes.
- 6:45 RTH: But there's no fully formed anything about that. [Agnes: No.] That's like all those strands of possibilities are somehow working their way through my experience. And it's not like they're just totally background or totally unconscious, [Agnes nods affirmatively throughout] but they're not formed either.
- 7:03 Agnes: Exactly! Yeah, exactly.
- 7:06 RTH: And I think I'm good, Michael, you have...?

- 7:10 MD: Um, I'd like to ask about the seeing the square. Um, can you say more about that? Like, are you, you seeing the square? Are you seeing it? (I'm offering a non-exhaustive list of options here.) Uh, are you seeing the May 3rd? Are you seeing the words "May 3"? Are you seeing or is it just all one thing and it just means May 3rd, or deadline or what, what is the nature of the seeing?
- 7:39 Agnes: Yeah, so I'm seeing, um, I see the square, the May 3rd, the kind of red deadline. I'm not at the moment of the beep reading any of that. Like, I mean, I had been reading it previous, *prior* to the beep, but at the moment of the beep, I'm kind of focused on it, but not in like a, I'm not in any kind of deliberate way. Like I had already, I, previous to the beep, I had already kind of looked at the calendar and registered *this is the deadline*. And now I was still looking there, but I wasn't doing anything active. It was a very passive kind of seeing. Um, I'd say I was in some sense focused on the square in the sense that like my eyeballs were directed at it, but I wasn't doing anything, any active reading. So that was in my visual field. And again, similar to like how I've described previous things, it was like in the foreground for me, and the other stuff was there (it wasn't blank around it) it was there, but that was in the foreground.
- 8:52 MD: Okay. That's helpful (to me). [laughs]
- 8:56 RTH: So it seems like the seeing is in some way similar to the thinking I am, the, the seeing aspect is part of the seeing part of, part of the mulling, I guess I would say.
- 9:11 Agnes: I'd say so. Yeah. I, I'd say so. Like, I mean, I'd say that previous to the moment before the beep, I had done the more kind of active thinking, maybe, or, um, I don't know if that's the right way to describe it. Like, I had read, I had read "May 3rd," it, it had like entered my consciousness. This is the grade deadline. My, I had first had the thought, um, what about this student with AI? This is very soon. And then now this was like the moment after that more active and novel processing and it was kind of a more passive like *hmm* [laughs] situation.
- 9:48 RTH: Okay. So I'm happy with number 1, er, number 3, number 3. [MD: Uh, me too.]
- 9:59 Agnes: Okay,
- 10:00 RTH: So you wanna go lead, lead on number 4, Michael?
- 10:02 MD: I'll take a shot.
- 10:04 Agnes: Okay.
- 10:05 RTH: And, and I would let, let me, let me just say what the, it, it strikes me that there's an argument to be made that the kind of thinking that you're describing here, which is not unconscious and not conscious, but not [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] but not specific is in some ways *more skillful* than inner speech or, or visual imagery or something like that. I got the impression that you were saying earlier on that, that this seemed like

a sort of a *deficient way* of, of, uh, of processing. [Agnes laughs] But I don't think that's, I don't think that's true. I think, I think that one could make the argument and (I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm not actually making the argument, cuz I don't know), but it's, but one could make the argument that it's actually better to process in some way this kind of mulling of all the different aspects all rolled into one rather than singling out one particular strand of them.

10:57 Agnes: Mm-hmm.

10:59 RTH: So, so I'm not, I'm *not making that case*. I'm, what I'm, what I'm saying is that I would like us to be a sort of agnostic about that and just...

11:06 Agnes: Okay, so, so are you saying perhaps what's more skillful is my ability to apprehend my experience in this kind of moment? Is that what you mean?

11:06 Russ comments: That is true, but it is *not* the point that RTH was trying to make. It will become clearer below (between here and 13:07).]

11:17 RTH: That's, that's, that's right. [Agnes: Okay.]

11:20 RTH: Well, I, I think that, I think that is right, but what I was saying was that the experience, what, what I was saying in, in this particular paragraph was that I think that the, I think it's possible that it's more skillful to process things multiply. [Agnes: Okay.] There's quite a few, there's quite a few ramifications of this: what it does for the student, what does it does for my schedule, what, how do I have to interact with the Office of, of Student Affairs? All, all that stuff in, in reality has to be processed at the same time. And in your experience, processing at the same time might be better than trying to say, well, what, what, trying to single it out. So I got a picture of the student, this is the particular student, what am I gonna do with her or him or whatever.

12:02 MD: And it may be that, that, that thinking about all, I mean, in some sense, your problem re, requires you to think about all that at once. And it may be that if you're genuinely and productively thinking about it all at once, that you're not gonna have any specific thing to say about what was the content of your experience. I think that's maybe what Russ is saying?

12:20 RTH: That's better than, that's what I was trying to say, said better than what I was trying.. That's what I was trying to say, but better. [MD: Okay.]

12:27 Agnes: And maybe I would add that the moment that was caught in flight by the beep this time was, I mean, I guess in a way an interesting moment because it was like the moment after the moment that I got this new-to-me information that had all these implications for me. And so maybe like, I mean, later down the line, in fact I, I did do some more like, okay, *what do I need to do?* kind of processing. But this was right at the beginning of like where everything was being brought to bear on the fact that there's this grade deadline, like all this other stuff that I knew. So anyway, that's, I think that's kinda interesting, actually. [laughs]

13:07 RTH: Yeah. And I do too. But what, what, but what I would say is that the, the reason that I would like to like us to be ag that I prefer to, that I prefer to be agnostic about whether this is a good deal or a bad deal, is that I don't think we, I don't think anybody knows about that. And the reason that nobody knows about that is that nobody has taken the care to try to do the kinds of things that we're doing now, which is hard work and takes time and attention and what, and, and whatever. And, and people prefer questionnaires or whatever. And, and, and uh, so if we, if we had enough samples so that we really had a clear grasp, grip of the landscape, then we might be able to say, well, this is really a good deal, or, or it's a bad deal or, or it's good in this way and bad in that way. But in, but until we have done the, the foundational work, then I don't think we can answer that question.

13:07 Russ comments: I am frequently asked (by participants, friends, media, etc.) what kinds of inner experience are related to what kinds of personality characteristics? or have what kind of functional advantages? If I am to be honest, I have to say "I don't know," for the reasons I just described. Most people, it seems, would prefer that I speculate anyway, which I generally decline to do. The good news is that *some* people actually understand that *I don't know* is probably the best answer, and appreciate that I give it.

13:59 MD: That seems right.

14:00 Agnes: Yeah.

14:01 RTH: Number 4.

Sample 4.4 discussion starts here

14:03 Agnes: Okay, so now I am, um, working on a paper that I'm like, I'm revising in response to referee comments. Um, and I had just clicked on, so I, it was kind of in a, like, what I had just done is I had got been in the references section and I had inserted a new reference. And I'm working in like a Google document where you have this, um, sidebar and if you set up headings, you can kind of click on the heading that will take you back to the section. So I had just inserted the reference, and I had just clicked on, um, the heading for, um, the *Mindfulness-based stress reduction* section of the paper. Um, actually the, the section, I can't remember the full title of the section. Does it, does it matter for the purpose description? [RTH: No.] Okay. There's like something, there's something else at the end of that. It's not just mindfulness based stress re reduction, but that's the beginning of the section heading.

15:13 And so I had just clicked on that and I was saying to myself, "mindfulness-based stress" and then like the beep went off. So I was, um, like I was in the, because I was clicking on that section to navigate back to it within the document, I was also reading it. Like I, I was reading those words when the beep went off. Um, and I was also caught in this moment of, um, anticipating going back to that section, which I had been working on, um, after adding that reference, which I had just referred to in the section I was working on, um, to continue working on that section.

- 16:01 So, um, so I was seeing the screen, but not really focused on anything in particular because I had like, literally just clicked it. So it was, it had just, that section had just come back up on the screen because I had just clicked it. I hadn't yet navigated to the part that I had meant to, that I was gonna continue working on. Um, so yeah, I was just sort of like caught in the moment of navigating to that section.
- 16:33 Um, and so again, just to kind of summarize what was in my experience was like the visual: like seeing that section, but not, not really reading it in any sense. Like, I was just kind of seeing the whole screen. And I was saying to myself, I was reading "mindfulness-based stress" and, and then the beep went off. Um, and then there was just this sort of, again, feeling that I, that I don't fully know how to articulate of just, I was about to start working on this again. And that was that kind of, *I'm about to start working on this*, um, anticipation of *where I need to navigate to next* and *what I'm gonna do next* was like also part of my experience.
- 17:27 RTH: You're muted, Michael.
- 17:32 MD: (My apologies. I'm not sure. I must have just mind mindlessly done that.) Um, the, I wanna start with, uh, the saying and reading part. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] I'm trying, I'm trying to figure out how that's related to the, the screen. The, the, the, the, you're seeing the screen, but you're not focused on anything in particular because it just came back, the section just came back up. So when you say you're *reading* it, how does that, how does the *reading* of those words relate to your visual experience of seeing a blank or seeing a screen sort of non-specifically?
- 17:32 Russ comments: For what it's worth, here is my process as best I can reconstruct it, now a few hours later: I notice that Michael's question at the outset refers to the "the saying and reading part." *That's good*, I think, because Agnes's first description (15:13) was "I was *saying* to myself," and only later did it become *reading*. But then the end of Michael's question (to my ear) abandons the *saying* possibility, focusing only on the *reading*. *My alert!* antenna jangles—I will have to pay attention to how Agnes and Michael deal with the saying vs. reading possibility.
- 18:15 Agnes: Like maybe I, I mean, okay, here's just kind of a caveat. Um, I'm not 100% sure like, precisely what was happening at the moment of the beep. So this is kind of my best attempt. Like, I, I *believe* that at the moment, like somewhere in the vicinity, I believe that the beep interrupted my saying "mindfulness-based stress" as kind of a way of queuing myself, like now I'm going to this section type thing. Um, and then I had like clicked, I had clicked on that thing I believe already before the beep. Like I had already kind of clicked on it and it had the screen of that section was up. [MD: So were you...] So I don't know, like, like I, I don't know whether the reading was my reading of that, the label on the sidebar, or whether I was reading, like somehow focused on the words on the screen. The best, the best I could do after the beep when I was trying to figure out what was going on at the moment of the beep, my best kind of recollection or whatever word you wanna use was that I, I just had in my experience, kind of the whole screen. But I could be wrong about that. I don't know.

19:33 MD: Oh, no. That, that, okay, I, I'm starting to understand a little better now. So the, see, I don't use these newfangled things, Agnes, like Google Docs, [laughs] every time you send me a Google Doc, I download it to my machine [laughs].

19:48 Agnes: Well, Michael, if you would just learn, you would learn that it's really easy and helpful.

19:52 MD: Well, well, we can argue about that later. Um, [Agnes laughs] so, so I didn't realize that the, that that the words "mindfulness-based stressor," whatever they were, that those words would still have been on the screen. So it's, but you're not sure whether you were actually reading them from that spot. You just have the sense that you're reading? Or is it more a sense of reading or more a sense of saying?

19:52 Russ comments: Good! Michael is asking what seems to me to be a genuine question about this distinction. See my comment at 17:32.

20:15 Agnes: I have, um, I don't know if I can draw a sharp distinction between reading and saying like. Surely I had read those, sorry, now I'm getting in the realm of causal explanation, which I know is wrong. But I mean, what, what, what had been happening before is I *had read* mindfulness based stress reduction to like, on that sidebar. [MD: Okay.] And I had clicked it and yeah, I, I don't know if I was still saying it because... I don't know if I was repeating saying it now that I was back at this section, or whether I *had said* it. So like that's the part where I don't have a clear answer.

20:55 MD: Okay. But somehow these two experiences are somehow I

20:57 Agnes: Was saying it, yeah. And

20:58 MD: Laying on top of each other or closely juxtaposed or something like that. [Agnes: Yes.] So when you say you're saying it that you're, are you saying it in your head out loud? Are you saying

21:08 Agnes: It in my head? In my own words? [MD: In your words... in your, yeah, in your head.] In your, as I'm reading it in my head, yeah.

21:08 Russ comments: So we end up not sure whether it is saying or reading. Good! We have made a distinction that might be important, and we haven't glibly or theoretically or dismissively come down on one side or the other. That seems to reflect our ability at the moment, neither overstating nor understating what we know. My antennae relax.

21:13 MD: Okay. Um, alright. So, so now maybe to the anticipation part. Um, would you, would you say that one, I, I wanna understand the anticipation part better, but maybe the first part of that is just to ask, would you say that one of these aspects, the saying business, possibly reading or possibly saying as if reading or I'm not, y'know, we're not sure about that part, would you say that these, that the, the, let's just call it the saying part [laughs] the saying part and the anticipating part. Are those sort of

equally strong for you? Or are, are you more, are you more kind of aware of the anticipation or maybe you're more aware of the vis the, the visual experience of the nondescript screen? Is that a third part? Is that a or should we separate this into three things?

22:14 Agnes: I would, I'm not sure I would separate them into things.

22:22 MD: Okay.

22:23 Agnes: Like, I'm not sure I would separate them into different tracks, necessarily. I don't know. But if, I don't know.

22:31 MD: That's fine. Um, so, so somehow they're all laying on top of each other. Um, there, so let's, let's talk about the anticipation. Is that a, is there, is there any kind of, um, valence to that like, I'm *excited* to get working on it, or *gosh*, I have to keep working on this thing? Or is it more *neutral* kind of anticipation like I just, you see, foresee the future or something?

22:59 Agnes: It's like a, I'm *trying to maintain my focus* kind of anticipation. Right? So basically what I had done previous to this is I had just added this footnote with this reference. [MD: Mm-hmm.] That, and, and then I put the, the reference in the reference list. And then I was going back and like the next step that I had to do was to write a more substantive paragraph that captures some stuff that I've been thinking about. And like I had written about in my Remarkable, and I had like formed the thought like up to 80 or 90%, but I had this bit of like, um, the *anticipation* was one of like a little bit of like, okay, *now I really have to do this*. Like now, now I have to, like,

22:59 Russ comments: The "Remarkable" is a particular brand of digital tablet.

23:47 MD: So with the anti was the anticipation that, so I I maybe I misunderstood it first

23:54 Agnes: Actually. Hold on. Can I, can I finish? cuz I wasn't

23:56 MD: Yes, of course. I'm sorry. Yeah,

23:57 Agnes: [laughs]. It's okay. Uh, like, I, like I wanted to finish what I had to say about the anticipation. It was kind of like, um, in response to your question. Part of, so part of the anticipation was, um, okay, *maintain your focus*. Like, *don't forget what you have to do now* that you've been like, like don't get distracted by having inputted done this stupid task. I've been input this reference. The real work is yet to be done because the, like writing this paragraph was gonna be a bit of real work that I was sort of low level [laughs] low key, avoiding, um, a, a little like, like kind of worried about, because it's an important point that the referee made and I wanted to get it right. So there was a bit of that, like, *okay, I better stay focused*. Um, a bit of *fear around getting this wrong* [laughs] even though I'm just writing it to myself. Um, so a bit of stay focused and okay, now it's time to write that paragraph. Um, I think that's the, the, the fullest way I can describe the anticipation.

24:56 MD: No, that was helpful. I, so one last thing on that. Um, would you say that, so, so it sounds, so initially I thought you were saying that it was kind of a generic kind of anticipation of getting back to work, but now it sounds maybe more like you're talking, it's more specific than that. You're, you're, you're, you're, you're anticipating a specific thing that you're going to do and not just anticipating that there is work to come, but you're more, cuz you're talking about now about how there's this specific thing that's the next thing to do. And so was the anticipation focused, like on that specific thing.

24:56 Russ comments: My antennae say that the issue is not whether the anticipation is of a specific thing, but rather whether anticipation is experienced in a particularly Agnes-y way, which includes the trying to focus, the *this is important*, the slight fear, and so on. So it's not the *thing* that is specific, but the anticipation itself that is Agnes's idiosyncratic way of anticipating in this particular occasion. That's just my antennae; we will see how that plays out.

25:35 Agnes: So okay, let, as we're having this conversation, um, I'm realizing that, um, plan, I just wanna like pause for a second because I'm not sure. I'm trying to tease apart, in my own recollection of the experience, what was actually in that experience as opposed to what was true about what I'm gonna write in this paragraph but wasn't in the experience. And I think, um, one thing that I, I think I can say for sure was in the experience or for as sure as I can possibly be about such things, um, is that there was this, *okay, get back, like, don't lose focus*. Like don't get distracted and do something else. Now you have to get back to that paragraph. Like I think that was, *that part* was certainly in that experience, so it wasn't just get back to work generically, but get back to that sec, that section, navigate back to that part in the document. Like part of it was like, don't lose track of where specifically in this section you have to go to. [MD: Okay.] So I think that was certainly part of the experience and the other stuff that I said, um, I am less sure was part of that experience in that moment. And it may just be part of the causal, like, I don't know, I, I don't know whether that was...

25:35 Russ comments: RE "I'm trying to tease apart, in my own recollection of the experience, what was actually in that experience as opposed to what was true about what I'm gonna write in this paragraph but wasn't in the experience."

Agnes seems to apologize for her inability to be sure. I think no apology is necessary, and in fact she is offering us something of high worth: she is trying to tell us with fidelity about her experience. What could be better than that?

26:53 MD: That's fine. I, I think, I think I'm good now.

27:00 RTH: So I had a couple of comments about that. One is I thought you did, y'all did a good job of separating out the experience of *saying* from *reading*, which I, I thought you left as being sort of indeterminate. I'm not sure whether I was just *saying* this or whether I was *reading* it. And that was how I, that I, I thought that was skillfully done because I think people would fall into the trap of saying, well, y'know, the words are on the screen, *therefore I must have been reading it*. But the experience

of reading and the experience of saying are not necessarily the same thing. So I thought that was good.

27:32 And I thought that the, the conversation about the getting back, anticipation or whatever was good and I, *because* it seems to me that there's a lot of different ways that you could, that you could simplify that and then, and none of them are not, probably not a, probably not a good idea because all that stuff about the micro-worry am I did it right, did I get it wrong? Do I have to do it right? What, all that stuff is probably baked into what anticipation is. And, and the, the farther you get from just a bland description of, well, I'm anticipating, and, and then the harder it gets to be to tease those things apart. But that doesn't mean that they're not there. It means that they're Agnes's particular brand of anticipation, which is not Webster's brand, it's her own [laughs].

28:31 Agnes: Well, and I guess what I was realizing in the context of that conversation is just, um, what does it even mean for certain elements to be *baked into* the experience of anticipation in that moment? Because I think one of the things that I'm realizing is challenging to disentangle is what I'm experiencing *in that moment* from *what I was experiencing three moments before* or *an hour before*. And whether I, like, there's kind of like a theory relatedness here of Agnes's own theory about what's going on with Agnes in other experiences, not immediately, which of course are, well, I wanna say of course, but maybe that's wrong, are, are related to the moment of the beep, but aren't necessarily being experienced. But *maybe they are*. And like I, I think it's just difficult to, I'm finding it difficult to determine for myself what is and isn't part of the anticipation *in that moment*.

29:37 RTH: So I think that's good and, and that's, that's what, that's what a smart person who is trying to be honest about these things ought to be doing. And that does not make it the method unusable. It makes it, we have to recognize what the limits of the, what the limits of the method are. So I, I, I think, I think we can probably say Agnes was *not* innerly saying to herself, "when are they going to reschedule the, the correspondents' dinner?" Y'know, she could be, she could have been saying that at that particular time, but wasn't that we can be pretty sure of, and then we have to be sort of honest about, about the, where, what the limits of these things are.

30:33 And that doesn't mean that I'm not doing a good job, or Agnes is not doing a good job. It means that Agnes is confronting what the limits of this, of this are. And, and Agnes's, Agnes's anticipation, Agnes anticipates in a, in Agnes's way of anticipation, there's no, and, and, and that varies from situation to situation. And we can do as good a job as we can do to describe it, which is gonna be less than perfect, but better than....

30:33 Russ comments: My way of thinking about these things is that once you are "in the weeds," by which I mean considering small details that are hard or impossible to distinguish from one another, then you have reached the limits of the descriptive enterprise. But that does not make the descriptive enterprise useless: that we cannot distinguish one thing in the weeds from another thing in the weeds does *not* imply that we cannot distinguish things in the weeds from things in relatively clear waters.

31:09 RTH: I guess we could also say Agnes was not saying, saying to herself, quote, “get back” unquote about this. That was *not* part of the anticipation.

31:09 Russ comments: Here, RTH is attempting to improve his 29:37 metaphor. In 29:37, the quotation remote from experience in two ways: both the content (about the correspondents’ dinner) and the manner (innerly spoken) are markedly different from the present experience. In 31:09, only the manner differs from present experience: Agnes’s experience was of trying to get back but there was no *speaking* involved in that getting back. The point RTH is trying to make is that whereas it may seem that Agnes is not confident about some details of inner experience (exactly how this anticipation is present to her), she is in fact quite confident about important experiential aspects (anticipation is somehow felt but not spoken).

31:22 Agnes: Correct.

31:24 RTH: And we can see....

31:24 MD: [they speak at the same time] I mean, I, I, I feel like I, I, (this could be, I could be fooling myself), but I feel like that conversation, even though we didn’t settle on, *well, this is precisely what anticipation was in this moment*. I did feel like the conversation gave me a better sense of what that anticipation was like for Agnes. Even though I couldn’t tell you, I couldn’t write down, y’know, the necessary and sufficient conditions for having that kind of anticipation. [Agnes nods affirmatively]

31:51 RTH: I think that’s absolutely right. And, and I would, I would amplify one more and, and [clears throat] excuse me, in that I think it’s probably clear *for Agnes* what that experience is like as well. And that actually may be the most important part of the deal. That *Agnes* comes to find out something about the way her experience actually is, *even though* Michael and Russ only have a sort of a semi understanding of what it is that Agnes is saying. I think it’s probably true that Agnes has a more differentiated view of it.

32:27 Agnes: I agree. Yeah, that’s, I think that helped me understand my own experience better.

32:32 RTH: And, and over the long haul that might be, that might be the sort of the, the, the best, the, the mo, the most valuable outcome of the whole deal. We can spend this time together and what, and what happens as the result of it is that *Agnes comes to know herself better* as Agnes as an individual person. One, one person. And that may, well, one thing that may be enough.

32:32 Russ comments: That is (in my way of thinking) a practical application of my understanding of Kierkegaard that I cited in Agnes Interview 2 (1:03:35). If Agnes, as a single individual, comes to a genuinely deeper grasping of (her own) inner experience, that is (or at least may be) a profoundly more satisfactory result than if a legion of people come to a shared shallow (or mistaken) belief. Scientists are often (nearly always) required to quantify their “impact,” and that is almost always some measure of the number of people who are influenced (or say they are

influenced) by the scientist's views. I think that is misguided. Genuine impact is always evaluated one individual at a time.

32:54 Agnes: I don't know if this is like too much of a sidetrack, so you can just say, say no too much of a sidetrack. But one thing that that really struck me, and I think a lot of participants at the workshop, is the story of Fran and, um, how doing DES with her changed her in this like deep and fundamental and lifesaving way. And one thing that came up in conversation, we were talking about this with Riana, was, um, whether DES in fact is used therapeutically, like just to like find out about your experience and see how that changes you. But anyway, maybe that's way too far afield, but, um,

33:38 RTH: Well, lemme give a short answer. Lemme give a short answer to that question. The, the short answer is that I have on occasion used it therapeutically. And, and, and what I think is, I'm a better therapist when I'm a *researcher* than when I'm a *therapist*. And the, and the reason for that is that when I'm a researcher, I'm a pretty pure guy. I'm trying to get at Agnes's experiences or Fran's experiences or whoever's experiences *just as it is* without any, any ulterior motive other than, *let's see whether we can get this right*. In the therapy business, there *is* an *explicit ulterior motive*. I'm trying to make you better, or you're trying to get better, whatever. And that screws things up, and uh, and I think in a, in a, in a fundamental way. I think I think DES is about as pure as it gets. And there's something that is very important about that, hard, hard as that may be to put into, into language that is convincing to people. But the,

34:41 MD: I, I have a lot to say that's mostly laudatory about what you just said, but I'll refrain so we can go onto Agnes [Agnes laughs] next beep.

34:48 RTH: Onward number 5.

Sample 4.5 discussion starts here

34:50 Agnes: Okay. Um, so in number 5, I'm now reading the student who used AI's paper [laughs] rereading it. Um, so I'm rereading this paper, um, with an eye to like, I *am* now gonna make this report [laughs] I'm rereading this paper with an eye to kind of like highlighting passages that were particularly, um, cl like *not student written* [laughs]. Um, and so that, that's just background.

35:29 Um, so at the time of the beep, I was reading in my own voice, so saying aloud innerly in my head, um, the passage, um, "making it difficult to maintain a clear connection, um, between those making decisions" (I think that was "those"), hmm, um, and then the beep went off. Um, so I was reading that in my own voice, and I was seeing the screen, um, focusing on those words. Um, so that's what was kind of in my experience visually. And also I had this experience of reading in my own voice, but, um, innerly.

36:16 And then the other thing that had that, the beep interrupted, I was at my standing desk and I had, um, sort of like shifted my weight to my toes and back. Um, but most of my focus at the moment of the beep was on the words on the screen um, and then, and this reading. And hold on. I think I had another thing. Did I have

another thing? [inspects notebook] Sorry. No, I think, hold on. Sorry, I'm getting confused with my notebook. [laughs]. No, that's the end. That's the end. [RTH: So...] So reading the, the words on the screen, seeing visually and then the shifting my weight on my toes and back, but that was kind of more in the background, but it was still part of my experience.

37:24 RTH: Okay. So I need to understand what the word "back" means. Does "back" mean this thing back here? [gestures toward the back of his torso] or just to toes and then and then back? So yeah,

37:34 Agnes: No, just back to my heels. [RTH: Okay.] Like, like I kind of like shifted my weight forward, so I was on my toes and then I had like shifted back onto my heels.

37:40 RTH: So *backwards*, not back as a, as a bodily part.

37:45 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. "Back, back to neutral," I was gonna, I meant to say like kind of [RTH: Okay, got it.] I shifted to my toes and I was back to neutral standing.

37:52 RTH: And, and that is somehow present to you. That's not just a fact of the universe?

37:56 Agnes: That was present to me. Yeah.

37:57 RTH: And present in my toes? In, in my body balance-wise. (I didn't mean that as an exhaustive list, but)

38:15 Agnes: I'd say in my toes and in my body balance-wise. It's more like holistic, this felt sense of the movement. Um, yeah, I wanna say all of the above. [RTH: Okay.] Like I felt it in my toes, but I also felt like the whole movement of my body.

38:37 RTH: And as a movement of my body? As a balancing of my body? As a,

38:42 Agnes: As a movement. As a movement, which like was kind of, um, I had just been standing still, so it was like a movement that was like

38:53 RTH: Adjusting

38:54 Agnes: Yeah. Like

38:55 RTH: Adjusting, adjustment movement or something.

38:58 Agnes: Not so much adjustment as *I need to move my body a little bit*.

39:03 RTH: Okay. [coughs] And I'm gathering that's the least present portion of this experience. [Agnes: Yes.] Present, but not the, not primarily present.

39:15 Agnes: Exactly. The, the primary part of the experience was like the, this reading component. And by *reading component*, I mean the visual and then the innerly saying,

39:25 RTH: And I'm seeing and reading what I'm seeing.

39:29 Agnes: Yes.

39:30 RTH: So my experience is a, is that a, is like a, is that a, like a unitary thing? I am *reading* this passage and that reading involves both *innerly speaking* it and *seeing* it as it unfolds on the screen or whatever.

39:44 Agnes: Yes. So I'd say so.

39:46 RTH: Okay. And the intention to discern whether this is AI-written or whatever, is that present to you or is that the task that you have set? And what's present to me is I'm reading this passage and sooner or later it's gonna come out the other side of this that *Yes, that was a passage or no, that wasn't*

40:10 Agnes: So the reason, hold on. Okay. No, sorry, I'm getting to, I'm getting this beep mixed up with like the next beep a little bit. That's why I'm looking back at the notebook.

40:20 RTH: That's too bad. [they laugh] in the sense that we have, that we're spending all this time dealing with an AI issue.

40:26 Agnes: Yeah, I know, right? Um, yeah, it's very... A side note: this is very annoying [laughs]. [RTH: Yeah.] Like I, I literally spent like a good hour on this today and this isn't the first time bit of time that I've spending.

40:40 RTH: I appreciate, I appreciate that.

40:42 Agnes: Anyway. Um,

40:43 RTH: Make, makes me happy that I'm teaching statistics, which is somewhere easier.

40:46 Agnes: Exactly. Ugh. Anyway, this is a whole other big conversation. But, um, in that moment, I'm not sure in that moment whether, um, what, whether in that particular moment the *reading it for AI evidence* was present to me or not. Like I can't say with certainty, um, in that, for that moment. I do believe that for many of the moments before that and after that [laughs] that was present to me, but in that exact moment, um, I just can't say with certainty.

40:46 Russ comments: RE "I'm not sure in that moment whether, um, what, whether in that particular moment the *reading it for AI evidence* was present to me or not."
That is an excellent answer. It's in the weeds, and I can't disentangle the weeds.

41:34 RTH: Fair enough. So I think I'm happy with that. And I, and I think that "you can't say with certainty" is a, is a perfectly fine answer. There's no doubt that toes motion is related to that as well, and that that's a bodily adjustment to the stress of stress of dealing with AI or whatever. No, no doubt that is somehow in that mix. To what extent, it's hard to know.

42:04 Agnes: I would say I do have a doubt that that's in that mix. [laughs]

42:09 RTH: Say that again.

42:10 Agnes: I would say that I *do* have a doubt that the bodily thing is related to this stress of the AI. I mean, I think the bodily thing, um, I just tend to adjust anytime I'm sitting still and I feel like my body needs to move, I do that. And,

42:27 RTH: And I wasn't meaning to doubt that in the slightest.

42:29 Agnes: Yeah.

42:31 RTH: I would say that the exact way that you did it no doubt reflects the exact way that you have been dealing with the AI issue. And, but, but, and that's the kind of thing that I think is *not reportable*. It's not, I'm, I'm not, I'm, I just think, I think that the world is more complicated than interrelated then to say, well that's entirely, my body's entirely separate. That's not probably true.

42:31 Russ comments: RTH's "no doubt" conveys more confidence that RTH has a right to have.

42:58 Agnes: No, I agree with that. I, I wholeheartedly agree with that. I just don't know. [RTH: Right...] I just don't know.

43:05 RTH: That's what I think. So I'm happy with that. Michael? [pause] And you're muted.

43:14 MD: I'm, I'm, uh, sorry. I'm happy with that. Also. I was, I was eating my lunch because I misconstrued when this meeting was supposed to be, and this is the only chance I had to eat. So I've been muting while I was chewing, cuz I didn't want you to have to listen to that. But I'm finished now, so I'll leave it.

43:28 RTH: I've been, I've been muting while I've been coughing, too, for probably about the same reasons! [they laugh]

43:34 MD: I I, but I'm happy with that. Um, I was gonna ask, well, I'll say what I was gonna ask, but I'm not asking it. But I, um, because I realized that I was asking it only because I have a theory about what Agnes must have been feeling [laughs]. Um, but I was gonna ask about affect, uh, because I *know* that if when I'm in that situation, I start to get angry and tense. Um, but you didn't mention anything about affect. So I, I didn't need to ask that. And I'm not asking it.

43:34 Russ comments: I take MD 43:34 to be a highly skillful turn. It genuinely conveys MD's own experience (and the genuine interaction between interviewers and participants is a good thing); and it raises the topic of interest (affect) *without pressuring Agnes to accede to it*. Most questions contain some minor or major coercion: you *do* agree with that, don't you? By contrast, MD's question provides an opportunity to talk about affect without any coercion in that direction.

- 44:04 Agnes: [laughs] maybe. I mean, don't ask about it now, because in that moment, like for some reason, I guess in this particular beep, I wasn't just in that moment, wasn't experiencing strong affect.
- 44:16 MD: Yeah. I mean, I You didn't say anything about it. That's what, yeah.
- 44:19 Agnes: However, um, I was, there *was* more of an affective element in the next beep.
- 44:26 MD: Well, let's do the next one!

Sample 4.6 discussion starts here

- 44:27 Agnes: We can move to the next one. So now in the next beep I write it, reading the paper, and now I'm writing the report, which is a big pain writing this stupid report! But anyway. Oh. So, um, so I'm in the middle of writing this report, which involves like filling out this form with boxes. And I had just, so I had just filled out the main box where I described why I believe this paper has been written by AI. I had just kind of finished that section and, um, sorry, I'm just gonna read what I, I'm just gonna read what I wrote here. [looks at notebook] Um, okay. So, so I had finished writing, like filling out this one box. In fact, I, I, I had finished filling out the entire form, um, including uploading all the relevant documentation in all of that.
- 45:41 And, um, when I, at the moment of the beep, I had just initiated this kind of physical movement. Um, like I was, like, I, (I'm again at my standing desk) and I had initiated this physical movement as if I was going to write something down on my Remarkable, which was like next to the computer. So there's this kind of like physical movement towards like, now I'm gonna move away from the form and I'm gonna write something down. But then when the beep went off, it wasn't act like, it wasn't clear what I was about to do. [laughs] Like there was no clear, like, I was like, no, I don't actually wanna write anything down, so I don't, I dunno, do with that what you will. That's kind of what, what my experience was. Um, but I was, um, seeing, to seeing the screen and um, and looking at this central box of the report. Um, but at the moment the beep went off. I had just sort of like shifted my attention in some sense.
- 46:45 Um, so, so that was part of it. I was kind of at, at this point where I was basically done the report, but I think I needed to do a few things and I had, and I had shifted my attention to something, but then when the beep went off, I was just like, what was I supposed to do? Like, what am I shifting my attention to, exactly? It wasn't clear [laughs] like what, where the shift was coming in, but the, the attentional shift was present to me at the moment of the beep. Um, and then the other thing that I could kind of feel like was there was, there was this adrenaline in the filling out of this form, and I could sort of feel like my heart was pounding. Like I could feel that energy in my body as well in the, the moment of the beep. Um, so sorry, that's yeah, that, that's it. That's, that's what I have. I'm sorry that's so like, like when the beep went off, there was just this, *wait a minute, what am I, what am I doing now?* [laughs]. So that's why I'm, I'm unable to tell a clear story a clearer than that story about it.

47:50 MD: That's a pretty, pretty clear story. Um, so when, when you say that you've initiated physical movement, does that, does that mean that you had you felt yourself forming that intention? Or you had actually started moving your body? Or something else?

48:12 Agnes: So I believe, I believe I felt like a forming of the intention to move. And I believe I had also started to move my body, but it wasn't like a major, it was a subtle movement. So I, I believe like maybe I was looking at the screen and I had just started to like, do this [gestures with her head down and to the side] or something like with my head and, or maybe my hands. Um, definitely there was like an intention to move component. And I believe also the movement had been somehow initiated, but possibly like just with my head or with my eyeballs. That, that part is kind of indeterminate.

48:12 Russ comments: Agnes's answer is, to my ear, of the form *Yes* (I had the intention) *but* (I had started to move). At 55:19 in the Michael Dickson Interview 4, I say "'Yes, but' in the, in, in my world almost always means *No*." That is, what comes after the *but* is usually more believable than what comes after the *Yes*. I'm no mind reader, and my job is not to interpret what Agnes says, but the first draft of my understanding is going to lean toward her experience as being more about the movement than about the intention.

More importantly, Agnes's *Yes, but* response provides feedback about the quality of Michael's question. I have said repeatedly that the way one learns to ask good questions is to attend to the answer: a DES question is good if it is followed by a description of experience, and not good if it is followed by anything else. A *Yes, but* response is half bad and half good: the *Yes* portion suggests that Agnes felt pushed *away from* her experience in a direction that was of interest to Michael (bad); however, the *but* portion suggests that Agnes was able, eventually, to resist that push and return to describing her experience (good; Michael has not overpowered Agnes; or said the other way, Agnes is independently strong enough to parry Michael's push).

The moral here is that attending to the responses is how one learns to ask good DES questions. It's not because *Russ* evaluates questions as being good or bad; it's that *Agnes* indicates whether a question is good or bad. To the extent that the question facilitates her describing, or wrestling to describe, her experience, it was a good question. To the extent that she has to defend herself against the questioner's interests, it was not a good question.

48:53 MD: So I, I guess what I was trying to get at, I, I wasn't very clear. I, I was trying to get at, um, whether this initiation was primarily felt by you as a mental event or as a physical event. Like you feel your body, even if it's not moving, maybe your muscles are just tensing up in preparation for moving or something. But I mean, I'm really getting at the mental versus physical. So when you say I initiate, I felt the initiation of physical movement. I'm just trying to understand if that's a mental feeling, a bodily feeling, both together.

49:25 Agnes: I, I'd say it's mostly mental, but a bit of bodily. Okay. Like I, like, I think in my experience there was some experience of like having...

- 49:25 Russ comments: That is another *Yes, but* response. I think the best we can say is that if there is any purely mental intention, it is in the weeds with the barely noticeable physical incipience, and it is probably not productive to try to disentangle in-the-weeds experiences.
- 49:37 MD: We just said that these things aren't so separate, so that's fine.
- 49:40 Agnes: Yeah. [laughs]. Yeah.
- 49:43 MD: Um, okay. And are you, you, you also described, you also said that you're seeing the screen, you're looking at the central box. Is that that's constant throughout this half a second or whatever we're talking about. So even as you're, even as you're feeling the initiation, you're still seeing the box?
- 50:05 Agnes: So this is a part that also, again, is just hard for me to determine what precisely was happening right before the beep as opposed to when the beep went off. I guess if I had to take my best guess, but I don't know, for whatever this is worth, like, I would say that I don't know. [MD: Okay.] I don't know. Is that like I, I feel myself making a theory [laughs].
- 50:30 MD: Okay, that's fine. [Agnes laughs] That's fine. We can theorize later. Um, so I let me ask a different question about the shifting of attention. Is that, first of all, is that a separate thing or is that another way of describing the initiation of physical movement?
- 50:56 Agnes: I'd say it's a separate thing, but related, right. So it's, it's distinct in that there was this, like I now knew that I had like kind of completed one task and it was time to move to the next subtask within this task. And that was accompanied by this initiation of the physical movement, but they were separate and I'm not even clear what I was moving towards, exactly. Like that's, yeah.
- 51:33 MD: Okay. And that, that actually leads to my next question. Um, do you, would you say it's better to describe that shifting atten, of attention as a shifting *away* from something or shifting *towards* something? Or is that not a helpful distinction in this case?
- 51:51 Agnes: A shifting *away* from something, I would say, and then the towards like, like, okay, here's what happened. The beep went off and I, and I asked myself, okay, what was going on? And the best I could do was, it seems like I was shifting my attention to wanna write something down on the Remarkable, but that made no sense to me because it seemed like just based on what was happening in, in the document, that really what I needed to be doing was, um, I mean, the next step just, this is so boring, but the next step that I needed to do, that I wanted to do, was to make sure that the, um, names of the documents that I had attached were referred to in my paragraph, so that the person could reading it, could, could like open the document and see what I was talking about. So my next step was just kind of double-checking what, um, what the names of the documents were and then inserting in

parentheses the names of the documents. Um, but somehow like that I, yeah, somehow that kind of got re-codified into me shifting to like wanna write something down. And that's partly the, I know that there's partly a causal story that I'm telling here.

53:13 MD: Well, I, I don't, I don't, I'm not worried about the causal story, but it sounds like you're So Go ahead, go ahead.

53:18 Agnes: I mean, the point I'm trying to make is that I'm not sure. Like it's indeterminate to me whether for sure I was actually moving down to write something on the Remarkable or whether I was simply shifting my attention and then the beep interrupted that and in the moment of the beep, that was like the thing I reconstructed. Does that make sense?

53:42 MD: So it does what I'm, what I'll, what I'll say, I mean, I was listening to you and about half of what you said sounded like shifting away and about half of what you said sounded like shifting towards. So it sounds like you, maybe that's just not a good distinction in this case. [laughs] uh, or not one that we, that we can make use of.

54:02 Agnes: For me, that's part of the problem is it's being indeterminate for me.

54:04 MD: No, I think that that's the conclusion I also reached during that discussion. Last thing...

54:09 RTH: I thought, I thought that was a good question and a good discussion because I thought it was mostly shifting away, and the way that she chose to shift away was to shift towards, even though the shifting towards doesn't have any reality, she, I'm gonna shift towards my Remarkable, I don't have anything to write there, but at least that's away from that shit! And, uh, [they laugh]

54:31 MD: Maybe that's it. [laughs] uh, can we talk for a minute about the heart pounding? Um, so is that physical, like you're, like actually in your chest you feel beating heart?

54:44 Agnes: Yeah. And,

54:47 MD: And, and do you, is that, is that pounding, are you identifying that pounding with any kind of affect? Or is it just my heart is pounding?

55:00 Agnes: Hmm.

55:01 RTH: And can I soften that question a little bit to make it not necessarily about the heart that makes it seem like it's only about the heart, and maybe it is and maybe it's not, but can you tell us about the bodily aspect of this?

55:01 Russ comments: What Agnes originally (46:45) said about this experience was "I could kind of feel like was there was, there was this adrenaline in the filling out of this form, and I could sort of feel like my heart was pounding. Like I could feel that energy in my body." That is, to my ear, ambiguous in the sense that "adrenaline"

and “energy in my body” *may* be merely a way of referring to her heart; but those references *may* refer to bodily sensations beyond her heart. RTH’s “softening” was intended to honor that ambiguity and give Agnes a chance to sort it out without merely assuming one particular interpretation.

55:13 Agnes: Yeah, so there, like this whole, as I’m doing this, there’s this like energy, like this like, um, where I’m very alert, um, the heart pounding is like this adrenaline, like, and I do, I mean, to answer Michael’s question, like I do physically feel my heart pounding. Um, yeah. So I think that’s all I, I can say right now. I mean, like, you can ask me other questions and maybe I can say more, but, um, that’s all I can think to say about that.

56:00 RTH: [pause] It’s fine with me.

56:00 Russ comments: To my ear, it is still ambiguous whether this “energy” and “very alert” refers to some sense beyond the heart pounding. It surprises me a little that RTH didn’t pursue this; perhaps RTH thought we were already an hour into the interview, or that he had missed some details, or whatever.

56:01 Agnes: If that answers your question or, yeah.

56:04 MD: Uh, yep.

56:09 RTH: So are we good about number 6?

56:12 MD: Yes. Uh, yes I am.

56:15 RTH: And it is now 9:28 my time, which is 12:28 your time, which means we’re almost at an hour. Do we wanna do some from yesterday at least to get a clear, our throats about to clear our minds about AI [laughs]

56:30 MD: I, I have time to do one more and then I will have to go,

56:33 Agnes: I could do one more as well. Alright,

56:35 RTH: Let’s do one more. Um,

56:36 Agnes: Does it matter, like which one of the ones from yesterday I choose?

56:36 Russ comments: There are two competing interests here. If the intention is to obtain a *random* sample of Agnes’s experience, it would be better for RTH to choose which sample to discuss (for example, “do the first one”). But if the intention is to let Agnes lead us in a direction that she thinks might be interesting, then it is better to let her choose. RTH preferred the latter.

56:42 RTH: No. Go for it.

56:43 Agnes: Pardon?

56:44 RTH: Go for it. Whichever one.

56:46 Agnes: Okay. Okay, I'm gonna go for the first one from yesterday.

56:52 RTH: Okay.

Sample 4.1 discussion starts here

56:54 Agnes: Um, hold on. That one I wrote, I wasn't actually at my notebook, so I wrote it in a document [RTH: Fine.] which I will just open my little note among all these other stupid open documents with my syllabus and so forth. Okay. Um, so yeah, this one was last night. Um, I was sitting at my computer outside on my deck and um, I was, I had been looking at this ad that I had posted on Pink Bike. I'm trying to sell a mountain bike that I just bought. Michael, if you're interested, you have lots of money, please, please buy it off of me [laughs]. Um, so, um, at the moment, so the, the beep kind of caught me in a moment where I felt, unlike these other beeps, like kind of, um,

57:46 I don't know what, what word I was gonna use, the word *mindless* or *fully absorbed* in what was going on. Um, so basically I was scrolling through this ad that I had posted before this, like before the moment of the beep. Um, I had been looking at how many views it received, and then in the moment of the beep, um, I was just scrolling through the photos just to kind of like double-check which ones I had put up there. And I didn't, that I didn't put up anything stupid. And, um, in the moment of the beep, I was just fully absorbed in this image of this one part of my bike. Um, so that was, as far as I can tell, this was one of the ones where like the beep went off. And, um, I, I didn't have a clear sense of what else might have been happening in my world. I think there was, I suspect that there was still some stuff about what I was thinking about this ad that was there, but what I can say for a certain is that I was fully absorbed like in this visual of this photo of this bike part. And then anything else I don't feel that I have a good, um, grasp of.

59:07 RTH: So let's start with the photo, with the seeing of the photo. So am I looking at this photo just as a photo of my bike part? Or am I zoomed in on the sprocket or the caliper or whatever? And, uh...

59:17 Agnes: I'm, I'm not zoomed, I'm just seeing it as a photo of a bike part that I had posted, that, um.... So no, I'm not zoomed in on anything in particular in that photo. I'm not inspecting it, I'm just kind of, I was scrolling through these photos just to see like, oh, what had I posted? Part, I mean, just some backstory, like a, a friend of mine graciously, um, took all these photos for me and like set up another ad at, at, on another site for me. So he had sent me all these photos, and I had just uploaded them a couple days ago. So I was just kind of checking that I had uploaded the right ones. So I wasn't, I wasn't *inspecting* them or anything, it was just like, okay, there's a bike part, there's a bike part. And I was sort of in that moment, like I wasn't even really check. Yeah. If I'm honest, I was no longer really checking. I was just kind of mindlessly scrolling, I guess, in the way that you could mindlessly scroll the internet. I was sort of mindlessly scrolling these photos that I had posted in the ad.

1:00:22 RTH: So I was seeing the photos go by, basically.

1:00:26 Agnes: Yeah.

1:00:26 RTH: And do I, do I feel myself to be making them go by? Is the, or is that, is that sort of background? Jst watching them happen? That's,

1:00:35 Agnes: I'd say that's background. Yeah. Like, I don't know in the moment I, the beep went off, I don't believe I had any experience of the scrolling. Like I believe I was just on that one photo.

1:00:47 RTH: Okay. So my scrolling has produced this photo, and at the moment of the beep I'm seeing this photo and the task that I have set myself is to make sure that these are the right kind of photos or whatever. But I don't, I don't experience that task at this particular moment.

1:01:03 Agnes: Exactly. I don't experience that task. Like in this moment, like I'd say I'm just kind of, I'm in like a state of like a little bit like bluh, cuz

1:01:12 RTH: [laughs] so I might have, I might've been scrolling through my friend's birthday party pictures or whatever, [Agnes: Exactly!] and I'm seeing the pic, I'm seeing the pictures go by and registering what they're, what they're about, but

1:01:22 Agnes: Yeah, I'm in this kind of bluh state [laughs]. Okay. Like

1:01:27 RTH: Then, then it, it turns out there's, I, I see quite a, quite a lot of scrolling, scrolling stuff and it's pretty much, pretty much like that I'm watching it go by with a mindlessness to it.

1:01:37 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah, exactly. And like I, this is why I don't do like social media because it puts me in this state and I don't like this state. And I was kind of putting myself in the state with my stupid bike ad. [laughs]

1:01:50 RTH: Okay. I got it. So what I'm gathering is that at this particular moment, the only thing that's really e, experiential, which is not much, but that is, I'm seeing, I'm seeing in a mindless way what I'm looking at, which happens to be a bike part. And I know it's a bike part and it's, I probably know it's my bike part and all that stuff, but, but I'm just unformedly seeing it as far as my experience is concerned.

1:02:17 Agnes: Yeah. Yeah.

1:02:19 RTH: Okay.

1:02:22 MD: Can we, can, can I get a better sense of how unformedly, like do you, did, were you aware of which part it was?

1:02:29 Agnes: Um, [pause]

1:02:33 MD: I, I think you already answered that question.

1:02:33 Russ comments: Good! MD is apparently recognizing that DES is not about the words. If Agnes has to hesitate in answering a simple question, then she probably doesn't know the answer to that question.

1:02:35 Agnes: Not really. Yeah. I mean, to be honest,

1:02:36 MD: I suspected that, but I just wanted, I was curious if you were, if you was *Oh yeah! I knew it was the, the reel...*

1:02:42 Agnes: Yeah, like what had happened is the beep went off and I, I think I asked myself *should I make a note of what, which photo this was?* And I decided that I didn't need to because it wasn't really relevant. Could have been any photo.

1:02:57 MD: Right. That's, that's what I wanted to know.

1:03:01 RTH: So I thought Michael's was a good question and I thought his interpretation of the hesitation was the best a, was the best answer. If, if she couldn't answer that question right off the bat, then the answer's gonna come out to be No. So shall we do this again?

1:03:19 MD: Sure. [Agnes: Sure.] I'm learning a lot.