

Agnes Bolinska.
Agnes Interview7
Sampling day 7

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the May 29 interview with Agnes that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/JIFOqNIyL0Q>. 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.
- 0:03 RTH: And this is gonna be Agnes's seventh day, I think. Yes. Anything we should talk about sampling before we talk about that?
- 0:17 Agnes: I don't think so. I, I guess one thing I should say is that I was, I had kind of a stressful day today and I was reading the document that you sent around, Russ, like, I don't know, last week, but I haven't read it fully. So for whatever that's worth. I read like most of the way through it, I think, but I didn't get quite to the end.
- 0:37 RTH: Okay. I probably don't remember what I sent. So sooner or later you'll respond to it and then I'll remember.
- 0:43 MD: Yeah. I owe you some responses as well, like I said, but I'll, I'll get to it.
- 0:47 RTH: Okay. So sampling day number 7. Samples from today or from yesterday?
- 0:54 Agnes: I, so I have two from this morning and four from yesterday. Um, but they're not that exciting. Warning! They're not that exciting! [laughs].
- 1:06 MD: We'll be the judge of that.
- 1:07 RTH: That's right.

- 1:07 Agnes: [laughs], you're gonna be like, wow. Agnus was working on her paper and staring off into space. Again! Wow! [laughs]
- 1:17 RTH: Well, shall we do the ones from today first? And, uh,
- 1:20 Agnes: Sure. Yeah,
- 1:21 RTH: But I'm, I'm, I'm easy about that. If you think, if you think there's something to be gained by doing it the other way around. Um,
- 1:27 Agnes: No, not really, to be honest. Um, yeah, I'm happy to do the ones from today first.
- 1:35 RTH: All right, let's do it. So this is gonna be number 5. [Agnes: Yeah.] The first beep is gonna be 7, 7.5.

Sample 7.5 discussion starts here

- 1:42 Agnes: Yes. So it was the morning. I was sitting outside on the deck and I was working on my paper. [laughs]
- 1:50 RTH: Heard that before!
- 1:54 Agnes: And, um, and I had just, I was in the... Hold on actually. Hmm. Sorry. I didn't, I realized you, you'd think I'd be better with this iterative process. I'm supposed to be better at this now, but like, I didn't write good notes, I just realized. Um, but, um, so at the moment of the beep, I was in a moment of kind of *pause* and I had actually interrupted me saying "such an objection," um, and I was saying that kind of in my own voice in the context of just having written that. And in the moment of the beep, um, I was seeing the screen, um, but not actually reading in the moment of the beep. Um, and I was sitting like this [demonstrates chin on hand] and like feeling, like, I was kind of sitting like this and thinking, and I could like, feel my hands against my lips. Um, so the experience was, um,... (Sorry, I just, sorry, I'm getting the other, this one confused with the other beep, the, the one after that. So I'm just trying to like, sort out what was happening, um, with those, between those two.) Um, yeah, I think that's it. Just the saying "such an objection," innerly in my head, um, seeing the screen but not actively reading at the moment of the beep. And then like, feeling my hands like this against my lips.
- 1:54 Russ comments: RE "I'm supposed to be better at this now, but like, I didn't write good notes"
- I think the writing of good notes (or not) is conflated with the kind of experience. If the experience is clear, then the notes will be good. If the experience is not clear, then the notes will be difficult.
- 3:51 RTH: And is one of those more prominent than the others or equally or...?
- 3:55 Agnes: I'd say equally, yeah.

- 4:01 RTH: Okay. So let's start with the hand, with the hands one. So fir, first off is, is it your understanding that the feeling of the hands against the lips was present one microsecond before the beep began, so that sensation was *caught in flight* by the beep?
- 4:22 Agnes: That is my understanding, yes.
- 4:24 RTH: Okay. And, and how confident are, are are the, are you of that? So people sometimes wonder, y'know, is it the case that she, the beep came and she looked around and she says, *well, my hands are here. I must've been feeling my lips.*
- 4:37 Agnes: I feel pretty confident about that. [RTH: Okay.] Um, yeah. Now one, okay, I have to, one thing I have to confess, I feel confident that I was feeling that. Um, but *then* I, I did something which I don't know if is bad, like if it's bad that I did this [laughs], but, um, I'm confident that I was feeling it. So when I wrote that down, I was like, *oh, yes, I was feeling that.* Um, but *then* I had this kind of like, *okay, what are they gonna ask me about this?* This is different. And so *then* I, I was thinking like, oh, they're gonna ask me, *are you feeling your hands?* Or are you gonna, *are you feeling like this sensation of like your lips on your hands?* or is it *the hands on the lips?* And so then I confess I kind of did it again to go like, *Hmm, what, what, what was I feeling* [laughs] *in that moment?* Which is maybe bad, but, um, that's what I, but I do feel confident that I was feeling that. Like that's something that I, I feel confident about.
- 5:42 RTH: Okay. So, so whether it's bad or good, uh, let's set that aside and, and, and let's see whether we can get to the sensation at the moment of the beep, which is to say one microsecond just before the, before the be beep begins and, and, and be happy with *well I'm not actually sure* (cuz I reconstructed it and I can't remember now, now I'm sort of confused about that). So what I would like to know is, so, so we've established that there's a *sensation* involved, and it's not *just* that my hands that I'm resting my hand chin on my hands or whatever, but, but that I am somehow *feeling that* I am sensing that in my directly apprehended experience. [Agnes: Yes.] And what you have said about that is *hands against lips*. So you're right: the question I'm gonna ask is, does this feel like I'm a pressure on my lips? So this is a lip experience or a hand experience? I feel the softness of my lips against my hand, or I don't know, I'm not sure. Got myself confused. What, whatever.
- 6:52 Agnes: I'm not 100% sure about that. But if like, my best recollection would be it was more hands against lips rather than lips on hands. Like it was more this.
- 7:05 RTH: So lip a *lip* sensation.
- 7:07 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. Lip sensi, *lip and chin*, I should say, lip and chin sensation.
- 7:12 RTH: Okay. And, and we're not a hundred percent sure about that, but No, 90% sure. 40% sure.
- 7:19 Agnes: I'd say like 70% sure.

- 7:22 RTH: So pretty sure that this is a facial lip, lip chin, lippy chin sensation rather than a on-my-hand sensation?
- 7:33 Agnes: Yes.
- 7:35 RTH: Okay. And then I think I'm good about that. Michael, you, uh? [MD: I'm okay with that part. Yeah.] Okay. And then let's go to the, uh, the, I'm speaking "such an objection." I'm saying that.
- 7:53 Agnes: Yeah.
- 7:54 RTH: And what's that experience?
- 7:57 Agnes: So I was working on a section of the paper where [laughs] I was replying to the, to this objection. And so, um, yeah, um, to be honest, I don't remember. I'm like recons, I'm reconstructing it right now. Like I, I knew that I was saying in my head "such an objection," which was what I was typing. But beyond that, like, I don't have, um, a clear, um, recollection of the experience right now.
- 8:33 RTH: So my, my *pretty clear* recollection, (and this is a question, but I'm stating it as a statement, which I sometimes do), but, uh, my pretty clear recollection is that I am innerly saying "such an objection," which I have written slightly before the beep. I have typed. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Such an objection as part of a sentence. I can't remember what the rest of that sentence is, but I have typed that. [Agnes: Yeah.] And now I am saying it again in the sense that I have already typed it, and now I am saying it.
- 9:09 Agnes: I have to confess that I didn't write good notes for this one. [RTH: Okay.] And like, I'm not sure which of those it is, it was. [RTH: Okay.]
- 9:20 MD: But you were not reading it. (I mean, that was a question also.)
- 9:25 Agnes: [laughs]. Um, no, I mean, I wasn't reading it as in like, it, it was something I was writing, um, so I wasn't *reading* it. No, it's, I mean, the, the, the, what I don't remember, and I didn't write good notes about, was whether the beep caught me *saying* it or, or whether I *had just said* it. And it was, it would've, and yeah, I'm like, I didn't write good notes for this, and I, um, I don't remember exactly what was going on.
- 10:05 RTH: So the, the indecision or the imperfection of memory, or whatever you want to call that, is about the timing of the beep. Is that right? [Agnes: Yes.] So, so another, another way that it could be an imperfect recollection is that I, I might be typing that *while I'm* saying it so I could be in the simultaneity, the simultaneous act of typing "such an objection" *while speaking* "such an objection."
- 10:35 Agnes: I was *not* doing that. No, because it was like I was in like a pause moment of trying to figure out what precisely I wanna say in response to the objection.

10:48 RTH: Okay. So I had typed it. I'm confident about that. [Agnes: Yeah.] And I'm confident that I'm innerly saying "such an objection." What I'm not confident about is whether that's caught in flight by the beep or slightly before the beep.

11:04 Agnes: Yeah. Exactly. Yeah.

11:06 RTH: Okay. You happy with that portion? Mike, Michael?

11:10 MD: Um, well, let me, I, I, there's a question I wanna ask, which maybe is, maybe this is the right time to ask it. In your initial description, you said that you were like this [puts hands next to chin] and you were *thinking*, and then the thinking kind of disappeared when you, when you restated the whole thing. But I wasn't sure if, I wasn't sure what to make of that. Were, when you said *thinking* maybe, were you referring to the fact that you were saying those words to yourself? Or was there some other thought that was going on? Or was this maybe a mis... Uh, tell me what thinking meant, or maybe that was just a misstatement.

11:45 Agnes: So, honestly I don't remember it clear. Like, I don't remember it clearly enough to answer these questions. Like, I think I was going, like, I may have just said such an objection, and then I was like pausing and thinking,

12:06 MD: But not, and,

12:07 Agnes: And, and thinking, and by thinking I just mean, um, trying to like figure out how to finish that sentence.

12:15 MD: Okay. So there was not an explicit thought that you can reproduce?

12:18 Agnes: No. There was no, like, there was no other inner speech apart from such an objection. And I don't have a good recollection of this any more, and my notes aren't good [laughs].

12:31 MD: That's, that's fine. I just didn't know if what, I just was trying to figure out what, what that statement meant, that *you were thinking*.

12:31 Russ comments: RE "what that statement meant, that *you were thinking*."
Agnes's statement is halfway into her 1:54 turn (on the video at 2:50): "Um, and I was sitting like this [demonstrates chin on hand] and like feeling, like, I was kind of sitting like this and thinking, and I could like, feel my hands against my lips." Michael is well within his DES-rights to inquire about that, but I will say that I heard her use of "thinking" as being a characteristic of current activity, not a characterization of experience.

Michael comments: Clearly I'm still learning to make that distinction well, as an interviewer. It did feel to me that there was a transition in this sentence, where "kind of sitting like this" appeared to be 'real world' stuff, and "feel my hand against my lips" appeared to be 'experiential world' stuff, and I wasn't sure on which side to

put 'thinking'. This point did seem to get clarified later, in any case, so hopefully I didn't do too much damage here!

Russ comments: I spend much of my professional life in the arena of differentiating between what is directly apprehended and all else, so (a) it is not surprising that my sensitivities are different from Michael's (and most other people's), but (b) that does not at all imply that I am always correct in those distinctions (that's what I sincerely meant by "Michael is well within his DES-rights to inquire about that.")

- 12:37 RTH: And I, I will say that that's how I understood it, that the thinking was a, was a description of the overall activity [Agnes: Yeah.] in the same way that you could, you could say "I'm having an interview right now." I'm not *thinking* about having an interview, but it's a fact that I am.[Agnes: Right.]
- 12:57 Okay. Onward to the portion about seeing the screen? So I got the same question as I had earlier about that. So my eyeballs are aimed at the screen. Am I directly apprehending the screen? [Agnes: Yeah.] Or is that seeing the.... So there's an unequivocal yes to that? [Agnes: Yeah.] Okay. And, and seeing any particular part of the screen?
- 13:22 Agnes: No, I'm not, I'm not focused on anything in this moment. It's kind of like, um, it's kind of like this pause kind of moment where, um, there isn't anything I'm focusing on, but I am seeing the screen.
- 13:37 RTH: And, and does seeing the screen mean seeing the Word document or whatever that's open on the screen or the window or the set of windows or the, the actual outline of the screen or the frame of the screen?
- 13:54 Agnes: So I am, there's a, a Word like, a Google doc, uh, open and it's filling the screen, and I am seeing that screen with Google Doc without being focused on any particular portion of it,
- 14:10 RTH: Which is to say that I'm seeing the Google doc surrounded by the screen or the screen with the Google doc on it, but not just one or the other. I'm,
- 14:21 Agnes: Yeah, exactly.
- 14:22 RTH: Okay. So I haven't focused, I haven't focused in on the Google Doc and ruled out the rest of the screen. So it *wouldn't* be fair to say "I'm seeing the Google Doc."
- 14:33 Agnes: Yeah.
- 14:35 RTH: But it wouldn't also be fair to say, "well, I'm seeing the screen without seeing the Google Google Doc."
- 14:41 Agnes: Yeah.
- 14:41 RTH: I am seeing the, I'm seeing what, what is there to be seen, which is the screen and the Google Doc, but not figurizing one of it, one part of it.

14:53 Agnes: Yeah, exactly. Okay,

14:59 RTH: Then I think I'm good about that.

15:01 MD: Yeah, I'm fine.

15:06 RTH: On to number 2.

15:08 Agnes: Okay. So this is number 6, um,

15:10 RTH: 6! Number 6.

Sample 7.6 discussion starts here

15:12 Agnes: So still I'm working on the paper [laughs] (it was not that long after this). Um, and here I have more detailed notes. Hopefully, hopefully it'll be, um, better this time. So the, like, the *background* here is that I had, I had just typed, um, "this kind of objection is motive motivated by precisely the kinds of issues that EBM seeks to mitigate." I had just typed that, that's like background. And, um, I had a, I was feeling my forehead kind of tightening and like my brow furrowing like this. I was feeling that. Um, and I was also in this pause of anticipating what would come next. Like this was at one of those moments where, uh, (and, and again, I'm saying all of this by way of background) I was trying to figure out this tricky part of the paper. And so this was like the beep caught this pause where I was anticipating what would come next, like similar to how we've discussed before.

16:23 Um, and, um, and in, for, for this beep, the, the words that I had just typed, I had also just said them and then like a few, so, so the beep didn't catch me saying those words, like I had already said them. And then like, I don't know, three moments went by, or like a second or whatever. Like, I dunno how to quantify the time. So I dunno if that counts as being part of the beep, but I had just innerly said them before the, the kind of pause. Um, and, um, I was again seeing the screen and I, I had been focused on the part that I'd been typing, but at the moment of the beep, again, I'd sort of softened my gaze. Um, so it was like the beep kind of caught... Like it was, okay, me innerly saying those words. Um, I had been focused on that part of that screen. And then when the beep went off, like I was, had softened my focus a bit to just kind of see the whole thing, but not be laser, um, like lasered in on those words.

17:46 MD: So I, I, I heard two different things about the words, but I think the one that sounded more, more definitive was that you were *not* in the moment of the beep saying the words. Is that correct?

18:03 Agnes: Yeah.

18:04 MD: Okay. But

18:04 Agnes: Like me, yeah. So again, um, I still am having a hard, like every time the beeper goes off, I still have a hard time like knowing what just happened, like being able to kind of recall what just happened the moment before the beep, rather than two moments rather than a moment after. Like, that's something that is hard for me, still.

18:29 MD: Right? Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I get that.

18:31 Agnes: This is kind of my best attempt to say about my experience.

18:35 MD: So I, I'm, I'm, I'm risking now putting, putting an idea in your head, so I'm warning you about that! [laughs] Um, but I'm, I'm, I'm just curious. So sometimes when we say words right *after* we say them, they're still somehow present to us. Like I, y'know, you're kind of vague, somehow aware that you just said the words it. Would that be a fair way to describe your state of mind at this point? Or is it they're gone and now and that you only remembered it because the beep went off and you had to think backwards?

18:35 Russ comments: I do think there is risk here, but perhaps not the risk MD mentions. DES is *not* an inquiry into Agnes's "state of mind." A *state* (of mind or of anything else) is something that is inferred, not something that is apprehended. So MD's question invites an inference rather than a description, and that is risky business....

Michael comments: That this line of questioning was risky is clear, and I think (?) I've learned that if I'm inclined (as an interviewer) to preface a question with 'this is risky' then I probably just shouldn't ask it. But also it appears that we understand the phrase 'state of mind' a bit differently (which clearly has created some confusion). As I understand that phrase, "states of mind" are directly experienced, not inferred. (To my ear the sentence "Agnes' was in a 'New York state of mind' but she was unaware of this fact" is a kind of oxymoron.)

Russ comments: RE "The sentence "Agnes' was in a 'New York state of mind' but she was unaware of this fact" is a kind of oxymoron."

This example highlights the problematics of talking about states of anything, as I see it. I think there is no such thing as a New York state of mind. I accept that New York is different from Columbia or Las Vegas; I accept the people in New York on average act in different ways than do people in Columbia or Las Vegas; I accept that people in New York on average think in different ways than do people in Columbia or Las Vegas; and so on. But I do *not* accept that every (or any!) *individual* in New York acts or thinks in some particular New York kind of way (because the average does *not* apply to every—or perhaps any—individual). Furthermore, I do *not* accept that what Michael thinks of as the New York state of mind is the same as what Agnes thinks of as the New York state of mind or what Russ or anyone else thinks of as the New York state of mind. That is, even if there is such a thing as the New York state of mind, I think there is no universal agreement about what it is.

I think people refer to the New York state of mind (or to any other state) as an invitation to collude: I'll use this *state* term as if we have a shared understanding of

what it means if you tacitly agree also to act as if we have that shared understanding.

So when I said (in my original 18:35 comment) “A state (of mind or of anything else) is something that is inferred,” I am being more charitable than I ought to be: I should say “A *state* (of mind or of anything else) is probably something that is the result of a collusion.”

Michael comments: The phrase “New York State of Mind” did seem possibly too obscure, and it was... It was a reference to an old Billy Joel song, in which it pretty clearly does refer to something like a ‘mood of which the bearer of the mood is directly aware’ (not inferred). (So there you go -- we have invoked the psychological and linguistic authority of Billy Joel...)

The upshot, probably, is that we really do just understand this phrase “state of mind” quite differently. I don’t think of the use of ‘state’ in that phrase as **at all** like the use of the word ‘state’ in physics -- states (in theoretical physics) definitely **are** inferred (“state of the electron” -- angular momentum L , or whatever). I mean something pretty close to ‘mood’. Anyway, we don’t need to hash that out. I’ll just not use the phrase any more.

Russ comments: RE “we really do just understand this phrase ‘state of mind’ quite differently”

That makes it about the words—that we have a different understanding *of a phrase*—when I think we have a different understanding *of the phenomenon itself*. MD says the New York state of mind refers to a “‘mood of which the bearer of the mood is directly aware’ (not inferred),” but I think that there is likely *no specific* (directly apprehended) New York mood—there are, instead, lots of *very different* experiences that, on retrospection, *seem to cohere* into the New York mood. It may make sense to say “I was in a New York state of mind,” but that does *not* mean that there *was* a New York state of mind.

And furthermore, whatever it is that leads Billy to say “the New York State of mind” may be (and probably are) very different from whatever it might be that would lead Michael, or Agnes, or Russ, or anyone else to invoke the same phrase. When Billy sings, I might have the feeling that *I know just what he is talking about!* but that isn’t necessarily true.

19:06 Agnes: I think that would be fair, what you just said.

19:11 MD: Okay. Um, so there was some, maybe somehow was

19:16 Agnes: Definitely, sorry. Like, that was definitely present to me somehow, y’know, like in the sense that, um, I had written that sentence and I was actively figuring out how these two parts, these two things that I was saying in reply go together. And that sentence was meant to be like a transition, and I was kind of actively working on that. So I’d say that yeah, that sentence was still somehow present to me whether or not I was innerly saying it.

19:16 Russ comments: ... And that, to my ear, is inferential: it is an exercise in logic: first *A*, then *B*, so *must have been C*.

19:45 MD: Right. Okay. That that's, I, I was actually gonna ask you in those words, "was it still present to you?" So, so maybe we're, maybe we're meeting mind to mind at the moment. Um, I guess my, my only other question about it, when you say "seeing screen," can we, can we assume similar to, to the previous beep? [Agnes: Yeah. Yeah.] So all, all those questions that Russ asked about seeing screen would kind of go the same way if we were to re-ask them.

19:45 Russ comments: RE "maybe we're meeting mind to mind"

I think you are meeting mind to mind, but I think it likely that that meeting is in the realm of inference rather than in the realm of description. If that is true, then I would call this mind-to-mind meeting *collusive*; that we have tacitly agreed to confuse (or at least not keep distinct) inferring and apprehending.

RE "can we assume similar to, to the previous beep?"

Part of the DES art is *not* to presume that things are the same, even if they sound the same. It is desirable to start each description at ground zero *for that sample*, to get *that experience* in as high fidelity as it can be gotten, and *then* to examine how similar *that experience* is to any previous experience. I do accept that this is difficult, because it seems so repetitious. But this instance turns out to be a good example: RTH's 20:12 question allows Agnes at 20:19 to describe aspects that are *not* the same as previous samples.

20:11 Agnes: Yeah.

20:12 MD: Okay.

20:12 RTH: So can I ask that one slightly different? So was there *anything different* about seeing the screen this, this time than last time?

20:19 Agnes: So I guess one difference is that I, I think, I *believe* the beep caught this transition from being actually focused on the sentence that I had typed to, again, like a, a, um, softening of my focus. So, um, yeah, I'm not sure if I can answer that question with full confidence, but that's the only thing I, I'd say might be different.

20:50 RTH: So the answer, the answer to that question would be something like: this beep... the previous, the previous beep, it, *it was softened*. It had softened. [Agnes: Yeah.] And this, this beep was *possibly* in the *transition* to softening [Agnes: Yes, exactly.] and not yet, not yet arriving.

21:04 Agnes: Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

21:06 MD: Okay. And so, yeah, I wanted to ask about softening. Is that a visual experience? Is that an attentional experience? Like does softening mean that something happens visually? Or does just it's more about where your attention is?

21:22 Agnes: The latter. Yeah. [MD: The latter.] It's like an attentional experience. Yeah. So it's not like visually things blur or go outta focus or anything like that. It's just, I was

focused on the sentence, um, kind of reading the words, and *now I'm not*, like, it's all just before me.

21:06 and 21:22 Russ comments: This is a good example of why *attention* is *not* a good way to think about experience. MD's question and Agnes's response suggest that there is a clear-eyed homunculus that aims (or doesn't aim) this attention thing at the visually available objects. I think that is quite misleading. Agnes (the whole of Agnes) sees with figural detail, creating the seen sentence, or she sees without figural detail, not creating any figural aspect. There is no behind-the-scenes attention aimer.

I wish to reiterate that this is *not* the slightest bit critical of Agnes. I am *not* saying "Agnes is not clear" as if it would be better if Agnes were clear. What I am saying is that *no one* apprehends Agnes's attention, not Agnes, not Michael, not Russ. Agnes sometimes sees with figure/ground features, sometimes not.

Michael comments: I'm sure I did not intend to refer to anything whose description could involve a homunculus (even metaphorically). The lesson that I started to take, after reflecting on why Russ might have reacted this way, was "Michael must mean something slightly different from Russ by 'attention'" but upon reflection, I think that the correct lesson is "Michael doesn't have any clear idea what the word 'attention' means." (So I would say that it was a bad question because it invoked a word whose meaning was very unclear to Michael, leaving zero chance of making the question clear to Agnes, regardless of how she might herself understand that word!)

Russ comments: RE "Michael doesn't have any clear idea what the word 'attention' means."

Neither does Russ. Michael seems to be making the same point that I was trying to make by mentioning the homunculus, only Michael made the point clearer.

In a fundamentally important way, DES is the best way I have come up with to talk about Agnes's experience without using terms that neither of us has any clear idea about.

21:42 MD: Okay. I feel like I might've missed something, but I don't think I have any other questions. Did I miss something?

21:47 Agnes: Well, it's not that exciting. Michael [laughs] [laughs].

21:50 RTH: So we haven't gotten to the brow for ring portion yet.

21:52 MD: Oh, that's right.

21:53 Agnes: Brow for, yeah,

21:54 MD: Sorry. I, I, I have it written right here and I still didn't [laughs]. Okay. Yes, I did wanna ask about that. Um, okay. Is, so, I guess maybe, maybe just ask an o very open-ended question. Can you, can you just say more about what that feels like? Brow tightening? You said tightening and then you said furrowing. Um, so

21:54 Russ comments: No reason to apologize—that's one of the advantages of having two interviewers. BTW, the same thing, but in the other direction (MD helping out RTH's memory lapse) happens at 59:37.

22:17 Agnes: Yeah, it's like, it feels like a tightening here, tightening [laughs]. Is

22:23 MD: That, is that a feeling in your skin, in your, in your,

22:26 Agnes: In my, um, is it

22:27 MD: Deep, deeper down or

22:28 Agnes: Deeper down? Yeah. Not skin. Not skin, but like in the muscles up in my forehead.

22:37 MD: So is it the kind of feeling you might have if you were like to actually like do it, I

22:42 Agnes: Feeling when you do this [laughs], these are not allowed questions, Michael bend [laughs].

22:48 MD: I'm just trying to figure out what you're talking about. So, so you think it's a muscular feeling?

22:53 Agnes: Yes.

22:54 MD: Okay. And is it a,

22:56 Agnes: The tightening of the muscles in my forehead, I felt that.

22:59 MD: Okay. And,

23:02 RTH: And can I, can I ask a more basic question before we get too far down this road? Yeah. So, so is, is it the case that this tightening, whatever we're gonna call it, was present experientially at the moment of the beep? Yes. Is to say, I feel when the beep, the beep catches that forehead brow sensation in flight?

23:25 Agnes: Yes.

23:26 RTH: Okay. Then back to Michael.

23:29 MD: Um, what was I gonna ask? Right? Uh, was it all right? I know, I know this is all, again, dangerous territory that we've entered in many times before, um, which I dunno if that makes it more dangerous or less dangerous, but, um, did, do you feel that it was brow tightening in the sense of I am now a genetically tightening my brow? Or was it just the feeling itself without any sense of like, I am doing this or whatever? No,

24:11 Agnes: Just the feeling itself.

24:12 MD: Just the feeling.

24:14 Agnes: I wouldn't attach any agent cleanness

24:18 MD: [laughs]. Okay. That's fair. So, so maybe, I mean, we, we have maybe this is actually, maybe, maybe the fact that we've been down this path does help because maybe we can say, and this is a question again, it's not, it's not that it's genetically happening. I'm not like an, I'm not like thinking I'm not experiencing myself doing this, but you're also not experiencing it passively as if someone was doing it to you. It's just the feeling. Yes. Is that a fair, fair statement?

24:51 Agnes: Yes. And that's actually, I did read past that part of the document, so, um, yeah, exactly. I mean, one of the, like from last time, I mean the, the distinction that Russ, or the correction that Russ made was it can be active, passive, or neither, or not applicable. And I would

25:09 MD: Say that's, that's what I'm asking. Yeah. Yeah,

25:10 Agnes: Exactly. And I, and I would, and my answer would be neither not applicable.

25:14 MD: Right. Okay. That's what I was asking.

25:17 RTH: But directly experienced,

25:18 Agnes: But directly experienced. Yeah. Right.

25:21 MD: Okay. I think I, I think I'm good now.

25:25 RTH: So I still have a couple of questions about that. So, so it seems like what, what I've heard, and I I'm always asking to be corrected if I got it wrong. What I've heard is that I'm confident that the beep happened, that, that, that the experience that was ongoing and caught by the, that the forehead experience was ongoing and caught in flight by the beep. There's no question about that.

25:48 Agnes: Yes.

25:51 RTH: Then about the speaking, that I'm not a hundred percent sure whether that had happened be and was over, or almost over the caught in flight by the beep time.

26:07 Agnes: That was, I'm confident that it was *not interrupted* by the beep, but I'm not sure whether it qualifies as being the last undisturbed moment of the beep or the moment before that, or like two moments before that.

26:22 RTH: So that's the, that's the distinction that I'm interested in, in seeing, seeing whether we can clarify, because for me, there's not a distinction there. What I'm interested in what is sliced through by the beep, and I call that *the moment of the beep*, and it's, and, and then I say it's, it's the moment before the beep because I don't want it to be in reaction to the beep.

- 26:47 Agnes: Right. And I guess the, the challenge for me, like part of... The *brow thing* was so easy for me to say this was *sliced through* by the beep because it was like the beep happened and I could *very easily* say like, *oh yes, I'm doing that*, y'know. Like, but when it comes to this more attentional stuff, like the reading or the thinking about this, it's like when the beep, like for my ex, I can... Can I tell you briefly, like my experience of the beep is often like the beep kind of startles me a little bit and I'm, and the, the next thing that happens is, *oh, it just beeped! Uh-oh! What was just happening? Am I getting it right? What's, what was just happening?* So it's like, um, very, it's often very hard for me to an ambiguously answer that question of what, like, what did the beep slice through exactly. Because there's all that noise around the beep for me. So, um, yeah, I dunno. I dunno if that answers what you were getting at.
- 27:56 RTH: Well, well, what I, what I'm, what I'm hearing in that is that there are *some things* that are *not* affected by the, what we're calling the noise or the whatever. [Agnes: Yeah! Exactly!] And, and one of those things is this furrowed-ness of my forehead.
- 28:15 Agnes: Yes!
- 28:15 RTH: And then there are....
- 28:17 Agnes: That seems to be not affected, whereas other things seem to be like *very* affected, [RTH: Right.] to the point where half the time I'm like, *Am I making this up? Or Was this really happening?* Or like, that's why there's this indeterminacy often in my answers.
- 28:31 RTH: And the, and the, the important moral to that from my, from my point of view, is that it's not something about the, the *beep itself*, it's about the *interaction* between the beep and the kind of experience. The beep doesn't seem to disturb my forehead f, furrowing, but the beep does make it difficult for me to grasp whether this inner, whether there's a shadow of this inner speaking. I'm gathering that the inner speaking was well enough before the beep that we can say *that wasn't present at the moment of the beep*. But the question that Michael was asking is, was there some residual or consideration or whatever of that still going on? *That's* hard to say.
- 29:11 Agnes: But also, I mean, one of the things I was thinking about today as these beeps were happening was: another way, Russ, that you have described, um, *caught in flight*, um, like the, the moment that was caught in flight of the, sorry, the moment of the beep or the moment that the beep slice slices through. Um, I believe that in previous sampling you've described it as, um, the, (see now I'm, now I'm forgetting what exactly you said), but like the kind of, um, experience that the beep interrupts or, um, (I'm forgetting now how you, how you, how exactly you put it). But so this is like my Agnes way of, of understanding it, but my understanding was that it's not necessarily like this very, like this super, super thin slice, but like whatever was unfolding that the beep interrupted, that's what we're interested in. Um, and so in that spirit, I was trying to not try, I was trying to go, okay, what was going on before the beep beeper went off *without* trying to narrow in so precisely to that split

second before the beep. Um, and so in that spirit, I guess, and I don't know if that's, if I'm getting that right, maybe I'm misunderstanding, um, I just kind of included the fact that I had, that I had, um, read that whole thing and then there was this pause and I, and I just included the indeterminacy of what counts as the moment in my description.

31:00 RTH: So I think I'm agreeing with all of that and that that, and, and, *and* I do think that we have been trying to become more precise about what exactly the moment of the beep means to me and to you and to Michael and anybody else. And, and where what I, where what I recall from previous sessions, (which my memory is not that good), but what I recall is that I was worried that we were, that you had, you had gotten that we had to get this very thin slice.

31:31 Agnes: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

31:32 RTH: Yeah. And I was, and I have been trying to say I don't, um, the, the, the, uh, ascend, uh, an experience can be fairly long [Agnes: Right!] and the beep can come anywhere along in there; and that would be fine with me. [Agnes: Right.] The, the, the ex the ongoing experience could be seconds or minutes long, could be, but, but the question is whether it's directly apprehended, sliced through by the beep. As if the beep were a dart, and the dart can catch an experience any, anywhere along in the experience. It could be at the beginning of the experience, at the end of the experience or middle of the experience. And the experience could be long or short as long as the dart hits it.

32:14 Agnes: Yeah, that's, that's the what you just said. That's what I was referring to. Yeah. So I was trying to, when the beep has been going off, I've been trying to go, *okay, what is that experience* rather than focusing too narrowly.

32:33 RTH: Right.

32:34 Agnes: And so, yeah,

32:36 RTH: But I, I also don't want us to under undersell the possibility that the, the difficulty of the task depends on, on the experience that's going on, the *kind of* experience. If, if my experience is sort of a, inchoate mulling, that might not be very easy for me to tell whether it is dartified, whether the, whether the dart has hit that or not. But if it's a sensation in my forehead, well, that I can, I can deal with that.

32:36 Russ comments: That the ease of sampling depends on the clarity or accessibility of the experience is a fundamentally important observation in DES.

33:13 Agnes: Yeah. Yeah. I'd say that's right.

33:16 RTH: And, *and* I think that's an important characteristic of the, of the method, I think, or or of experience, I wanna say experience. It's an important characteristic of experience: that some experience is more directly apprehended and others is less directly apprehended.

- 33:40 Agnes: Yeah, I'd agree with that.
- 33:47 RTH: And, and, *and* I would like to emphasize that that is not a failing of Agnes's. That is the way it is. And uh, if Agnes has experienced some of which includes a inchoate mulling, and it's gonna be hard for her to say, *well, I'm not exactly sure whether that had come and gone or whatever*, well then that's just the way it is. Agnes has experiences, which is sort of hard to tell whether it's where it is. Which I think is probably true. I think that's probably the characteristic of Agnes now. [Agnes: Yeah.]
- 34:23 MD: It definitely feels that way. Yeah.
- 34:24 RTH: And, and that is, and that is not, that is not the *fault* of Agnes. That is the *characteristic* of Agnes, which is a different deal.
- 34:41 MD: Whose fault is it, Russ? Is it Agnes's mother's fault?
- 34:45 Agnes: Probably! [they laugh]
- 34:50 RTH: Most things end up being *my* fault! [they laugh] I've been reading some comments that people have been making to, in, on the internet about my work, and it seems like most of them fault me. Oh, well. So shall we go on to beep number 1?
- 35:10 Agnes: Sure.
- 35:11 RTH: So this will be the first beep from yesterday?

[Sample 7.1 starts here](#)

- 35:14 Agnes: Yes. So, so this beep was unusual in that, um, I had just turned on the beeper and it beeped like 30 seconds later, which hadn't happened to me yet. So, um, so this is all, all background. I had just, um, transitioned from attaching the beeper to myself, like just hooking it in, so, so that it would attach to looking up at my computer screen. Um, and so I, my experience was that I was feeling a shift of weight from my left to my right foot. I was at my standing desk, um, and I was seeing the computer screen. I wasn't yet reading. I had literally just, like the beep interrupted the moment where I was shifting from my left to right foot, and I had started seeing the computer screen, um, but I wasn't yet reading anything. And it was open on an email, like a very long annoying email with lots of stuff. Um, so yeah, my experience was the feeling of the shift from my left to my right foot and seeing this, the computer screen, not focused on anything.
- 36:36 RTH: Okay. And is the, is the feeling from left to right present to me in my directly apprehended experience? [Agnes: Yeah.] So it's not just a fact of the universe that I'm shifting my weight, and then when I look back, I can say, well, y'know,
- 36:52 Agnes: Yeah,

36:53 RTH: But I feel, I feel it.

36:54 Agnes: Yeah.

36:56 RTH: And does this feel like I feel it in my left foot, or I feel it in my right foot, or I feel a shifting, a a shifting-ness to it? Hard to say? Not possible to say?

37:10 Agnes: Hard to say. I, yeah, I don't know how to answer. Like, it was like,

37:13 MD: Or maybe in your body? Like not in your feet, but just like the,

37:19 Agnes: I'd say in my feet. In your feet. Okay. Like after, like, so of course my body was shifting, but I was feeling it, the experience was like the shift of the weight from left foot to right foot. [MD: Okay.] Um, again, I don't know whether it was like left <beep> right or left right <beep> or like where exactly the beep came, but that's, that was my experience. That's like what beep interrupted was that shift and it was experienced in my feet rather than elsewhere.

37:54 RTH: And does it feel, does at the, in, in the, while it's happening, does it feel like a left foot thing? Or a right foot thing? Or does it feel like a shifting?

38:07 Agnes: Like a shifting. [RTH: Okay.] But like a shifting but it's, it's not *not* a left foot thing, and it's not *not* a right foot thing. [RTH: Okay.] Like, I wanna say it's shifting, but it's also a left foot thing and a right foot thing.

38:24 RTH: Okay. I'm happy with that. So, so what I've got,

38:27 MD: Can I ask one more question about that? Um, just offer another distinction between maybe feeling weight or pressure on your feet, versus feeling muscular activity in your feet. Is there, is that a meaningful distinction in this case?

38:41 Agnes: Like pressure, pressure and pressure and weight, not muscular activity. [MD: Okay. Alright.] Not, it wasn't like an active, I wasn't feeling my active shifting. Like not agentic! [laughs]

38:54 MD: No, I, I wasn't really trying to get...

38:56 Agnes: I know you weren't asking about that, but like the, the muscular thing would maybe.... Anyway, you weren't asking about that.

39:01 MD: No, but you said pretty clearly just then you, it was more like pressure and weight rather than [Agnes: Yeah.] more like muscular activity. [Agnes: Exactly. Yeah.] Okay.

39:09 RTH: So what I've got from that is that there was something footy, footy pr, pressure, pressure, pressure-footy that that happens. And it, it is indubitably interrupted by the beep. [Agnes: Yes.] Now, I can't say exactly where in this pressure-shift it was—not a hun, not a hundred percent sure about that—but there was ongoing-ness foot

pressure. [Agnes: Yes.] part of, part of my beep, part of the beep, [Agnes: Yes.] not, not just reconstructed after the beep.

39:44 Agnes: Yes.

39:46 RTH: Okay. And *then* there is, I see the computer screen but not yet focused on it.

39:54 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah.

39:56 RTH: And is this will be the third beep where we have seen a computer screen. Is this the same kind of a deal? I'm

39:56 Russ comments: Here RTH makes it too easy for Agnes to say that this was the same experience as previously described. That is an error similar to the one that I criticized in the second half of my comment at 19:45.

40:03 Agnes: Same kind of deal. Yeah.

40:04 RTH: My eyeballs are aimed at the computer screen; there is an email present; I'm not reading the email; I'm not just focusing on the email. I'm seeing the rest of the screen as well. So this is a visual perception without a figure. That was a, something that we've sort of tentatively created as a characteristic. This is a non-figural visual phenomenon, [Agnes: Yes.] and all three of them have been like, have, have been like that. [Agnes: Yeah.] I am, I am seeing without making anything the figure.

40:44 Agnes: I mean, except that I like... Yes, except that if any, like, it's not that when I'm seeing the screen, everything else around it is black or not present. I'd say everything is still there. But, so the whole screen is the figure screen plus email screen plus Google doc, whatever is the figure. And everything else, um, is still there, but in the background.

41:18 RTH: So I have made something about the screen email figure by comparison to the rest of what might be falling on my retina, the window and the chair and the lamp and whatever. [Agnes: Yeah.] So I, I have made something of a figure. [Agnes: Yeah.] But I haven't, but I haven't made a, a clearly defined figure.

41:18 Russ comments: RE "something about the screen email figure"
That is not quite right; it would be better without the word "email."

41:44 Agnes: Yeah. Okay.

41:48 RTH: Then I think I'm good about beep number 1. Uh,

41:52 MD: Me too. Think I already asked what I wanted to.

Sample 7.2 discussion starts here

- 41:57 Agnes: Okay. So, um, [laughs], sorry, this is so uninteresting [laughs], but I'm now writing an email to [laughs], um, that... Like, I got, I, I got a place in Wisconsin for my sabbatical next year. So I was writing an email to the landlord there, and I was typing "I am planning to stay till," and the beep went off after, like, after I had typed "till" the beep went off. Um, and I was saying those words innerly as I was typing it, typing them. Um, and I was focused and I was seeing those words on the screen and I *was* focused on *them*, but I was seeing everything else as well in the background, but I *was* focused on those words, *unlike* the previous, um, computer-screen beeps. So, um, yeah. So, so my experience was saying those words innerly and seeing them on the screen.
- 43:09 MD: Okay, so let's talk about this, now. The, the, so it's come up several times and I, I've wanted to ask, and now, and now it's like front and center when you say, so this is the best example of it, so I'm glad I *didn't* ask it earlier. When you say you're saying them innerly as you're typing, how, say more about how that goes. Like for ex, let me just give you one, one question to address, but don't limit yourself to this question. Is it, are they in sync with each other as you're typing? You're saying, so each, each word comes in your mind and your inner mind, inner monologue as it's being typed? Or, and that's just one question, but I'm inviting you now to say more about what, about how, how this goes.
- 43:58 Agnes: Yes. I [mimes typing with her hands, and says something inaudible]
- 43:58 RTH: [interrupts] So can I, can I give an epoché warning? [MD: Yes, please. (I laughs)], before, before you answer that. So I, it, I think it is entirely possible to feel like I am saying it at normal cadence and have it not be actually in some way said at normal cadence.
- 44:16 MD: Oh yeah. That I didn't mean to be imply otherwise. Sorry if I did, I'm just trying to understand the relationship, the *experienced* relationship, not the *actual* relationship between the typing and the inner speaking.
- 44:28 Agnes: So I don't believe that the typing... I'm not sure. This is something I'm not sure about. Like, so it's a, it is a good question. Um, when the beep went off, I didn't include... Like, okay. It's an open question to me whether the typing itself is part of my experience. Like I'd have to like, I mean, I can reconstruct it, but I, I don't, I'm not confident right now. [MD: Okay. Okay.] So like my best answer to your question is like, y'know, [mimes typing] "I am planning to stay till," um, like, like, um, as if I'm kind of dictating to myself, but I'm not like... Yeah, I don't even know how much, I dunno how much of the typing was really part of the experience. It *may* have been, but I, like, I'm not confident about that. Like, I, I think, I think there's an answer to your question, but I don't think I can answer it without confabulating right now.
- 45:33 MD: Okay. So let me offer you this. Maybe there's no answer. I mean, maybe, maybe because I, I'm asking you for your, the *experienced* relationship between these things. And so until you, until you said there's an answer to your question, [laughs], I started thinking, oh, maybe there's *not* an answer to this question. Maybe the relationship between these things is not something she's experiencing at all.

45:58 Agnes: I mean, maybe yes and maybe no, like [MD: Okay, alright.] when I say maybe there's an answer, I, I genuinely mean I don't... Like, like if I could kind of go back in time to the beep and apprehend it with that question in mind, then I think it's possible that I could answer it. Like, again, part of my challenge whenever the beeps go off, is just going, okay, well what was I like the, the whole epoché thing. I mean, I find it really hard when the beep goes off and then I'm like, *Oh! Okay, the beep went off. What was I experiencing?!?* Like, it's very hard for me not to, um, think about what I was *doing* and have that *inform* what I was experiencing. So yeah, I mean, genuinely, I'm not sure. I guess maybe that's the, the best way to answer your question.

45:58 Russ comments: RE "it's very hard for me not to, um, think about what I was *doing* and have that *inform* what I was experiencing."
That is an excellent expression of the difficulty of the epoché. The epoché is difficult but necessary for fidelity.

46:52 MD: Totally fine. Um, when, when you, you said you were seeing the words and, and this was a little different cuz you were actually focused on the words. [Agnes: Mm-hmm.] Um, I wasn't sure if you meant you were just seeing all the words or you were like in some kind of, y'know, ha linearly working your way through the words or, so.... I guess maybe just say more about what you mean by seeing the words in a focused way.

47:24 Agnes: So I was, I I was **not** going like, going word, word, word like that in sequence. [MD: Mm-hmm.] It was more that sentence. My attention was focused on that sentence that I was typing

47:37 MD: As a whole.

47:38 Agnes: As a whole. Exactly.

47:40 MD: Okay. Okay. And it, I, I guess I know the answer to this probably already, but let me, let me ask it just to be sure. Is that, is there, is there a relationship between that and the inner speaking? Or these separate things, or you don't know?

47:59 Agnes: I don't know. Okay. I mean,

48:02 MD: I, I thought that was the answer, but I felt like I should ask.

48:05 Agnes: In the world. There obviously is, but

48:06 MD: No, no, I'm not asking about that, of course. [laughs]. Okay. Um, I think I'm good then.

48:15 RTH: So what I would say is, I, I I think the epoché is *difficult*, and, and that's, that is not to be swept under the rug. I think it is entirely difficult. And, *but* I think, *and*, and so the, the, the aim from my point of view is to try to be pretty good at it and, and not fret about whether we're not perfect at it. So I could ask, for example, did you feel

your right hand, first finger hit the key? And I'm *guessing* you would say no, I don't think I, that was not part of my experience.

48:52 Agnes: Probably not, but I don't know.

48:54 RTH: [laughs] and, and, and so I'm happy your right hand, first finger, no doubt did hit the key in, in that. But that was, but that was not figurized for you. That I think we can probably fairly say.

49:08 Agnes: Yeah! Exactly! Yeah, yeah, yeah. That was certainly not figurized for me. That I can say confidently.

49:15 RTH: Right. And so then, then, well, did you feel your hands at all? And I'm guessing the answer to that is sort of tough, but it's [Agnes: Exactly. Exactly.] And, and, and I'm happy with that. I don't, I think that's the way the world... I, I think that's the way the experiential world is: that there's something, there's something in the penumbra, or the penum-penumbra, or the penum-penum-penumbra, or whatever, the, of, of the, of the sensations of the hand that are being processed by this skillful typer. And, and where that ends and where that begins, I don't think, I don't think we can tease apart. Un, *unless* her experience teases it apart. So, y'know, she has a cut on her finger and so she feels she's typing, but she feels the paper cut when she's hitting the key. And that then, then that becomes figural.

50:19 But other than that, what I, so what I, what I've got out of this is: I am saying this sentence, innerly saying this sentence, and that's experiential. I experience myself as speaking this. And I, *and* I am in fact typing it, and that is either not experienced or very minorly experienced, and therefore I don't have any kind of a relationship between 'em. It's, so, it's, it's not a good idea for to ask whether there's, they're in sync or not, cuz I'm not even sure [Agnes: Exactly.] whether the typing portion of it is, is there. And then I'm seeing the screen and seeing the words on it, seeing the, this is a pretty focused seeing [Agnes: Yeah.] as opposed to a relatively diffuse seeing.

51:09 Agnes: Yeah.

51:10 RTH: Then I'm good about that. [MD: Yeah, me too.] Number 3?

Sample 7.3 discussion starts here

51:16 Agnes: Okay, so number 3. Um, okay. So by way of background, um, number 3 has to do with the kitty, the, the cat at the, in the neighborhood. So [laughs], by way of background, the cat is pregnant and um, I mean, she's pregnant but also, but also there was like a question mark about whether she's also sick, like in addition to being pregnant. Cuz she's just been like really, really lethargic since Sunday. And I've been worried, I've been worried about the cat and I've been worried about what I should do and like, y'know, just, yeah, lots of worrying. So, um, I was, so I was sitting, uh, she's been hiding. She's now been like nesting in the ne, next door neighbor's bushes. And I know them and we're like, we're friendly. Um, and that's

- where she was. So I was there kind of in front of their house in their bushes, [laughs], uh, feeding the cat. Um, so that's, this is all by way of background.
- 52:20 Um, and so the experience was that, uh... The experience is, I was just kind of seeing the cat in front of me as well as the [pause] (Man. I really, why don't I have good writing?) Um, oh, like the, the porch, like the, the cat, like the cat was sitting on like the pavement part, and then the background was their house and the porch. So I was seeing that. *Pavement!* That's what that says! *Pavement!* [laughs]. Um, and I was sort of worrying like as like, when, when the beep went off, I was worrying about what's going on and what I should do, and is she just pregnant or is she also sick? Should I do something? Because the neighbors were like, no, she's just pregnant. But she seemed also sick to me. Um, so I was worrying about these things.
- 53:19 Uh, that's what the, the beep, beep kind of caught, but I wasn't saying these things to myself in words. Like, I, like, it's not like it, the beep cut caught any of those particular worries. Um, so, but, but they were somehow present to me. And then I also had this vague sense of whether I should be sitting there like on my neighbor's property, [laughs] with the cat. Like whether, like they're really nice and we get along really well and I'm like, 98% sure they wouldn't care because we've, we've talked a lot. They know, like we've talked a lot about the cat. But still there was this vague sense of like, am I doing something? Am I crossing some line here by like hanging out in front of their front porch with this cat and feeding her like right on their property. So there was that vague sense that that was there as well.
- 54:09 Um, so that's it. So I, it was like the visual seeing the, the cat and the pavement, but not, um, yeah, again, when the beep went off, I'm not sure if I was focused on the cat or if I was just kind of seeing the whole scene. I'm not sure. It's, it's not clear to me. And then this vague, this, this worrying was somehow there and then this vague sense of am I being like a total weirdo and doing something improper? Um, but that was less, yeah, those, those two worries were maybe equally prominent. I'm not sure. I'm not even sure I know how to tease them apart, exactly. So, sorry, this was like all very vague, but that's what was going on.
- 54:50 RTH: So I'm, I'm under, let's stick with, start with the worries. I'm, I'm understanding that there are *two* worries going on. [Agnes nods affirmatively] This is *not* one worry that has.... So there's a worry about the, about the cat being sick [Agnes: Yes.] and what should I do about that, if anything? [Agnes: Yep.] and the, and there's a worry about crossing the line.[Agnes: Yep.] And those are, and those are both are, are, those are both worries. [Agnes nods affirmatively] And, and are, so we're gonna use the same word to describe them. Are they the same kind of experience even though the content is different?
- 55:27 Agnes: Hmm. Good question. [pause, sighs] I don't know. I'm not sure. Because like both of these worries, like, as y'know, as I'm describing this, they're all very, they're not necessarily in words. They're just there. Um, and I'm not sure if they're the same.
- 55:52 MD: So there could be, would it, would it be appropriate (I think this is a different version of Russ's question), would it be appropriate to use slightly more fine-grain terminology? So maybe the first worry is something like *concern* and the second worry is something like *guilt* or something like that.

55:52

Russ comments: RE "I think this is a different version of Russ's question"

In my view, MD's question is risky because it limits (or at least may limit) the difference to be one of *content* (such as *concern* or *guilt*).

By contrast, RTH's 54:50 question ("Are they the same kind of experience even though the content is different?") was *not* limited to content. Agnes *could have* (but didn't) answer it in a content-oriented way, saying something like "Yes, they seem to be the same experience except that one was *concern* and the other was *guilt*" (or some other content-descriptive words).

But if the difference-to-Agnes was *not* content oriented, she could have responded something like "No, the sick-worry was in my heart whereas the line-crossing worry was mental"; or she could have said "No, the sick-worry seemed in some way *slow* whereas the line-crossing worry was somehow *fast*"; or she could have said "There was a swirling to the sick-worry, whereas the line-crossing worry was static"; or any of a host of alternatives.

So I worry that MD's question may deprive us (Agnes, RTH, and MD) of the opportunity to struggle to figure out how to describe, or if we *can* describe, how these two worries were simultaneously present but distinct.

I'm no mind reader, but I think that Agnes was struggling in her 55:27 turn. MD's question reduces the struggle, whereas I would have preferred to struggle along with Agnes for a bit and see if we can discover something.

56:09 Agnes:

Yeah. I mean, yes. I, I wouldn't use those terms exactly, but yeah, I think using different terms would be helpful. So I would characterize the first set of worries as kind of like a problem-solving type of worry. Like, *what should I do? What's going on? How do, how do I proceed?* Um, that kind of worry. Whereas the other one was more like, um, a self-consciousness perhaps, or like a am, am I being improper? Am I like, what do, what will they think of me if they come home? Or I think they weren't home or maybe one of them was home, but I, I don't know if I, I don't know if they could see me. So it was more of like a self-consciousness say.

56:53 MD:

So does, so it feels to me like what you just said, it kind of answered to Russ's question because he was asking is are, is it appropriate to think of these as distinct things? [Agnes: Yeah.] And it sound, it sounds like you're now saying yes to that.

56:53

Russ comments: I think Agnes had, from the get go, confidently described these as distinct things. The question was whether it was possible to say *how* those things were different (in ways that would include, but not necessarily be limited to, content).

57:08 Agnes:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm saying yes. The reason like, I mean, the way you framed the question, Michael, was helpful because when Russ asked it, I was thinking like purely about, okay, what was my.... I, I was trying to clarify for myself, like the experience of those things. And that's what I have a hard time really latching onto. Um, like if you ask me more specifically, like, "Okay, Agnes, you said you were worried, but you also said you weren't using words. Well, where was that worry? Were you feeling it in your body? And now tell me about this con, this other thing about the neighbors. Where were you feeling that?" Or like, if it's not in words, I dunno if I have a good way of distinguishing between them *experientially*, but

conceptually I do. And then there's a question I think about whether there is an *experiential* difference based on that conceptual difference that I think I can confidently say is true.

- 57:08 Russ comments: RE "And that's [the experience of those things] what I have a hard time really latching onto"
I absolutely agree that that is difficult, very likely impossible. The object, I think, is to work as hard at it as we can and if we discover something, great! If not, we will have learned something about the limits of the process.
- 58:21 MD: Sorry, I jumped in there, Russ.
- 58:23 RTH: I thought the, I thought your questions were good. I, I think the, the risk of the questions was that it makes it too much about the words, but Agnes didn't seem to fall for that. So
- 58:34 MD: Good job, Agnes!
- 58:36 RTH: The so is, is this do, does, does, is there a bodily aspect? Do these things seem to be a bodily thing or is this a mental No,
- 58:49 Agnes: I think it's mental. Yeah. Like, um, yeah, not, not bodily.
- 58:55 RTH: So some kind of a mental vortex that has a center of, a center of which i, center of gravity, I guess you could say, of what should I do? [Agnes: Yeah.] And another mental vortex that has a, has a concern, am I crossing a line, center of gravity?
- 59:15 Agnes: Yeah, exactly.
- 59:16 RTH: And, and those seem somehow to be separate. It's not that they're the same vortex,
- 59:21 Agnes: They're separate vortices. [laughs].
- 59:24 RTH: Okay, then I'm good about that aspect. You happy with that, Michael?
- 59:31 MD: Uh, yes.
- 59:37 RTH: And was there, was there something else? I forget.
- 59:39 MD: Yeah, I, there's a, there's the *seeing* stuff.
- 59:42 RTH: Oh, the *seeing*, yeah. I wana hear, hear about the seeing. I see the cat, the pavement and the porch.
- 59:51 Agnes: Exactly. Yeah. And like the house, the bottom of the house. Cuz I'm kind of sitting on the ground with the kitty
- 59:57 RTH: And, and is there a figure in that, in that seeing?

- 1:00:03 Agnes: Uh, I'd say the cat is probably the most figure-like, but I think when, like when the beep went off, I was kind of moving, I think I was moving my attention a little bit. Like I'm not sure. Like it was when the beep went off, it was not entirely clear, like whether I was focused on the cat or whether it was just, that was... Like, I definitely had a visual experience, but I'm not entirely sure whether I was in the moment of the beep focused on the cat or not. I believe I wasn't. I believe it was more like, um, just the cat was in my visual field and the pavement. Um, but I wasn't necessarily focused on anything in particular.
- 1:00:54 RTH: So that sounds like: I'm seeing the screen [Agnes nods affirmatively] on which there is a Word document or a Google doc and a some other windows that are open in a, in whatever, and I am not singling out any one of those, [Agnes: Exactly.] but I am more seeing the screen than I am seeing the round room round it.
- 1:01:17 Agnes: Yes.
- 1:01:19 RTH: And this is, I am seeing the cat in the walkway and the pavement and the porch and the whatever. And I'm not really singling out one of those, but I'm seeing that more than I am the rest of the house or...
- 1:01:19 Russ comments: RE "but I'm seeing that more than I am the rest of the house"
In the next turn, Agnes corrects that—that clause is not accurate.
- 1:01:33 Agnes: Yeah, I mean in, yeah. Yeah. [RTH: Okay.] I mean the, the rest of the house wasn't exactly in my, like my visual field was limited to like cat pavement and then part of the bottom of my house. So, but yeah, I wasn't focusing on any aspect of that.
- 1:01:50 RTH: Okay. Then I think I'm good about that.
- 1:01:58 MD: This is a strange question, but was there any color?
- 1:02:03 Agnes: Yeah, I mean the color of the cat. Like the color of the cat, the color of the pavement. Yeah, those were all present to me.
- 1:02:15 RTH: And I wanted to ask one more question, and that is in the, in the previous beep I saw the sentence and I'm gathering, I, I guess I would like to know whether *that seeing* was different from seeing the cat.
- 1:02:31 Agnes: Yes. Because in that seeing I was focused on the sentence, whereas in this moment, if I'm recalling correctly, I wasn't focused on the cat in this moment.
- 1:02:45 RTH: So to the so...
- 1:02:47 Agnes: I had been, but I was, I had kind of like shifted my focus in that moment. [RTH: Alright.] I think because I was doing the worrying [laughs].

1:02:54 RTH: So it's not like we're neglecting to mention that there's a figure of ground phenomenon here. We are saying, *I'm pretty sure there was not a figure ground phenomenon here*. [Agnes: Exactly.] I, I know what figure ground phenomenon *is*. The sentence was a figure and the..., [Agnes: Correct] but, but this is not that.

1:03:10 Agnes: Yes.

1:03:12 RTH: Okay. And I think I'm good about that.

1:03:18 MD: I'm good.

1:03:19 RTH: And we have past our hour.

1:03:21 MD: Yep.

Conversation after sampling

1:03:24 RTH: So shall we call this enough, enough sampling for today and then discuss what we're going to do next?

1:03:32 Agnes: Yes.

1:03:34 MD: Yes.

1:03:35 RTH: So it seems like we've got two options. One is to do another sampling day, and another is we, we had decided that we thought a, a green meeting would be a good idea. And I'm, I'm sort of mixed about that. I'm,

1:03:48 MD: I, I'm indifferent. I, I would like to do the green meeting. I'm not mixed about that. But I'm, but I'm mixed about, I, I'm okay with either not or yes. Doing another sampling day.

1:03:58 Agnes: I'm happy to just do the green meeting. [laughs]

1:04:01 MD: Meeting. Okay.

1:04:02 RTH: It does seem like we have answered some of the major questions that we had, which were about figure/ground phenomenon. It seems like we have ascertained that there is no figure ground phenomenon in some of these visualizations, or that, or if there is figure ground phenomenon, it's not snappy, kind of this is the figure and that's, and the rest of it's not.

1:04:24 MD: Yeah, I was kind of thinking the latter is like, like it's kind of there, but not, not very distinctive.

1:04:32 Agnes: Yeah.

1:04:37 RTH: I guess that would be matter of interpretation. It maybe becomes out to the language, but the, the cat pavement, house, the natural, I would say the, the natural figure/ground phenomenon thing when we just say, I was seeing the cat. And the pavement when the house was ground and Agnes was saying that isn't what, that isn't what was happening. And then she gives an explanation while I was changing my mind or worried about this or whatever. That's fine with me. I don't really care about that, about the explanation portion. But the experience is I didn't make the cat a zeroed-in-on phenomenon.

1:05:24 So: Sounds like we are deciding by majority rule that we should do the green meeting. [MD: Yeah.][Agnes: (inaudible) And, and uh, when, when should we do that?

[They compare calendars]

1:08:00 RTH: All right. Let's pencil that in. If anybody changes their mind about that...

1:08:02 MD: And now I, I'm sorry about my horrible memory, but now remind me, Russ, um, so I can be prepared, even if I don't have to do actual work, I still wanna think about it a little bit. What, what, what's gonna happen here and what, what should we come in prepared to say or discuss?

RTH describes the green meeting

1:08:21 RTH: So what's gonna happen is that we're gonna go back through all of Agnes's samples [MD: Yeah.] and we'll probably start with the start from the end and work backwards, because at the end is where we thought we understood things better than we did at the beginning. [MD: Okay. Okay.]

1:08:35 And so we will start at the end, at the end and work backwards, and we'll try to bring all those samples back to mind. And what bringing them back to mind is, well, we'll see whether we can remember them, and if it, and if we have doubts about that, then we might look at the video or, or whatever.

1:08:35 Russ comments: We might look at the transcript as well as the video.

1:08:53 RTH: [continues]But then, and, and in that, bringing them to mind, we will, we will write what I call a *caption* and I'll write that in green, which is why it's called a *green meeting*. But the, but a a a caption is designed to be a few words that can convey what that sort of, the essence of that was about.

1:09:13 MD: We're gonna, we're gonna, we're gonna develop or compose these during the meeting. We don't come with them re-written ahead of time?

1:09:19 RTH: That's correct. That's correct. Okay. And, uh, and the object of that will be not necessarily consensus. It will be you, Michael, will have the responsibility and Agnes will have the responsibility of making sure that the caption conveys to her or him what the sort of the central kernel of that experience. And if we disagree about that, then there might have to be, Russ said this, or Russ thought it was this way, Agnes thought it was that way, or whatever. That's, that's to be *desired* rather than, well,

I'll just slide by and see what happens later or whatever. [MD: Okay.] And those captions, we are designed... So we've, we've this, we've had seven sampling days and we've looked at four or five or so samples of each day. So we've got like 30 ish samples to look at and, and to try to remember. And that's a cognitively difficult task to remember all that. So the captions are designed to, so that then we can go back and we can sort of organize these things and the caption is gonna help us do that.

1:10:22 And the captions are, are living things in the sense that we will write a caption for the first beep and then when we get to the second day, (which, which would be the sixth day, cuz we'll be working backwards) we might say, well, we didn't write that, that caption that we wrote back for sample 7.4 wasn't really right. We should go back and adjust that, which we will do. And, and attend to the risks of, well, y'know, this, we're gonna cherry pick these things or whatever. And that's, that is the risk of the procedure. And, and, and we will try not to fall into any traps, but we will try to make the captions useful for us. A what the, and what the, what useful to us means is sooner or later we're going to want to write a, something that characterizes Agnes's experiences as we have apprehended them.

1:11:11 And, and we're, we're gonna wanna say something like, well, y'know, we had, she had a lot of times where she had visual experiences without a figure-ground phenomenon or whatever. And then the caption is gonna help us figure out, well, which ones of those are, are, so that then we can go back and think about that when we try to write about the, the, uh, visual experience.

1:11:34 But the, but the, but the subsequent, the point that I'm trying to make here (pretty slowly), but the point that I'm trying to make is that the, we're, we're not gonna do any analysis of the caption. The caption is a tool that points at Agnes's experience and then this other caption is a tool that points at Agnes's experience. And the video is another tool that points at Agnes's experience. We're, we are gonna use all those tools as best we can to characterize Agnes's experience. And it's not a verbal, it's, it's not a about-the-words deal, it is about Agnes's experience deal. And everything, everything is subservient to that, basically.

1:11:34 Russ comments: Our eventual task is to describe Agnes's beeped experiences in a way that rests lightly on her experience with fidelity. And all these thing are tools that point to Agnes's experience: Agnes's recollection, Michael's recollection, Russ's recollection, the contemporaneous descriptions, the transcripts of the interview, the comments in the transcripts, the videotapes, and the captions. As we endeavor to write a description of Agnes's sampled experiences, we will use all of those tools, trying to use them to the extent that they are useful, recognizing each of their flaws, risks, and advantages.

1:12:15 MD: Got it.

1:12:18 RTH: So we will write a... So ba, basically I will between now and Tuesday. (Did we decide Tuesday? Yeah.) [MD: We did, yeah.] Tuesday at eight o'clock my time, the, I will have prepared a document, which is the same document that I think I've already sent you, but updated, which will have all the descriptions in it. [Those are what are called the contemporaneous descriptions.] And so we will go through those descriptions. We will use that as a tool to try to remember Agnes's experiences. And

we'll start at the end of that document and work backwards and write a green caption on each, overlaid into each one of those things.

1:12:55 And then we will use all of that stuff to de, to say something that we think is worth saying about Agnes's experience. And there again, that might, might not be consensus. It could be that Agnes sees it one way Michael sees it another way, Russ sees it yet a third way. Or it could be that there will be consensus and then we can figure it out. That's, that's the goal. The goal is to say something about Agnes's experience that *Michael thinks is right* and that *Agnes thinks is right* as best they can say and *Russ thinks is right*. And that might have to involve, Michael sees it this way, but Russ saw it that way.

1:13:40 MD: Understood. [Agnes: Alright.]

1:13:47 RTH: But that will come out, that'll come later. So we've got our marching orders. [Agnes: Yes.]

1:13:54 MD: We have our marching orders.

1:13:57 RTH: Alright. Thank you very much. [MD: All right.] It's interesting process.

1:14:02 MD: Yep. Thank you. [Agnes: Bye.]