

Kerry 7.
Kerry Interview 7

Below in black is a word-for-word transcript of the November 8 interview with Kerry that is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/e5IcdGuS-VM>. In brown are conversations about the Descriptive Experience Sampling process that took place during the interview. In green are Russ's comments, and in blue are Julian's comments about and explanations of the Descriptive Experience Sampling process inserted after the interview. If you have corrections, suggestions, or questions, please post them as YouTube comments.

RTH = Russ Hurlburt

JBK = Julian Bass-Krueger

MM = Mel May

Kerry = Kerry U.

SAMPLE 7.1 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

0:02 JBK: All right. So, [Kerry: Okay] so the first beep. So what was that experience?

0:09 Kerry: Um, so I was very much distracting myself with work today. So a lot of these are about work [laughs], I'm, apologies if it's boring. But anyway, beep one was at, um, 11:14 AM. Um, I was sort of mindlessly making copy changes to a design that I was working on, but in the moment that the beep was going off, um, I was saying in my head something I, I was saying "I would like to do a handover call with whoever will be making design edits in the future." That's what I was like, I was like imagining myself on a Zoom call saying that about the design that I was working on. Um, sorry, it's really loud. [refers to background noise] [Mel: It might be me. (echo) It might be me. (mutes herself)]

0:56 JBK: Maybe the wind.

0:58 Kerry: Yeah. There we go. Okay. Anyway, um, so I was, I'm not, I think it was at the end of the sentence that beeped, but basically I was kinda imagining a conversation that I was having with the client that I was doing the work for. Um, so I, I was saying that in my own voice in my head, and then I was, um, picturing like small little zoom squares of their faces. So of the two clients, so it was, the guy's name is Doug, and the other girl's name is Bevan. Um, so kinda a lot of things happening at once. I'm looking at my computer screen. Mm-hmm. I'm mindlessly doing design work, but not really super focused on it. And I was almost sort of like rehearsing what I was gonna say to them in the call that I'd be presenting the work. So looking at my screen, I'm saying I would like to do a handover with whoever's gonna be making future edits. So that's auditory and then I'm visually picturing their faces, but it's like a little zoom square, two zoom squares, not, not like a full scene.

- 0:58 Russ comments: Kerry says “I was, um, picturing like small little zoom squares of their faces” and “I’m visually picturing their faces, but it’s like a little zoom square, two zoom squares, not, not like a full scene.” I take both of those to indicate that the experience is of the squares, with the faces experientially secondary. Part of the evidence for that is that I think it would be far more natural to say “I was seeing them in little zoom squares,” instead of the first utterance. But she doesn’t say that easy locution, instead putting the squares themselves primary. In the second utterance, I take the “but” to be a denial of the “picturing their faces.” (There will be additional comments on this theme at 2:30, 3:52, 4:38, 4:56, 9:49, 10:24, 11:34, 22:53, 23:06, and 24:23.)
- 2:09 JBK: Okay.
- 2:10 Kerry: There’s a bit going on.
- 2:11 JBK: I got a, uh, I got it frozen for a little part of that, but I’ll just [Kerry: Okay] tell you what I got. Um, so, so you’re imagining a, a zoom call with Doug and Bevan and they’re... Devan? or Bevan?
- 2:26 Kerry: Bevan, B-E-V-A-N,
- 2:30 JBK: B-E, Bevan, and their faces in zoom squares, and you’re kinda rehearsing, saying in your head, um, something, something about a handover call. What, what was that specifically?
- 2:30 Russ comments: RE “and their faces in zoom squares”
(See the comment at 0:58) That has it backwards, which runs the risk of dulling the fidelity of the interchange. JBK could easily have said “and zoom squares with their faces.” If Kerry’s experience really was of the people, mirroring Kerry’s original would have allowed Kerry to correct it if she desired.
- 2:42 Kerry: Yeah, basically I’m designing a menu for a restaurant that’s opening and it’s a template, um, so that they can make edits in the future. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] So what I was saying was that whoever’s gonna be making edits, whether the GM of the restaurant or the chef, or whoever, I was telling the client (so Bevan and Doug who work for a hospitality agency, they’re separate from the restaurant. I was telling them.) that I would like to speak with someone in the restaurant who will be working with the, the menu template on a regular basis.
- 3:14 JBK: Okay. Um, and do you remember the, the exact words that you were speaking?
- 3:25 Kerry: Um, I think I got the full sentence in before it beeped. So the word, but the words that I was speaking, I guess right at, at, as the beeper was going off would’ve been “edits in the future.”
- 3:38 JBK: “Edits in the future.”
- 3:40 Kerry: Mm-hmm.

3:41 JBK: Um, would it make sense for you experientially to count that as, as the experience? Or would it make sense with more context like what came before it?

3:52 Kerry: I would say if I to rank experientially, it would be the words. So like, "I would like to speak,"... "I would like to do a handover call with whoever will be making design edits in the future." Um, and we can shorten that to just "design edits in the future." So the words were primary, um, the zoom squares [laughs] were secondary and then like my experience, like I was doing the work, but it's very mindless. So my, what I was actually looking at on the screen, I don't feel like I was really very present. [JBK: Okay.] Um, in, I was more, I was more thinking about the words, cuz I was actually kinda nervous to have this conversation cuz they're being quite annoying. [laughs]. Um, so [laughs]...

3:52 Russ comments: RE "the zoom squares [laughs]"
(See the comments at 0:58 and 2:30) The laugh here, which I take to be Kerry's soul (or heart, or body, or language processor, or whatever) recognizing that seeing the squares is a little strange, is strong evidence that she was seeing squares, not seeing clients in squares.

4:38 JBK: Could you give percentages to, um, like the visual thing, seeing the clients in the zoom call, um, the, the visual computer screen that's actually in front of you and the, the voice in your head? Like, could you give percentages to

4:38 Russ comments: RE "the visual thing, seeing the clients in the zoom call"
JBK continues to normalize (that is, misrepresent) Kerry's locution.

4:56 Kerry: Yeah. Um, I would say like the, the voice is probably 50% and then the faces are 25 and the action of the work that I was doing on my computer screen is 25. [JBK: Okay.] So like, yeah, the faces normally I have really detailed visuals that pop into my head. These were like kinda blurry and small and it wasn't a full scene, it was literally just the two squares. So it wasn't super focused on *them*, but I did know at least it was their two faces, if that makes sense.

4:56 Russ comments: RE "and then the faces are 25"
RTH wonders: Does she say "faces" because JBK has repeatedly said faces? Or is she merely correcting herself?
RE "it was literally just the two squares."
This cements it for RTH: She was seeing squares, not faces. Note that she has probably normalized (by which I mean hide anything that might be abnormal or peculiar) *twice* in her opening salvo: referring to faces and giving 25% to the computer screen, which is likely not at all present in her experience. I think JBK has contributed to this normalization by initiating it himself.

5:38 JBK: Okay. Um, so I guess let's start with the, the most present thing. I, so "I would like to do a handover call with whoever's making edits in the future." And you said that's your voice in your head. Um, is that more metaphorically or does it have like a physical location?

- 6:04 Kerry: My voice?
- 6:06 JBK: Yeah. Like for some people it might be literally in their head and for some people [Kerry: Mmmm.] that might just mean, oh, it's metaphorically like just speaking to myself.
- 6:06 Russ comments: I think Kerry has not understood the distinction that JBK was making at 5:38. The reason is that JBK's (5:38) "that" in "is that more metaphorically" is an ambiguous referent: JBK intends it to refer to "in your head," but Kerry understands it to refer to "that's your voice in your head." The moral: If you want to make a fairly weird/unusual distinction (as I think JBK wanted to do in 5:38), you have to be substantially explicit. So it would have been unambiguous to say something like "And you said that's your voice in your head. By 'in your head', are you referring to a physical location? Do you mean that you actually experience your inner voice as being here [point to forehead], or here [point to back of head], or some other physical space in your cranium? Or are you simply saying that my voice is silent?"
- 6:17 Kerry: Um, I would say it's, I'm not speaking it out loud, but I am, it's definitely, it's in my head, but it sounds exactly like my voice. It sounds like how I would say it on a single call.
- 6:30 JBK: How your voice as you would say it. Any particularities with the tone or pitch or anything, or no?
- 6:38 Kerry: Um, I think because it was a work thing, I was like, the tone I guess was kinda more professional [laughs]. Um,
- 6:51 JBK: And, um, and is this more about just the words? Or more about the meaning? Or more about rehearsing what to say or?
- 6:51 Russ comments: The word "meaning" is a hugely dangerous word, I think. "Meaning" has a very narrow sense, as if JBK had asked: Are you speaking words that have absolutely no lexical significance (no *meaning*)—they might as well be Greek? (I don't think he has any warrant to ask that, but I suspect that is actually what he is asking.) But "meaning" also can have hugely broad significance, as when we refer to the meaning of life, for example. And many intermediate significances. So I recommend never using the word "meaning" without heavy-handedly clarifying what you intend—if you simply use "meaning," you will never know what you are talking about and will likely collusively assume that you have a shared understanding.
- 7:07 Kerry: I think it was more about the meaning because I'm starting to get particularly frustrated with this client. So I think the potentially the reason why my brain even went here in the first place is because I'm trying to minimize myself doing extra work in the future. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] So it was like a general sentiment of being, I guess, sort of disgruntled or annoyed. Um, and then this was my, this was me trying to like mitigate extra work in the future or come up with a solution. And sometimes when

I'm nervous about having particular conversations, I will like rehearse them in my head.

- 7:07 Russ comments: Kerry is not talking at all about experience at the moment of the beep—she is talking about causation, explanation, generality, context, anything except what she had experienced at the moment of the beep. Why? Because JBK had inquired about meaning.
- 7:49 JBK: Okay. And is there a, a frustrated feeling at this moment? Or is that more kinda just the general context that this comes out of?
- 7:58 Kerry: General context, like I'm not, um, I'm not actively upset or angry or anything.
- 8:05 JBK: Okay. And is this more like, um, if we use this tape recorder metaphor, like you're speaking *into* a tape recorder or more like you're pressing Play and hearing, hearing it, playing back and hearing these words,
- 8:22 Kerry: Uh, this one felt [JBK: or does that not make sense?] No, it makes sense. Yeah. I think this one felt like I was speaking.
- 8:29 JBK: Okay. So more like speaking. And uh, a any other questions from Mel or Russ about the, this voice-y part before we move on?
- 8:29 Russ comments: RE "So more like speaking."
It was not *more like* speaking, it was *speaking*.
- 8:44 RTH: Kerry, you said at one point something that I, that I, could have could have meant that you were, it felt like at the moment of the beep I was saying "just edits in the future." Or it could have meant I was saying "I would like to do a handover call to whoever's gonna make the edits in the future," and the beep happened to come at "edits in the future." [Kerry: Mm-hmm.] So the question is, does it seem like sort of one long thing with the beep at the end? Or does it seem like a piece and another piece and another piece in the piece that happens to be there is "edits in the future?"
- 8:44 Russ comments: RTH is referring here to the turns at 3:25 and 3:52.
- 9:14 Kerry: Yeah, no, I definitely was saying the sentence as one long thing and the beep, the beep went off like towards the end of the sentence. So I wasn't sure if I should include the whole sentence or not. [RTH: Got it.] But it was definitely one long complete full sentence. Okay.
- 9:28 RTH: Then I'm good.
- 9:30 JBK: Yeah. From my perspective, um, since the sentence kinda has a meaning and since that was, seems like it was part of your experience, like even though the sentence is long, like it, it would make sense to include all of it as the sample.

- 9:30 Russ comments: It has nothing to do with the meaning (whatever that is—see 6:51). The question is whether it is experienced as one (long) utterance or as a series of short utterances. She has said pretty clearly that it was one (long) utterance.
- 9:47 Kerry: Got it. Um, yeah. Cool.
- 9:49 JBK: So yeah, that's what I think, but some for other experiences it might make sense to just include one word if it was really just more about that word experientially. It's, it's up to you, pretty much [laughs]. [Kerry: Cool.] Um, so the, so you're mentally seeing Doug and Bevan in Zoom squares, and you mentioned this was blurry or not so distinct or, or can you describe this part?
- 9:49 Russ comments: RE "seeing Doug and Bevan in Zoom squares"
I think that is misleading. See the comments at 0:58, 2:30, 3:52, 4:38, 4:56, and also 10:24 and 11:34.
- 10:24 Kerry: Um, yeah, I would say not completely in focus. Like I feel like normally when I call recall like visual thoughts, I can give you really niche details. I can't tell you what they were wearing or what Bevan was doing with her hair in this moment. Um, like normally I would be able to provide those details, but it just felt like kinda a little bit blurry, fuzzy. But I could tell like... Or, y'know, when you look at something and you blur your eyes is like that [JBK: Right.] so you can kinda, y'know what you're looking at, but it's just not super sharp. Um, that's kinda how I would describe it. And it felt smaller, whereas, um, normally, or not normally, sometimes a visual thought for me is like more, uh, immersive.
- 10:24 Russ comments: A general DES principle: If the participant talks about things *other* than experience at the moment of the beep (as Kerry does here), the preceding question is problematic. Here, I think the problem is that JBK's 9:49 question has misrepresented Kerry's experience.
- 11:18 JBK: So.
- 11:18 RTH: So does it, can I interrupt here for a minute. Does it seem like you're looking at zoom squares and the zoom squares happen to have Devin and Bevan in it? Or does it seem like you're looking at Doug and Bevan, who happen to be in Zoom squares?
- 11:34 Kerry: Um, I would say maybe Zoom squares first and foremost, that happened to have them in it just because, like I could see the edge of the square. I could see their, the name written like that was kinda, that detail of it being on Zoom was more important than the actual, or I guess more in focus than the actual [RTH: Okay.] yeah, people.
- 11:34 Russ comments: One might ask, what's the big deal? Why does it matter whether Kerry is seeing people who happen to be in Zoom squares, or Zoom squares that happen to have people in them? It is a big deal because the aim of DES is fidelity to Kerry's experience, and one account is more faithful than the other. And when you get the details wrong, then it leads Kerry off on the wrong track (as at 10:24).

12:08 JBK: Could you see like a computer around it? Or was that not part of this?

12:11 Kerry: No, literally just two squares, like rec or I guess technically rectangles right next to each other. Um, small out of focus.

12:22 JBK: And when you say out of focus that's like literally a bit blurry? Or do you mean just like it doesn't have as much detail as some other images?

12:32 Kerry: Kinda both. Um, normally I can take, uh, stock of like the detail in the background or what, or y'know, I feel like, um, I don't know, the rug or something like, or I don't know, like the detail behind whatever I'm looking at. Um, but this was, there wasn't a lot of detail to look at and it was kind of a little bit fuzzy.

12:59 JBK: Okay. Is there a part that's more fuzzy? The faces or the bodies or the...?

13:05 Kerry: I would say the only thing that was really crisp or in focus would be the edges of the zoom square. Like the curved edges were really clear. Um, but everything else just looked like it had a, like a blurry layer over it.

13:22 JBK: Okay.

13:22 Kerry: Or everything within the box. Sorry.

13:25 JBK: And, um, and when you said it was small, like again, that could be metaphorically since there wasn't so much detail like it, it seemed small to you? Or, or did it literally visually appear small?

13:44 Kerry: Um, I would like, it feels small because I'm still looking at my screen, which is probably dominating most of my visual view. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] But I'm looking at the right side of the screen and focused on that. But on the left side, like, which naturally is smaller than what I'm looking at more broadly, um, is where the Zoom squares were. So it was, it's like, it, it's definitely smaller and um, yeah, kinda fit within my field of vision.

14:17 JBK: So they're, they're over the left side of your screen, kinda like overlaid or, or

14:25 Kerry: I would say, yeah, overlaid, but again, it's not, I can still see past it, um, because I'm aware that it's not real. Um, so yes, overlaid, but also it's kinda hard to describe cuz I can technically see pa, past that.

14:48 JBK: Do you remember your sample of, you're in the street and there's a car going across and you can still see the car vividly, but you also know that it's not real and y'know what's behind it?

15:00 Kerry: Yeah.

15:01 JBK: Could you compare this to that? Is it similar or,

- 15:06 Kerry: Um, this was, I mean, it's similar in that concept of overlay, in that like, I know that it's not real, but it's different in that this felt way less dominant of a, a visual. Um, like the car, I was really focused on that because I was thinking about *my* car that I was imagining. Um, and I was focused on it. But for *this* instance, like *yes*, it's overlaid in a similar way and yes, I'm aware it's not real, but I'm *less focused* on it cuz I was more focused on the words that I was saying [JBK: Okay.] to them.
- 15:47 JBK: Uh, Russ, Mel, do you have questions about this part?
- 15:51 RTH: I'm good.
- 15:53 JBK: Um, and, and now for the part of like, visually looking at the screen, at first it seemed like it wasn't really present at all in, in your awareness. And then you said it was maybe as present as like the, the mental image of the zoom call. So, so what was, what was that part? Like, was it hard to say?
- 16:16 Kerry: Yeah. Um, when I'm making copy edits, it's really easy to do while not really focusing on it, it's just copying and pasting updated text. So it, I was present in that my hands were on my laptop and I was doing the work, I was moving the text over into the appropriate areas. [JBK: Okay.] But I wasn't, I was much less focused on that actual action, I guess.
- 16:47 JBK: Because from, from my perspective, there's the possibility that even though you're doing this action and you're doing it skillfully, um, it's still possible that it could be kinda going on automatically and not the main part of your awareness. Do you think that that's possible here or do you think it it was part of your awareness, but just a little bit?
- 16:47 Russ comments: The first part of this turn is fine. But the last sentence is problematic. Everything is possible, so to ask if it is possible is likely a misleading question. You don't want to know if it is possible; you want to know whether there was no editing experience at the moment of the beep. She probably can't answer that question, because we're 16 minutes into the interview. So I think it would be better to explicitly acknowledge that that line of questioning is iterative practice.
- 17:09 Kerry: Yeah, I think that's possible. I, I put it at 25 because I feel like any lower than that, I'm like, how am I even working, [laughs] y'know?!? [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, if it's at 10%, how am I doing the work? But maybe that is possible. Um, yeah.
- 17:21 JBK: I think that's at least a possibility we can hold because Yeah, that it is possible you're doing something skillfully, you're doing something very complicated, but not have it take up so much of your awareness. Um, any questions about, about this from anybody?
- 17:42 RTH: I'm good.
- 17:45 JBK: Alright. Number 2. Or Mel, anything?

17:49 Kerry: Um,

17:51 RTH: Mel. Mel would you, oh, you're, you are muted. So the waterfall sound, I don't know who that's coming from, but

17:59 JBK: I could mute my mic for now. Maybe that'll help.

18:04 RTH: Didn't change anything.

18:05 Kerry: Oh, I wonder if it's mine. Lemme try.

18:09 RTH: Yeah, it is yours.

18:11 Kerry: No,

18:11 JBK: It's okay. Maybe it's a gentle waterfall not a rushing

18:15 Kerry: Okay.

18:15 RTH: Yeah, it's not Niagara

18:17 Kerry: [laughs].

18:19 MM: I thought it was my laptop like dying, like working overtime.

18:22 Kerry: Well yours, yours is definitely making noise too.

18:25 MM: Yeah well that's why I keep turning myself off..

18:27 Kerry: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [laughs], I wish I could mute myself, but it's kinda crucial that I don't. [laughs]

18:32 RTH: I guess. Okay. Kerry, number 2.

SAMPLE 7.2 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

18:35 Kerry: Okay. Beep 2 was at 11:48. Um, I was reading basically a chart of different paper sizes, so like A, A3, A4, A5, cuz I was getting the specs for it. Um, so it, as I was reading, um, I was reading out loud "A5: 5.3, 5.83 inches by 8.27 inches" is what I was reading when the beep went off. So it was like a line in a, in a chart of measurements.

19:11 RTH: And is that your entire experience?

19:13 Kerry: Yeah, I was pretty focused, um, on this at this moment, I would say. Um, yeah, a hundred percent on this because I was, the context was I was trying to work out if this folded menu would fit in a leather-bound booklet and it was [RTH: Got it.] kinda a hard thing. (I'm really bad at math [laughs], so, um, and it's a really easy thing to mess up.) So I was really zeroing in on the measurements. Um,

19:43 RTH: So tell me again what, what you were saying.

19:46 Kerry: "A5: 5.83 inches by 8.27 inches."

19:54 RTH: And that's being said aloud?

19:56 Kerry: In my head,

19:58 RTH: Aloud in your head. So if I were in the room next to you, I would not have heard that? Is that what you mean by that? [Kerry: Correct. Yeah.] So this is an inner, inner speaking of some sort?

20:09 Kerry: Yes.

20:09 RTH: Okay. And you're reading it off the page, so it's present there on the page? [Kerry: Yes.] And so you are saying in your inner voice what you are seeing on the screen? [Kerry: Yes.] Okay. And, and is there any particular inflection of that?

20:27 Kerry: Inflection in the tone or...?

20:30 RTH: Yeah, or anything.

20:30 Kerry: Um, it felt pretty monotone because I was reading like a whole chart of different numbers, so definitely wasn't trying to sound professional or, or be loud or quiet or anything. It was just very, it was very monotone.

20:46 RTH: And, and is anything in your experience, other than the reading? I understand that the context is, I'm trying to figure out whether it's gonna fit in whatever, but is, is any of that present to you? Or, or at the moment, is it just well I'm reading this, experientially.

21:03 Kerry: Um, I would say like almost nothing else is in my experience because I was like hunched over my computer looking really intently at this chart and reading in my head, but out loud in my head, um, very intently. So I, I honestly don't think anything else was in my experience in this moment.

21:27 RTH: Okay. And my eyeballs are seeing the chart and, (cuz I'm reading, I'm, I'm reading it), but in, in, in my experience, do I see the chart in my experience? Or is it, that's just that, that that's the sort of the substrate on which I speak "5.83 inches by 5.27 inches"?

21:46 Kerry: No, I definitely see the chart. I would say, and if I could break it down, I, I would almost say 50—50 in, in that like the chart was very much part of the visual, but I still was reading, like saying out loud in my head.

22:04 RTH: And by the chart do we mean this line of the chart or the whole chart or the,

- 22:08 Kerry: This line, this line. [RTH: So I'm...] I mean maybe the line before, cuz I had just read that, but, um, very, like very zeroed in.
- 22:23 RTH: So I guess my, my question is does it seem like I'm seeing the chart? Or does it seem like I'm saying this line that happens to be coming out of the chart?
- 22:32 Kerry: Hmm. Okay. Phrasing like that I would say, I'm saying this line that is coming out of the chart. That's how I think a better way of word it probably.
- 22:47 RTH: Then I think I'm good.
- 22:53 JBK: Is it, is it more about just saying the string of letters and numbers or is, is there much meaning there? Meaning.
- 22:53 Russ comments: See the comment at 6:51. Inquiring about "much meaning" will likely derail the conversation. I think what JBK is asking is about lexical significance: Do you grasp this with understanding—that is, that you immediately understand "8.53" to be the height of the page, and so on—or is this just a meaningless string of words—words that might as well be Greek?
- 23:06 Kerry: Um, I think if I were to draw meaning it would be around like me trying to put it in the context of this leather-bound book that I'm fitting it into. Um, but in that moment I don't even, I don't think I was at that step yet. I think I was really just noting that this was gonna be a little bit too small, like, um, based on the numbers.
- 23:06 Russ comments: RE "I think if I were to draw meaning it would be around like"
That is six subjunctifiers in a row, which is (I think) Kerry's soul/heart/language processor/whatever saying "I'm a nice guy, and I'm going to answer your question about meaning, but I don't have any idea what we're talking about, and certainly it isn't my inner experience at the moment of the beep."
- 23:37 JBK: So, so do you think noting it was too small was at, at this moment here? Or might have come a little later or...?
- 23:37 Russ comments: ...but JBK responds as if she were speaking about directly apprehended experience.
- 23:48 Kerry: That I think came later here was really just taking in the information.
- 23:54 JBK: Okay. So more just reading. Alright then, then I'm, I'm good at this one too.
- 24:02 RTH: Well, lemme make sure that I understood what that line of questioning was about. So I'm un, I'm understanding that you are not just reading mindless words, you're reading words that have meaning that these are, this is a semantically meaningful. Is that correct? Is that correct?
- 24:19 Kerry: Yes. Yeah,

- 24:20 RTH: Then I'm good.
- 24:22 JBK: Okay.
- 24:23 Kerry: Okay.
- 24:23 RTH: The problem with "meaning" is that it's pretty widely unmeaningful [Kerry, JBK laugh] meaning whole range of range of things it could possibly be. [Kerry: Yeah.]
- 24:23 Russ comments: See the comments at comments on "meaning" at 2:30, 3:52, 4:38, 4:56, 9:49, 10:24, 11:34, 22:53, and 23:06.
- 24:35 JBK: Yeah.

SAMPLE 7.3 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

- 24:37 Kerry: Um, okay. Um, the, beep 3 was at 12:33. (Sorry, my notes are kinda weird on this one. One second. Okay.) I was this one, I was, I had two things up on my screen. I had [gestures with her hands] the menu copy from the chef and I had my menu design next to one another, um, split screen. I was anticipating that, um, there were gonna be a *lot* of changes from the chef and I was kinda preemptively frustrated. Um, but in this moment I was realizing that he actually didn't change that much, so it was gonna be less work than I thought. So when the beep went off, I was saying, um, "okay, not that bad" in my head. Um, as in like, *oh, okay, this is gonna be less work than I thought*. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, that realization I don't really know how to describe, but, um, my reaction to that realization was, "okay, not that bad."
- 26:01 JBK: Okay. Would you say this is, this *is* the realization? Or this we're now the reaction to it? Or...
- 26:10 Kerry: This felt like a reaction to it.
- 26:14 JBK: Okay. So you've already realized and now you're, you're saying that. Okay. Um, so you're saying "okay, not that bad" in your head, your voice. Any, any particular anything about the inflection or tone?
- 26:14 Russ comments: RE "your voice"
 She has not said it was in her voice. The heart of DES is the bracketing of the natural attitude (that bracketing is occasionally called the epoché). Our object is to describe Kerry's experience. JBK's question comes (I think) from the natural-attitude logic: *Kerry's experience is of saying: in the natural world Kerry's saying is in her voice; therefore I will understand Kerry as saying in her own voice*. That is exactly the logic that DES does *not* employ.
- 26:35 Kerry: Um, this one still felt a little bit monotone, but kinda like a relief. Like "Uuhh okay, not that bad." Like the "not that bad" monotone, but "okay" was a little bit more of like a "Uuhh, okay." Um, like how I would say it in conversation.

26:51 JBK: Does it have a volume?

26:51 Russ comments: (see the comment at 26:14). This is another natural-attitude question: *Kerry said it is in her voice; voices in the natural world have volume; therefore I will ask about her volume.* That is, this question does *not* rest on Kerry's experience but on JBK's natural attitude.

26:51 Julian comments: Even if asked as "does it have volume?" rather than "what's the volume?" Does inner speaking never have volume? Is it ever appropriate to ask a question in this direction? Is it kind of like our big mental-image debate, where "volume" presupposes the inner speaking as an object separate from the speaker?

Russ comments: RE "Is it ever appropriate to ask a question in this [about the volume of inner speaking] direction?"

I went to graduate school in Vermillion, a small college town in South Dakota farming country. I lived in a house at the edge of town; I planted a garden and thought I would fertilize it with manure from a farm a mile or so down the road. Armed with a plastic bag and a shovel, I approached the farmer and asked if I could have some manure; he said "Sure." I hopped the fence into his feed lot and went from cowpie to cowpie, shoveling each into my bag. The farmer sat, leaning on his tractor's steering wheel, watching. After a while, he climbed down off the tractor, ambled over to me, and said, "Y'know, sonny, it's shit all the way down."

That was an important lesson for me. Armed with a little knowledge (of manure being good fertilizer), I had been focused on absolutely the very worst bits of it (the parts that hadn't yet decayed) while avoiding the best bits, which were easily available all around me. And there were people who knew a lot more about it than I did.

Yes, there are lots of times that it is appropriate to ask about the volume of inner speaking: whenever a question arises from a place where the natural attitude has been bracketed.

I'm no mind reader, but my JBK-natural-attitude antennae were all jangling from his opening question about this sample. Here is Kerry's opening salvo (24:37):

Um, but in this moment I was realizing that he actually didn't change that much, so it was gonna be less work than I thought. So when the beep went off, I was saying, um, "okay, not that bad" in my head. Um, as in like, *oh, okay, this is gonna be less work than I thought.* [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, that realization I don't really know how to describe, but, um, my reaction to that realization was, "okay, not that bad."

To my ear, JBK's opening questioning suggests that he has heard one cowpie (Kerry's inner speaking "okay, not that bad") and he is trying to ascertain the details of it.

By contrast, I hear Kerry struggling to describe her experience, which *may be* (as JBK seems to suggest) an innerly spoken reaction. But her opening salvo has lots of hints that suggest that her "saying, um, 'okay, not that bad' in my head" may be only loosely or approximately descriptive—for example, she immediately qualifies that description by saying "Um, as in like, *oh, okay, this is gonna be less work than I thought.*" Should this pair of utterances be understood as conveying: *It's inner speech, and the meaning of that speech is ...?* Or should these utterances be understood as saying *This is the meaning, and calling it inner speech was a metaphor...*? Is this a cowpie, or is it shit all the way down? I don't know.

The natural attitude is all cowpies.

That's a longish discursion about answering the original question, which was whether it is ever appropriate to ask a question about the volume of inner speaking. Once one has established what is the phenomenon, then it makes sense to ask about the characteristics of that phenomenon, as long as it is recognized that the questions being asked might not make sense when applied to the present phenomenon. But here, to my ear, we have not yet established the phenomenon, and all of JBK's questions reify one assumption about what that phenomenon is.

26:53 Kerry: Volume? Um, I was speaking probably a little bit more softly than I used to, like, than I normally do. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, I'm not really sure why [laughs], but it definitely felt a little bit softer.

26:53 Russ comments: It is worth noticing the characteristics of Kerry's response, which I take to be something like bewilderment, as if her delivery says *Volume?!? Why are you asking me about volume?!?* That is recognizable in her tone, laughter, and haltings, as well as in the fact that she is talking about generalities and causation rather than description. The general principle: We should be sensitive to those characteristics, and when we hear them, we should recognize that the precipitating event was probably a bad question.

27:09 JBK: Yeah. Um, so is there like, um, a relief *feeling* or is it more just *speaking*?

27:26 Kerry: I think

27:27 JBK: Or some other feeling? I don't want to like impose any...

27:30 Kerry: No. I, I, I think like that's why I was, when I said the realization felt separate cuz that realization was also a little bit of relief and then I was kinda reacting to that. [JBK: Okay.] Um, but yeah, I don't really know how to describe it, but realizing [laughs].

27:47 JBK: Okay. It's more about just speaking at this point. Um, and for the tape recorder thing, is it more like speaking into it or playing it back?

28:00 Kerry: Uh, this was speaking, yeah.

28:04 JBK: Okay. And are you also seeing the menu, the two menus split screen at this moment? Or is that more just general context?

28:04 Russ comments: RE "are you ... seeing the menu?"
"Seeing" is an ambiguous term, referring either to experience or act. RTH will try to make that distinction clearer at 28:44.

28:17 Kerry: Um, they're both there, but I'm actually more focused on the left side, which is what the chef wrote. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, yeah, I would say most of my focus would be split between, um, what's going on in my head, which is the words, and then what I'm looking at, which is the chef's writing in in particular.

- 28:40 JBK: Could you give a percentage between those two things?
- 28:44 RTH: Um, so, so before, before you give a percentage, can I take us back to the previous conversation there? It's possible for your eyeballs to be aimed at something and not experience that at all. There's no question about that, that, that's possible, and that you could be skillfully dealing with that in the sense that realizing that that's not that bad and, and yet have no visual experience of that, other than your eyeballs are aimed at it. [Kerry: Mm-hmm.] And it's also possible to be looking at it and seeing it and recognizing it.
- 29:19 Kerry: Um, can you describe what it would be to look at something and not experience it?
- 29:19 Russ comments: (Kerry provides her own example at 40:23. From the standpoint of iterative training, it would have been a good idea to point that out at that point, but there was too much other stuff going on there. Obviously we can't use that example here, but RTH files away that we will need to help Kerry understand this issue beyond what unfolds at this sample.)
- 29:27 JBK: You could use the example like you're sitting on a chair now, maybe you're, you're feeling that, that chair. Um, but before we called your attention to it, like it might have just been, been automatic, something you're doing, but you're not paying attention to it really.
- 29:47 Kerry: Yeah. Okay. In this example, I would say I'm definitely experiencing the visual of the, the chef, cuz I was like actively comparing the text between my design and his edits, and then reading through his edits. Um, and kinda noting in my brain where there were edits and where like, and how I was anticipating more than there were. So this felt like the visual, looking at his edits felt like it was part of my experience in this moment. [JBK: Mm-hmm.] Um, and but also same with the words.
- 30:34 JBK: At this moment, um, was there a particular edit or set of edits you're looking at, or had you already done that and now you're just more generally looking at the whole thing?
- 30:46 Kerry: Um, yeah, I was looking at the Starters, um... Actually, sorry, no. I had initially looked at the Starters—there were a lot of edits. In this moment, I was looking at the Mains, and the Mains had fewer edits. So the Starters had a lot, which I was angry about. [laughs] And then I was specifically looking at the Mains with this like, anticipation, *oh, this is also gonna be bad*. It wasn't. And that's why I said "Okay, not that bad." So I was, it was a specific, it was like the second half of the menu that I was specifically focusing on from a visual side.
- 31:22 JBK: Were you looking at any specific mains or more just taking in that category?
- 31:29 Kerry: Um, I was looking at the, so they have the Main, like the, the title and then ingredients that are in it. So I was specifically looking, um, both at I think the ingredients of the halibut [laughs] (which niche!), um, and then also trying like, but I was also looking at that section and trying to see how many additional menu items had been added, cuz

that was gonna affect the menu design. So it was like I was looking at the detail, but also like the blob of text to see how much was there, if that makes sense.

32:04 JBK: Okay. So is it, so is it both the halibut ingredients and also the additional items at the same time? Or is it more first one and then the other? Or...?

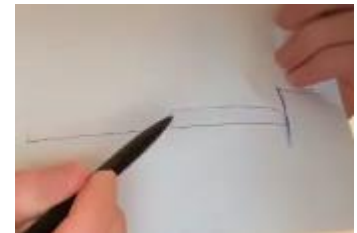
32:19 Kerry: I think it was first the detail and then like my eyes skipped down to the bottom to see what had been also added. But it was like almost happening like within milliseconds, like very close.

32:33 JBK: Okay. Would you think both of those things would've been during the time it took for you to say "okay, not that bad"? Or how do you think the timing is there?

32:33 Russ comments: That is a question from the natural attitude, which should be bracketed. The experiential question is whether those things were experienced as simultaneous.

32:48 Kerry: Um, I think the timing would've been me looking at the additional menu items, cuz I was gonna have the most impact, and that's what I was reacting to. Cuz there were fewer than I thought, which is good [laughs].

33:02 JBK: [laughs]. So during the time [laughs], so maybe I'll draw, draw you a picture. [draws] Um, so I guess this is your experience and then the beep comes here. [Kerry: Mm-hmm.] And then you could say that this is, this is where you're saying, "okay. Not that bad."



33:35 Kerry: Yeah.

33:37 JBK: And so it could be that at the same time you've got halibut and then you have additional menu items, or it could be that halibut came here and then it was additional items.

33:37 Russ comments: (This is another comment about bracketing the natural attitude.) JBK's talk about his sketch is ambiguous about whether he is talking about what Kerry experienced and what is presumed to happen in the natural world. For example, it seems that "you've got halibut" means *my eyeballs were, in the real world, aimed at the ingredients of the halibut*. But I don't think there was any experience like that—Kerry's experience was about how many additional menu items had been added, not really about halibut at all. In short, I have no objection to the sketch, as long as it is always about Kerry's experience, and what is experienced prior or simultaneous. That has nothing to do with what happens in the natural world.

33:55 Kerry: Yeah. I would say the latter. So how of it there and then, okay. Not that bad. When I was reading the additional menu items.

- 34:05 JBK: And then, I mean, there's a bunch of other options too. It could be they both came right. Y'know, you don't have to stick to just those two options. [Kerry: Yeah.] But that was to just give you an idea of like, so okay.. So you, so you think, um, closer to the beep was seeing the additional items is kinda like a blob or like seeing the text, but not like specifically reading it, just seeing that...?
- 
- 34:33 Kerry: Yeah, I, like, I wasn't, from a design perspective, I wasn't even, I was more worried, worried about the word count than what those words mean, if that makes sense. Because the word count affects the spacing of the menu items. So by seeing like a chunk of text that is smaller than I thought it was going to be, it meant my job was gonna be easier. I wasn't necessarily reading, y'know, *oh, they added salmon*. It was more, oh, this chunk of text is smaller and it can fit in the space that I have already allotted for it. [JBK: Okay.] So I was drawing meaning from the amount of text, not, not the words.
- 35:14 JBK: So it was looking at the size of the chunk.
- 35:18 Kerry: Yeah.
- 35:20 JBK: Uh, any other questions on this?
- 35:26 RTH: So I guess, I guess I haven't yet figured out whether I should think of this as: what's primarily in my experience is I am saying to myself, in re in in the realization that it's not that bad, it's, "Uh okay, not that bad." Or whether there's some separate realization that leads to or under, underlies or whatever the saying. So the question is whether it's just a sort of a gestural speaking, "oh, it's not that bad," which comes out of the recognition, or whether there is an explicit recognition that is accompanied by the speaking.
- 35:26 Russ comments: This question conflates two different distinctions: sequential (is there first a realization and then an inner speaking?) and semantic (are the words experienced as a semantically intact summary or merely an utterance). We don't resolve that ambiguity.
- 36:09 Kerry: Um, I think it's the second one. Um, because it, there was like, in that realization, there's a sense of relief. And in that sense of relief I think is when the words, what the words were reacting to. So it, like the words didn't necessarily feel completely mindless or like, not part of it. It was like, I'm reacting to this like in a relieved way. [inaudible]
- 36:45 RTH: Okay. Then I'm good?
- 36:49 MM: Yeah, that was exactly the same question I was gonna ask. So you stole mine.
- 36:53 Kerry: [laughs]

36:55 RTH: Number 4.

SAMPLE 7.4 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

36:56 Kerry: Okay. Beep 4. Um, this one I, there was kinda a bit going on. I was having lunch with my housemate, um, and we were talking about, um, the election and I wanted to show her [laughs] a meme about Jill Stein voters, um, and [laughs] from, uh, this like news account (actually, Australian) called Cheek Media Co. Um, and so I was, but I could like, I couldn't remember what it was called for in that moment. So, and then I remembered, so I, I just said "Cheek." It was cheek out loud of my head, but I, um, was looking at my laptop that had Instagram up, but I wasn't really, I didn't feel like I was taking in any information on the screen. I was more like in my head trying to remember, and then remember it and said "Cheek" out loud in my head. Um, and then the beep went off.

38:01 RTH: And so at the moment of the beep is the, the case that as far as my experience is concerned, it's just saying "Cheek."

38:08 Kerry: "Cheek," yeah.

38:09 RTH: And is cheek C-H-I-C or C-H-E-E-K or..."

38:14 Kerry: C-H-E-E-K. Cheek Media Code.

38:18 RTH: Okay. And, and the rest of the stuff that, that's a meme about Jill Stein or whatever, [Kerry laughs], that's context? [Kerry: Context.] As far as my experience..[Kerry: Yeah.] My experience is just of, I've been trying to figure out, we'll figure this out. That's before the beep. [Kerry: Yeah.] Now at the moment of the beep, I am saying in my head "Cheek."

38:38 Kerry: Yeah. And um, like la my laptop was on the table, but I was standing up and like kind of looking up like I am now trying to remember. So I wasn't like, I wasn't very present in like, I was standing, I guess, but I wasn't really focused on any information that was on my laptop. I wasn't using any visual cues to try to remember. I was kinda like looking off in the distance and then just said "Cheek" in my head.

39:08 RTH: Okay.

39:09 Kerry: So in this moment, like, uh, I would say almost a hundred percent of my experience was the word "Cheek." [laughs] Yeah.

39:20 RTH: Okay. And, and no doubt there was some mental processing that got you to the word Cheek, but that's not available to you. What that's happening more or less behind the scenes or unconscious or whatever you wanna call that. [Kerry: Yeah.] And, and what, and the Cheek is said internally, not externally.

39:40 Kerry: Yes. Yeah.

39:42 RTH: And I think I'm good.

39:44 MM: I have a question. So when you say "Cheek," are you still in the process of trying to work out like the full, y'know, you've, you've identified Cheek, but you're trying to work out that Instagram account or whatever. Are you still like trying to work it out? Or are you going like *Cheek that's what it is* sort of thing?

39:44 Russ comments: RE "in the process"

Asking about *process* requires Kerry to speculate about what is going on behind the scenes, some cognitive activity or other. DES does not ask about anything other than directly apprehended experience, and process is not part of that. MM could have asked "Do you experience yourself, at the moment of the beep, as trying to work it out?"

40:03 Kerry: That's what it is that, that's like me realizing, even though I didn't say the full name, that's me. Like, it's kinda like *good enough* in my own brain. Um, yep.

40:03 Russ comments: RE "it's kinda like *good enough* in my own brain"

Probably because MM's question was ambiguous, Kerry's answer is ambiguous. Does she experience some *good enough* directly apprehended presentation? Or is that a speculation about her neural/cognitive processing? We don't know.

40:12 MM: Yep. Gotcha.

40:17 JBK: Cool.

40:19 Kerry: Cool. Do you wanna do beep 5?

40:20 RTH: Number 5.

SAMPLE 7.5 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

40:23 Kerry: Um, [laughs], this one's kinda embarrassing. Um, this one I was, I don't know if you guys know Bo Burnham, um, but he is a comedian / singer. Um, and I was listening to his album from the pandemic because that's how I'm feeling. Um, and [laughs], one of the songs is called "White Woman's Instagram." And so one of the lines, [laughs], one of the lines, uh, is, um, listing off things that you might find on a white woman's Instagram. So the line was, um, "a golden retriever in a flower crown." And so the music, the song was playing, but I was also like really focused on the [laughs] words and then also visualizing [laughs harder] a golden retriever in a flower crown, um, as like a visual [laughs] going along with the lyrics. So I was like looking at my screen, but I was absolutely not paying attention to, I don't even know what I was doing in this moment. I think I was probably still working on the menu. Um, but I was like the lyrics, I was hearing the lyrics and singing the lyrics in my head, um, and then visualizing a [laughs hard] golden retriever wearing a flower crown [laughs].

40:23 Russ comments: There is, to my ear, substantial power evident in this description, and the focus of that power is "visualizing a golden retriever wearing a flower crown." To

my ear, there is so much power in the consideration of that visualization that (twice!) Kerry can almost not control her laughter while she speaks about the visualization. I think such power has to be honored, probably by going directly toward the experience of the visualization. Otherwise, Kerry will presume that you didn't hear the power, or you didn't care about the power, or you were afraid of the power. And it will be an uphill battle to talk about anything other than the power-relevant visualization.

RE "So I was like looking at my screen, but I was absolutely not paying attention to, I don't even know what I was doing in this moment."

This is a much smaller point than the power of the inner seeing, but at 29:19, Kerry had asked "can you describe what it would be to look at something and not experience it?" This is a straightforward example—she is looking at the screen but not seeing it.

41:39 JBK: So hearing, singing, and then visualizing

41:42 Kerry: Yeah.

41:43 JBK: a doggy. Um, would you say the hearing singing is like the same, like part of the same thing or two separate things?

41:54 Kerry: Um, I think as I'm going along with a song, it feels like one thing, um,

42:01 JBK: Okay.

42:01 Kerry: It, yeah, it doesn't feel separate.

42:04 JBK: You're singing in your head not out loud, right? Or

42:09 Kerry: Yes, I might have been like mumbling, but I was, that I'm honestly unsure. I, I definitely was saying in my, in my head, um, the actual lyrics,

42:22 JBK: Which was "Go Golden retriever in a flower crown," right?

42:27 Kerry: Yes. [laughs]. It's a great song, [laughs].

42:32 JBK: Um, and is there anything about pitch or inflection or tone, any details?

42:41 Kerry: Um, I mean, I'm trying to sing it the way that he sings it. Um, [laughs], I won't perform it for you guys, but it's like a ba a basic melody. Um, and so I'm, yeah, I'm basically like imitating him in my head, but it is my own voice, my own singing voice, which is not great.

43:01 RTH: Can we go to the visual?

43:04 JBK: Ok. Let's go to the visual then. Um,

- 43:07 MM: Wait. But can I ask one question about that? Sorry. Just your, what is the split then, if there is one, in your experience of hearing his voice, but hearing your voice singing along? Or is there no distinction for you?
- 43:22 Kerry: It all kinda feels like one. Yeah. Um, like I, sometimes when I sing songs in my head, I try to make my voice sound like the singer's voice. So like, if I'm listening to Bruce Springsteen, I'll like do a huskier voice, version of my own voice. Um, and so that makes it feel like one, so I don't sound like Bo Burnham, but I like almost when I, when I sing in my head, I try to make my voice sound like whatever I'm listening to. And so it feels more like one, yeah.
- 43:59 MM: It's just really concurring, the singing, I got you.
- 44:02 Kerry: Yeah.
- 44:05 RTH: So are you singing or you're hearing yourself sing? Is this a hearing phenomenon or a singing phenomenon?
- 44:12 Kerry: Um, this actually feels, even though it was a larger part of my experience, as in like, I wasn't really paying attention to the work I was doing, it definitely felt more passive in the sense that I was like Iis, like hearing my voice, but I'm not, it didn't feel like I was like speaking or sin— actively singing.
- 44:33 RTH: Okay.
- 44:35 JBK: Could you describe, this question might not make sense or it's too relative, but, uh, could you describe the clarity of this? Like is it clear as if you were actually singing out loud? Or is it different or does that not make sense to you?
- 44:50 Kerry: Um, no, I think, uh, I think part of the reason I'm having a hard time remembering if I was actually singing out loud. Like I'm pretty confident this was inside my head, but there is a chance that I was singing out loud. So it in that sense, I guess maybe it's less clear or I'm not sure if that answers your question, but, um, I think it was in my head
- 45:20 JBK: Well, I don't know, it might be an impossible question because it's, it's so relative, like what somebody calls clear, another person might not. So I think an interesting question, but I don't know if it's a good one. But yeah, maybe let's go to the image now. Um, could you describe that?

45:20 Russ comments: RE "I don't know if it's a good one"

I agree that it is not a good question, in part because people can disagree about what to call clear. But the more important reason that this is not a good question is that it is driven by the natural attitude rather than driven by Kerry's experience. (See also comments at 26:14, 26:51, 32:33, 33:37.) Whether a real-world sound is clear is a reasonable question to ask about the real world. But Kerry has given no hint that clarity was an issue in her inner experience. I see no warrant arising *from Kerry's experience* to justify inquiring about clarity.

RE "the image"

(This is another in the natural-attitude comment.) In the real world, one sees an *image*. In the experiential world, one *sees* (there are exceptions). There is no *image* of a golden retriever that Kerry subsequently/separately sees. Instead, she innerly sees a golden retriever. Referring to an image will likely lead the questioning astray (in ways that are hard to predict).

45:20

Julian comments: I must say I'm disappointed that I keep talking about images despite you saying so many times that it's a bad idea. I guess it was an ingrained habit, since I've written about "mental images" many times.

And probably ingrained in the way I think as well, not just my habits. I didn't have the preconception that inner seeings are always like looking at photographs. I was well aware they could be immersive scenes. Still, there are other ways that preconceptions could slip in.

I wanted bring up the Cartesian separation discussion since there are few nuances I want to ask about it. Actually in writing out my question, I answered it. But I'll leave in my write-up in case some reader is interested in the process.

Basically, talking about images dredges up separation between seer and what they're seeing. If I'm looking at a photograph, *I am here and the photo is there*.

I get how in experience, this separation is a problem. It can gum things up in cases like Kerry's nothing-beyond seeings, where she sees something, like here a golden retriever, with nothing beyond it. If we impose Cartesian separation then if she's looking at a dog, there must be something around this dog—whether a scene, or blackness, or empty space, or the real world. Even if there's nothing around the dog, Kerry might assume it to be small, since it's not a full scene. But in experience, since there's no separation between seer and seen, it's possible to see just the dog, nothing beyond it, and yet have this seeing be fully occupying/absorbing.

My clarification question is this. Is Cartesian separation also a problem with inner seeings of full scenes? In the real world, if I'm out hiking, it's possible to see my surroundings, tent, trees, mountains, taking up my field of vision. In instances like this, would you still say there's a separation between seer and seen? And so in inner experience, it's possible for Kerry to innerly see an immersive scene with tent, grass, mountains. Would you say that the collapse between seer and seen makes this different than if she were seeing such a thing in the real world?

So I understand how Cartesian separation is an issue for assuming inner seeings are like photographs, or for dealing with the nuances of nothing-beyond seeings. I also get how talking of "images" dredges up assumptions of superposition of inner seeings and the real world and assumptions of natural-attitude visual field. But I haven't fully thought through if Cartesian separation engenders misunderstanding of inner scenes. Are they substantially different in some way to real-life immersive seeing (beside the obvious fact that inner seeing is inner)?

So I mentioned having come up with an answer while writing. And yes, innerly seen scenes can be substantially different from real-world ones. Case in point, Kerry's sample 9.4 which comes later in our sampling. She's seeing a yurt on a mountain but the *entire seeing* is behind her. If we Cartesian-ly separated Kerry from her seeing, we would probably miss that her entire perspective on this yurt was not from where her actual body was. You probably have lots of other examples of how inner scenes can be different from real-world ones. I see the utility of your warning that: "Referring to an image will likely lead the questioning astray (in ways that are hard to predict)."

Russ comments: RE “talking about images dredges up separation between seer and what they’re seeing”

The upcoming is a lecture in the *it’s not about the words* series. It is true that talking about images dredges up separation, but that isn’t the most important problem. More importantly, your talking about images *reflects your own* presumed separation between seer and seen. That is, *dredges up* implies that your mentioning “images” has an undesirable impact *on your interlocutor*, and while that is true, what is worse is that your mentioning “images” reflects *your own* natural attitude.

(The following rests on the assumption that you do not adequately bracket the natural attitude, but I largely do so [there is no claim of absoluteness or perfection here]. I happily accept that that assumption may be incorrect, that it may rest on my own delusion. But for the sake of the upcoming argument, let’s accept that it is largely true.)

Here’s (what seems like) a conundrum: It is *not* okay for *you* to ask Kerry about her image, but it *is* okay for *me* to ask Kerry about her image. (Here comes the *it’s not about the words* part 😊) The problem does *not* arise because the word “image” is used; the problem arises if the use of the word stems from the natural attitude. So I can ask Kerry about her “image” because I will (perhaps ever so subtly) inflect that term with the shroud of *in a manner of speaking* (perhaps detectable by Kerry, perhaps not); and I will be skillfully alert to the dangers of that term and its possible consequences and will have my antennae tracking Kerry’s responses; and I will be prepared to act on a slight jangle to try to correct any unwanted excursion toward Cartesian separation. That is, I will accept that everything I say is imperfect, and that my using “image” is among the possible imperfections. It’s shit all the way down, and I will do all the time be alert to it.

I point out occasions where, to my sensitivities (antennae), your words suggest that you are operating from the natural attitude. But my aim is *not* to correct your words; my aim is to help you figure out how to practice bracketing the natural attitude.

(I reiterate that I am no mind reader. My JBK-natural-attitude antennae can jangle for reasons unrelated to JBK. I do the best I can, which is short of perfection. You should feel free to reject any of my suggestions.) Here endeth the *it’s not about the words* lecture.

RE “Is Cartesian separation also a problem with inner seeings of full scenes? In the real world, if I’m out hiking, it’s possible to see my surroundings, tent, trees, mountains, taking up my field of vision.”

This question reflects a philosophically common but hugely mistaken viewpoint. In the real world, if you’re out hiking, you will likely make the tent the figure of your perception and relegate the trees, mountains, and so on, to the ground. (Or make the mountain the figure and the tent the ground, or whatever.) What you *don’t* do (or at best only rarely do) is to see all the objects in your field of vision. (There are exceptional people in this regard; I have written about Fran, for example.) So the real world is populated by a welter of objects, but every perception of the real world is, importantly, more *inner* experience than external perception.

So I think inner experience and outer perception are in some ways very similar: outer perception is driven by inner proclivities as well as outer objects.

And I think that whatever I might have said about inner seeing ≠ images = photographs also applies to inner seeing ≠ images = full scenes.

RE “Are they [inner scenes] substantially different in some way to real-life immersive seeing (beside the obvious fact that inner seeing is inner)?”

This is a hard question to answer because I think there isn’t really a solid science of “real-life immersive seeing”—see my discussion in the previous RE, and notice that in the perception literature (at least as I know it), there isn’t any discussion of people like Fran.

45:42 Kerry: Yeah, um, it, I mean it is like a stock standard golden retriever. Um, it’s sitting, but it’s not sitting in like a full scene or anything, it’s just the dog. Um, it’s kinda to my right, um, facing me on an angle. And it has one of those, like, (I actually used to wear this every day at school in fourth grade), but it [laughs] it’s like a headband with fake Hawaiian flowers. Um, and he’s wearing it [laughs] on top of his head, [laughs] in front of his ears. Um, the flowers are red, green, yellow, and blue, like more of a pinky red. Um, and they’re like very clearly fake.

45:42 Russ comments: RE “it is like a stock standard golden retriever”

This is the first ramification of JBK’s reference to an image: she talks about stock images. The good news is that Kerry brings the description back to experience.

46:38 JBK: So they’re clearly fake. Is, is your attention on any particular part of this image, the flowers or the dog or...?

46:38 Russ comments: This is a natural-attitude question. In the real world of images (e.g., of photographs), people look at one part of the image at a time. That is not at all necessarily true (and in fact is usually not true) or inner seeings.

46:47 Kerry: Um, the dog’s kinda smiling, so I would like the, I, the dog’s face plus the crown, but like mainly his face, less of his body, um, would be what I was mostly focusing on [laughs].

46:47 Russ comments: Kerry has given a natural-attitude answer to JBK’s natural-attitude question—she is assuming that the rest of the dog is present but is not being focused upon. It is possible (probably likely) that there is no experiential presence of the rest of the dog—she’s interested in the dog’s face and crown, and there is no necessity for her to visualize anything that she is not interested in. But here, we can’t know whether the dog’s body was seen in some way because the questioning is about an *image*—that is, we started with the assumption that she *did* see the rest of the dog.

47:03 JBK: So mostly the dog’s smiling face, but also the crown and the red green. Are you particularly drawn to the colors of the flowers, the red, green, yellow, and blue? Or is it just that they happen to be those colors?

47:17 Kerry: Honestly, the dog’s face more than the colors in this um, instance. I was more drawn to like, like a, a smiley dog I guess. Um,

- 47:32 JBK: Ok. Smiley dog in a crown. Is there anything outside this dog? Like is there a background? Are there borders or
- 47:32 Russ comments: RE "Smiley dog in a crown."
That does not match what she just said. That grammar makes the crown at least as important as the dog, but she has just said that the crown was unimportant. (This is in the it-is-not-about-the-words category. If you had somehow conveyed "smiley dog in a crown," then the same words were involved but they would have conveyed what Kerry actually said.).
- 47:41 Kerry: No? Um, just his body I guess, but that's not like, I'm like mainly looking, mainly seeing the face and the crown.
- 47:41 Russ comments: RE "just his body I guess"
Does she talk about her body because JBK has asked a natural-attitude question (and Kerry naturally operates in the natural attitude—of course I didn't see a body-less dog)? Or because she innerly saw the dog's body? We can't know.
- 47:53 JBK: Mm-hmm. And you mentioned him being on the right or what's like visually, like is it an overlay thing or just that that's where this image happens to be?
- 48:07 Kerry: Um, I was like looking at my laptop and I think he was on my right almost in a sense like, because I was sitting on the couch during this, so I'm sitting on the couch, my laptop's on my lap, and then the like, vision of the golden retrievers to my right, almost like a dog is like sitting at my feet or like looking at me while I'm sitting on the couch. Um, so that's just where it is spatially, I guess, if that helps.
- 48:38 MM: Can I ask two questions on that if I haven't [inaudible]? [JBK: Inaudible] Um, how big is the dog? Like, is it like real-life size?
- 48:48 Kerry: No, like weirdly I'm describing it sitting next to me, but it's smaller. So it's like, I think potentially because I was still looking at my screen and still working, um, it's like off to the side, but it's smaller.
- 49:05 MM: And then,
- 49:06 Kerry: Yeah, it's not, not life-size.
- 49:07 MM: Sorry. And then before this train goes past, um, how clear is that image in terms of, y'know, like right now if I look at my water bottle next to me, like that's a very crisp, y'know, I'm, I'm looking at my water bottle. Comparatively, like you looking at that dog, like what's that? Like,
- 49:24 Kerry: This, um, is way more detailed compared to like the zoom squares that I was describing before, which were like slightly blurry. This like, I can see the exact look on his face, like the twinkle in his eyes, like the leather style of his like lips like, like very, very, very crisp. Um, but mainly focused on the face. Whereas the body, I would say is like, kinda blurry, but like the head and the flower crown, like I'm picturing a very

particular thing that I used to wear as a kid. Um, and all of that, like I can see the white, there's, the way the flower petals work, there's like a little bit of white that fades up into the color of the petals and I can like see all this. It's a plastic white headband with like little spikes that used to pull my hair back and that's what the dog is wearing. So it's like *very* detailed on the face. The body not so much, but it is smaller.

50:22 MM: So how does your experience (sorry if I go on a tangent, Russ), but like, like how, you taking that in visually, how does that differ, if at all, to other things that you know of, physically present in your environment around you? Or does it not? Um,

50:22 Russ comments: RE "how does that differ, if at all, to other things that you know of, physically present in your environment around you?"

My understanding of this question is that MM would like to know how (or if) the (inner) seeing of the dog's face differs from the external seeing of real objects. But she asks a problematic question, because the only thing she has mentioned as being "physically present in [her] environment" is the computer screen, and she has said that she "was absolutely not paying attention to" (40:23) the computer screen at all. So the comparison MM wants is between seeing the dog and seeing some specific, clearly available thing (like the water bottle MM has mentioned at 49:07). MM could have invited a comparison between seeing the dog and seeing the Zoom window in front of her right now. The good news is that Kerry understands what MM wants to know.

50:44 Kerry: No, it does, like the biggest distinction between anything visual that I'm seeing is that I can still technically see past it. So like, it's, it's weird I don't fully know how to describe it cuz it's, it's not see-through, it's not like a lower opacity or anything like that. Like I can see it in full color, but I'm not like, *oh my God, there's a dog here* because I can technically see the ground past it where it would be technically sitting to my right. Um, it's like, it's vibrant in color, but I know I, I'm actually looking at the ground and I, it's a really hard thing to describe, but, um, whereas everything else I can't see past, like my desk right here is, y'know, it's there because I can't see the ground below it. Whereas where the dog was placed, I can see the ground.

50:44 Russ comments: If you filter out the faux explanations (the clauses that follow the two instances of "because") on the logic that Kerry cannot really know what causes what in the experiential realm, Kerry is giving a very good description of her seeing: I innerly see the dog in vibrant color and without transparency. Kerry finds that "weird" because of her commitment to the natural attitude: in the world of real images, one would have to explain how you can see behind an object without that object's being translucent or transparent. But in the experiential world, there is nothing weird about it: I (externally) see one thing, and I (innerly) see another thing, and there is no reason that they must interact with each other.

Many people, including many consciousness scientists, believe that they must explain on the basis of the characteristics of the thing seen how one knows that one is innerly seeing rather than externally seeing. I think that is the natural attitude at work. Kerry *understands* herself to be innerly seeing because she *is* innerly seeing. It has nothing to do with the way things look.

- 51:42 JBK: Um, I am curious how it relates to the world. Like does it seem like the dog image and y'know, the rest of the room is in the same space or, because some people like might have mental image, like they might have a mental image and it's kinda its own thing and then the world around is it's a separate thing.
- 51:42 Russ comments: JBK's curiosity is his natural attitude at work. It is the natural attitude to believe that there is an image that is seen (just like in the external world). But there is no reason that that is necessary. The DES aim is to suspend the natural attitude: Kerry creates a seeing; she does not create a dog image *and then* see it.
- 52:08 Kerry: Um, I would say this in this instance, um, the dog feels separate just because it was smaller. It wasn't like a life size image, whereas the car example that almost felt like it fit within the world around me and the visual of it was like comparable to other cars on the road, whereas this felt small. So that feels slightly separate from the world that I was physically sitting in.
- 52:08 Russ comments: This talk is about explanation, not description, which means that the precipitating question was bad. My take: JBK asks a (bad) natural-attitude question, which Kerry (because she is a nice person) answers in the natural attitude. Neither JBK nor Kerry know what they are talking about.
- 52:36 JBK: Okay.
- 52:38 RTH: So it seems to me that maybe that we could clear up some of the questions that Mel and Julian asked. It's, it's a bad deal to call this seeing an *image* because she's not seeing an image, she's seeing a dog. It's imaginary, but she's seeing a dog. She's not seeing a picture of a dog and not seeing a representation of a dog. She's seeing a dog. It's not there. So she's got two seeings going on. She has a seeing of a dog and a seeing of a, the floor around her and, and most of her liveliness is on the seeing of the dog, it seems to me.
- 53:13 I was, I was interested in the, the tiara, crown. The crown, I guess, we call it a crown. [Kerry: Flower crown.] The, the, the crown do, is the dog wearing *your crown*? Or is the dog wearing a crown that then when you describe it, you would say, "well, it's the same as the crown that I used to wear when I was a kid."
- 53:35 Kerry: Um, I mean, upon reflection I realized I was visualizing the crown that I used to wear, but it, when I was in the moment, I don't think I was like, *oh, that's my crown and the dog is wearing it*. Um, but like when I was just describing what, what the visual was, I realized I was, I was actually thinking of the crown that I wore as a child, but in the moment I'm not conscious of that.
- 53:35 Russ comments: Kerry is making a skillful distinction about experience.
- 53:56 RTH: Got it. In, in the moment I see *this* crown and later on I can say, *well that's the crown that I used to wear*.
- 54:01 Kerry: Yeah.

54:01 RTH: Got it. Okay. And I would say, in sort of the recapping this, that what I think made the, the first part of this conversation difficult is that the energy in Kerry's experience at this particular moment was in the *seeing*, of the dog. That's, to my ear that's where all the energy was. And we spent a lot of time at the beginning trying to figure out the details of the singing, but the singing wasn't the big deal. The singing was the background music for the seeing of the crown. [RTH misspeaks; he means *dog*, not *crown*.]

54:34 JBK: Yeah. I think you're right.

54:37 RTH: Number 6.

SAMPLE 7.6 DISCUSSION STARTS HERE

54:39 Kerry: Okay. Number 6 was at 2:44. Um, again, I was working on these menus. There's a lot of menus that I'm working on. Um, and in my head I was saying "we have maxed out our edits on these, on this one," which basically, again, going back to me like rehearsing things that I'm potentially going to say to this client. Um, this is me telling them, cuz they've had me redo this wine menu three or four times. Um, so I was like imagining, as I was working on it, I was imagining myself saying like, "no more" essentially. Um, there was no visual to go along with this. It was, um, like purely just me looking at my screen, working on the edits and then saying "we have maxed out edits on this one."

55:33 RTH: And do you see the screen or is it the case that your eyeballs are aimed at the screen and your attention's all on the imaginary conversation?

55:41 Kerry: Um, I think I, it's not really part of my experience and just mindlessly working. I on a, I'm not even confident that I was working on the wine list. I could have been working on a different menu, but I was sort of, yeah, I was definitely more focused on the words.

56:00 RTH: And, and these are gonna, these words presumably are practice that are, are gonna be aimed at a particular person?

56:06 Kerry: Yeah.

56:07 RTH: And is that person present? Is that, does it feel like I'm speaking to him or her or whatever?

56:13 Kerry: Um, he's not present, no. Um, I normally, when I like rehearse things in, in my head, I almost visualize myself saying it. So like visualizing me saying it on Zoom or visualizing saying it to the person. But in this scenario it was just the words. Um, and like for greater context, I was trying to decide *if* I was able to say these words to them because I wasn't sure if we actually had maxed out the edits, or if I was just super frustrated. So it was kinda like me working out in my head *if I can say that*, not speaking and not actually saying it to them, if that makes sense.

56:56 RTH: So I'm practicing *saying* it, but I'm not practicing saying it *to the guy*.

56:56 Russ comments: Kerry has made a refined distinction about her experience, clarifying what she had said in her opening salvo (54:39): "me like rehearsing things that I'm potentially going to say to this client."

57:01 Kerry: Correct.

57:02 RTH: Okay. And, and is the super frustrating present to you at the moment of the beep, or is that the context that leads to this?

57:16 Kerry: Um, it's hard to say, because I've been frustrated most of the day, so I, I think maybe no, because what I'm saying to them is like trying to stop it. Um, so I'm not, I'm not like angry in how I'm saying it. The tone, the tone's not angry. It's moreso just like *we need to wrap it up*.

57:46 RTH: Okay. And I think I'm good.

57:51 JBK: I have, uh, I have one question. You mentioned trying to work out if you, if you *can* say this. Like, is is that, uh, present here? Is that more context?

58:06 Kerry: Um, I think that's context. I think, I think that actually came sort of after I said it, I was like kinda rehearsing saying this and then I, and then I was like, oh wait, can I even say that? Like, have we maxed out the edits? So it was more that like context was in reaction to this sentence.

58:27 JBK: Okay. So the context came later? Yeah, I, I mean the, the,

58:31 Kerry: Oh the, like, the context was there, but like my decision about whether or not, um, I could say this, that realization, um, um, was after the fact.

58:31 Russ comments: My take: Kerry has made a careful description of experience: she's saying it but not saying it *to the guy*. Beyond that is explanation or context.

58:45 JBK: So after the beep?

58:48 Kerry: Uh, yeah, I think so.

58:49 JBK: Okay. And then I'm good on this one.

58:54 RTH: I am too. And I think we ought to do this again, now that we've got all, the whole gang here.

59:00 Kerry: The gang's all here! [laughs]

59:01 JBK: Whole gange.

They compare calendars

- 59:02 RTH: Do we wanna figure out when we're gonna do that or do we want to do that by email?
- 59:07 MM: Well, I will say Julian, so I thought I was gonna have to go into the office every day for this project that I'm on at the moment, but it doesn't look that way. So I now will have a little bit of sneaky flexibility in my schedule so we can do earlier for you.
- 59:21 JBK: Okay. So maybe like 10, starting at 10 for me, which would be [Kerry: Noon.]
- 59:28 MM: Or an hour earlier than what we did today, right?
- 59:32 JBK: Yeah. An hour earlier for everybody. I also don't mind 11 actually.
- 59:38 MM: Yeah, up to you. I don't mind this current time, but just in general we can do earlier. I'm not hamstrung as much as I thought I would be.
- 59:46 JBK: Okay. Um, how about you, Carrie? Is this a good time? Hour earlier okay?
- 59:54 Kerry: Yeah, I'm pretty flexible on timing. I can do earlier, later or whatever. Um, I just, the first half of, I don't know if we're aiming for next week, but the first half of next week is really chaotic for me,
- 1:00:07 JBK: For me too. I'd rather do like 18th to 20
- 1:00:13 Kerry: The same.
- 1:00:13 RTH: A week from today would work or the next for me.
- 1:00:17 Kerry: I am, I'm fully blocked off on the 18th and 19th. Um, so I could do Friday the 15th or I could do Wednesday the 20th.
- 1:00:30 RTH: I cannot do Friday the 15th.
- 1:00:33 JBK: We can do Wednesday the 20th.
- 1:00:36 RTH: I could do Wednesday the 20th at any time in the afternoon that time.
- 1:00:42 MM: Yeah, I can do Wednesday the 20th.
- 1:00:46 JBK: Okay. Should we say,
- 1:00:48 RTH: So we wanna go one hour, one hour earlier?
- 1:00:51 MM: On hour earlier? Yeah.
- 1:00:53 JBK: So what is that 10 for me? 4 for Mel?

1:00:57 MM: 4 for me, yeah.

1:00:57 JBK: 2 for Russ, 1 for Kerry, or did I

1:01:02 RTH: Works for me. [Mel: Alright.]

1:01:03 JBK: Yeah. Okay.

1:01:05 RTH: Wednesday the 20th.

1:01:06 JBK: Yeah. I'll send an invite. Cool.

1:01:10 MM: Thank you.

1:01:11 RTH: All righty.

1:01:12 JBK: I'm gonna stop the recording and people stay on like one minute. [Mel: Okay.]