

Thinking Through the Body, Educating for the Humanities: A Plea for Somaesthetics

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I

What are the humanities, and how should they be cultivated? With respect to this crucial question, opinions differ as to how widely the humanities should be construed and pursued. Initially connoting the study of Greek and Roman classics, the concept now more generally covers arts and letters, history, and philosophy.¹ But does it also include the social sciences, which are often distinguished from the humanities and grouped as a separate academic division with greater pretensions to scientific status? And should our pursuit of humanistic study be concentrated on the traditional methods and topics of high culture that give the humanities an authoritative aura of established nobility, or should it extend to new and funkier forms of interdisciplinary research such as popular culture or race and gender studies?

Despite such questions and controversy, it is clear (even from etymology) that the meaning of the humanities essentially relates to our human condition and our efforts to perfect our humanity and its expression. But what, then, does it mean to be human? I cannot pretend here to adequately answer such a complex and difficult question. I will, however, argue that because the body is an essential and valuable dimension of our humanity, it should be recognized as a crucial topic of humanistic study and experiential learning. Though the truth of this thesis should be obvious, it goes sharply against the grain of our traditional understanding of the humanities. One striking example of such antisomatic bias is the very term that German speakers use to designate the humanities, "*Geisteswissenschaften*," whose literal English translation would be "spiritual (or mental) sciences," as contrasted to the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) that treat physical life,

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with which, of course, the body is clearly linked. Hence, given the pervasive physical/spiritual opposition, the body is essentially omitted or marginalized in our conception of humanistic studies.²

We humanist intellectuals generally take the body for granted because we are so passionately interested in the life of the mind and the creative arts that express our human spirit. But the body is not only an essential dimension of our humanity, it is also the basic instrument of all human performance, our tool of tools, a necessity for all our perception, action, and even thought. Just as skilled builders need expert knowledge of their tools, so we need better somatic knowledge to improve our understanding and performance in the arts and human sciences and to advance our mastery in the highest art of all—that of perfecting our humanity and living better lives. We need to think more carefully through the body in order to cultivate ourselves and edify our students because true humanity is not a mere genetic given but an educational achievement in which body, mind, and culture must be thoroughly integrated. To pursue this project of somatic inquiry, I have been working on an interdisciplinary field called *somaesthetics*, whose disciplinary connections extend also beyond the humanities to the biological, cognitive, and health sciences, which I see as valuable allies for humanistic research.³

Somaesthetics, roughly defined, concerns the body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aisthesis*) and creative self-fashioning. As an ameliorative discipline of both theory and practice, it aims to enrich not only our abstract, discursive knowledge of the body but also our lived somatic experience and performance; it seeks to enhance the meaning, understanding, efficacy, and beauty of our movements and of the environments to which our movements contribute and from which they also draw their energies and significance. Somaesthetics, therefore, involves a wide range of knowledge forms and disciplines that structure such somatic care or can improve it. Recognizing that body, mind, and culture are deeply codependent, somaesthetics comprises an interdisciplinary research program to integrate their study. Mental life relies on somatic experience and cannot be wholly separated from bodily processes, even if it cannot be wholly reduced to them. We think and feel with our bodies, especially with the body parts that constitute the brain and nervous system. Our bodies are likewise affected by mental life, as when certain thoughts bring a blush to the cheek and change our heart rate and breathing rhythms. The body-mind connection is so pervasively intimate that it seems misleading to speak of body and mind as two different, independent entities. The term *body-mind* would more aptly express their essential union, which still leaves room for pragmatically distinguishing between mental and physical aspects of behavior and also for the project of increasing their experiential unity.⁴

But whether we speak of body-mind or body and mind, we are dealing with what is fundamentally shaped by culture. For culture gives us the languages, values, social institutions, and artistic media through which we think and act and also express ourselves aesthetically, just as it gives us the forms of diet, exercise, and somatic styling that shape not only our bodily appearance and behavior but also the ways we experience our body: whether as a holy vessel or a burden of sinful flesh, a pampered personal possession for private pleasure or a vehicle of labor to serve the social good. Conversely, culture—including its institutions and humanistic achievements—cannot thrive or even survive without the animating power of embodied thought and action. And one measure of a culture's quality of life and humanity is the level of body-mind harmony it promotes and displays.

For continued progress to be made in somaesthetics, resistance to somatic study and cultivation in the humanities must be overcome. That is the prime purpose of this article. So before saying more about somaesthetics, I want to explain and challenge this resistance. I will argue the paradoxical thesis that the body has been rejected in the humanities precisely because it so powerfully expresses the fundamental ambiguity of being human, and because of its all-pervasive, indispensable instrumentality in our lives. In striving for a nobler, less vulnerable, and thus more one-sided vision of the human, our tradition of humanistic research implicitly shuns the body, just as our humanistic focus on valuable intellectual and moral goals tends to obscure or marginalize the study of the very somatic means necessary for achieving those goals and other worthy ends of action.

II

The living body—a sensing, sentient soma rather than a mere mechanical corpse—embodies the fundamental ambiguity of human being in several ways. First, it expresses our double status as object and subject—as something in the world and as a sensibility that experiences, feels, and acts in the world. When using my index finger to touch a bump on my knee, my bodily intentionality or subjectivity is directed toward feeling another body part as an object of exploration. I both *am* body and *have* a body. In much of my experience, my body is simply the transparent source of perception or action and not an object of awareness. It is that *from which* and *through which* I perceive or manipulate the objects of the world on which I am focused, but I do not grasp it as an explicit, external object of consciousness, even if it is sometimes obscurely felt as a background condition of perception. But often I also perceive my body as something that I *have* rather than *am*: something I must drag out of bed to do what I wish to do; something I must command to perform what I will but that often fails in performance; something

that includes heavy limbs, rolls of fat, a sometimes aching back, and a too often unshaven, tired-looking face, all of which I recognize as mine but do not identify as who I really am.

The body further expresses the ambiguity of human existence as both shared species being and individual difference. Philosophers have emphasized rationality and language as the distinguishing essence of human kind, but human embodiment seems at least as universal and essential a condition of humanity. Try to imagine a human being, and you cannot help but call up the image of the human bodily form. If we imagine creatures displaying human language and behavior but having a very different kind of body, we would think of them not as humans but as monsters, mermaids, robots, aliens, angels, or persons whose humanity has been somewhat robbed or diminished, perhaps by some inhuman spell, as in fables such as "Beauty and the Beast."⁵

But though our bodies unite us as humans, they also divide us (through their physical structure, functional practice, and sociocultural interpretation) into different genders, races, ethnicities, classes, and further into the unique individuals that we are. We may all use legs to walk or hands to grasp, but each person has a different gait and fingerprint. Our experience and behavior are far less genetically hardwired than in other animals. A bird of the same species will sing much the same in Peking and in Paris, while human vocalization patterns obviously vary quite widely because they depend on learning from the experienced environment. There are anatomical reasons for this greater role of individual experience. The pyramidal tracts, which connect the cerebral cortex to the spinal cord and are essential for all voluntary movement (including that of vocalization), are not fully formed and fixed at birth but continue to develop during infancy through the movements a baby is led to perform.⁶ This means the precise makeup of an individual's nervous system (her preferred repertoire of neural pathways) is partly a product of her individual experience and cultural conditioning. The body thus shows that human nature is always more than merely natural.

The commonality and difference of our bodies are deeply laden with social meaning. We appeal to our shared somatic form, experience, needs, and suffering when charitably reaching out to people of very different ethnicities and cultures. But the body (through its skin and hair color, facial features, and also its gestural behavior) is conversely the prime site for emphasizing our differences and for uncharitable profiling. Most ethnic and racial hostility is the product not of rational thought but of deep prejudices that are somatically marked in terms of vague uncomfortable feelings aroused by alien bodies, feelings that are experienced implicitly and thus engrained beneath the level of explicit consciousness. Such prejudices and feelings therefore resist correction by mere discursive arguments for tolerance, which can be accepted on the rational level without changing the visceral grip of the

prejudice. We often deny we even have such prejudices because we do not realize that we feel them, and the first step toward controlling them or eventually expunging them is to develop the somatic awareness to recognize them in ourselves. This cultivation of skills of enhanced awareness is a central task of somaesthetics.⁷

The body exemplifies our multiply ambivalent human condition between power and frailty, worthiness and shame, dignity and brutishness, knowledge and ignorance. We invoke the notion of humanity to urge a person toward moral excellence and rationality that transcend mere animality, but we also use the predicate "human" to describe and excuse our flaws, failures, and lapses into base or even bestial behavior: they are human weaknesses, limits linked to the frailties of the flesh we share with common beasts. Yet despite its animal nature, the body serves as a symbol of human dignity, expressed in the irrepressible desire to depict the body in art's beautiful forms and to portray even the gods in human shape.⁸ Respect for the body's dignity forms part of our basic respect for personhood and human rights; it is implicit in the right to life and in our tacit sense of respecting a certain physical distance from each other so as to allow some free space for the body—a basic *Lebensraum* or kinosphere. But even in death is the body respected, as most cultures dispatch the corpse with some dignifying ritual of burial or cremation.

Moralists often inveigh against the body as the enemy of righteousness, as when St. Paul declares "Nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh" (Romans 7:18). Though frailty of flesh often undermines our moral aspirations, we should realize that all our ethical concepts and norms (and even the very notion of humanity that underwrites them) depend on social forms of life involving the ways we experience our bodies and the ways that others treat them. As Wittgenstein remarked in a strangely brutal passage of his *Notebooks*,

Mutilate completely a man, cut off his arms & legs, nose & ears, & then see what remains of his self-respect and his dignity, and to what point his concepts of these things are still the same. We don't suspect at all, how these concepts depend on the habitual, normal state of our bodies. What would happen to them if we were led by a leash attached to a ring through our tongues? How much humanity still remains in him then?⁹

In a world where bodies were always mutilated, starved, and abused, our familiar concepts of duty, virtue, charity, and respect for others could get no purchase and make no sense. Moreover, bodily abilities set the limits of what we can expect from ourselves and others, thus determining the range of our ethical obligations and aspirations. If paralyzed, we have no duty to leap to the rescue of a drowning child. Virtue cannot require constant labor with no rest or nourishment because these needs are physical necessities.

Besides grounding our social norms and moral values, the body is the essential medium or tool through which they are transmitted, inscribed, and preserved in society. Ethical codes are mere abstractions until they are given life through incorporation into bodily dispositions and action. Any properly realized ethical virtue depends not only on some bodily act (speech acts included) but also on having the right somatic and facial expression, indicative of having the right feelings. A stiffly grudging, angry-faced offering cannot be a true act of charity or respect, which is why Confucius advocated the proper demeanor as essential to virtue.¹⁰

Moreover, by being inscribed in our bodies, social norms and ethical values can sustain their power without any need to make them explicit and enforced by laws; they are implicitly observed and enforced through our bodily habits, including habits of feeling (which have bodily roots). Confucius therefore insists that exemplary virtue is somatically formed through "the rhythms of ritual propriety and music" and wields its harmonizing power not by laws, threats, and punishments but by inspiring emulation and love.¹¹ Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, in contrast, highlight the oppressive aspects of social embodiment. Entire ideologies of domination can be covertly materialized and preserved by encoding them in somatic norms that, as bodily habits, get typically taken for granted and so escape critical consciousness. The norms that women of a given culture should only speak softly, eat daintily, sit with closed legs, walk behind men, and only look with veiled, bowed heads and lowered eyes both embody and reinforce such gender oppression. Domination of this subtle sort is especially hard to challenge because our bodies have so deeply absorbed it that they themselves revolt against the challenge—as when a young secretary involuntarily blushes, trembles, flinches, or even cries when trying to raise a voice of protest toward someone she has been somatically trained to respect as her superior. Any successful challenge of oppression should thus involve somaesthetic diagnosis of the bodily habits and feelings that express that domination so that they, along with the oppressive social conditions that generate them, can be overcome.

Our ethical life is grounded in the body in a still more basic way. Ethics implies choice, which in turn implies freedom to choose and act on that choice. We cannot act without bodily means, even if these means are reduced (through the wonders of technology) to pressing a button or blinking an eye to implement our choice of action.¹² The body may even be the prime source of our very ideas of agency and freedom. What could be a better, more fundamental paradigm of voluntary or willed action than the way we move our bodies to do what we will—raise a hand, turn the head?¹³ What could provide a clearer, more immediate sense of freedom than the freedom to move our bodies, not merely in locomotion but in opening our

eyes and mouth or regulating our breathing. Life implies some sort of animating movement, and the freedom to move is perhaps the root of all of our more abstract notions of freedoms. On the other hand, true to its essential ambiguity, the body also clearly symbolizes our unfreedom: the bodily constraints on our actions; the corporeal bulk, needs, and failures that weigh us down and limit our performance; the relentless degeneration of aging and death.

If we turn from ethics and action to epistemology, the body remains emblematic of human ambiguity. As both an indispensable source of perception and an insurmountable limit to it, the body epitomizes the human condition of knowledge and ignorance. Because, as a body, I am a thing among things in the world in which I am present, that world of things is also present and comprehensible to me. Because the body is thoroughly affected by the world's objects and energies, it incorporates their regularities and thus can grasp them in a direct, practical way without needing to engage in reflective thought. Moreover, to see the world, we must see it from some point of view, a position that determines our horizons and directional planes of observation; that sets the meaning of left and right, up and down, forward and backward, inside and outside; and that eventually shapes the metaphorical extensions of these notions in our conceptual thought. The soma supplies that primordial point of view through its location both in the spatiotemporal field and the field of social interaction. As William James remarked, "The body is the storm-center, the origin of coordinates, the constant place of stress in [our] experience-train. Everything circles round it, and is felt from its point of view." "The world experienced," he elaborates, "comes at all times with our body as its center, center of vision, center of action, center of interest."¹⁴

But every point of view has its limitations, and so must that provided by the body, whose sensory teleceptors all have limits of sensory range and focus. Our eyes are fixed forward in the head, so that we cannot see behind it or even see our own face without the aid of reflecting devices; nor can we simultaneously focus our gaze forward and backward, left and right, up and down. Philosophy is famous for radically critiquing the body and its senses as instruments of knowledge. Since the Socrates of Plato's *Phaedo* defined philosophy's aim as separating the knowing mind from its deceptive bodily prison, the somatic senses and desires have been repeatedly condemned for both misleading our judgment and distracting our attention from the pursuit of truth. But according to Xenophon (another of his close disciples), Socrates affirmed a much more body-friendly view, recognizing that somatic cultivation was essential because the body was the primordial, indispensable tool for all human achievement. "The body," Socrates declared, "is valuable for all human activities, and in all its uses it is very

important that it should be as fit as possible. Even in the act of thinking, which is supposed to require least assistance from the body, everyone knows that serious mistakes often happen through physical ill-health.¹⁵

The basic somaesthetic logic here (also affirmed by other Greek thinkers) is that rather than rejecting the body because of its sensory deceptions, we should try to correct the functional performance of the senses by cultivating improved somatic awareness and self-use, which can also improve our virtue by giving us greater perceptual sensitivity and powers of action.¹⁶ The advocacy of somatic training for wisdom and virtue is even more striking in Asian philosophical traditions, where self-cultivation includes a distinctive bodily dimension developed through ritual and artistic practice (both conceived in highly embodied terms) and through specifically somatic training (such as disciplines of breathing, yoga, Zen meditation, and martial arts), which aim at instilling proper body-mind harmony, proper demeanor, and superior skill for appropriate action.¹⁷ As Mencius insists, care of the body is the basic task without which we cannot successfully perform all our other tasks and duties. "Though the body's functions are the endowment of nature (*t'ien*), it is only the Sage who can properly manipulate them."¹⁸

If the body captures the ambiguous human condition of subject and object, power and vulnerability, dignity and indignity, freedom and constraint, commonality and difference, knowledge and ignorance, why does modern humanistic philosophy tend to take the positive sides of this ambiguity for granted and negatively marginalize the body by emphasizing its weaknesses? Part of the reason is our profound reluctance to accept our human limitations of mortality and frailty, which the body so clearly symbolizes. Though the field of humanities was first introduced in contrast to theological studies termed *divinity*,¹⁹ humanist thinkers do not seem content to be human; they secretly want to transcend mortality, weakness, and error and to live like gods. Since bodily life does not allow this, they focus on the mind.

Transcendence, as the urge to reach beyond oneself, is indeed basic to human existence, but it need not be interpreted in supernatural terms. Our very being is a flux of becoming something else, which can be constructively construed in moral terms of self-improvement. Like other aspects of our humanity, transcendence has a distinctive bodily expression in the soma's basic urge for locomotion; in its reaching out to the world for nutrition, reproduction, and a field of action; and in its normativity of developmental growth and self-transformations of its physiological systems. Essentially top-heavy when erect, the living body finds it easier to sustain dynamic equilibrium through movement rather than to stay statically in place.²⁰ But even at rest, the soma is not a motionless thing but a complex field of multiple movements, a surge of life, a projection of energy that Bergson described as *lan vital*.

III

The body's instrumental function is etymologically indicated in words like "organism" and "organ," which derive from the Greek word *organon*, meaning "tool." So when humanists defend the body and advocate its cultivation, they usually do so in terms of its instrumentality, its necessary role in sustaining life, and its service to higher functions of humanity identified with the soul. Rousseau, for instance, insists that "the body must be vigorous in order to obey the soul" because "a good servant ought to be robust." "The weaker the body, the more it commands," thus "a frail body weakens the soul." Strengthening the body helps develop the mind, which it nourishes and informs through its senses: "it is only with a surplus of strength beyond what [man] needs to preserve himself that there develops in him the speculative faculty fit to employ this excess of strength for other uses. . . . To learn to think, therefore, it is necessary to exercise our limbs, our senses, our organs, which are the instruments of our intelligence."²¹ "The human body," Emerson reaffirms, is the source of all invention: "All the tools and engines of this earth are but extensions of its limbs and senses."²²

To be recognized as humanity's primal and indispensable tool should constitute an unequivocal argument for humanistic cultivation of the body. But, unfortunately, the very notion of instrumentality retains in humanistic culture strong connotations of inferiority, as noble ends are contrasted to the mechanical means that serve them. This negative nuance can be seen in Rousseau's image of the body as servant to the soul, a familiar analogy from ancient Greek philosophy and traditional Christian theology that continues into modern times. And the analogy of instrumental servant to higher functions is often coupled with "gendering" the body in a way that underscores its inferior, serving status while also reinforcing and naturalizing the second-class status of the gender with which it is associated—woman. Thus even Montaigne, a sincere lover of women and fervent advocate of embodiment, lapses into this devaluing figure in his very effort to affirm the body, urging that we "order the soul . . . not to scorn and abandon the body . . . but to rally to the body, embrace it, cherish it, control it, advise it, set it right and bring it back when it goes astray; in short to marry it and be a husband to it, so that their actions may appear not different and contrary but harmonious and uniform."²³

Here we face the second of the two paradoxical reasons why somatic studies are demoted in humanistic education. Not only is the body wrongly neglected because it more fully expresses our true humanity by displaying both human power and human vulnerability, but also its indispensable instrumentality ironically relegates it to the devalued realm of service (associated with servants and women and the mere mechanics of material means), while the humanities are instead identified with the pursuit of the highest

and purest of spiritual ends—venerated forms of knowledge concerning classics, philosophy, literature, and the arts. Why, then (goes the argument), should we humanists busy ourselves with studying the body (as the *means*) when we can concentrate directly on enjoying the *ends*—on studiously appreciating our spiritual and artistic achievements?

One answer, inspired by the pragmatist philosophy that shapes somaesthetics, is that if we truly care about the ends, we must care about the means necessary to realize those ends. The body deserves humanistic study to improve its use in the various artistic and scholarly pursuits that it underlies and serves. Musicians, actors, dancers, and other artists can perform better and longer with less attendant pain and fatigue when they learn the proper somatic comportment for their arts, how to handle their instruments and themselves so as to avoid unwanted, unnecessary muscle contractions that result from unreflective habits of effort, detract from efficiency and ease of movement, and ultimately generate pain and disability. A famous case in point concerns the somatic theorist-therapist F. M. Alexander, who first developed his acclaimed technique to address his own problems of hoarseness and loss of voice in theatrical acting that were generated by faulty positioning of his head and neck. Such learning of intelligent somatic self-use is not a matter of blind drill in mechanical techniques but requires a careful cultivation of somatic awareness.

Philosophers and other humanities' scholars can likewise improve their functioning as thinkers by improving their awareness and regulation of their somatic instrument of thought. Wittgenstein frequently insists on the crucial importance of slowness for properly doing philosophy. Philosophers often err by rashly jumping to wrong conclusions from hastily misinterpreting the surface structure of language. To unravel and avoid such errors philosophy needs painstaking linguistic analysis, which requires slow, patient labor and thus demands a sort of practiced, disciplined slowness and calm. Hence Wittgenstein's appreciation of tranquil slowness, urging "The salutation of philosophers to each other should be: 'Take your time!'" and advocating an "ideal [of] a certain coolness," a state of tranquility where "conflict is dissipated" and one achieves "peace in one's thoughts." Wittgenstein's own manner of reading and writing aims at attaining this calming slowness. "I really want my copious punctuation marks to slow down the speed of reading. Because I should like to be read slowly. (As I myself read.)"²⁴

But a more basic, versatile, and time-proven method for attaining the tranquility needed for slow, sustained thinking is focused awareness and regulation of our breathing. Since breathing has a profound effect on our entire nervous system, by slowing or calming our breathing we can bring greater tranquility to our minds. In the same way, by noticing and then relaxing certain muscle contractions that are not only unnecessary but

distractive to thinking (because of the pain or fatigue they create), we can strengthen the focus of our mental concentration and build its patient endurance for more sustained philosophical meditations. We can then afford to take our time.

Philosophers, however, have often argued that thinking of our bodily means is to harmfully distract attention from our ends and thus is more likely to cause problems. Despite the general thrust of his pragmatist and body-respecting philosophy, William James insists that bodily actions are more certain and successful when we focus on "the end alone" and avoid "consciousness of the [bodily] means." Given the parsimonious economy of consciousness, we should concentrate its limited attention on the most important features of action, namely our goals, and leave the bodily means to our established unreflective habits of somatic use. "We walk a beam the better the less we think of the position of our feet upon it. We pitch or catch, we shoot or chop the better the less" we focus on our own bodily parts and feelings and the more exclusively on our targets. "Keep your eye on the place aimed at, and your hand will fetch it; think of your hand and you will very likely miss your aim."²⁵

Immanuel Kant further warns that somatic introspection "takes the mind's activity away from considering other things and is harmful to the head." "The inner sensibility that one generates through one's reflections is harmful . . . This inner view and self-feeling weakens the body and diverts it from animal functions."²⁶ In short, somatic reflection harms both body and mind, and the best way to treat one's body is to ignore, as much as possible, the sensations of how it feels, while using it actively in work and exercise. As James put the point in his *Talks to Teachers*, we should focus on "what we do . . . and not care too much for what we feel."²⁷ Astutely recognizing that "action and feeling go together," James urged (in both public lectures and private advice) that we should just control our feelings by focusing on the actions with which they are linked. To conquer depression, we should simply "go through the *outward movements*" that express cheerfulness, willfully making our body "act and speak as if cheerfulness were already there." "Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key." "My dying words," he exhorted (more than thirty years before his actual death) "are outward acts, not feelings."²⁸

The Kantian-Jamesian rejection of somatic introspection is, I think, misguided (and largely a product of their avowed fears of hypochondria).²⁹ But their arguments do rest on a significant truth. In most of our usual activities, attention is and needs to be primarily directed not to the inner feelings of our embodied self but to the objects of our environment in relation to which we must act and react in order to survive and flourish. Thus, for excellent evolutionary reasons, nature positioned our eyes to be looking out

rather than in. The error of Kant and James is in confusing ordinary primacy with exclusive importance. Though attention should be directed mostly outward, it is nevertheless often very useful to examine one's self and sensations. Consciousness of breathing can inform us that we are anxious or angry when we might otherwise remain unaware of these emotions and thus more vulnerable to their misdirection. Proprioceptive awareness of one's muscle tension can tell us when our body language is expressing a timidity or aggression that we wish not to display, just as it can help us avoid unwanted, parasitic muscular contractions that constrain movement, exacerbate tension, and eventually cause pain. In fact, pain itself—a somatic consciousness that informs us of injury and prompts a search for remedy—provides clear evidence of the value of attention to one's somatic states and sensations. Care of the self is improved when keener somatic awareness advises us of problems and remedies before the onset of pain's damage.³⁰

Though James rightly affirms it is generally more efficient to focus on the end and trust the spontaneous action of established habits to perform the bodily means, there are many times when those habits are too faulty to be blindly trusted and thus require somatic attention for their correction. For example, a batter will normally hit the ball better if she is concentrating on the ball, not on the stance of her feet, the posture of her head and torso, or the grip of her hands on the bat. But a poor or slumping batter may learn (often from a coach) that her stance, posture, and grip tend to put her off balance or inhibit movement in the rib cage and spine in a way that disturbs her swing and impairs her vision of the ball. Here conscious attention must, for a time, be directed to the somatic feelings of the problematic postures so that these postures can be proprioceptively identified and thus avoided while new, more productive habits of posture (and their attendant feelings) are developed and attended to. Without such proprioceptive attention, the batter will spontaneously relapse into (and thus reinforce) the original, problematic postural habits without even being aware of doing so.

Once an improved habit of swinging is established, the somatic means and feelings of swinging should no longer claim our primary attention since the more ultimate end remains hitting the ball. But achieving that end requires treating the means as a temporary end and focus, just as hitting the ball—*itself* only a means to get on base or score a run or win the game—is treated as a temporary end in order to achieve those further ends. Direct seeking of ends without careful attention to the needed means will only bring frustration, as with the batter who wills with all her might to hit the ball with distance yet fails because her eagerness to attain the end prevents her from concentrating on the required bodily means, including the simple holding of the head needed to keep her eye on the ball. Likewise, scholars whose creative productivity is constrained by recurrent headaches and writing pains resulting from bad bodily habits of self-use at their work

stations cannot remedy or overcome these problems by mere will power; the bodily habits and their attendant consciousness need to be examined before they can be properly transformed. We must know what we actually do in order to correct it, reliably, into doing what we want.

Though wise to advocate the value of somatic actions for influencing our feelings, James fails to recognize the corresponding importance of somatic feelings for guiding our actions. We cannot properly know how to smooth the brow if we cannot feel that our brow is furrowed or know what it feels like to have one's brow smooth. Similarly, since most of us have been habituated to faulty posture, the ability to hold ourselves straight in a way that avoids excessive rigidity requires a process of learning that involves sensitive attention to our proprioceptive feelings. James's unfeeling insistence on vigorous dorsal contraction and stiff upright posture ("bottle up your feelings . . . and hold yourself straight," he exhorted) is thus a sure prescription for the kind of back pain he indeed suffered throughout his life, just as it is surely an expression of his puritan ethics more than a product of careful clinical research. If "action and feeling go together," as James remarked, they *both* warrant careful consideration for optimal functioning, just as both ends and means require our attention. Though knives are most clearly means for cutting rather than ends of sharpening, we sometimes need to focus on improving their sharpness and other aspects of their use in order to improve their effectiveness. Such means-respecting logic underlies the project of somaesthetics as a meliorative study of the use of our bodily instrument in perception, cognition, action, aesthetic expression, and ethical self-fashioning, which together constitute humanistic research, artistic creation, and the global art of perfecting our humanity through better living.

IV

The question of how to improve an instrument's use helps introduce (at long last near the close of this essay) the three major branches of somaesthetics whose structure I elsewhere elaborate more fully.³¹ First, a tool is better deployed when we have a better understanding of its operational structure, its established modes of use, and the relational contexts that shape them. *Analytic somaesthetics*, the most distinctively theoretical and descriptive branch of the project, is devoted to such research, explaining the nature of somatic perceptions and comportment and their function in our knowledge, action, and construction of the world. Besides traditional topics in philosophy concerning the mind-body issue and somatic aspects of consciousness and action, analytic somaesthetics is concerned with biological factors that relate to somatic self-use; how, for example, greater flexibility in the spine and rib cage can increase one's range of vision by enabling greater rotation of the head, while, on the other hand, more intelligent use of the eyes can

conversely (through their occipital muscles) improve the head's rotation and eventually the spine's.

This does not mean somaesthetics should be assimilated into physiology and thus expelled from the humanities; it only underlines the (obvious but much neglected) point that humanities research should be properly informed by the best scientific knowledge relevant to its studies. Renaissance art and art theory owe much of their success to the study of anatomy, mathematics, and the optics of perspective. Philosophers' traditional disdain for the body may be largely a product of their ignorance of physiology (as Nietzsche suggested), coupled with their pride in privileging only the knowledge that they do master.³² Analytic somaesthetics is also deeply concerned with what the social sciences have to say about the modes and structuring contexts of somatic experience—including genealogical, sociological, and cultural analyses that show how the body is both shaped by social power and employed as an instrument to maintain it, how bodily norms of health, skill, and beauty, and even our categories of gender are constructed to reflect and sustain social forces.

Secondly, use of a tool can be improved by studying the range of already proposed theories and methods for improving that use. Such critical and comparative study of somatic methods constitutes what I call *pragmatic somaesthetics*. Since the viability of any such method will depend on certain facts about the body, this pragmatic dimension presupposes the analytic dimension. However, it transcends analysis not only by evaluating the facts analysis describes but also by proposing means to improve certain facts by remaking the body and the enviroing social habits and frameworks that shape it. A vast array of pragmatic methods have been designed to improve the experience and use of our bodies: various diets; modes of grooming and decoration; meditative, martial, and erotic arts; aerobics; dance; massage; bodybuilding; and modern psychosomatic disciplines like Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais Method.

We can distinguish between holistic or more atomistic methods. While the latter focus on individual body parts or surfaces—styling the hair, painting the nails, shortening the nose through surgery—the former techniques (such as Hatha yoga, t'ai chi ch'uan, and Feldenkrais Method) comprise systems of somatic postures and movements to develop the harmonious functioning and energy of the person as an integrated whole. Penetrating beneath skin surfaces and muscle fiber to realign our bones and better organize the neural pathways through which we move, feel, and think, these practices insist that improved somatic harmony is both a contributory instrument and a beneficial by-product of heightened mental awareness and psychic balance. Such disciplines refuse to divide body from mind in seeking to improve the entire person.

Somatic practices can also be classified in terms of being directed primarily at the individual practitioner herself or primarily at others. A massage

therapist or a surgeon works on others, but in doing t'ai chi ch'uan or bodybuilding one is working more on oneself. The distinction between self-directed and other-directed somatic practices cannot be rigidly exclusive because many practices are both. Applying cosmetic makeup is frequently done to oneself and to others; and erotic arts display a simultaneous interest in both one's own experiential pleasures and one's partner's by maneuvering the bodies of both self and other. Moreover, just as self-directed disciplines (like dieting or bodybuilding) often seem motivated by a desire to please others, so other-directed practices like massage may have their own self-oriented pleasures.

Despite these complexities (which stem in part from the interdependence of self and other), the distinction between self-directed and other-directed body disciplines is useful for resisting the common presumption that to focus on the body implies a retreat from the social. Experience as a Feldenkrais practitioner has taught me the importance of caring for one's own somatic state in order to pay proper attention to one's client. In giving a Feldenkrais lesson of Functional Integration, I need to be aware of my own body positioning and breathing, the tension in my hands and other body parts, and the quality of contact my feet have with the floor in order to be in the best condition to assess the client's body tension, muscle tonus, and ease of movement and to move him in the most effective way.³³ I need to make myself somatically very comfortable in order not to be distracted by my own body tensions and in order to communicate the right message to the client. Otherwise, when I touch him, I will be passing on to him my feelings of somatic tension and unease. Because we often fail to realize when and why we are in a state of slight somatic discomfort, part of the Feldenkrais training is devoted to teaching how to discern such states and distinguish their causes.

Somatic disciplines can further be classified as to whether their major orientation is toward external appearance or inner experience. Representational somaesthetics (such as cosmetics) is concerned more with the body's surface forms, while experiential disciplines (such as yoga) aim more at making us feel better in both senses of that ambiguous phrase: to make the quality of our somatic experience more satisfying and also to make it more acutely perceptive. The distinction between representational and experiential somaesthetics is one of dominant tendency rather than rigid dichotomy. Most somatic practices have both representational and experiential dimensions (and rewards) because there is a basic complementarity of representation and experience, outer and inner. How we look influences how we feel, and vice versa. Practices like dieting or bodybuilding that are initially pursued for representational ends often produce inner feelings that are then sought for their own experiential sake. Just as somatic disciplines of inner experience often use representational cues (such as focusing attention on a body part or using imaginative visualizations), so a representational discipline

like bodybuilding deploys experiential clues to serve its ends of external form, using feelings to distinguish, for example, the kind of pain that builds muscle from the pain that indicates injury.

Another category of pragmatic somaesthetics—*performative somaesthetics*—may be distinguished for disciplines that focus primarily on building strength, health, or skill, disciplines such as weightlifting, athletics, and martial arts. But to the extent that these disciplines aim either at the external exhibition of performance or at one's inner feeling of power and skill, they might be associated with or assimilated into the representational or experiential categories.

Finally, a third way to improve our use of a tool is through actual practice with it, for we learn to do by doing. Thus, besides the analytic and pragmatic branches of somaesthetics, we also need what I call *practical somaesthetics*, which involves actually engaging in programs of disciplined, reflective, corporeal practice aimed at somatic self-improvement (whether representational, experiential, or performative). This dimension of not just reading and writing about somatic disciplines but systematically performing them is sadly neglected in contemporary philosophy, though it has often been crucial to the philosophical life in both ancient and non-Western cultures.³⁴

V

The case for the humanistic study and cultivation of the body as our primordial, indispensable instrument has, I trust, been adequately made. But we should not forget, in closing, that the body, as purposeful subjectivity, is also the user of the tool it is. Moreover, we should question the body's presumed status as mere means in contrast to higher ends. This disparaging categorization rests on an implicit means-ends dichotomy that needs to be challenged. The means or instrumentalities used to achieve something are not necessarily outside the ends they serve; they can be an essential part of them.³⁵ Paint, canvas, representational figures, and the artist's skillful brush strokes are among the means for producing a painting, but they (unlike other enabling causes, such as the floor on which the artist stands) are also part of the end-product or art object, just as they are part of the further end of our aesthetic experience in viewing the painting. In the same way, the dancer's body belongs as much to the ends as to the means of the dance work. As Yeats poetically put it (in "Among School Children"), "O body swayed to music. O brightening glance. How can we know the dancer from the dance?" More generally, our appreciation of art's sensuous beauties has an important somatic dimension, not simply because they are grasped through our bodily senses (including the sense of proprioception that traditional aesthetics has ignored) but, in addition, because art's emotional values, like all emotion, must be experienced somatically to be experienced at all.

Also beyond the realm of art, somatic experience belongs to higher ends, not merely menial means. Though athletic exercise may be a means to health, we enjoy such exercise in itself as part of what health actually signifies—the ability to enjoy strenuous movement. And bodily health itself is enjoyed not just as a means to enable laboring for other ends; it is enjoyed intrinsically as an end in its own right. Happiness and pleasure are often prized as highest ends, but somatic experience clearly forms part of them. What are the joys of love without desiring and fulfilled emotions that are always experienced bodily no matter how pure or spiritual one's love is claimed to be? How can we appreciate even the pleasures of thought without recognizing their somatic dimensions—the pulsing of energy, flutters of excitement, and rush of blood that accompany our impassioned flights of contemplation? Knowledge, moreover, is sturdier when incorporated into the muscle memory of skilled habit and deeply embodied experience.³⁶ As human thought would not make sense without the embodiment that places the sensing, thinking subject in the world and thereby gives her thought perspective and direction, so wisdom and virtue would be empty without the diverse, full-bodied experience on which they draw and through which they manifest themselves in exemplary embodied speech, deeds, and radiating presence.

We thus conclude with another double feature of the living body. Not only instrumentally valuable for perfecting our humanity, the soma is also part of this valued end. In educating and cultivating the sensibility of somaesthetic awareness to improve our thinking through the body, we not only enhance the material means of human culture but also our capacities as subjects to enjoy it.³⁷

NOTES

This article was originally given on April 6, 2005, as my inaugural lecture as the Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Humanities at Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, and was subsequently delivered at a plenary session of the Ninth East-West Philosophers Conference, Honolulu, June 1, 2005. I express my gratitude to Anthony Tamburri and Roger Ames, the organizers of these events, and to the encouraging public who attended them.

1. *Webster Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam Webster, 1971) defines *humanities* as "the branch of learning regarded as having primarily a cultural character and usually including languages, literature, history, mathematics, and philosophy"; *The Random House College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1984), defines it as "a. the study of classical Latin and Greek language and literature. b. literature, philosophy, art, etc. as distinguished from the sciences."
2. There is considerably more interest in the body in the social sciences, especially sociology. The humanist neglect of the body is reflected even in basic arts education, where obviously body-centered arts like dance and theatre get far less attention in the curriculum. On this point, see Liora Bressler, "Dancing the Curriculum: Exploring the Body and Movement in Elementary Schools," in *Knowing Bodies, Moving Minds*, ed. Liora Bressler (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), 127-51.

3. For a detailed account of somaesthetics, see Richard Shusterman, *Performing Live* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), chaps. 7 and 8. For its connection to traditional aesthetics and to feminist aesthetics, see, respectively, Richard Shusterman, *Pragmatist Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), chap. 10, and "Somaesthetics and *The Second Sex*," *Hypatia* 18 (2003): 106-36. For critical discussions of somaesthetics, see the essays of Martin Jay, Gustavo Guerra, Kathleen Higgins, and Casey Haskins, and my response in the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 36, no. 4 (2002): 55-115; see also Jerold J. Abrams, "Pragmatism, Artificial Intelligence, and Posthuman Bioethics: Shusterman, Rorty, Foucault," *Human Studies* 27 (2004): 241-58; and Peter Arnold, "Somaesthetics Education and the Art of Dance," *Journal of Aesthetic Educations* 39, no. 1 (2005): 48-64. In his otherwise fine article, Arnold inaccurately suggests I regard somaesthetics as "concerned with the 'inner' experience of the body rather than its 'external' appearance" (62). It is thus important to reiterate that somaesthetics, for me, includes both aspects and that they are clearly related.
4. John Dewey employs the term *body-mind* in *Experience and Nature* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 191; he later uses the term *mind-body* to designate "a unified wholeness" in his essay "Body and Mind" in *The Later Works*, vol. 3 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 27.
5. Of course, given the sloppy, haphazard abundance of nature, there are always occasional human mutants, but such exceptions only confirm the bodily norm, which can be understood as an evolving form rather than a fixed, sacred, ontological essence.
6. Evidence for this includes the so-called sign of Babinski or plantar response: the toes in infants dorsiflex and fan with stroking of the sole, similar to the response of adults with damage to the motor cortex.
7. I elaborate this argument more fully in "Wittgenstein on Bodily Feelings: Explanation and Melioration in Philosophy of Mind, Art, and Politics" in *The Grammar of Politics: Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy*, ed. C. Heyes (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).
8. Though proscribing graven images, the ancient Hebrew bible affirmed that humans were molded in God's image, suggesting our bodies have a divine source and paradigm. If the question of God's own body remains problematically mysterious in the Old Testament, then the New Testament's human incarnation of God in Christ, though adding further mystery, nonetheless reconfirms the human form as worthy of divine inhabiting. Hegel and others have admired Greek sculpture for capturing the way the harmonious proportions of the human body express the dignity of our rational spirit.
9. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Denkebewegung: Tageb cher 1930-1932, 1936-1937* (Innsbruck: Haymon, 1997), 139-40.
10. *The Analects of Confucius*, trans. R. Ames and H. Rosemont (New York: Ballantine, 1998), 2:8, 8:4.
11. *Ibid.*, 16:5; see also 4:1, 4:17, 12:24.
12. A stunning new breakthrough in neurotechnology might seem poised to challenge this assertion. A system called the "BrainGate™ Neural Interface System" has, in a pilot study, succeeded in reading neural signals from the motor cortex of a quadriplegic patient with a three-year old spinal cord injury and converting those signals through a computer into commands that allow the patient to control a cursor. The signals are read, by an implantable neuroprosthetic device, from the area of the motor cortex that controls movement of the hand and arm. This system seems to allow the patient to directly communicate his motor intentions to a computer without the use of any overt bodily instrumentalities such as using the voice or blinking an eye. However, it is most probable that the generation of these signals in the motor cortex would involve or rely on other small muscular movements in the head area that are associated with the previously embodied habits and neural pathways used in moving the hands prior to the injury. It would be hard to explain systematic, habitual signal patterns of motor

- intentions in the motor cortex relating to hand movement without any prior experience of moving the hand. Thus even such alleged cases of "bodiless" action (which seem to forget that the brain also belongs to the body) would seem to rely in some way on actual or prior use of bodily instrumentalities or movements (outside the brain) that may not be overt. The initial research and applications of the system were conducted on monkeys and published as an article, "Instant neural control of a movement signal," in *Nature* (2002) 416: 141-2. For more information on BrainGate™, see <http://www.alsa.org/files/cms/News/Archive/2005/BRAINGATE%20BACKGROUND.pdf>.
13. Even mere willing itself (that is, willing that fails to issue in performing the willed action) still will involve—especially if it is effortful willing—bodily means and be expressed in patterns of muscular contraction.
 14. See William James, "The Experience of Activity," in *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 86.
 15. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 1:153, 163; Xenophon, *Conversations of Socrates* (London: Penguin, 1990), 172.
 16. Aristippus, founder of the Cyrenaic school, insisted "that bodily training contributes to the acquisition of virtue" because fit bodies provide sharper perceptions and more discipline and versatility for adapting oneself in thought, attitude, and action. Zeno, founder of Stoicism, likewise urged regular bodily exercise, claiming that "proper care of health and one's organs of sense" are "unconditional duties." Cynicism's founder, Diogenes, was even more outspoken in advocating bodily training as essential for the knowledge and discipline needed for wisdom and the good life. He also experimented with a striking range of body practices to test and toughen himself, extending from eating raw food and walking barefoot in the snow to masturbating in public and accepting the blows of drunken revelers. Of Diogenes the Cynic it is said: "He would adduce indisputable evidence to show how easily from gymnastic training we arrive at virtue." Even the pre-Socratic Cleobulus, a sage "distinguished for strength and beauty, and initiated in Egyptian philosophy," "advised people to practice bodily exercise" in their pursuit of wisdom. See Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 1:91, 95, 153, 221; 2:71, 215.
 17. See, for example, Xunzi's emphasis on embodiment in "Discourse on Ritual Principles," "Discourse on Music," and "On Self-Cultivation" in *Xunzi*, trans. John Knoblock (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Chuangzi and Guanzi, respectively, on breathing, in "The Great and Venerable Teacher," in *Chuang-Tzu*, trans. W. A. Rickett (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1965), vol. 1, Nei yeh chapter; and D. T. Suzuki; D. J. Suzuki on Zen meditation and swordsmanship in his *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973). The contemporary Japanese philosopher Yuasa Yusuo insists that the concept of "personal cultivation" or *shugyo* (which is presupposed in Eastern thought as "the philosophical foundation") has an essential bodily component because "true knowledge cannot be obtained simply by means of theoretical thinking" but only "through 'bodily recognition or realization' (*tainin* or *taikoku*)." See Yuasa's *The Body: Towards an Eastern Mind-Body Theory* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), 25.
 18. *Mencius: A New Translation*, trans. W. A. C. H. Dobson (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1969), 6A.14. He also writes: "Whichever trust I fail to fulfill, it must not be that of keeping my body inviolate, for that is the trust from which all others arise" (4A:20).
 19. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). 7:476.
 20. Most of our body weight (head, shoulders, torso) is on top, while our legs and feet are much lighter. This anatomical structure, which contrasts with the stability of a pyramid, mechanically encourages us to move in reaction to gravitational pressure to make us fall.

21. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 54, 118, 125.
22. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Works and Days," in *Society and Solitude* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1922), 157.
23. See *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald Frame (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), 484-85. Montaigne condemned as "inhuman" any philosophy "that would make us disdainful enemies of the cultivation of the body" (849).
24. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (bilingual edition) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), 2, 9, 43, 68, 80. I sometimes use my own translation from the German original.
25. William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 1128.
26. Immanuel Kant, *Reflexionen zur Kritische Philosophie*, ed. Beno Erdmann (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1992), paras. 17, 19 (pp. 68-69). Kant later critically remarks that "man is usually full of sensations when he is empty of thought" (para. 106 [p.117]).
27. William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: Dover, 1962), 99.
28. James, *Principles of Psychology*, 1077-78; James, *Talks to Teachers*, 100; William James, *The Correspondence of William James* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 4:586 and 9:14.
29. Noting his "disposition to hypochondria," Kant felt that heightened attention to inner somatic sensations resulted in "morbid feelings" of anxiety. See his book *The Contest of the Faculties* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 187-89. On James's hypochondria, see Ralph Barton Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James*, abridged ed. (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996), who also cites James's mother's complaints of his excessive expression of "every unfavorable symptom" (361). On the "philosophical hypochondria" of "introspective studies," see James's letter to brother Henry on August 24, 1872, in *The Correspondence of William James*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 1:167. James repeatedly confessed, in private correspondence, to being "an abominable neurasthenic." See, for example, his letters to F. H. Bradley and George H. Howison in *The Correspondence of William James*, 8:52, 57.
30. In advocating the cultivation of somatic awareness, I am not suggesting that our bodily feelings are always infallible guides to practice and self-care. On the contrary, I recognize that the average individual's somatic self-perception is often quite inaccurate (not noticing, for instance, excessive and harmful chronic muscular contractions). But this is precisely why somatic awareness needs to be cultivated in order to make it more accurate and discriminating, and why such cultivation typically requires the aid of a teacher or coach. I also do not want to suggest that a person's somatic self-awareness is ever complete or perfect in a way that she can become totally transparent to herself. For the limits and difficulties of somatic introspection, see my articles, "The Silent, Limping Body of Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, ed. T. Carman and M. Hansen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 151-80, and "William James, Somatic Introspection, and Care of the Self," *Philosophical Forum* 36, no. 4 (2005): 429-50.
31. See *Performing Live*, chaps. 8 and 9.
32. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968), para. 408.
33. Feldenkrais Method deploys an educational rather than therapeutic-pathological model. Practitioners thus work with clients who are treated as "students" rather than "patients," and we speak of our work as giving "lessons" rather than "therapy sessions." I describe the Feldenkrais Method in greater detail in chapter 8 of *Performing Live*. Functional Integration is only one of the two central modes of the method, the other being Awareness Through Movement. The latter is best described in Feldenkrais's introductory text, *Awareness Through Move-*

- ment (New York: Harper and Row, 1972). A very detailed but difficult account of Functional Integration is provided in Yochanan Rywerant, *The Feldenkrais Method: Teaching by Handling* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983).
34. See Richard Shusterman, *Practicing Philosophy: Pragmatism and the Philosophical Life* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
 35. John Dewey powerfully makes this point in chapter 9 of *Art as Experience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987).
 36. Hence Montaigne wisely urged that "we must not [merely] attach learning to the mind, we must incorporate it; we must not sprinkle but dye" (*The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, 103).
 37. Heightened awareness enables us to increase our pleasures by making them more consciously savored and deepening them with the pleasures of reflection. As Montaigne writes, "I enjoy [life] twice as much as others, for the measure of enjoyment depends on the greater or lesser attention that we lend it" (*The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, 853).