

Annual Review of Anthropology Multisensory Anthropology

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Abstract

The senses are made, not given. Multisensory anthropology focuses on the variable boundaries, differential elaboration, and many different ways of combining the senses across (and within) cultures. Its methodology is grounded in "participant sensation," or sensing—and making sense—along with others, also known as sensory ethnography. This review article traces the sensualization of anthropological theory and practice since the early 1990s, showing how the concept of sensory mediation has steadily supplanted the prior concern with representation. It concludes with a discussion of how the senses are engaged in filmmaking, multispecies ethnography, and material culture studies as well as in achieving social justice.

INTRODUCTION

"Multisensory anthropology," it could be said, stands for a cultural approach to the study of the senses and a sensory approach to the study of culture. The senses are treated as both objects of study and means of inquiry. In her programmatic article on the topic, Classen underscored the multiplicity of sensory experience across (and within) cultures and the imperative of approaching each culture on its own sensory terms:

Sight may be linked to reason or to witchcraft, taste may be used as a metaphor for aesthetic discrimination or for sexual experience, an odour may signify sanctity or sin, political power or social exclusion. Together, these sensory meanings and values form the *sensory model* espoused by a society, according to which the members of that society "make sense" of the world....There will likely be challenges to this model from within the society, persons and groups who differ on certain sensory values, yet this model will provide the basic perceptual paradigm to be followed or resisted. (Classen 1997, p. 402, emphasis in original)

Classen went on to review the contributions of Paul Stoller, Steven Feld, and Michael Taussig, among others, to this emergent field of study and concluded by proposing that "[t]he broad range of applications for a sensory analysis of culture indicates that the anthropology of the senses need not be only a 'subfield' within anthropology, but may provide a fruitful perspective from which to examine many different anthropological concerns," such as politics, religion, and gender. This point was seconded by Herzfeld (2001) in a chapter on "Senses" in his masterful synthesis of theoretical practice in the discipline. Herzfeld's chapter was reprinted in *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader* (Robben & Sluka 2007), which heralded the transformation of the subfield into one of the more prominent ways of going about anthropology, namely, "sensorial fieldwork" (Robben & Sluka 2007, part VIII) or "sensory ethnography" (Pink 2009), as it is also known. Laplantine [2015 (2005), p. 2] aptly captured the gist of this approach in *The Life of the Senses: Introduction to a Modal Anthropology*: "The experience of fieldwork is an experience of sharing in the sensible [partage du sensible]. We observe, we listen, we speak with others, we partake of their cuisine, we try to feel along with them what they experience" (see, e.g., Geurts 2003, Barcan 2011, Irving 2016, Doerksen 2018¹).

Laplantine's formulation represents a significant departure from the conventional anthropological method of participant observation. It relinquishes the status of the observer in favor of the practice of participant sensation, or sensing—and making sense—along with others. Sensing is conceptualized as an active social, rather than passive or purely psychophysical, process. Sensory ethnography also plays up the multiple senses of the word "sense," which includes in its spectrum of referents sensation and signification, feeling and meaning (as in the "sense" of a word). The resulting idea of cultures as so many different "ways of sensing the world" (Howes 1991, p. 8) was pregnant with implications for the sensualization of the discipline, as discussed below.

READING/WRITING/SENSING CULTURE

This florescence of the senses in contemporary anthropological research has a backstory. Dialing back to the mid-twentieth century, we find an emphasis on the cultural patterning of sense experience; for example, see Bateson & Mead [2007 (1942)] on the contrast between the visual and kinesthetic learning of the Balinese versus the verbal and propositional learning enshrined in most US classrooms (see also Howes 2003, pp. 10–17). This focus on sensation was eclipsed in

¹Doerksen even went so far as to have three magnets implanted in his left hand over the course of his (extra)sensory ethnography of the grinder subculture of California.

the 1970s by a new focus on interpretation, which was ushered in by Geertz. In a letter, Geertz records how Mead "once said to me pointedly, 'there are two kinds of anthropologists, looking anthropologists [her] and talking anthropologists [me].' I saw her notes on Bali: they were sheerly behavioral: 'Njoman walks across the square and sits down, 15 seconds' etc." (Howes et al. 2019). In response to Mead's "behaviorism," Geertz (1973) introduced a language-based model, "the model of the text," to advance his own interpretivist agenda: "The culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong" (p. 452). This move opened the way for the textualization of anthropology, or slippage from "reading" (as Geertz put it) to "writing" culture. The transition from interpretation to representation came to a head in 1986 with the publication of Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (Clifford & Marcus 1986). Ironically, the cover of this book shows an anthropologist hunched over his notebook, concentrating on his writing, with a couple of informants gazing (distractedly) over his shoulders—the reverse of the posture approved by Geertz. It bears remembering that Writing Culture came out at the height of postmodernism in anthropology, when it was seriously countenanced that "il n'y a pas de hors-texte."

Noticeably absent from the pages of *Writing Culture* is any discussion of the other technologies, besides writing, with which anthropologists were already experimenting in highly creative ways: media such as film and audio-tape recording, which may be regarded as "extensions of the senses" following McLuhan (1964) and his associates Carpenter (1972) and Ong [1991 (1967)]. The increasing portability of such technologies (e.g., handheld video cameras) facilitated this diversification of the modalities of inquiry. This transformation in the means of perception has been theorized by, among others, Taylor (1996), Grimshaw (2001)², and MacDougall (2005)³. In "Iconophobia," Castaing-Taylor cried out against the "linguification" of meaning and the denigration of film in mainstream anthropology; he went on to extol the "apparent affinity of film with life itself" and to suggest that "ethnography can itself be conducted filmically" (Taylor 1996, pp. 83, 86). True to his word, Taylor founded a multimedia laboratory at Harvard University, called Sensory Ethnography Lab, in 2006 and has produced a number of highly sensational (noticeably wordless) documentary films.

Meanwhile, other senses besides the visual were stirring, most notably the "second sense" in the conventional Western hierarchy of sensing, namely, hearing. The ethnomusicologist Feld (1996) introduced the concept of "acoustemology" by way of summing up his practice of listening in to the culture and environment of the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea. By training his ears to pick up on all the nuances of local ways of producing and perceiving sound, he was able to discern the capital cultural importance of such auditory motifs as "lift-up-over sounding" and even hear the "inside" of a drumbeat (Feld 1991, pp. 91–94). Feld subsequently proposed a theory of the "iconicity of style," or cross-modal correspondence and transposability of perceptual schema. For example, he discerned a link between the layering of sound in the Kaluli singing style and the layering of paint and other paraphernalia in their ceremonial costumes. Feld has also produced many fine recordings of sounds ranging from the voices (both human and nonhuman) of the rainforest to bells, car horns, and glaciers melting. It was out of this shift in registers that an anthropology of sound was born (Feld & Brenneis 2004, Rice 2013).

²Using a camera instead of pen and paper "positions oneself differently in the world," according to Grimshaw (2007, p. 199), and facilitates a shift from the conventional "word-sentence to an image-sequence approach" to knowledge production.

³One of the distinctive things about film, according to MacDougall (2005, p. 52), "is its routine mixing of different modes of thought and perception. There is a continuous interplay among its varied forms of address—the aural with the visual, the sensory with the verbal, the narrative with the pictorial" (see also Howes 2016, pp. 174–77; Zhang 2017).

Taking his cue from Feld, Sutton (2001, 2010) introduced the concept of "gustemology" into the anthropology of food (a subfield that had been strangely silent about the actual gustatory properties of foodstuffs up to that point) and also championed the idea that memory should be regarded as a sense in its own right. The anthropology of food has become substantially more flavorful in consequence (Rhys-Taylor 2017, Counihan & Højlund 2018).

Taking her cue from Classen (1993) and Csordas (1993), Geurts, in Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community, explored the somatic modes of attention (knowledge and action) that constitute the sensory model of the Anlo-Ewe of Ghana. Geurts's sensory analysis of Anlo-Ewe culture ranges over many domains, including the language of the senses, childrearing practices, rituals, mythology, cosmology, and material culture to flesh out the meaning of seselelame, the indigenous category referring to "feeling in the body" (i.e., perception). She found an overwhelming emphasis on balance and kinesthesia, as exemplified by how the Anlo-Ewe imagine the fetus to be seated on a "stool" (i.e., the placenta) in the womb, already practicing the art of balance, and by the more than 50 Anlo-Ewe words for different ways of walking (or kinesthetic styles), each of which carries a different moral valence. The climax of Geurts's ethnography comes in her account of how she found herself curving her own body inward, cleaving to the same posture as the other members of the audience, at the moment in the relation of the Anlo-Ewe migration myth when a founding ancestor collapsed from exhaustion and rolled up or folded into himself. (This iconic gesture laid claim to the territory that the Anlo-Ewe inhabit to this day.) Her comportment in that moment also triggered the revelation that this posture is echoed in the Anlo-Ewe's very name, which is pronounced AHNG-lo (Geurts 2003, pp. 114–20).

The sensory turn in anthropological theory and practice was consolidated in the first decade of the new millennium with the publication of the Sensory Formations series from Berg Publishers (now Bloomsbury Publishing). It consists of seven volumes, one on each of the canonical five senses (Bull & Back 2003, Classen 2005, Korsmeyer 2005, Drobnick 2006, Edwards & Bhaumik 2008), together with an introductory volume on the interrelations of the senses, as well as a final volume on the mysterious, highly multifarious sixth sense (Howes 2005, 2009). This body of work is distinguished by its insistence on the senses being made, not given; its introduction of the holistic concept of the sensorium (in place of "the five senses") which highlights the variable boundaries, differential elaboration, and many different modes of combining the senses across (and within) cultures; its focus on the "emplacement" of the sensing subject in a particular environmental and cultural context (Howes 2005, p. 7; Pink 2009, p. 25); its emphasis on "the mediated sensorium" [Jones 2018 (2006)], that is, on mediation in place of representation; and, its critique of phenomenology for failing to grapple adequately with the social life of the senses. "Phenomenological accounts can sometimes capture the sensual qualities of experience, but they tend to ignore how shared meanings shape the most 'natural' of human actions and perceptions in dance and in life, slighting the cultural content inherently implied by physical and cultural experience" [Bull 2018 (1997), p. 263].

SENSUOUS SCHOLARSHIP

One sign of how far anthropology has come since the heyday of the writing culture movement is the volume entitled *A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies*,

⁴Jones [2018 (2006)] writes, "The human sensorium has always been mediated. (Without the 'medium' of air or water, the anthropoid ear finds it impossible to hear)" (p. 219). The senses, and their extensions via diverse media, "mediate the relationship between self and society, mind and body, idea and object" (Bull et al. 2006, p. 5).

coedited by Elliott & Culhane. The contributors are all cocurators of the Centre for Imaginative Ethnography. The five chapters cover imagining, sensing, recording and editing, walking, writing, and performing and are replete with "participatory exercises that invite you to write in multiple genres, to pay attention to embodied multisensory experience, to create images with pencil and paper and with camera, to make music, and to engage in storytelling and performance as you conceptualize, design, conduct, and communicate ethnographic research" (Elliott & Culhane 2017, p. 3). As an example, the chapter on writing includes sections on poetry and drawing, in addition to referencing the work of Stewart (2011). The latter approaches writing as a form of "worlding," which captures emergent perceptions. Indeed, Stewart's prose is so finely textured and affectively charged that we feel ourselves sensing along with her as we read (see also Peterson 2016).

The work of various members of the Centre for Sensory Studies has also contributed to the groundswell from representation to mediation. While they are known primarily for such reference works as the seven-volume *Sensory Formations* series (see above), the six-volume *Cultural History of the Senses* set (Classen 2014), and the four-volume *Senses and Sensation: Critical and Primary Sources* compendium (Howes 2018a,b), these practitioners of "sensuous scholarship" (in Stoller's apt phrase) have also engaged in numerous research-creation experiments that have opened up the terrain "between art and anthropology" (see Schneider & Wright 2010, Cox et al. 2016; http://www.ethnographicterminalia.org). Under the conceptual and artistic direction of Chris Salter, the Centre has produced a series of "performative sensory environments," such as "Displace v. 1.0," which was shown at the 2011 American Anthropological Association meetings. "Displace" staged a Lévi-Straussian "fugue of the five senses"—or symphony of sensations—modeled on the synesthetic cosmology of the Desana of Colombia (Classen 1993, pp. 131–38; Salter 2015, chapter 3). It was like a museum exhibition but without any objects or labels, only qualia. Billed as a "flight simulator for anthropologists," it sought to disrupt conventional habits of perception by rearranging the senses and thereby to open a crack in the Western sensorium.

For its current project, "Sensory Entanglements," the Centre has teamed up with Jennifer Biddle and is collaborating with indigenous artists in Canada and Australia to create a series of intercultural, multisensorial installations that pivot on the sharing of the sensible (Salter 2018). Consider "Light Tipi/Tipi de Lumière/Yahkâskwan Mîkiwahp" (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZmcbEA1Q9Y) by First Nations Cree, Irish–Canadian singer-songwriter and performance artist Cheryl L'Hirondelle. The latter invited participants to assemble in a Toronto park one winter's eve, with the city's skyline looming in the background. They were handed sage bundles and flashlights and instructed to position themselves in a circle and make the form of a tipi with the beams of the electric torches against the billowing smoke of the sage. The projection of the light tipi superimposed an indigenous architectural structure on the skyline of the settler city. While classifiable as "light art," this installation also had important olfactory and proprioceptive dimensions; that is, it could be scented and felt as well as seen. Most importantly, by incorporating members of the dominant society into the creation of this fragrant spectacle, "Light Tipi" created an intercultural space. The resulting fusion of horizons gave sensuous expression to the cardinal legal principle of reconciliation (Robinson & Martin 2016).⁵

Summing up, the hard line Mead drew between "looking anthropologists" and "talking anthropologists" has been scrambled in the ensuing decades as various anthropologists have taken to sensing cultures and producing what are now called "multimodal anthropologies" (Collins et al. 2017), an umbrella term encompassing all the audiovisual affordances of contemporary media.

⁵This project is also concerned with exposing the trauma (sensory assault and deprivation) of indigenous life under occupation (Biddle 2016, Robinson 2016) and contesting official historical records from the standpoint of indigenous sensory archives, including oral histories (Howes & Classen 2014, pp. 118–22).

BEING ALIVE TO SENSORY ALTERITY

The multisensory turn—or better, "revolution" (Howes 2005, pp. 1-7)—in anthropology has not been without its setbacks. Ingold unleashed a virulent attack in The Perception of the Environment. There, in a pair of chapters, he denounced the contributions of Carpenter, Stoller, Gell, and Classen, among others, for failing to conform to the dictates of the phenomenological philosophy of Merleau-Ponty and Jonas and the ecological psychology of J.J. Gibson. With a nod to Merleau-Ponty, Ingold avers the "preflective unity" of the senses and, citing Gibson, their "interchangeability" in that vision (Gibson's chosen sense), understood as "a mode of active, exploratory engagement with the environment,...has much more in common with audition than is often supposed, and for that matter also with gustation and olfaction" (Ingold & Howes 2011, p. 314; see also Ingold 2000, chapter 14). It bears remembering that Gibson's account of the senses as perceptual systems had its roots in military research during and immediately after the Second World War, the main concern of which was to understand and assess the visual aptitude of fighter pilots (Valiquet 2019). But the senses are not interchangeable and not simply information seekers or drones; rather, they are culture bearers and therefore always subject to moral regulation. Nor is it the case that "sight is an experience of light" and hearing is "an experience of sound" tout court, as Ingold would have it (Ingold & Howes 2011, p. 314). This formulation ignores the qualitative dimensions of light as of sound, 6 just as it elides the culturally specific practices of looking (Sturken & Cartwright 2017) and ways of listening [Rice 2013, Kane 2018 (2015)] that inform our engagement with the world. "I am, at once, my tasting, my listening, and the rest," Ingold proclaims, with his exalted sense of self or "ontogenetics" (Ingold & Howes 2011, pp. 330, 314, emphasis in original), oblivious to all the ways in which the senses and sensations are gendered (Classen 1998), racialized (Stoever 2016), and also structured by social class (Bourdieu $1987).^{7}$

From the standpoint of multisensory anthropology, sensory values are social values and social interaction is sensory interaction. The indissociability of the social and the sensible [Laplantine 2015 (2005)] is brought out well in dance anthropologist Bull's [2018 (1997)] comparative study of the modulation of the senses in ballet, contact improvisation, and Ghanaian dance. Each dance form privileges a different sense, which in turn conditions the interplay of the other senses in performance. It is manifest in the schism between preaching (the preserve of men) and "dancing the Word of God" (the preserve of women) in the historically black charismatic Protestant churches of New York City, as studied by Elisha (2018). Praise dancing enables women to engage in ministry even as they conform to the conservative gender norms and stereotypes of their denomination (e.g., women should be seen not heard). They must always be careful to toe the line "between technique and submission," but by doing so they are able to "make themselves 'heard' through dance" (Elisha 2018, p. 381). These cases speak to what Elisha calls the "principled decentring of the self" (p. 383), in contrast with Ingold's homogenization of same (van Ede 2017) and to Classen's point about intracultural diversity, the fact that there will always be groups within

⁶Regarding light, see the discussion of the scale of values or "qualisigns" of lightness ranging from somber to brilliant in *Light Volumes, Dark Matters* (Dutson 2010; see also Bille 2015). Regarding sound, see Rice (2013) and Kane [2018 (2015)].

⁷Ingold's understanding of gender, race, class, and other social structures is notoriously thin (Ingold & Howes 2011, pp. 329–30; Keane 2018, pp. 46–47). He is a postsocial anthropologist. Furthermore, in Ingold's world you must always be "practically and productively" engaged in the pursuit of some calling or skill; it is forbidden to be idle, or thoughtful (Keane 2018, pp. 45–46). In a related vein, Ingold warns against listening to the high priests of visual culture studies, with all their talk of images, for they commit idolatry (Ingold & Howes 2011, p. 316). (See below in note 11 for an explanation for this dogmatic stance.) With Ingold, the new John Calvin, it's back to the Reformation.

society who contest the values of the dominant sensory model. "The perceptual is...political" (Bull et al. 2006, p. 5, emphasis in original).

"Being alive" is one thing (Ingold 2011). Being alive to the "cornucopia of potent sensory symbolism" (Classen 1997, p. 402) and full panoply of alternative ways of sensing presented by the world's cultures is another. Only by seeing through Ingold's (2018, p. 41) dogma of "direct perception" can we tap into the extraordinary richness and diversity of sense experience across (and within) cultures. Fortunately, there exist many alternative approaches to Ingold's ontogenetic phenomenology within the anthropology of the senses as it has evolved to date, such as "sensory model" (Classen 1990, 1997), "sensuous mimesis" (Taussig 1993), "sensuous scholarship" (Stoller 1997), "anthropology of the visceral" (Manalansan 2006), "sensational knowledge" (Hahn 2007), religion as "sensational form" (Meyer 2010), "sensorial field" (Hamilakis 2014), "modal anthropology" [Laplantine 2015 (2005)], "transductive anthropology" (Helmreich 2015), and "qualia" and "qualisigns of value" (Chumley 2017, recuperating Munn 1986).

SENSORY OPENINGS

"If a revolt is to come, it will have to come from the five senses!" writes Michel Serres (quoted in Howes 2016, p. 173), who is justly famous for his laughter reading Merleau-Ponty (Howes 2005, pp. 1–2). We can see this revolt unfolding in the steady rise of multisensory anthropology as one sensory register after another has come to figure as a focus for cross-cultural investigation: the visual in opposition to the verbal, the aural in relation to the visual, the haptic in relation to all of the above, and so forth. We can also see it in the emergence of "sensory studies" (a term first coined in 2006) as an autonomous, interdisciplinary, multimodal field of inquiry (Bull et al. 2006), which regroups visual culture, auditory culture (or sound studies), smell culture, taste culture, the culture of touch, and "sixth sense," in all its multiplicity (Howes 2018b, pp. 1–3). What sensory studies, like multisensory anthropology, add to the investigation of each of these subdivisions of the sensorium is a focus on their articulation, or "intersensoriality" (Howes 2005, pp. 7–12).

To pursue this notion of intersensoriality, consider the technique the Murngin of Northern Australia use to communicate with whales: "[W]e can take sweat from under our arms and put our hands in the water, and we can put that water in our mouths and sing out the power names of that whale. It is just the same as if we were asking him for something" (Warner 1958, pp. 354–57, quoted in Howes & Classen 1991, p. 275). In a related form of communication found among the Yirrkala, people from one moiety rub the sweat from their armpits on the eyes of the other moiety to empower the latter to "see with sacredness" (Berndt 1951, p. 44, quoted in Howes & Classen 1991, p. 275). These examples of "audio-olfactory" and "visuo-olfactory" communication, which are at once chemical and aural-vibrational or visual, represent only two of the many multimodal techniques of communication documented by anthropologists. They help relativize the apparent

⁸There are many fine overviews of this evolution (see Finnegan 2002, Bendix & Brenneis 2005, Porcello et al. 2010, Cox 2018, Low 2018; see also Howes 2003, chapter 2; Howes 2015).

⁹In like manner, Jonas's philosophy of the senses, and *ipso facto* Ingold's (2000, pp. 258–59), is risibly culture bound. For example, Jonas (1954) pins his argument in "The Nobility of Sight" on the phenomenological distinction between distance and proximity, objective and subjective senses. But this argument would not hold up in those cultures where sight is linked to witchcraft (e.g., the evil eye) rather than to reason and objectivity. With phenomenology, the researcher is continually at risk of projecting their own (culturally biased) subjective experience onto the culture under study without ever being the wiser, whereas the trick is to exercise one's senses critically (Cox et al. 2016) and reflexively (Howes 2003, pp. 10–17, 28) in an effort to make sense of how the sensorium is constructed and lived locally. This aim is best served by adopting a cultural historical approach (Classen 1993, Smith 2007, Howes & Classen 2014; but see also Geurts 2003, pp. 15–16, on "cultural phenomenology").

naturalness of audiovisual technologies, such as film, and problematize the idea of conducting ethnography filmically. How could film ever capture the way the Murngin communicate with whales? Might the "film sense" (Eisenstein 1942) sometimes interfere with the practice of sensory ethnography?

In a highly perspicacious article entitled "Tasting Tea and Filming Tea: The Filmmaker's Engaged Sensory Experience," Zhang reflects on just this issue. She found that video recording a tea-tasting session at a Hong Kong teahouse made her lose track of tasting the precious Puer teas on offer. Significantly, she discovered that describing the qualities of the teas in writing helped her recover some aspects of the lost taste. Ingeniously, she also experimented with filming various adjacent sensations (e.g., holding a tea bowl, sniffing an empty tea bowl) and incorporating her own experience as a filmmaker into the picture, and in this way she successfully drew herself and her subjects, as well as the viewers of her film, closer to the act of tasting. Zhang's valiant attempts at evoking gustation could have been enriched further by drawing on Helmreich's (2015) theory of transduction, "the transmutation and conversion of signals [or energies] across media" (p. 225). Indeed, if a solution to the crisis of representation that still besets anthropology is to come, it will come from Helmreich's notion of transduction (with its emphasis on mediation) as that notion continues to evolve from its original technoscientific definition (see also Howes & Classen 2014, chapter 6, on the varieties of cross-modalism).

Anthropologists who practice multispecies ethnography have taken to experimenting with their senses in ways that are sometimes as ingenious as the Murngin way of communicating with whales. For example, Hayward [2018 (2010)] sought to bridge the divide between her *Umwelt* and the *Umwelt* of cup coral by coining the cross-modal notion of "fingeryeyes." While Ingold would not approve of her endeavor,¹¹ many other anthropologists, such as Myers with her project on "Becoming Sensor in Sentient Worlds" (https://becomingsensor.com/), have followed suit and have thereby expanded the bounds of sense beyond the human (Helmreich 2015, pp. 225–26; Smart & Smart 2017, chapter 3).

The practice of multisensory anthropology has also enlivened the study of material culture. It does so by focusing on "experiencing the properties of things" (Dudley 2012; see also Hamilakis 2014, Classen 2017)—their "qualia" (Chumley 2017), or "ecstasies" (Bille 2017), rather than their objecthood. The single most sonorous, luminous, and polished example of what could be called the sensori-social life of things approach to material culture is Munn's (1986) analysis of kula valuables as "qualisigns of value" in *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim Society.* Whereas Malinowski prided himself on being able to see the "big picture" while alleging that the natives could not (a questionable claim) and postulated that kulaing is about "the love of give and take for its own sake," Munn's work shows that the kula is actually geared to the production of *butu*—a term meaning "noise" and also "fame"—that is, to the quest for renown, and this goal entrains all the other senses (including sight) and their qualisigns in a determinate sequence (Howes 2003, chapters 3, 6).¹² It is a welcome sign that Munn's approach, which did so much to illuminate the sensory model of the Massim world, is finally being (re)discovered and extended to the exploration of other worlds of sense (Chumley & Harkness 2013, Chumley 2017).

¹⁰Thus, writing—or language in general—is not the enemy of the senses that some proponents of the visualization of anthropology seem to suggest. It can also come to their aid. See also Classen (1993, pp. 2–3) on speech being counted among the senses in many cultures, including Western culture, historically.

¹¹See Ingold (2018, p. 41). Ingold dismisses *Umwelt* theory for the same reason that he rejects the notion of soundscape and visual culture (and even culture for that matter): such constructs interfere with his dogma of "direct perception," which is hostile to any notion of mediation.

¹²Ingold's insistence on the synergy or "prereflective unity" of the senses fails to comprehend the "sequencing of sensations" in the sensory order of the Massim world (Howes 2003) or the numerous other instances of this phenomenon discussed in the literature (see Howes & Classen 1991, pp. 278–80; Geurts 2003, pp. 153–65).

Finally, multisensory anthropology has a crucial role to play in advocating for a just society by embracing the recognition that sensory critique is the beginning of social critique (Howes 2016). For example, with regard to the so-called disabled, Graif (2018) has shown how "hearing ways of seeing" marginalize d/Deaf ways of seeing (including the intelligibility of sign language), and Liebergesell et al. (2019) have demonstrated how approaching the design of the built environment through the eyes of a d/Deaf architect can generate architecture that is not only attentive to d/Deaf experience but also proves more accommodating for the hearing. With regard to civil and human rights, Trnka and colleagues' (2013) edited volume *Senses and Citizenships: Embodying Political Life* reveals both the multiple political effects of the senses and how naturalizing—that is, judiciously recognizing instead of outlawing—different citizens' sensory practices is essential to achieving a just, multicultural, polysensorial society.¹³

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¹³On the legal life of sensation, see also Howes & Classen (2014, chapters 3, 4) and Hamilton et al. (2017).

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