

Elena Clare Cuffari
CURRICULUM VITAE

Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science
University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)
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EDUCATION

University of Oregon, Ph.D., Philosophy, December 2011

Dissertation: “Co-Speech Gesture in Communication and Cognition”

Committee: Mark Johnson, philosophy (chair); Eric Pederson, linguistics;
Ted Toadvine, philosophy; Naomi Zack, philosophy

University of Oregon, M.A., Philosophy, 2009

Swarthmore College, B.A. in Philosophy with High Honors, Minor in Linguistic Theory with
High Honors, B.A. in Linguistics, 2005

Oxford University, courses in Philosophy and Linguistics, 2003-2004

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Language
Philosophy of Embodied Cognitive Science

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

20th Century Continental Philosophy
Moral Theory
Feminist Philosophy
Cognitive Linguistic Theory

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Post-doctoral Researcher, Department of Logic and Philosophy and Science, University of the
Basque Country (UPV/EHU), Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain, July 2012-May 2014

Visiting Researcher, Center for Subjectivity Research, Department of Media, Cognition and
Communication, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, January-February 2013

Visiting Scholar, Center for Human Interactivity, Institute of Language and Communication,
University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, January-February 2013

Adjunct Instructor, Department of English, University of Oregon, Winter 2012

Courtesy Post-doctoral Research Associate, University of Oregon, 2012-2014

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, and GRANTS

Marie Curie Fellowship, Experienced Researcher, TESIS (Towards an Embodied Science of Intersubjectivity), Node San Sebastian, University of the Basque Country (UPV), 2012-2014

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, University of Oregon, English, 2010-2012

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, University of Oregon, Philosophy, 2006-2010

Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS) Research Grant for Graduate Studies, University of Oregon, 2008-2009

Graduate School, Conference Grant, University of Oregon, 2008-2009

PUBLICATIONS

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals:

Cuffari, Elena. "Gestural Sense-making: Hand Gestures as Intersubjective Linguistic Enactments." *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 11:4 (December 30, 2012), 599-622.

Cuffari, Elena. "Mining the Mismatch: An Essay Review." *Gesture* 11:2 (2011), 219-231.

Cuffari, Elena. "Habits of Transformation." *Hypatia*, vol. 26, no. 3 (Summer 2011), 535-553.

Jensen, Thomas Wiben and Cuffari, Elena. "Doubleness in Experience: A Distributed Enactive Approach to Metaphor in Real Life Data." *Metaphor and Symbol*. (under review)

Chapters in Edited Volumes:

Cuffari, Elena. "Friendless Women and The Myth of Male Nonage: Why Philosophy of Love and Sex Needs a Science of Commitment" in *Philosophies of Love and Sex*, Sarah LaChance Adams, Caroline Lundquist, and Christopher David, eds. (under review).

Cuffari, Elena & Streeck, Jürgen. "The Intercorporeal Nature of Gesture and Language: Expanding Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy Through the Micro-analysis of Interaction" in *Intercorporeality: Beyond the Body*, Christian Meyer, Jürgen Streeck, and Scott Jordan, eds. Oxford University Press (in preparation).

Cuffari, Elena & Jensen, Thomas Wiben. "Living Bodies: Co-Enacting Experience" in *Body-Language-Communication: An International Handbook on Multimodality in Human Interaction*. Cornelia Müller et al, eds. De Gruyter. (under review).

Book manuscript:

Cuffari, Elena. *Living Language: A Philosophy of Gesture*. Proposal accepted by Adam Kendon, ed., *Gesture Studies*, John Benjamins Publishing Co. (in preparation).

Papers in Progress:

“The Enactive Language Project in Three Stories” – with Ezequiel Di Paolo and Hanne De Jaegher

“Field Notes from the Interspace” – with Miriam Kyselo

“Parent-Child Interactions: An Experimental Psychological Study in Natural Pedagogy” – with Angelique Eydem

PRESENTATIONS – Invited talks

“Languaging in Maturana and Merleau-Ponty,” Research Seminar, Center for Subjectivity Research, University of Copenhagen, Denmark (February 2013)

“The Sense of Sense-making,” Colloquium Presentation, Center for Human Interactivity, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark (February 2013)

“Habits of Transformation: Embodied Freedom at the Heart of Existential, Genealogical and Pragmatist Feminist Ethics,” *University of Oregon Undergraduate Philosophy Conference* (May 2010)

PRESENTATIONS - Conferences

“Coordinating Experience: Metaphoricity and Emotional Learning,” with Thomas Wiben Jensen, Poznan, *Research and Applying Metaphor (RaAM) Seminar 2013: Metaphor, Metonymy and Emotions* (May 2013)

“The Achievement of Metaphoric Meaning in Co-speech Gestures: Towards a Dynamic and Intersubjective approach,” Lund, *International Society for Gesture Studies (ISGS) 5th Biennial Meeting* (July 2012)

“Pragmatic and Pragmatist Approaches to Gesture Study: Getting Normativity in Co-Speech Gestures,” University of Oregon, *Summer Institute in American Philosophy* (July 2011)

“Hand Gestures Perform Meaning”, University of Oregon, *Big Ideas Symposium: Health and Human Performance* (February 2011)

“Reconciling Deliberation and Difference in Writing Pedagogy”, University of Oregon, *Radical Philosophy Association (RPA) 10th Biennial* (November 2010)

“Come on, Rorty (Don’t Fear the Reaper): Why Rorty Should Ditch Davidson”, Pacific University, *Northwest Philosophy Conference* (October 2009)

“Natural Born Babies? Bradley Method of Natural Childbirth: NatureCulture Mash-up”, University of Oregon, *Philosophical Inquiries into Pregnancy, Childbirth and Mothering* (May 2009)

“Narcissism or Creation? Looking for the Self in Cultivations of Feminine Physicality”, University of Oregon, *Women Philosopher’s Forum* (March 2009)

“Embodied and Engaged: The Empirical-Existential Ethic of John Dewey and Simone de Beauvoir”, Philadelphia, *Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy* (SAAP) at *APA-Eastern Division Meeting* (December 2008)

“Self Magazine and the Art of Feminine Narcissism: A Call to Recultivate the Self-Cultivation Ethic of the Fashion-Beauty Complex”, San Francisco State, *Radical Philosophy Association* (RPA) *8th Biennial* (November 2008)

“Towards a Like-Minded Ontology: Gesture and the Embodied Nature of Thought in David McNeill and Maurice Merleau-Ponty”, Case Western Reserve, *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, Language 9* (October 2008)

“Can Knowledge Be Power? The Significance of Situation in Sexuality and Science (in Simone de Beauvoir)”, DePaul University, *Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences* (SPHS) *Annual meeting at Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy* (November 2007)

“Disarticulating Response: Derrida and Agamben on Language and the Living”, University of Memphis, *Perspectives on Otherness* (February 2007)

PRESENTATIONS - Commentator

Comments on Shaun Gallagher, Soren Overgaard, and Sjoerd Ebisch panel “Social Perception and Empathy,” University of Copenhagen, *Enactive and Phenomenological Approaches to Intersubjectivity* (February 2013)

Comments on Rafael Nuñez and Kensy Cooperrider panel “Doing Time,” University of Oregon, *Philosophical Collaborations on Embodiment* (May 2007)

TEACHING

As Instructor:

At University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU):
Philosophy of Science Fall 2013

At University of Oregon:
Philosophy 102 *Ethics* Summer 2008
Philosophy 170 *Love and Sex* Summer 2009
Writing 121 *College Composition 1* Fall 2010 & 2011, Spring 2011, Winter 2012
Writing 122 *College Composition 2* Winter 2011, Winter 2012

As Teaching Assistant:

At the University of Oregon:
Philosophy 102 *Ethics* Winter 2007
Philosophy 110 *Human Nature* Fall 2006, 2007 & 2008
Philosophy 170 *Love and Sex* Spring 2007 & 2008
Philosophy 211 *Existentialism* Spring 2009
Philosophy 213 *Asian Philosophy* Winter 2008

Philosophy 310 *Ancient Philosophy* Fall 2009
Philosophy 311 *Modern Philosophy* Winter 2009
Philosophy 312 *19th Century Philosophy* Spring 2010
Philosophy 344 *Intro to Phil of Law* Winter 2010

SERVICE

On-Site Conference Organizer, *Interacting Complexity: Ethics and Communication in Conflict*, Globernance Institute and Center for Life, Mind, and Society, San Sebastian, Spain, May 2014

Referee for *Radical Philosophy Review*, *Cognitive Systems Research*

Women's Caucus Organizer, Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF), September 2010 – March 2011

On-Site Conference Organizer, International Conference on *Philosophical Inquiry into Pregnancy, Childbirth and Mothering*, May 2009

RIG Co-coordinator, Pregnancy, Childbirth and Mothering Research Interest Group, Philosophy Department, University of Oregon, January 2009 – May 2009

Graduate Student Representative, Graduate Studies Committee, Philosophy Department, University of Oregon, 2007-present

Administrative Assistant, *Society for Interdisciplinary Feminist Phenomenology* (SIFP), 2007-2008

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Philosophical Association
Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences
International Society for Gesture Studies
International Association for Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences

TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS, AND SUMMER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Video and the Analysis of Social Interaction, Advanced Methods Summer Institute, Kings College, London, June 17-18, 2013.

Psychotherapy and Psychopathology: An Interpersonal Approach, Munich Workshop of TESIS, Klinikum rechts der Isar (MRI), Department of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy, Munich, June 6-8, 2013.

Psycholinguistic Approaches to Metaphor Comprehension, at the Research and Applying Metaphor Seminar 2013, Poznan, May 3, 2013.

Mindfulness and Bodily Awareness Workshop, at the 17th Herbstakademie: The Implications of Embodiment: Enactive, Clinical, Social, Heidelberg, October 1, 2012

Embodying Intersubjectivity Research, TESIS Summer School, San Sebastian, May 14-18, 2012

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Stawarska, Beata. 2009. *Between You and I: Dialogical Phenomenology*. Ohio University Press, 2009 (proofreader)

Johnson, Mark. 2007. *The Meaning of The Body*. University of Chicago Press, 2007 (index)

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French, reading knowledge
German, reading knowledge
Spanish, A2 (not certified)

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Co-Speech Gesture in Communication and Cognition

This dissertation stages a reciprocal critique between several philosophical approaches to language on the one hand and interdisciplinary studies of speech-accompanying hand gestures on the other. Gesturing with the hands while speaking is a ubiquitous, cross-cultural human practice of meaning-making. Yet this practice is complex, varied, conventional, spontaneous, and above all under-theorized. In light of the theoretical and empirical treatments of language and gesture that I engage in, I argue that the hand gestures that spontaneously accompany speech are a part of language; more specifically, they *are* enactments of linguistic meaning. They are simultaneously (acts of) cognition and communication. Human communication and cognition are what they are in part because of this practice of gesturing. This argument has profound implications for philosophy, for gesture studies, and for interdisciplinary work to come.

As further, strong proof of the pervasively embodied way that humans make meaning in language, reflection on gestural phenomena calls for a complete re-orientation in traditional analytic philosophy of language. Philosophical awareness of intersubjectivity and normativity as conditions of meaning achievement is well-deployed in elaborating and refining the minimal theoretical apparatus of present-day gesture studies. Moreover, phenomenological reflections on language as a situated, constrained, yet world-disclosing practice of appropriating and inhabiting received meanings adds richness to a philosophical understanding of communicative action and communicative intention. Triangulating between the most social, communicative philosophies of meaning and the most nuanced, reflective treatments of co-speech hand gesture, I articulate a new construal of language as embodied, world-embedded, intersubjectively normative, dynamic, multi-modal enacting of appropriative disclosure. Spontaneous co-speech gestures, while being indeed spontaneous, are nonetheless informed in various ways by conventions that they appropriate and deploy. Through this appropriation and deployment speakers enact, rather than represent, meaning, and they do so in various linguistic modalities. Seen thusly, gestures provide philosophers with a unique new perspective on the paradoxical determined-yet-free nature of all human meaning.