Adrian Martin reminds us that *mise en scène* is ‘the art of bodies in space’. (1) The human body, particularly in motion, generates a complex series of culture-bound meanings: gestures, postures, orientation, touch, and facial expressions comprise a sophisticated array of patterned behaviour. Similarly with space, which appears to be an unbroken continuum, but is a form of communication divided into distinct signifying elements – and, like body movement, the distinct meanings conferred on those elements are culture-bound. Another traditional aspect of *mise en scène* is the realisation that the camera cannot record thoughts, emotions, and feeling, only physical appearances, actions, and gestures, which nonetheless convey those inner states. The study of how an actor's physical body expresses inner states of mind is fundamental to understanding how *mise en scène* functions in the cinema.

Despite the significance of bodies and space, *mise en scène* critics rarely refer to the disciplines of kinesics and proxemics, which systematically study, respectively, the movements of the body and the spaces it inhabits. Ray Birdwhistell, one of the founders of kinesics, claims that around 65 – 70% of face-to-face interaction is non-verbal, involving a complex system of micro gestures, made up of variables or options – such as several types of nod, different arm swings when walking, and so on. Gestures are integral to the study of bodies in filmic space, and we can enrich *mise en scène* analysis by employing kinesics and proxemics, for they enable us to differentiate these micro gestures as a film unfolds second-by-second. I make a case for the value of kinesics and proxemics to *mise en scène* analysis by examining four scenes from the opening of *The Big Sleep* (Howard Hawks, 1946), scenes where Humphrey Bogart portraying Marlowe interacts with four different female characters. These interactions constitute a highly charged social ritual involving sexually coded gestures, postures, and spaces.

Kinesics is an empirical theory that studies the body's complex expressive and semiotic behaviour; it systematically observes behaviour and
In his study of body orientation, Edward T. Hall measured social space via distance between people and body orientation. He identified four distinct spaces: intimate, personal, social, and public. At an intimate distance, the sensory presence of another body is fundamental: the visual field of interlocutors is dominated by the other person; smell, body heat, and the other person's breath are also central. The voice is reduced to a whisper, or plays only a minimal role. Personal space names the protective sphere that surrounds a body in a non-contact society anything from eighteen inches to four feet. This is the space in which most face-to-face conversations take place. The voice is at normal volume for a conversation, and interlocutors are able to touch one another by extending their arms (and leaning forwards, if they occupy the outer edges of personal space). Social space covers distances from around four to twelve feet. At the outer limit, the full figure of the interlocutors is clearly visible. Contact is maintained via the gaze and a fairly loud voice, which can be overheard easily by others standing farther away from the interlocutors. Finally, public space (over twelve feet) either involves no interaction, or a formal type of interaction with a loud voice (at question and answer sessions, for example), sometimes accompanied by exaggerated gestures. Public figures (Presidents, Royalty, film stars) are usually kept at approximately 30 feet distance from onlookers.

Although Birdwhistell singled out each gesture for analytical purposes, he emphasised that they can never be studied in isolation: 'gestures are forms which are incapable of standing alone.' They only become significant when used in conjunction with other gestures within a social context. Kinesics and proxemics are valuable to mise en scène analysis not only because they draw attention to micro distinctions, but also because they encourage us to move away from the activity of simply repeating in words what is visible on screen, or privileging one or two gestures, and instead focus our attention on the systematic patterns that organise body behaviour. Kinesics studies structural relations between gestures – it demonstrates that gestures form a complex patterned activity, and that the potential meanings of a gesture emerge from its combination with other gestures in a social context, rather than in isolation. There is no simple, direct link between a gesture and a fixed meaning (as popular studies of body language tend to suggest). In other words, gestures do not passively manifest pre-existing meanings. Instead, the meaning of a non-verbal form of behaviour is relative to the social context and other Behaviour performed at the same time.

Previous studies of kinesics in film are to be found in Richard Dyer's seminal book on film stars, Virginia Wright Wexman's essay on Bogart, and Adrienne McLean's essay on Judy Garland. Crucially, each author focuses on how actors use their body, voice, gestures, and movement to create characters and express their thoughts and feelings. Like these authors, I will refer to the actors rather than the character(s) they construct – except when discussing the actor's attempt to portray their character's actions and state of mind within the fiction. I am therefore focusing on the camera's physical portrayal of an actor on set interacting with other actors in the creation of fictional characters.

In part 3 of Stars, Dyer examined stars as signs. After a brief discussion of the work of Birdwhistell, he analysed two scenes from Fort Apache (John Ford, 1948) to contrast the stiff, aristocratic, 'bookish' posture and gestures of Henry Fonda with the more relaxed, intuitive, confident
posture and gestures of John Wayne. The expressiveness of these two scenes derives, Dyer argues, not only from the editing and camerawork, but also from the kinesics of Fonda and Wayne. In particular, Dyer lists a number of postures and gestures that contrast the two actors. (10)

In this early seminal study, Dyer focused critical attention on the value of the kinesic method as an integral part of mise en scène analysis.

Virginia Wright Wexman also makes explicit reference to the kinesic method in her analysis of Bogart in *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941) and *The Big Sleep*. She identified a series of differences in Bogart's construction of characters between the two films:

To create a character who is open to the possibility of love rather than one who is obsessed with the necessity of control Bogart radically altered his manner of expressing the quality of his internal life for his role in *The Big Sleep*. The defensive gestures that mark his portrayal of Sam Spade [in *The Maltese Falcon* are toned down or eliminated; in their place are indications of relaxation and thoughtfulness. (11)

Wexman's analysis of the contrast between the way Bogart played the two characters continues over a long paragraph, highlighting the value of a comparative kinesic analysis (as does Dyer's study of Fonda and Wayne in *Fort Apache*). In the following pages, I carry out a comparative kinesic analysis of the opening scenes in *The Big Sleep*.

Adrienne McLean employed the technical theories of effort-shape analysis to examine how Judy Garland's gestures, posture, and movement signify an actor's body and mind in pain. McLean notes that Rudolf Laban developed effort-shape analysis 'to describe, measure, and classify concrete, visible human processes – including musculoskeletal structure, gesture and posture, facial movements and expressions, foot-tapping and the like – as a complex of biological and social factors.' (12) McLean examines the tensions between Garland's physique (curvature of the spine, small torso, feet pointing slightly inward, limited diagonal movement of her legs) and the demands placed upon her at MGM to conform to the ideal image of femininity promoted by Western society and Hollywood in particular. In other words, McLean emphasises the tension between secondary and tertiary signs in Garland's acting. These tensions resulted in Garland's well-documented anxieties and sense of failure.

In contrast to all these studies reviewed here, there exists a tendency in film studies to write atomistic, fragmentary comments and observations on gestures. Based on unarticulated intuitions and hidden assumptions, these studies simply decontextualise, isolate, and fetishise one or two gestures. Roland Barthes made this type of analysis fashionable in 'The Third Meaning', after viewing a number of Eisenstein film stills. (13) From a different theoretical perspective, Andrew Klevan practices this type of impressionistic, piecemeal criticism in an online essay 'Expressing the In-Between.' (14) His essay opens with *The Big Sleep*, including Bogart's interaction with the unnamed Dorothy Malone character in the Acme bookshop (which I analyse below). Klevan's comments consist of little more than a jumbled list of a small number of the gestures found in the scene, combined with the paraphrasing of a few lines of dialogue. Unlike the authors discussed above, Klevan's work does not develop an argument, and we learn nothing about gesture and posture. In his essay and elsewhere, Klevan abandons the fragment of film after making a few initial observations.

In the following analysis of the opening scenes of *The Big Sleep* I use kinesics and proxemics to examine Bogart's face-to-face interactions with four female actors. More specifically, I analyse how actors in a classical Hollywood film construct their characters by reproducing and exaggerating a small number of significant postures, gestures, and stances that signify courtship readiness in Western society, a system of rituals that maintains and reinforces normative heterosexual behaviour. I compare the patterns of kinesic behaviour each female actor performs in relation to Bogart, drawing out the similarities and differences between their gestures and postures. As we saw in Dyer's analysis of Fonda and Wayne and Wexman's essay on Bogart, a comparative kinesic analysis is invaluable for drawing attention to the significance of gestures. This is because gestures form part of a system. That is, they are highly patterned; they do not exist in isolation, or simply have meaning in themselves. Their significance only emerges in relation to a system of gestures.

The four scenes last a little over eight minutes. Firstly, it is significant to note that all four interactions involve commentary (sometimes quite explicitly) on Bogart's body, posture and gestures, including his initial interaction with Martha Vickers (playing Carmen) in the film's opening scene. The interaction begins with Bogart in long shot, standing still in the Sternwood Mansion hallway, hat in his right hand, left hand in his trouser pocket, and Vickers, filmed in a reverse extreme long shot, trotting down the stairs into the hall. She turns her head to her right and at the same time slows down (changing from a trot to a slow stride) as soon as she catches sight of Bogart (who is off screen). She continues to stare at him, and begins to swing her arms fairly high and stiff as she slowly strides towards the table in the middle of the hallway. When she reaches the table, she breaks off her stare in order to handle the mail (which functions as a manipulator). Bogart's presence therefore makes Vickers change her behaviour. Her slow, deliberate, pronounced movements suggest she is putting on a form of flirtatious display. Her checking the mail may be a form of pretence, for it allows her to stand still and become the object of Bogart's look. At this stage the space between them seems to be at the outer edges of the social (it is difficult to measure accurately, because they are not filmed in the same shot), and territoriality is an issue, since Bogart's character is a visitor and stranger in the Sternwood house. Cut to Bogart in medium shot glancing off screen at Vickers. He first tilts his head slightly towards his right shoulder and directs his look downward, before returning his head to a vertical position and his look to eye level. His visitor status prompts him to be polite and to speak first. He begins conventionally, with one word: 'morning,' uttered with a slight forward nod of the head. Vickers tosses aside a letter she was handling and orientates her body in his direction. Significantly, she places both hands behind her back, a bimanual gesture in which the two hands are touching and the arms are in contact with the body. (15) This gesture creates an open posture which functions in this instance to put her body on display for Bogart (and, indirectly, the film audience). But she does not simply present herself as an object of Bogart's gaze, since she reciprocates his arms are in contact with the body.

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The first request is deictic, in which he motions to the off screen drinks trolley by coordinating the movement of his hand, eyes, and head. Rebuffs her questioning (she is trying to find out why her father hired him, while he is keeping tight-lipped) and requests a drink three times.

Standing at an angle (over 45 degrees: position 1 in Hall's classification), which is less intimate than face-to-face. (Similar to Vickers playing with her hair). Figure 3 shows that they are not facing each other, as in Bogart's interaction with Vickers, but immobile, rooted in her space screen left, while Bogart is more mobile, moving his arm up and down, wiping his neck with a handkerchief.

His reaction is a prolonged snort, more pronounced than his reaction to Vickers, perhaps suggesting annoyance as well as amusement. She is left hand, and her right hand thumb hooked on her trouser pocket. Like Carmen, Bacall's character makes a direct comment on Bogart's body – 'you're a mess' she says, a reference to his sweating (and therefore his body heat and odour), a taboo state for the body in Western society.

Towards the end of this scene, Bogart has somehow switched his hat from his right to his left hand (we can read this either as a simple unfilmed action which took place while he was off screen, or as a minor continuity error), and has hooked the top part of his right hand thumb in his belt, which has the effect of thrusting out his elbow. At this moment in the scene, this gesture suggests Marlowe's defiance in relation to Carmen's failed attempts at flirtation.

The second interaction takes place between Bogart and Lauren Bacall (playing Vivian, Carmen's older sister). This interaction quickly becomes confrontational – expressed both verbally (indirectly, then directly) and above all via gestures and posture. Whereas Bogart's scene with Vickers began with her in full motion while he stood still, in the scene with Bacall the staging is reversed, with Bogart in full motion, walking into the scene, while she remains standing still in the corner, pouring a drink. The glass is a manipulator that Bacall holds for the majority of the scene. Bogart has his own acting props: he holds his hat in his left hand and dapes his jacket over his left forearm for most of the scene; the jacket in particular acts as a barrier, partly concealing his body. For a brief period at the beginning, he holds a handkerchief in his right hand and uses it as a self-manipulator, by mopping the back of his neck with it.

Bacall's body is oriented at a 90 degree angle to Bogart. They share a social space. She briefly turns her head to his right to acknowledge his presence (unlike Vickers, who turned her head for a prolonged period). Bacall breaks eye contact with him almost immediately by looking away, back to her drink. After a few seconds of silence, she moves closer to him, from social space to personal space, with her drink in her left hand, and her right hand thumb hooked on her trouser pocket. Like Carmen, Bacall's character makes a direct comment on Bogart's body – 'you're a mess' she says, a reference to his sweating (and therefore his body heat and odour), a taboo state for the body in Western society. His reaction is a prolonged snort, more pronounced than his reaction to Vickers, perhaps suggesting annoyance as well as amusement. She is immobile, rooted in her space screen left, while Bogart is more mobile, moving his arm up and down, wiping his neck with a handkerchief (similar to Vickers playing with her hair). Figure 3 shows that they are not facing each other, as in Bogart's interaction with Vickers, but standing at an angle (over 45 degrees: position 1 in Hall's classification), which is less intimate than face-to-face.

Although Bogart's interaction with Bacall is less intimate than with Vickers, it is more animated. The dynamics between them changes as he rebuffs her questioning (she is trying to find out why her father hired him, while he is keeping tight-lipped) and requests a drink three times. The first request is deictic, in which he motions to the off screen drinks trolley by coordinating the movement of his hand, eyes, and head.
Agnes is not fooled.

None of which he performs at other times in the film. With Vickers's character Carmen, he acted out a mild form of deception, an exaggerated
tactile gesture (she points to the drinks trolley with a swift raising of her arm, thumb cocked). In this game of one-upmanship, Bogart has succeeded in gaining the upper hand. Bacall acknowledges this via a major body shift, by turning and walking away several steps from him in order to 'regroup', before swiftly turning to face him once again. The camera reframes them, with Bogart now screen left and Bacall screen right. They still do not face each other directly (the angle between them remains at least 45 degrees). She now holds her drink with both hands in front of her body (compare with Vickers, who held her hands behind her body); her hands form a symmetrical shape around the glass, with thumb tips touching above the glass and fingertips touching beneath the glass, with her arms touching her body. Bacall's character is less open and more reticent than Carmen in her attitude towards Marlowe. This is conveyed not only through the dialogue, but also kinesics: Bacall's orientation (rarely facing Bogart) and her bimanual gesture – holding her glass in front on her body, which acts as a barrier between them. By resisting her questioning and insisting on being offered a drink, he seems to have regained the upper hand. (The fact that he says he no longer wants a drink, once offered, shows the asking was a pretence to annoy her, in response to her comment that he is a mess.)

As soon as he says he no longer wants a drink, she then turns away from him for a second time and moves towards a window, in order to regroup once again. Bogart has his character follow her, at the same time pulling at his earlobe with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, which in this instance he combines with the raising of his eyebrows – all of which signify his attempts to refocus her attention in a conflicting, uncertain sexually-charged environment. She opens the window, turns around, and sits on the windowsill, left foot planted on the ground, right leg partly balanced on the windowsill, leaving her foot dangling. She still holds her drink in both hands, that is, still feels the need to hold the glass in front of her body, but her posture is more relaxed, more open to him. In response to her new posture, he puts down his jacket, hat, handkerchief, and hooks both thumbs in his belt to take up a more erect, masculine, self-confident posture. The thumbs hooked on the belt create the bold effect of putting his body on display, a similar gesture to Vickers placing her hands behind her back.

However, with Bogart, his arms are away from his body, not touching it. His body is now more open and exposed to her.

Bacall's posture changes abruptly, for her character feels insulted ('people don't talk to me like that', she says in a raised voice, revealing her temper and upper-class status). The muscles in her face, body, and limbs tense up, transforming from relaxed and open to closed and rigid, with both feet now together, firmly planted on the ground. As her posture transforms, she slams the glass down on the windowsill. In response to this abrupt and defensive posture, Bogart performs an exaggerated, long drawn out paralinguistic 'Oh!', which quickly diffuses the situation. Her voice softens and she clasps her hands in front of her torso (no longer holding a glass; instead, her left hand is curled around her right hand, thumb tips again touching and separate from the fingers). In this context, and reading the scene as an instance of courtship readiness, her clasped hands may suggest insecurity, in that she has shown her temper and her upper-class status to a working class man she feels attracted to. This may explain why she turns her back on him and walks away, to conceal her gesture of insecurity. (Throughout the film, her hands are rarely at ease.) But turning her back also suggests she wishes to disengage from him (she is occupying Hall's position 6). She rectifies this by re-engaging with him via her gaze: she quickly stops and turns her head sideways in his direction, while her body is still oriented away from him (this complex posture and hand clapping can be seen in Figure 4).

This is similar to Vickers's stance towards Bogart before she fell into his intimate space, although Bacall is further away, the outer edge of personal space. But Bacall has no intention of falling backwards into Bogart. The conversation quickly leads to a dead end, and he walks out of the scene. This interaction between the two characters Vivian and Marlowe has lasted three times longer than Carmen's interaction with Marlowe, and is more dynamic, involving changes in a struggle for dominance. This struggle is signified by the actors both verbally and kinesically.

Bogart's next two major interactions with female characters take place in the semi-public spaces of bookshops, unlike the private spaces of the home. These two bookshop scenes have their own symmetry, as well as numerous references back to Vickers and Bacall – primarily to their postures and gestures. But before Bogart visits the bookshops, he goes to the Hollywood Public Library to find out about famous first editions. When returning the reference book to the librarian (Carole Douglas), she remarks that he does not look like the type who would be interested in first editions. In other words, she comments on his appearance, implying he is not like her, the intellectual bookish type. He takes her comment as a rebuff and replies in a typically patriarchal manner by saying 'I collect blondes in bottles, too', which reduces her to
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Sonia Darrin has Agnes clutch a typical manipulator (a pencil), which she holds in front of her body with two hands for most of the scene (compare with Bacall holding her drink). Towards the end of the scene, she briefly places both hands on her hips and then crosses her arms tightly in front of her torso as she loses patience with Bogart's (and Marlowe's) alter ego; the hands on hips is not, in this context, a form of sexual display, but is Darrin's kinesic expression of her character's agitated state of mind. Her crossed arms create another barrier between their bodies, and also express impatience kinesically. At the same time, she begins to talk loudly at him – the volume of her voice is inappropriate for two people standing close together, in personal space. When expressing Vivian's state of mind, Bacall also raised her voice, prompting Marlowe to swiftly walk away, saying to Vivian 'I'm wasting your time'. Marlowe also walks swiftly away from Agnes, once he realises he is wasting her – and of course his own – time (she will not let him see Geiger). Darrin plays Agnes as a harsher version of Vivian.

In the Acme Book Shop, across the street from Geiger's, Marlowe speaks to the proprietress (an unnamed character played by Dorothy Malone, in an early role). Bogart immediately adopts an open posture by placing his hand on his hip, with his elbow sticking out (more relaxed than placing his thumb on his belt), and by leaning his torso to one side in order to place his other elbow on a bookshelf.

At first, Dorothy Malone enacts her character in the same way Darrin enacts Agnes: she holds a pencil and crosses her arms. But her expression and voice soon soften and, most significantly, she begins to walk in a slow, deliberate, pronounced manner, which suggests her character is putting on an act for the benefit of Marlowe, just like Carmen did.

Malone moves close to Bogart, occupying personal space. She does not face him, but stands adjacent to him (position 4 in Hall's classification): she adopts a relaxed pose by leaning against, almost sitting on, the same bookshelf, in imitation of him. She then describes Geiger's appearance in some detail while running her eyes up and down Bogart. When she says Geiger is 'fattish', Bogart reacts by looking down and immediately sucking in his stomach. Here we see a continuation of the discussion of Bogart's body and appearance evident in the previous scenes. She continues to describe Geiger, building up an impression that he is homosexual. In Geiger's bookshop, Bogart's character imitated a heterosexual stereotype of a homosexual through gestures and voice; in the Acme bookshop, we get a verbal description of a homosexual man, filtered through the perspective of a heterosexual woman.

Bogart sucks in his stomach for at least two interrelated reasons: he does not want to be associated with Geiger (his homosexuality), and the sucking in of one's stomach is also a gesture of courtship readiness: 'Courtship readiness is most clearly evidenced by a state of high muscle tonus. Sagging disappears, jowling and bagginess around the eyes decrease, the torso becomes more erect, and pot-bellied slumping disappears or decreases. (19) Furthermore, the Malone character is trying to impress Marlowe with her observational powers by describing Geiger in some detail. Marlowe is impressed, but Bogart has him perform a major body shift by walking away from her and towards the window (similar to Vivian in her bedroom); he remains with his back to her, disengaging from her. She nonetheless follows him, trying to maintain a close, personal distance. She again leans her weight on the bookshelf, arms rigidly by her side, keeping her balanced. Cut to a medium shot of the Malone character (a continuity error occurs, for she is now suddenly shown holding the pencil in her right hand, and balancing it on the finger tips of her left hand): her head is slightly bowed, mouth partly open, and her eyes glance sideways at Bogart off screen. Cut to a two-shot to show Bogart turning around, seeing this pose, and immediately understanding he is being propositioned. His response is to place both thumbs in his belt, with elbows sticking out, away from his body. It is not the Malone character's words but her posture that signifies courtship readiness, to which Bogart responds with a typical masculine posture. She realised Marlowe was prepared to leave, so she took up this courtship pose to keep him in the shop. When he agrees with her that it would be better to stay inside the shop, she performs a major body shift by going to the door, closing it, and pulling down the shade. The way she pulls down the shade is significant – halfway through the movement, she turns her back to the door and pulls down the shade by placing both hands behind her back. It is much easier and more straightforward to face the shade with arms out in front of the body. But pulling the shade from behind her back is more seductive and suggestive, for it puts her body on display. He is screen-right, back to the camera, looking at her screen-left as she pulls down the shade. Her bimanual gesture behind her back is also reminiscent of Vickers's portrayal of Carmen, where she places her hands behind her back to strike a seductive pose when first meeting Marlowe.

Courtship readiness now takes centre stage. By closing the shop in the middle of the afternoon, the Malone character changes it from a semi-public to a private space, isolating the two of them from the public world of the street. Bogart has Marlowe pour a drink for two (compare to Vivian, who only poured a drink for herself) while she performs a number of preening activities: she looks in the mirror, takes off her glasses, and also express impatience kinesically. At the same time, she begins to talk loudly at him – the volume of her voice is inappropriate for two people standing close together, in personal space. When expressing Vivian's state of mind, Bacall also raised her voice, prompting Marlowe to swiftly walk away, saying to Vivian 'I'm wasting your time'. Marlowe also walks swiftly away from Agnes, once he realises he is wasting her – and of course his own – time (she will not let him see Geiger). Darrin plays Agnes as a harsher version of Vivian.

She briefly looks up, to see if Marlowe is looking at her. Marlowe does look up and reacts as if he is seeing her for the first time. In a mirror action, they toast one another and begin to drink.

The Malone character is presented as a more mature version of Carmen: she performs the same gestures – playing with hair (which is successful), mouth open (more exaggerated than Carmen), tongue in cheek, and placing both hands behind back when pulling down the
Throughout these interactions with female characters, Bogart's character has either been rebuffed (Vivian, librarian, Agnes), or he rebuffs female characters because they are too immature and predatory (Carmen). With the Malone character, he finds the right balance. Of course, his confrontation with Vivian was not a simple rebuff (as it was with the librarian and Agnes), but a ritual of two people testing each other before initiating a serious relationship. (The famous 'horse racing' conversation between Bogart and Bacall later in the film brings that testing process into sharper relief.)

I have tried to show that a few minutes of film contain a complex system of postures and gestures, particularly when we study their coordination and combinations. In addition, a comparative study of the gestural reactions of the four female characters to Bogart reveals a complex network of gendered gestures, which I have studied under the rubric of courtship readiness.

By way of conclusion, I shall simply present six observations and directions for future research:

1) Building on the suggestive comments of Dyer, more analytic work needs to be carried out to integrate proxemics and kinesics into the 'heuristics' of mise en scène analysis – heuristics such as foreground-background, foreshadowing, same frame, and long take vs analytical editing. (20)

2) Kinesic and proxemic analyses are more successful when carried out moment-by-moment rather than via a general summary of impressions, in order to be more rigorous and identify the expressive nuances of gestures used in films. By becoming aware of these micro distinctions as the film unfolds second-by-second, we are also able to understand the body's different expressive options and variations, and avoid vague, inaccurate summaries. For example, Wexman only devotes one sentence to the first meeting between Marlowe and Vivian: 'The first encounter of the two lovers is marked by Vivian restlessly pacing around the detective as Marlowe remains relatively stationary: she, suspicious and nervous, appears to be stalking him, while he, relaxed and uninvolved, coolly appraises her.' (21) This summary (similar to Klevan's jumbled list of observations) lacks detail and precision, and misses the dynamic shifts and coordinated exchanges between the two characters as the scene between them gradually unfolds.

3) Nonetheless, Wexman's work highlights the value of developing a comparative kinesic analysis – for example, of the different characters in the same film (as I have done here).

4) The focus of study should not fall just on one or two isolated gestures; instead, Birdwhistell emphasises that gestures constitute a complex system, and should be studied as part of a system. Dyer made a similar point: 'the signification of a performance sign is determined by the multiple codes in relation to which it is situated, and also by its place in the totality of the film.' (22) This perspective is more valuable and accurate than the fetishisation of a few isolated gestures we see in Barthes and Klevan.

5) Following on from (4), the same gesture takes on different meanings when combined with different gestures in a particular social setting. We saw that Vickers and the Malone have their characters place their hands behind their backs in the presence of a male stranger. Both female characters were performing this gesture as part of a larger series of gestures that signify courtship readiness. But in a different context this same gesture has different meanings. In his analysis of Fort Apache, Dyer mentions that Wayne's character York is more relaxed than Fonda's Thursday, and reproduces two frame enlargements to illustrate his point. (23) In the second, we see York with his hands behind his back. This gesture performed at this moment in the film clearly is not a sign of courtship readiness, but instead links up to the other gestures he performs that signify his comfortable, relaxed state of mind.

6) Finally, this kinesic and proxemic study of courtship readiness can be developed by combining it with traditional ideological and feminist theories of film. If carried out on a micro level (see point (2)), kinesics and proxemics have the potential to make these traditional studies less abstract and general – that is, they can contribute to a concrete and specific study of ideology and gender in film.

Thanks to Peter Kramer for reading an earlier version of this essay.

Endnotes

http://www.kinoeye.org/04/03/martin03.php


6. James Naremore, following Pudovkin, calls these 'expressive objects'. Acting in the Cinema (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988),
11. Ibid., p. 211.
14. Birdwhistell suggests that the relation of arms to the body is gender-determined: ‘the American female gender presentation arm position involves the proximation of the upper arms to the trunk while the male in gender presentation moves the arms some 5 to 10 degrees away from the body’. *Kinesics and Context*, p. 44. My analysis of four scenes from *The Big Sleep* confirms these observations.
15. In the novel, Chandler suggests that Carmen's look away from Marlowe in the hallway is in fact a form of flirtation: ‘she lowered her lashes until they almost cuddled her cheeks and slowly raised them again, like a theatre curtain’. Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep* (London: Penguin, 1948 [1939]), p. 11. The translation of gestures and postures from novel to film, and the potential changes in meaning that take place, is another area of kinesic research to pursue in film studies.
16. Paralinguistics refers to non-speech sounds such as grunts, yells, snorts etc. that express the speaker's feelings or attitudes.
17. Agnes is also putting on an act, pretending to be an assistant in an antique bookshop which is in fact a front for a pornographic shop.
22. Ibid., pp. 166-67.
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INTRODUCTION

PART 1
PART 2
PART 3
PART 4
PART 5
PART 6
PART 7
PART 8

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