Eric Herhuth - The Animated Will: Intelligent Movement and Embodied Intentionality in Character Animation

Date : 16-05-2019

[1] The image to the left is from Chuck Jones's *Bully for Bugs* and shows Bugs Bunny standing, looking worried, writing on a large piece of paper, the top of which has curled over to reveal the word "Will." The word is oriented for the audience instead of appearing upside down and indicates that Bugs is planning for his imminent death. Part of the gag is that audiences know very well that the cartoon character has no life at stake, even if a bull appears to charge him. But to the extent that animated cartoon characters present personality and intentionality based in movement, the gag above demonstrates a coherent logic. Bugs Bunny has a will as much as he has ears, which is to say that the drawing includes the representation and expression of ears and the character includes the representation and expression of intentionality. Personality animation aims to express both spontaneity and deliberate planning in/through a character. This aesthetic makes it reasonable for Chuck Jones to show the bunny planning for future possibilities and trusting that his final wishes are protected by law. At a more basic level however, the appearance of the gag in an animated cartoon suggests that movement has a fundamental relation to notions of will and intentionality, and therein, that the animated cartoon is a privileged site for analyzing the human experience of personal freedom or sovereign will.

Cinema has always included willful creatures in its horror, sci-fi, and fantasy genres, but character animation – especially forms working within or inspired by the American animated cartoon tradition established in the mid-twentieth century – has tended to present autonomy and agency as a distinctly violent and repetitive illusion. An animated character may move freely, or rebel, resist, and act unpredictably, or demonstrate decision-making, perseverance, and commitment, but the character simultaneously announces its artifice—that it is the result of deliberate techniques of manipulation and fabrication. The substantially mediated performance expresses the idea that freedom itself is illusory. Such expressions have a lineage throughout puppetry, theatre, and literature. And this idea resonates with a range of intellectual and scientific modes of inquiry that seek to disclose the truth of human action; to reveal the hands pulling the strings, so to speak, whether in terms of unconscious motives, material economic conditions, social relations, biological

and ecological processes, global and cosmic events, or metaphysical forces.

The animated character, then, who at once expresses freedom and embodies causality, represents a philosophical critique of the will as a paradoxical illusion: that humans only feel subjectively free because they are conscious of their actions but unaware of the forces causing them to act. This formulation separates human experience from the world and expresses skepticism about our ability to know fully our conditions and motivations. Furthermore, it confines the will and its animated expressions to the domain of subjective, interior life. To have a will and to will something is not the same as taking action. In this sense, one can maintain a personal will during moments of oppression and restriction. But such accounts are misleading. In *Willing* (1981), political philosopher Hannah Arendt asserts that philosophical accounts that restrict the will to subjective experience and mental life contain "an inevitable flaw": "simply that every *philosophy* of the Will is conceived and articulated not by men of action but by philosophers" (Arendt 1981, p. 195, emphasis in original). Arendt objects to modern philosophy's use of the concept of willing to separate freedom from politics.[2] Instead of defining freedom as action, which has real limits and is subject to plurality and unpredictability, the idea of sovereign will posits that freedom exists within the individual as an independent resource to be marshalled against external and competing internal forces (Arendt 1981, pp. 199-201). This philosophical bias has a corollary in interpretations of character animation that reductively associate expressions of freedom with illusion and mental interiority. As I will describe, these interpretations conclude that many forms of character animation offer an insincere promise of freedom.

To reframe this issue, I examine concepts from animation theory, philosophy of mind, and considers a short film by Joanna Quinn (*Body Beautiful*, 1991) which offers a progressive depiction of embodied will.[3] This analysis demonstrates how the cartoon animation dialectic of freedom and constraint is not limited to presenting the futility of action, a withdrawal into mental life, or the illusion of will. In addition to these expressions, cartoon animation can express a non-sovereign, individual freedom grounded in embodiment and movement, which are part of our everyday coping in the world. Understanding this capacity is a critical practice that illuminates the integration of self and world, mental and physical, and it can help us cope skillfully with our increasingly animated media environment.

Sergei Eisenstein, the notable origin of dialectical theories of animation, compares the appeal of early Disney animation to the human attraction to fire. Who is attracted to flames? Eisenstein answers, "He, of course, who particularly lacks its fascinating qualities, the foremost of which are freedom of movement, freedom of transformation, the will of the elements." Eisenstein's point is that in a context of confinement, fire acts as a "symbol of will, life, and potency," and the animation aesthetic of plasmaticity does likewise (Eisenstein 2011, p. 25). The implication is that both the plasticity of animation and the human will are based in the material world, where things such as fire move and change in space and time.

Animation theorists following Eisenstein's lead are quick to acknowledge that there is an insincere promise of freedom in animated film (primarily cel animation cartoons) that correlates with contradictory notions of freedom, especially those found in modern capitalist society. For Esther Leslie, animated cartoons offer an analogy for the illusory freedom experienced by workers in a capitalist system (Leslie 2013, pp. 84-85). In a

similar vein, Scott Bukatman refers to the dialectical tension of labor and anima as dominating the early history of cartoon animation: "Animation as an *idea* speaks to life, autonomy, movement, freedom, while animation as a *mode of production* speaks to division of labor, precision of control, abundances of preplanning, the preclusion of the random" (Bukatman 2012, p. 108, emphasis in original). Materialist analyses of this dialectical formulation diminish the presentation of freedom and autonomous agency significantly as meticulous description reveals agency as distributed, shared, and interdependent. Understanding that the performance of a puppet or drawn character results from a network of actants dismantles the divisions between subject and object, nature and culture, that have been habitual in modern thinking (Herhuth 2016).[4]

The political stakes of animated film's dialectical expression of the will are apparent in Nicholas Sammond's *Birth of an Industry* (2015), which examines the foundational influence of blackface minstrelsy in American animated cartoons. As Sammond describes it, the rehearsal of a "willful resistance" through cartoons featuring minstrel characters and African-American caricatures suffers from "a sadomasochistic racial fantasy of encounter and resistance" in which characters rebel and are punished again and again (Sammond 2015, p. 209). Regardless of all the action and violence in these films, nothing happens, and this form of comedy means that the cartoon characters tend not to evoke sympathy or empathy (p. 288). Sammond concludes that cartoon violence and humor express a sense of "shared futility" (p. 302). The cartoon character's resistance, his will, is crushed again and again, as exemplified by Wile E. Coyote chasing the Road Runner, and for audiences, "our sadistic pleasure is not in it stopping but in knowing that it will start again" (p. 301). This dialectic between mechanism and agency generates a feeling of pleasure to the extent that we identify the "illusion of control" as our own and it is one that we "continue to try to reclaim, if only to feel the (un)pleasure of a shared futility" (p. 302).

The implication is that films working within this cartoon tradition are at best limited to presenting opportunities for commiseration and comic relief and at worst their repetitive structure reinforces inequitable, unjust, and unconscionable conditions. Obviously, not all cartoons and films follow the tradition of repetitive violence that Sammond observes. But his work raises the question of how to analyze cartoon aesthetics that maintain the dialectic between mechanism and autonomous agency, but also seek progressive political expressions. And, furthermore, how does the basic element of animation or generated movement inform this aesthetic?

I propose that the answer lies in acknowledging that the human body is typically absent in animated cartoons, but movement is present.[5] Character animation does not present the willful, thinking body directly (although there is always a trace back to the animator), but the process presents an intelligent movement to the extent that designed character movements express quotidian, background sensorimotor knowledge.[6] Character animation can elucidate the background movement and sensorimotor knowledge that we rely on for intentional activity but that we also forget and ignore. This background knowledge informs depictions of personality and intentionality and is apparent in basic character animation principles such as overlapping action. There is a well-known statement from Walt Disney that appears in Don Graham's "Art of Animation" (1955) that elaborates the principle:

It is not necessary for an animator to take a character to one point, complete that action completely, and then turn to the following action

as if he had never given it a thought until after completing the first action. When a character knows what his is going to do he doesn't have to stop before each individual action and think to do it. He has it planned in advance in his mind. For example, the mind thinks, 'I'll close the door – lock it – then I'm going to undress and go to bed.' Well, you walk over to the door – before the walk is finished you're reaching for the door – before the door is closed you reach for the key – before the door is locked you're turning away – while you're walking away you undo your tie – and before you reach the bureau you have your tie off. In other words, before you know it you're undressed – and you've done it in one thought, 'I'm going to bed.' (qtd. in Lasseter 1987, p. 40)[7]

The passage makes it clear that thinking is depicted through its absence. Of course, the character is a character and has not "planned" anything "in advance in his mind." Nevertheless, when characters do not need to stop and think, but still act with purpose, audiences infer that they are inherently thoughtful creatures. The passage is interesting in that it situates an animated character in the world in a way that an actor or any person for that matter is situated in the world. The character demonstrates the kind of skillful interaction and negotiation that our bodies engage in every day. But the animation process, which breaks down action into small units, draws attention to the components of the performance that are easily overlooked—the tremendous level of sensorimotor knowledge that supports the capacity to act deliberately. Instead of the camera penetrating the automatism of the human body, the systems of habitual and involuntary processes, the animator is tasked with this job and in the case of drawn cartoons, the animator is asked to transpose the penetrated bits of action into graphic units.

While inaction in an animated character can convey interiority and contemplation as well, the point here is that continual, overlapping, character action can express the invisible qualities of will and thoughtfulness. Through its movement, a character appears to engage with its world deliberately and skillfully. There is a presentation of an integration of perceptual, sensorimotor skills and other forms of knowledge—concepts, feelings, or contextual, cultural details. This makes cartoons sensible and familiar even if the physical rules of their diegetic world are different from our own. As John Lasseter points out, character animators need to have the personality of the character in mind in advance of designing the action, and this designing of the action requires the careful deployment of the other animation principles: squash and stretch, timing, anticipation, staging, straight ahead action, slow in and out, arcs, exaggeration, secondary action, and appeal.[8] All of these principles contribute to presenting what Lasseter calls "thought process": "in character animation, all actions and movements of a character are the result of its thought processes […] Without a thought process, the actions of a character are just a series of unrelated motions" (Lasseter 1987, p. 43).

The previous quote from Disney suggests that an entire series of actions is caused by one thought, "I'm going to bed." But as we know, a person does not need to think this thought in a propositional form in order to initiate her nightly routine. The thoughtful creature that Disney and Lasseter desire to express through character animation is precisely that human creature who can act intentionally and meaningfully without stopping to think. In Husserlian phenomenology, intentionality is called "aboutness" and refers to the fact that mental states are always about or directed at something, but this is precisely the formulation of intentionality that is critiqued by attending to the activities and routines that make up daily life. It is not the mind, but the "embodied person" who is about something (Dreyfus 1993, p. 32). The idea latent in the comments of Disney and Lasseter is aptly articulated in this passage from philosopher Hubert Dreyfus:

phenomenological examination shows that in a wide variety of situations human beings relate to the world in an organized purposive manner without the constant accompaniment of a representational state which specifies what the action is aimed at accomplishing.

Examples are skillful activity like playing tennis; habitual activity like driving to the office or brushing one's teeth; casual unthinking activity like rolling over in bed or making gestures while one is speaking; and spontaneous activity such as fidgeting and drumming one's fingers during a dull lecture. (p. 27)

For Dreyfus, even if a person can explain why they were doing what they were doing after the fact, most of the time, during the activity, this kind of propositional thinking is not present. Moreover, such thinking often disrupts the flow of the activity. Intellectualist accounts of intentionality are limited to deliberate forms of action and completely overlook the bulk of everyday activity that is purposeful without being governed by a mental or representational state. Animating characters with personality and intentionality likewise relies on depicting a flow of nonconceptual activity.

Unlike intellectualist accounts which rely on a mediational or representational theory in which we know the outside world through our mental faculties, a contact theory of being in the world emphasizes the constant role of embodied knowledge. This shift away from mediational theory is a problem for the idea of the sovereign subject, capable of removing herself from all worldly encumbrances and exercising her will independently. Instead of independence from the world, contact theory elucidates how the subject gains a sense of ability and will through being in the world. What is central to the contact theory I am evoking is what Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Taylor, following Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, call "ordinary coping," "skillful coping," or "absorbed coping" (Dreyfus and Taylor 2015, p. 18). These terms refer to the nonconceptual skills and sensorimotor knowledge that embed all of our thinking and doing. They refer to the skills we begin developing the moment we are born and start dealing with the world, with all of its obstacles and affordances. The word "coping" denotes the ever-present quality of being in a situation with various combinations of obstacles and affordances. But the terms "ordinary," "skillful," and "absorbed," indicate that our constant engagement with the world makes us incredibly adept at dealing with it and most of the time we can completely forget about these skills, especially if we are well-functioning adults.

This process of forgetting is essential to our conscious knowledge and reflective modes of thinking, which gain their content by being situated in a "context of background understanding which underlies and is generated in everyday coping" (Dreyfus and Taylor 2015, p. 54). Even though we actively forget about our everyday coping, we constantly use it to support complex activities—whether driving to work, playing a sport, or holding a baby. Even abstract activities rely on everyday coping as a fundamental background (Ibid., p. 50). When creating an animated character with personality and intentionality, the animator considers and includes the fictional background understanding that the character appears to forget, but in actuality relies on. For an animated character to display personality and intentionality, there needs to be evidence of ordinary coping or the flow of activity that is part of an everyday engagement with the world.

The degree of embodied intentionality and background sensorimotor knowledge on display in a cartoon varies of course. Using Donald Crafton's terminology, we can say that absorbed and skillful coping are displayed across both figurative and embodied approaches to personality animation although probably not equally (Crafton 2012, p. 23). Disney's classical style of embodied personality animation, cultivated through the teachings of Don Graham, relies heavily on studies of naturalistic embodiment and acting (Crafton, pp. 36-48). But even in Chuck Jones's more figurative personality animation,

elements of embodied intentionality are on display. In *Bully for Bugs*, Bugs Bunny demonstrates a hyperbolic athleticism, he even dodges bullets. This athleticism, as a form of embodied knowledge, enables him to improvise and scheme on-the-fly. In figurative performances, which feature more generic, ostentatious movements and gestures, the characters' bodies are still depicted as knowing how to do things and as capable of learning how to do things (Crafton, pp. 23-36).

Instead of providing a survey of cartoons displaying embodied intentionality through principles like overlapping action, I want to conclude with a focused discussion of the character Beryl in Joanna Quinn's *Body Beautiful*. Beryl is an exemplary image of individual will, but it is not necessary to interpret her will as a force governing all of her actions or as an illusory force concealing her determining conditions. Instead, her will can be understood, in the words of Dreyfus and Taylor, as "an occasion that triggered the more basic motor intentionality in which [her] body is motivated to respond directly to [a] situation" (Dreyfus and Taylor 2015, p. 50). That is, her will arises from a situation and a set of physical, social, and psychological conditions. It emerges out of her everyday activities and efforts to cope with particular conditions.

Quinn's animation style features an abundance of thick and thin curvy lines that give her characters' moving bodies a fluid, vivacious, and transformational quality. This enables her to exaggerate the changes in Beryl, who transitions from a state of sluggish exhaustion to lively determination. The film follows Beryl's plan to abstain from her workplace cabaret show and enter the "body beautiful" contest to compete against the company's sexist, womanizer Vince. Beryl's plan is not outright disclosed to viewers but it begins to take shape during an epiphany sequence. The sequence begins with Beryl walking to a store, appearing physically exhausted, and once in the store she visits a display of magazines. Disturbed by the skinny woman on the cover of a magazine, Beryl turns her attention to a series of magazines focused on sports. The action of her reading and thinking lasts roughly 10 seconds, but the motion of her eyes and face indicate that something profound has occurred to her (the transformational significance of the idea registers in her face).

After Beryl's epiphany, the next shot shows her running to an exercise facility. This is a reasonable action to show in that it demonstrates her excitement. The character's body is responding to her idea and doing a lot of work automatically, which will help her realize her overarching goal, which is to perform a rap and posing routine to ridicule and shame Vince (Beryl literally raps to music, defending her self-esteem and body—she says she is "proud of every pound"—and flexes her muscles, which overwhelm Vince, who remains on stage). The subsequent training montage, a common element in sports films, condenses time and emphasizes repetition. This montage sets up the expression of skillful coping in that the audience can overlook the extent of Beryl's training while simultaneously understanding that the character's deliberate actions (Beryl's performance) rely on it. Beryl appears to understand how regular exercise can give a person the confidence to undertake an irregular physical activity and this logic is an extension of how mundane activities inform our efforts to plan and make goals too.[9]

The epiphany sequence in *Body Beautiful* is convincingly familiar in that it depicts the experience of finding inspiration in an unlikely place. The sport magazines offer Beryl an alternative to the limiting sexist scripts of her workplace. In a sense, Beryl leverages the cultural values associated with sport, fitness, and artistic performance against the sex and

gender norms of her workplace. But before this happens, it is telling that before entering the store, when Beryl is bent over and struggling to catch her breath, she tells herself "Dear God, there must be an easier way than this." Akin to Disney's example of the action of going to bed, this one prayerful thought leads to overlapping and sequential actions as Beryl enters the store and looks at magazines. We can infer that this depiction of Beryl is not one in which the character presents thinking in a conceptual, representational fashion. In a manner of speaking, she does not know what she is doing, but her embodied self is about finding an alternative course of action. After the voiceover, it is Beryl's body that presents her thinking and, through a flow of activity, demonstrates her search for an alternative solution, her epiphany, and her preparation for the body beautiful contest. Beryl's quotidian, bodily activities inform viewers of her intentions.

Beryl's social milieu and embodiment are constitutive of her ability to make meaning, to think, and to will toward the possible. Because we are always engaged with the world, even when imagining and fantasizing, our intentional and conscious activities arise out of this condition of engagement. Dreyfus and Taylor explain that we need to see this nonconceptual understanding as

that of an engaged agent, determining the significances (*sens*, *Sinne*) of things from out of its aims, needs, purposes, desires. These significances arise out of a combination of spontaneity and receptivity, constraint and striving; they are the ways the world must be taken in for a being defined by certain goals or needs to make sense of it. (Dreyfus and Taylor 2015, p. 69)

The terms "spontaneity and receptivity" are helpful descriptors for understanding Beryl's character as not presenting a sovereign will but a will grounded in coping with the real obstacles and affordances of the world. And that is what the magazine covers are—obstacles and affordances; they are not a resource for radically antinormative thinking. As Beryl imagines herself on each cover, the animated sequence emphasizes that she is using her knowledge about her body and context—she is tired of the harassment at work (and walking to the store), she is aware of the size and shape of her body, and she is looking for alternative ways of coping with her situation. This context drives her imagination. Thus, it becomes impossible to construe her imagination as decoupled from her immediate conditions. The film emphasizes how immediate factors (her stress, mood, and location) give meaning to her imagination.[10]

In the context of cartoon animation, Quinn's film, with its depiction of thought and action, builds on the tradition of a rebellious spirit. The character Beryl resists, disobeys, and overcomes a variety of forces—sexual harassment, peer pressure, and cultural norms. And her kinetic and morphing body amplify this quality of will in that they suggest that change is possible if not irrepressible (at one point during her performance, Beryl's torso transforms into horns that seem to announce and celebrate her body and inherent potential). Movement itself has strong associations with freedom and possibility, as both Eisenstein and Arendt have noted (Eisenstein 2011, p. 25; Arendt 1981, p. 200). But the film's training montage and epiphany scene ground Beryl's culminating performance in everyday coping and sensorimotor knowledge. Her will appears through her performance, training, and her interactions with her surroundings. It is not an isolated, internal resource, but a vibrant, animated engagement with the world.

As in all animation (including live action), *Body Beautiful* is both a performance and a record of a performance: movements and sounds experienced in the present but also

experienced as audiovisual artifact. The experience of movement informs both aspects and implies that Quinn, as an animator, had to think through how effective human action occurs. Beryl becomes confident that she can plan an effective performance and change her work environment. This becoming has its foundation in the epiphany sequence, but as expressed by Quinn's cartoon aesthetics, Beryl's confidence is partly expressed through the movement in the moving image itself. Her confidence is not that of Hollywood's fantastic individualism, but instead it is bolstered by an understanding shared by the audience that the world is subject to movement and change. Her planning is based on an intimate knowledge of possibility and the morphing and metaphorical depiction of her performance echoes that knowledge. This is not to say that Beryl seems to know that she is a cartoon and that anything is possible, but more in the vein of Eisenstein's thinking, the film suggests that even hyperbolic cartoon aesthetics have an everyday, worldly grounding that we fundamentally understand. Although the most immediate reading is that Beryl first had an idea that then directed her toward an action. A reading focused on movement and ordinary coping suggests that there is a background of embodied activity that makes this deliberate action possible.

Interpreting *Body Beautiful* as exemplifying contact theory and embodied thinking generates a reading of the film that accords with philosophical efforts to attend to the world and our being in it. Such efforts can be understood as a countermeasure to media environments that strain attention and obfuscate a sense of common reality (Crawford 2016). Part of the countermeasure is to reconnect abstract reasoning and fantasy to the material and worldly conditions that generate it. This move is likely to help people cope with the abstract aspects of techno-capitalism and the burdens of the attention economy by refocusing attention onto contextual forces. Attention to context and background is also likely to encourage engagement in environmentally-based politics, which include debates about public space and environmental protections. Furthermore, this reading of *Body Beautiful* suggests that there is a fundamental connection between being in the world and animation in the sense that our embodied knowledge of movement is very much on display in cartoons and personality animation.

Eric Herhuth is Assistant Professor of Communication at Tulane University. He is the author of *Pixar and the Aesthetic Imagination: Animation, Storytelling, and Digital Culture*(University of California Press, 2017), and he has published articles in the Quarterly Review of Film and Video, and animation: an interdisciplinary journal

References

Arendt, Hannah. (1981) *Willing*, in *The Life of the Mind*, Mary McCarthy (ed.). New York: Mariner Books.

Arendt, Hannah. (2006) "What is Freedom?" *Between Past and Future*. New York: Penguin.

Bukatman, Scott. (2012) *The Poetics of Slumberland: Animated Spirits and the Animating Spirit*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cavell, Stanley. (2005) "What Photography Calls Thinking" in *Cavell on Film*, William Rothman (ed.). New York: State University of New York.

Clowes, R.W. and Mendonça, D. (2016) "Representation Redux: Is there still a useful role for representation to play in the context of embodied, dynamicist and situated theories of mind?" *New Ideas in Psychology*, vol. 40, part A, pp. 26-47.

Crafton, Donald. (2012) *Shadow of a Mouse: Performance, Belief, and World-Making in Animation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Crawford, M. B. (2016) *The World Beyond Your Head: On Becoming an Individual in an Age of Distraction*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Dreyfus, Hubert. (1993) "Heidegger's Critique of the Husserl/Searle Account of Intentionality," *Social Research* 60.1, pp. 17-38.

Dreyfus, H. and Taylor, C. (2015) *Retrieving Realism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Eisenstein, Sergei. (2011) *Sergei Eisenstein: Disney*, Oksana Bulgakowa and Dietmar Hochmuth (eds.), Dustin Condren (trans.). Berlin: Potemkin Press.

Gunning, Tom. (2007) "Moving Away from the Index: Cinema and the Impression of Reality," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 18.1, pp. 29-52.

Herhuth, Eric. (2016) "The Politics of Animation and the Animation of Politics," *Animation: an interdisciplinary journal* 11.1: 4-22.

Lasseter, John. (1987) "Principles of Traditional Animation Applied to 3D Computer Animation," *SIGGRAPH* '87, Proceedings of the 14th annual conference on Computer graphics and interactive techniques, New York. doi>10.1145/37401.37407

Leslie, Esther. (2013) "Animation's Petrified Unrest" in *Pervasive Animation*, Suzanne Buchan (ed.). New York: Routledge.

Rodowick, D.N. (2015) *Philosophy's Artful Conversation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sammond, Nicholas. (2015) *Birth of an Industry: Blackface Minstrelsy and the Rise of American Animation*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Notes

[1] The idea of intelligent movement deployed in this paper is inspired by D.N. Rodowick's discussion of Stanley Cavell's reading of *Mr. Deeds goes to Town* (Frank Capra, 1936). Rodowick notes that cinematography reveals thinking "through its own attentiveness to everything that moves before the camera and in making movement expressive. One wants

to say it gives intelligence to movement." Despite their deep interest in photo-indexicality, Cavell and Rodowick cannot avoid acknowledging the significant role of movement in cinematic expressions of human interiority. My position is that the use of movement in character animation is comparably expressive of human interiority and, following Cavell, grounded in being in the world. For his discussion of Cavell, see Rodowick 2015, p. 221.

[2] Arendt explains that "the philosophical tradition…has distorted, instead of clarifying, the very idea of freedom such as it is given in human experience by transposing it from its original field, the realm of politics and human affairs in general, to an inward domain, the will, where it would be open to self-inspection" (Arendt 2006, p. 144).

[3] Joanna Quinn's work can be found on her website: www.berylproductions.co.uk.

[4] Donald Crafton offers a distributive approach in his analysis of cartoon performance as co-created by audiences, animators, and characters (2012, p. 72).

[5] The emphasis on movement aligns with efforts to think of all film as animation and to think of movement as a realistic aesthetic element. Following the early work of Christian Metz, Tom Gunning has proposed understanding cinematic realism as based on movement. This aesthetic leads Gunning to reposition animation as a primary quality of cinema rather than secondary to photography. It also leads Gunning to follow animation theorists such as Eisenstein and to theorize movement as linking together realism and fantasy. Gunning effectively finds that movement is the thread connecting early cartoons to CGI insomuch as cinematic movement facilitates the juxtaposition of realism and fantasy. See Gunning 2007, pp. 41-42, 46.

[6] This line of reasoning follows and challenges Stanley Cavell's essay "What Photography Calls Thinking." In the essay, Cavell analyzes the film *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (Frank Capra, 1936) and argues that motion photography's purchase on existence works in conjunction with the film's theme about the human body's "fidgetiness" serving as an indication of thinking. In short, seemingly irrational behaviors, doodling, twitching, knuckle-cracking, indicate invisible rational processes—such as thinking. What Cavell and many other theorists ignore is that character animation offers a comparable expression of being-in-the-world to the extent that animators create characters who display quotidian bodily movement. See Cavell 2005.

[7] Donald W. Graham's "The Art of Animation" is an unpublished manuscript, dated July 20, 1955, held at Walt Disney Studios. For a discussion of Graham's influence on animation aesthetics, see Crafton 2012, especially chapter 4.

[8] Solid drawing is the 12th principle in Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas's book *The Illusion of Life*, but it applies less to computer animation.

[9] Dreyfus and Taylor explain it this way: "Thus, ongoing coping supplies the basis for all goal-directed activity. Moreover, motor intentionality cannot be explained in terms of physical causation because it involves a sense of being solicited to do what feels appropriate, nor can it be understood as the result of mental causality as when an intention in action causes a bodily movement, precisely because it is presupposed in order to account for the way a mental representation, in this case an intention in action, can

indirectly move the body. In short, motor intentionality makes representational intentionality possible" (Dreyfus and Taylor 2015, p. 50).

[10] Although there are ongoing debates in cognitive science and philosophy of mind over the role of "representation" as a concept and descriptor (Clowes and Mendonça 2016), the film *Body Beautiful* offers a generally insightful depiction of how representations function not through difference but through context. As evident in Clowes and Mendonça, there does appear to be some confusion on this point. Contact theory and anti-representational theories of mind do not deny the activity of representation—one thing standing for or in for another. But they refute theories that are grounded in representation—i.e. representationalism. Instead, as Dreyfus and Taylor assert, representational forms—language, symbols, signs, models, proxies—are grounded in contact and the background coping that comes with being in the world.

© Eric Herhuth

Edited by Amy Ratelle