EMBODYING HOLISM:

A SOMATIC PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNICATION

DISSERTATION

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By

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I
I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in
I am lost . . . I am helpless
   It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

II
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
   But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

III
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in . . . it's a habit.
   My eyes are open.
   I know where I am.

   It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

IV
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

V
I walk down another street.
This project is dedicated
with loving appreciation to the
spiritual hierarchy who work silently,
eternally to uplift all of humanity.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

If the body had been easier to understand, nobody would have thought that we had a mind. (Rorty, 1979, p. 239)

"Communication is an embodied process" (Streeck & Knapp, 1992, p. 5) in that the human body is essential to virtually every communication act. Whether in the realms of interpersonal, organizational, cultural, or rhetorical communication, the importance of the human body is difficult to deny. Even in realms where the salience of the body may seem minimal—in textual and mediated communication forms, for example—the body is a vital, omnipresent force.

For instance, although you are now reading my seemingly disembodied written text, the fact that I am hungry, my back aches, and my cat is purring on my lap are all occurrences that doubtless affect my communication with you. My hunger invokes impatience for anything but eating; thus, I am writing quickly with inattention to detail in anticipation of an
upcoming meal. My ailing back causes irritability and lends a terseness to my expression. The sensation of the cat on my lap is comforting, hopefully tempering the irritation. These experiences are possible at all only because I "have" a body. Further, any combination of such embodied experiences can—and inevitably does—affect your process of receiving/decoding/interpreting my messages. Perhaps you are hungry, tense, or uncomfortable. Perhaps you are habituated to reading in a particular, patterned manner. Or maybe you are distracted from this reading by the varied sights, sounds, and sensations that comprise human experience.

Despite the empirical certainty of the role of the body in communication, the bulk of communication research, whether of humanistic, social scientific, or critical orientation, "has ignored for too long a significant part of the process" by predominantly focusing on verbal or written exchange often at the exclusion of the body (Knapp & Hall, 1992, p. 29). This lack of attention to the body is ironic because, as some nonverbal researchers insist, the act of speaking itself is accomplished by the gesturing of the tongue (Koechlin, 1992). Still, the underlying
supposition in communication scholarship seems to be that somehow the product of a communication process (i.e., talk, words, the verbal code of formal language) is more important than the bodily processes from which it emanates. The relative absence of the body in communication scholarship may be because human experience and its vehicle—the body—are multifarious and seemingly resistant to scholarly theorizing.

In general, when the body is considered in communication research, it typically is situated within the category of nonverbal communication. Such labeling carries with it three underlying assumptions: First, because nonverbal communication is, by definition, nonverbal, it can be separated from its verbal counterpart; second, because verbal and nonverbal codes are distinct, verbal communication is primarily a cognitive process that occurs in the brain somehow separate from the body; and third, because nonverbal communication is defined according to what it is not (non-verbal), nonverbal communication is devalued.

One perspective that challenges these three assumptions is a somatic perspective. Somatics establishes the body as the theoretic entry point and
makes the body central to every theoretic claim. The term somatics derives from the Greek somatikos, soma, or somat, which refer to the living body. More specifically, soma refers to "the biological body of functions by which and through which awareness and environment are mediated" (Hanna, 1983, p. 1). Conceptualizing the human as soma fuses the mind/body dichotomy so prevalent in European-American culture and in conventional communication scholarship by recognizing the embodied self in its wholeness. The term somatics describes the art and science of the inter-relational processes among awareness, biological functioning, and environment, with these three realms understood as a synergistic whole (Hanna, 1983).

Somatics is a relatively new arrival on the academic scene. Its origins can be traced to Hanna's book, Bodies in Revolt: A Primer in Somatic Thinking, published in 1970 by the American Council of Learned Societies. Responding to a nation in need of a "guide for the perplexed," Hanna, a philosopher, introduced somatic ways of conceptualizing the human race and the world by drawing on what he calls "somatic scientists and philosophers" (1970/1985, p. 3). In the book, he
laid out the basic tenets of somatics and focused "the somatic attitude" on the present evolution of human culture (1985/1970, p.3).

Since Hanna's introduction, somatics has grown into an interdisciplinary and multicultural field. Somatic knowledge and techniques derive from disciplines as varied as anatomy, physiology, chemistry, psychology, physics, electronics, kinesiology, education, and medicine, as well as Eastern philosophy, healing, and martial arts traditions and practices. Somatic institutes and educational facilities have sprung up throughout the United States and the world, and several American institutions, such as Ohio State University and the California Institute of Integral Studies, offer graduate programs in somatics.

**Purpose of the Study**

Somatics has much to offer an understanding of human communication. A somatic perspective on communication is grounded in certain epistemological and ontological assumptions that provide a unique framework from which to view communication. Three
interconnected assumptions contribute to the perspective.

First, the human is conceptualized as soma. This means the human is understood in its wholeness as an embodied living organism. A somatic perspective on communication takes the soma, the embodied self, as the theoretic entry point. Somatics is "a field which studies the soma; namely, the body as perceived from within by first-person perception" (Hanna, 1986, p. 4). A somatic perspective advocates increasing proprioception—awareness of the myriad stimuli produced within our bodies. Thus, a somatic perspective conceptualizes living human experience from the inside out. The perspective is self-focused and legitimates the internal realm where inner awareness and proprioceptive communication are central foci. This is a radical departure from the conventionally accepted scholarly perspective of observing communication phenomena from an external, third-person standpoint.

A second assumption of a somatic perspective is that of holism. As the site of the synergistic interrelated processes of awareness, biological
functioning, and environment, the embodied self is conceptualized in its complete multidimensionality. A somatic perspective recognizes four simultaneous and interconnected dimensions of human existence: the physical, emotional, mental, and transpersonal. The body is understood as the site and location of the convergence of these dimensions. The result is an alternative somatic ontology that conceptualizes the human in integrated wholeness as embodied self.

Third, somatics assumes human interdependence. Within this framework, human beings cannot be reduced to isolated entities but must be understood as part of a mutually interrelated web. None of the constituents of this network is discrete or fundamental in that each component reflects the properties of the other parts. In essence, embodied selves have no meaning as isolated entities and must be understood as interconnections and potential interconnections. Thus, a "social" concern, a concern for the interrelationship between self and others, is implicit in somatics. The potentiality of interconnectedness is located within the embodied self.

These three assumptions suggest the kinds of contributions somatics can make to an understanding of
communication. This study develops the contribution of somatics to communication in greater depth. I articulate how our understanding and practice of communication is enhanced by the application of a somatic perspective to communication in theory, research, and teaching. The research questions that guide my analysis are:

(1) What are the key components of a somatic theory?

(2) What constitutes a somatic theory of communication?

(3) What constitutes a somatic research method in communication?

(4) What constitutes a unit on somatic communication for the basic course?

Significance of the Study

At this time, communication scholars are engaged in a questioning and scrutiny of the field that extends to the paradigm level. Feminist scholars, for example, have been part of such efforts, helping the field of communication to expand its data, theories, and basic assumptions to include the perspectives of women. Recently, African-American scholars also have
questioned the field's central focus on European Americans and have encouraged the development and inclusion of theories that reflect the communicative practices and values of other cultures. Still other communication scholars are suggesting that communication's focus on discourse is too limiting and ignores a very important form of symbol use, the visual image; such scholars are encouraging the communication discipline to expand its boundaries to include study of the nature and function of visual messages.

This project contributes to such efforts in the discipline of communication to examine and question the ideological and methodological boundaries that communication scholars have erected around their theories and practices. A somatic perspective on communication provides yet another challenge to the discipline and will add to the new constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques being formulated in the field.

Introducing somatics into the discipline means that the human body is not simply a medium through which communication is accomplished. From a somatic perspective, the body—as the theoretic entry point—is
a significant site and source itself of communicative activity. Consequently, a somatic perspective challenges the mind/body dualism that characterizes the Western intellectual tradition and is manifest in the communication discipline as an emphasis on cognitive functions. This project has the potential to make a major contribution to the reconceptualization and revision of constructs and theories in communication so they are better able to account for the nature and function of communicative phenomena.

Although a number of scholars are involved in the questioning and reconceptualizing of the constructs and theories of the communication discipline, this project constitutes the only known effort aimed at introducing and integrating a somatic perspective into the discipline. Ohio State University represents the only graduate-degree-granting university in which somatics, as a cognate area, and communication, as a separate discipline, may be studied in tandem if a student chooses. Having developed these two areas of expertise, I am in a unique position to draw on my competence in both communication and somatics to integrate somatics into the field of communication.
Relative to traditional frameworks, a somatic perspective on communication is grounded in significantly different foundational philosophical premises. As such, the implications of this project for communication studies are vast and include contributing to the literature on communication philosophy. Further, somatic communication theory contributes to our understanding of human communication in general. As with any significant theory, the somatic perspective on communication informs the areas of communication scholarship, pedagogy, and practice. For example, in addition to the contributions to communication philosophy and rhetorical theory, a somatic perspective on communication applies to the areas of intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, small group communication, rhetorical criticism, presentational speaking, and critical cultural communication.

Review of the Literature

The research literature that addresses the human body is enormous. It encompasses disciplines as varied as the arts, the biological sciences, the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, education, human
ecology, and medicine, to name a few. To narrow the scope of my review of relevant research, I have focused on literature that deals with the relationship between the human body and communication—those efforts that have been made to integrate the body into communication.

Considerable communication literature exists in which the body is conceptualized in various ways, although none of it starts with the body as its theoretic entry point, as does somatics. Almost all of the literature that exists currently on the body in communication seems to adopt assumptions that are at odds with a somatic perspective. The body is seen as secondary to verbal exchange; the body is vulnerable to observation and examination from an external perspective; the body is understood as a blank slate that is defenseless against an onslaught of cultural inscription; or the body is an enigma that women, especially those who choose to write, have the means to begin to decipher.

I have organized the literature into four broad conceptual themes that I believe reflect the variety of existing approaches. These thematic categories are for
organizational purposes only and are not meant to be understood as discrete or exhaustive: (1) the body as vehicle for effect; (2) the body as lived experience; (3) the body as culturally inscribed; and (4) writing the body. The themes are in approximate chronological order, roughly corresponding to the treatment of the body in communication scholarship over time.

The Body as a Vehicle for Effect

A vast amount of communication literature focuses on the body as a vehicle for communication effect. Scholars concerned with communication effects are interested in the outcome or results of communicative influence on others. This trend in research dates back to classical times more than two thousand years to when Aristotle devised his definition of rhetoric--the faculty of observing in any case the available means of persuasion. Although likely not intended by Aristotle, this definition has translated into a focus on developing techniques for influencing others. The focus on persuasion by Aristotle and other classical rhetoricians "forged a conceptual link that has been brought through the centuries to the modern study of communication" (Shepherd, 1992, p. 204).
Within the framework of communication as influence, the assumed motivation behind any speech act is to influence or affect a communicative partner in some way. Scholars are concerned with the outcome of an interaction, and research often is directed toward discerning the extent to which ideas imparted by the communicator enhance the desired effect. Whether investigating communication phenomena from a humanistic/rhetorical perspective or a social scientific one, both areas are characterized by questions of effect. Further, the assumed motivation to influence is believed to originate in the speaker's mind, emanating from cognitive processes located in the head; the body is a channel, a communicative vehicle that may inhibit or enhance the desired effect. Within the framework of influence, the body is one of the available means to a rhetorical end— that of persuasion.

Because the conceptualization of the body as a vehicle for effect comprises such a large volume of conventional communication scholarship, in this section, I very briefly outline what amounts to a history of the body in mainstream communication
research, from its beginning in classical rhetoric to more contemporary social scientific approaches.

Conceptualization of the body within the framework of classical rhetoric generally was characterized by the canon of delivery, which focused on matters of message transmission. Although most classical rhetoricians considered delivery a gift of nature, Cicero, for example, advocated that diligent practice and imitation of great orators could improve a speaker's eloquence. Cicero (1959 version) emphasized the importance of amplified and ornamented delivery so as to stir the emotions of the audience to resonate with those of the speaker. Similarly, Longinus "stresses the importance of emotional transport, of imaginative grandeur, and of the sympathetic reaction of the individual reader or hearer" (Bate, 1952/1970, p. 59). The body was the vehicle for gesturing and expressive movements that provided the emotional transport advocated by early rhetoricians. In *Institutio Oratoria*, for example, Quintilian described the significance of gesturing for an eloquent presentation. Emotional intensity and oratorical loftiness characterized the early depictions of ideal
delivery. In these instances, the body was an accompaniment to the spoken message, a vehicle for moving and edifying, for invoking the desired rhetorical effect.

The elocutionist trend in rhetorical study was an elaboration on the canon of delivery. Elocutionists primarily were concerned with the body as an instrument for effect. Influential British elocutionist Sheridan (1762/1968), for example, defined elocution as the just and graceful management of voice, countenance, and gesture in speaking. The history of the development of the elocutionary movement illustrates the early body/mind separation that still haunts communication study to this day. In the 1500s, French philosopher Ramus adamantly advocated the separation of subject matters and successfully argued for the isolation of logic and dialectic from rhetoric (Howell, 1951). Ramus believed that rhetoric should consist only of style and delivery and should not be allowed to overlap in subject matter with the canons of invention and disposition, which belonged in the separate realm of logic. The separation of dialectic from rhetoric established a framework for the elocutionary movement
and its contribution to the incorporation of the body into the study of communication.

The primary assumption of the elocutionist movement was that, unlike writing, which is a human creation, speech was a gift from God; thus, there was believed to be divine structure and order to innate bodily activity (Bacon, 1964). Philosophers and rhetoricians surmised a universal language of the body that resided naturally in everyone (Knowlson, 1965). Elocutionists advocated a natural manner of bodily expression and--based on the notion of a universal body language--devised prescriptive rules for achieving it.

In matters of delivery, gesture and movement were understood to be the natural language of the passions. Two approaches characterized the elocutionist movement with regard to bodily expression. One approach advocated that the proper gesture be enacted by the orator, thus invoking the appropriate emotion. Speakers often would mimic the gestures of renowned performers. The second approach advocated that an orator experience the proper emotion, which would be followed by the emergence of the appropriate gesture. The intent was for orators and interpreters to be true
to their natural feelings and to avoid imitating the performance of others.

Both schools of thought advocated that an orator "act naturally," based upon the belief of the time in a universal language of the body. Regardless of the difference in method, both approaches advocated the existence of one pervasive correct gesture to be sought and enacted. In using the body to demonstrate a particular gesture, orators sought to evoke the maximum communication effect.

Both approaches relied on prescriptive rules for achieving the correct bodily expression. Firmly adhering to the principles of faculty psychology, the elocutionists believed that by following prescriptive rules, orators could come to realize the connection between the internal sensation of a passion and the external expression of it. The elocutionary movement is characterized by its penchant for prescriptive, mechanical rules for body movement, as is indicated by the title of Austin's (1806) influential work, Chironomia or A Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery: Comprehending Many Precepts, Both Ancient and Modern, For the Proper Regulation of the Voice, the
The elocutionist movement indicated an attempt by rhetoricians to devise a science of gesturing. Austin's comprehensive elocutionary doctrine contained complete elaboration of each body part—from position of feet and lower limbs, motions and elevations of arms and hands, to head, eyes, shoulders, and stroke and time of gesture—with over one hundred detailed illustrations. Notations placed above the line of a text, for example, may direct an orator to advance two steps to the right, raise eyebrows, and extend the left arm. Says Guthrie (1951), "from 1806 through 1860 Chironomia remained the definitive work on gesture," and "its indirect influence in America was tremendous" (p. 30).

The elocutionist movement, a vital contribution to the formation of contemporary rhetorical study, was characterized by its prescriptive, mechanistic treatment of the body in order to enhance delivery techniques. Further, the body was analyzed primarily
in its relationship with the verbal components of thought and presentation. The body was seen as a vehicle that potentially could enhance or inhibit an orator's presentation and was manipulated by an orator to insure the desired communication effect. Similarities can be seen between this method and perspectives utilized today in terms of the effect orientation that characterizes prescriptive, skill-directed approaches to nonverbal behavior for impression management and compliance gaining (i.e., Patterson, 1987; Mehrabian, 1989).

The elocutionist notion of a universal body language was later supported by the work of Darwin (1872/1956). His *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animal* in 1872 set the stage for scientifically analyzing bodily expression independent of verbal messages. Darwin asserted "that all the chief expressions exhibited by [wo]man are the same throughout the world" (1872/1956, p. 398) because, to a large extent, the various movements of expression are innate and independent of human will. Darwin concluded there were no "grounds for believing that any inherited movement, which now serves as a means of expression,
was at first voluntarily and consciously performed for this special purpose" (1872/1956, p. 395). The primary function of body movements was not as a means of communication, according to Darwin; rather, they developed in response to specific biological needs, such as sexual reproduction. Darwin also speculated on a universal innate human ability to decode bodily expression.

When the importance of the body in communication came to be considered by social scientists during the 20th century, nonverbal communication as an area of study was developed. Conceptualizing the body as a vehicle for communication effect prevailed in this area of research as well. Because the relatively recent and extreme popularity of nonverbal communication research and its multidisciplinary nature make an exhaustive survey of the nonverbal research far beyond the scope of this literature review, in this section, I briefly outline major trends in nonverbal research to demonstrate the general conceptualization of the human body in this area of communication scholarship.

In 1959, Hall significantly contributed to the development of the area of nonverbal communication when
he demonstrated that out of ten identified primary message systems—time, space, body movement, posture, gesture, facial expression, eye contact, physical appearance, touch, and paralanguage—only one involves words. Then in 1970, Birdwhistell—one of the founders of kinesis and of the nonverbal area—made several startling claims. He showed that the nonverbal-to-verbal ratio of units of meaning in regular spoken sentences averages 35 to 1. He estimated that the average person actually speaks words for only about 10 minutes daily, with the standard spoken sentence lasting just 2 1/2 seconds. Further, he observed that in a typical two-person conversation, over 65 percent of the social meaning is carried nonverbally. Thus, Birdwhistell (1970) concludes that people are multisensual beings who occasionally verbalize.

The desire to explain such nonverbal behavior led to intense scientific study of nonverbal phenomena (Patterson, 1983). In an early attempt to determine what constitutes nonverbal behavior, Goffman (1959) distinguished between two types—cues that are "given off" within interactions—behaviors that are spontaneous and unintended—and those that are
"given"—other-directed messages intended to produce effect. Most nonverbal researchers concern themselves with the later category, although "the intentionality behind social behavior is both a vital and illusive construct for communication researchers" (Manusov, 1992, p. 69), and discussion of the different ways of conceptualizing intention are common (see, for example, Bowers & Bradac, 1984; Cronkhite, 1986; Kendon, 1981; MacKay, 1972; Motley, 1986, 1990; Ruben, 1984; Scott, 1977; Stamp & Knapp, 1990).

Regardless of debates about conceptualization, the intentionality of nonverbal messages—whether focusing on encoder or perceived intent—is primarily assumed to emanate from the cognitive processes of the brain, located in the head, seemingly independent of the body. Further, the importance of intentionality to the nonverbal communication realm demonstrates a focus on communication effect. Researchers are overwhelmingly concerned with intentional, goal-directed communication where people act deliberately to evoke a particular response.

Evidence of nonverbal communication effect is ascertained by observing the body from a third-person,
external perspective. Often, verbal and nonverbal channels are conceptualized independently because "the prevailing paradigm in the social sciences sought to dissect the process and study each component verbal and nonverbal part separately" (Streeck & Knapp, 1992, p. 3). The predominant research agenda for nonverbal inquiry has been a systematic scholarly dissection of the body, with specific areas subjected to extensive programs of research. Influential works are concerned with the identification and categorization of various nonverbal components that often result in the isolation and segmentation of body parts. Such research includes Ruesch and Kees's (1956) early classification system of nonverbal forms into three distinct categories—sign language (gesturing), action language (movement), and object language (involving objects). Ekman and Friesen's (1969) categorization system includes five areas of nonverbal behavior—emblems (quotable gestures); illustrators (personal gestures); affect displays (facial emotional expression); regulators (usually involving the head); and adaptors (usually involving touch of self, other, or objects).
Even when the body as a whole is considered by theorists, the predominant scholarly concern is with communication effect. For example, Sheldon (1954) classifies body types into three groups—endomorph (soft, round, fat); mesomorph (bony, muscular, athletic); and ectomorph (tall, thin, frail). Sheldon (1954) published a guide for somatotyping the adult male at varying ages that used the three body classifications described above to identify stereotypes and perceived personality characteristics associated with the different body builds. The somatotyping framework also has been utilized by other researchers (i.e. Cortes and Gatti, 1965; Wells & Siegel, 1961).

Early nonverbal classification schemas recently have been elaborated and reorganized. My review of the current literature shows ten general nonverbal categories upon which most communication scholars seem to agree: environment; proxemics (territory and personal space); physical appearance and dress; kinesics (body movement, gesture, and posture); haptics (tactile and touching behavior); affect displays (facial expression); oculesics (eye behavior); paralanguage (vocal cues); chronemics (use of time);
and olfactics (smell). The research possibilities within each category are seemingly endless, and scholars have taken full advantage of such opportunities, evidenced by the start, in 1976, of a journal of Environmental Psychology and Nonverbal Behavior, which three years later became The Journal of Nonverbal Research, an entire journal dedicated exclusively to nonverbal investigations.

An illustration of typical nonverbal research and its conceptualization of the body can be ascertained by a brief look into one research category, gesturing. In a typical research article investigating gesticulation, for example, researchers differentiate among the following: gestural units, unit boundaries, gesture types, gestural modes, gestural embroidery, hand movements, motions, movement trajectories, indexical signs, spatial-kinesic structures, pre-indicative gestures, parsing, directional and unidirectional gestures, pre-positioned gestures, emblems, regulators, adaptors of self, other or objects, manipulators, nervous movements, body lean, body orientation, postural adjustments, lexical units, points, pointers, pointing, iconic gestures, manual narratives, action
projectors, gestural referents, deictic referent gestures, mimesis, enactments, reenactments, beats, batons, ideographs, kinesic stress points, acme, spatial imagery, and foot or leg movements.

I have refrained from defining each of the above terms because my point is to illustrate, by listing the considerable vocabulary, the extent to which nonverbal communication scholars symbolically dissect the body for research purposes. Further, the sequential location of gesturing within interactions is usually timed with accelerometers to be precise at one tenth of a second. Also commonplace is the use of devices to measure galvanic skin response, heart rate, electrical brain activity, palmar sweat, blood pressure, and duration of micturition. This further illustrates the orientation that characterizes much of nonverbal communication investigation, where researchers attempt to isolate variables and identify determinants of nonverbal behavior.

Recently, the nonverbal area has come under criticism for its compartmentalized treatment of processual phenomena. Researchers within the area itself are calling for more holistic approaches and
conceptualizations of nonverbal behaviors. In response, nonverbal communication researchers "are gradually learning how to put the pieces back together after several decades of separating them in order to examine them microscopically" (Knapp & Hall, 1992, p. 28). These more integrative research trends include: focusing on nonverbal functions rather than isolated channels or codes (Burgoon, 1980; Patterson, 1983); conceptualizing verbal and nonverbal systems as inter-organized (Streeck & Knapp, 1992); studying naturalistic conversation (Kendon, 1987; Trimboli & Walker, 1993); and studying multiple behaviors of all interactants over time. In each of these lines of research, conceptualizing the body as a vehicle for effect still prevails, however, in that scholars remain primarily concerned with cognitive intentionality and strive to ascertain intended effects by observing the body from an external, third-person perspective.

Some new trends in research in nonverbal communication are more consistent with a somatic perspective. Some scholars in the area recognize the complexity of nonverbal phenomena that seem to defy social scientific investigation. For example, Andersen
and Andersen (1989) point out how the nonverbal processes associated with arousal "are covert and difficult to measure" (p. 41). Moerman (1990) describes how "all of the body's sensory modalities . . . are used together and inter-organized" (p. 9). Streeck and Knapp (1992) explain that "ideographic gestures do not lend themselves to translation into language" and "may denote qualities that are too abstract (and too idiosyncratic) to be encoded in natural languages" (p. 16) and attribute interactants' understanding of such nonverbal phenomena to "the unconscious intelligence of their bodies" (1992, p. 16). Similarly, Argyle (1992) reports how "positive emotional response to non-verbal communication is evidently partly or mainly innate" (p. 100), and Hadar (1992) describes the emergent, adaptive, nondeterministic (i.e., neither nonprescriptive nor rule governed) nature of body movements among interactants. In each of these instances, the body is not reduced to a vehicle for communication effect but is considered to possess dynamic, complex potentiality.
The research that is concerned with communication effect tends to be characterized by three distinct features, each of which differs sharply from the basic assumptions of a somatic perspective. First, the body is viewed as separate from and secondary to verbal communication forms. This is evident by the isolation of the body into the categories of delivery and nonverbal communication. Verbalization is primary, and bodily communication is viewed as separate from its verbal counterpart, having a function either of enhancing or detracting from a communicator's intended meaning. In this area of research, cognitive intentionality is assumed, with the source of intentionality located in the head, seemingly relatively independent of the rest of the body.

Second, the primary means of evaluating nonverbal communication phenomena is through third-person, external observation of the body. The internal viewpoint of the communicator is often devalued as researchers concerned with effect strive to validate their conclusions through repeated empirical observation. When the body is conceptualized as a vehicle for effect, the focus is on communicative
outcome, where researchers observe intended effects from an external viewpoint.

Third, differences often are noted between the communicator's intent and the effects on the receiver/audience. The result is that, "in most cases, the message is assumed to be a static construct that can be manipulated and examined for its salient features" (Lanigan, 1988, p. 24). Thus, the area of literature that conceptualizes the body as a vehicle for effect is characterized by a skills-oriented approach to communication where we are directed to modify our communicative bodies in certain ways in order to facilitate an intended effect.

The Body As Lived Experience

In contrast to the empirical focus of researchers who concern themselves with communication effect, theorists who conceptualize the body as lived experience utilize a philosophical approach. The body is conceptualized as the vehicle for meaningful experiencing, and the human is viewed simultaneously as experiencer and experienced. The "lived-experience" mode of understanding the body is greatly influenced by the phenomenological philosophical orientation. This
thematic area, however, as I have framed it, also includes communication theorists who, although they may not specifically identify themselves with phenomenology, still indicate an acknowledgment of the body as a vehicle for meaningful experiencing and focus on the human as simultaneous experiencer/experienced.

In order to limit the scope of this exploration and to preserve coherence, in this section, I describe certain broad precepts of phenomenology as I believe they pertain to understanding the body in communication. Then, I address relevant communication scholars who regard the body as lived experience within their respective theoretic frameworks.

By the 1970s, the philosophical orientation of phenomenology had entered the communication research domain, bringing with it a new conceptualization of the body. Phenomenology is the study of essences (Merleau-Ponty, 1953/1963). Phenomenologists focus on how human experience is lived and how lived experience is formed and made meaningful. Phenomenologists conceptualize the body as the vehicle by which meaningful experiencing is possible. Such experience is
constructed daily in moment-to-moment interaction with others.

Humans are understood simultaneously to experience others and to be experienced by others, to perceive and to express. As conscious beings, humans have the ability to convert their perceptions into expression through communication and, conversely, to convert their expressions into perception. In phenomenological terms, this is referred to as "the unique human feature of reversibility" (Lanigan, 1988, p. 23). According to Lanigan (1988), "initial analysis of the simultaneity of expression and perception requires a fundamental understanding of the personal experience of the self, human embodiment" (p. 46-47). By acknowledging the meaningful realm of experience, phenomenologically based communication theorists validate bodily processes and the internal realm.

Existential phenomenology's roots lie in the work of Husserl, "which is now usually referred to as classical or orthodox phenomenology" (Macksoud, 1971, p. 140). Husserl (1913/1982) contended that the fundamental aspect of understanding is a process of returning to the things themselves or of comprehending
matters as they present themselves. This includes analysis of the immediate information provided by any perceptual encounter. Phenomenology seeks to explicate a phenomenon by describing the modes of experience that give meaning and structure to consciousness. To describe the content of consciousness is to describe what is felt and intended. Behind every act in every moment is the perceptually experienced, meaning-as-lived world.

Thus, phenomenology is concerned with sensory phenomena, where "every person is the measure of the sensible world" (Pilotta, 1979, p. 291). Further, "lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 36); its goal is the textual expression of the essence of lived experience. Phenomenological researchers want to find out what a certain phenomenon means and how it is experienced. Lived experience is understood as sensual, felt experience--an embodied experience, for "just as our body needs to breathe, our soul requires the fulfillment and expansion of its existence in the reverberations of emotional life" (Dilthey, 1985, p. 59).
Phenomenology conceptualizes the embodied human as the site of such experiencing. The embodied realm of human experiencing makes our perception of reality possible: "The opening of time and space take place on the ground of the 'lived body' and its horizon of all possible kinaesthesia" (Pilotta, 1979, p. 292). Gadamer (1975) articulates this kind of perspective in his description of play. He describes how bodily expressions constitute a kinaesthetic flow of spatio-temporal forms.

Despite its obvious concern for the body, phenomenology's mandate for honoring the experienced world has not resulted in any coherent theory of the communicative body. Instead, communication scholars with phenomenological orientations have translated a concern with the body into methodological applications in communication research and, in particular, to a methodological procedure called "bracketing," in which researchers restrain their own mental processes and disassociate from the biases of previous experience in order to apprehend the given objectively (Lanigan, 1988). Despite attention to the body, even these
researchers separate mind and body in the belief that the self can disassociate from sensory experiences.

Communication scholars have utilized the phenomenological research method in limited ways. My review of the literature suggests that phenomenology enjoyed a surge of attention in the 1970s but since then has waned in popularity. Perhaps one of the reasons for its demise is that, ironically, the method of phenomenology and hermeneutics is that there is no method (Gadamer, 1975; Rorty, 1979). In fact, phenomenologists caution against such structuring:

if we wish to remain responsive to the commitment of phenomenology, then we should resist the temptation to develop positivistic schemata, paradigms, models, or other categorical abstractions of knowledge. Instead, we should refer questions of knowledge back to the lifeworld where knowledge speaks through lived experience. (Van Manen, 1990, p. 46)

Such a lack of structure for conceptualizing embodied experience makes phenomenology a particularly challenging and problematic area of research.

Phenomenology found its way into communication theory predominantly in combination with hermeneutics (Deetz, 1973; Hawes, 1977). This alliance significantly separates phenomenology from bodily concerns because of hermeneutics' concern with the
interpretation of experience through a text or other symbolic forms (Van Manen, 1990). Despite the fact that Merleau-Ponty (1964/1968) ascribes broad-based meaning to the term word (for him it means a "significant gesture" that includes, for example, movement, sound, or visual stimuli), most phenomenologists who are recognized by communication scholars confine themselves to investigating shared language as it structures social relations: "A phenomenology of human communication investigates being as it manifests itself in and through speaking" (Hawes, 1977). The work of Gadamer (1975, 1976), Ricouer (1976), and Schutz (1972) is representative of the application of phenomenology to communication. In these approaches, "knowledge is articulated in a shared language and thus the phenomenological style stresses the faculty of reason and communication" (Smith, 1988, p. 33).

The work of Habermas (1970, 1971) is recognized by some scholars as representative of phenomenological philosophy in combination with hermeneutics (Smith, 1988). Habermas advances an "ideal speech situation" that provides the features needed for "a consensus
achieved in unrestrained and universal discourse" (Habermas, 1970, p. 372). He describes features that comprise a linguistic conceptualization of "the ideas of truth, freedom and justice" (1970, p. 372) and posits a goal of an enlightened consensus through a process of dialogic communication.

A bias toward language community and social structures is evident in Habermas' theory. Humans become disembodied voices in a universal dialogue as the social nature of Habermas' ideal speech situation seems to disregard the potential of the individual as individual. Habermas' understanding of the human as viewed within a social matrix has the effect of reducing embodied selves to mere social units whose individuality needs to be surmounted for the sake of community and consensus. Taken to its fruition, Habermas' ideal speech situation would result in unlimited discussion without external constraints or the distortion of ideology (Burleson & Kline, 1979). Even under the best of circumstances, the idea of unlimited discussion--seemingly without attention to bodily action or listening and with no respite for the internal synthesis of the individual--ends up being
less than ideal from the standpoint of the embodied human. Habermas' notion of an ideal speech situation neglects the embodied human and privileges cognitive, verbal, and social realms at the expense of the inner, proprioceptive reality of embodied humanness.

The philosophical orientation of phenomenology, with its emphasis on experiencing, seems to hold promise from the perspective of human embodiment. Despite its potential to point the way to a somatic perspective on communication, however, none has been developed. The most vital contributions of phenomenology to communication studies have been confined to methodological discussions and social theorizing in which the body is largely ignored.

Although phenomenology has failed to theorize the communicative body, some contemporary scholars, also sensitive to human experience, minimally recognize the body as the vehicle for lived experience. Rhetorical theorist Booth, for example, advances an "art of discovering good reasons," grounded in his philosophy of assent that reflects "the mysterious process of two becoming one" (Booth, 1974, p. xiv). In advocating this type of connection, Booth briefly alludes to the
"delicate sensing apparatus" housed inside the body—a kind of sensual wisdom that unites us all (Booth, 1974, p. 99). In order to facilitate the social/rhetorical construction of realities, according to Booth, we need to connect, to assent, and to integrate. Although he reaffirms the innate goodness of the individual and pays brief tribute to sensory intelligence in his analysis, the body remains an undeveloped aspect for Booth in his rhetoric of assent. His is an art of good reasons that privileges social realms with qualified, reasonable voices to speak in them.

Rhetorical theorist Burke also acknowledges the lived body to a limited extent in his rhetorical theory. Burke conceptualizes the body in two ways—the body as intrinsically divisive and the body as symbolic action. In keeping with his reputation for defying easy categorization, the second of Burke's two conceptualizations of the body somewhat overlaps with the next thematic area I have framed. For purposes of coherence, his ideas will be addressed entirely in this section.

Burke's expansive theory of the human as a symbol-(mis)using animal focuses primarily on words and
language systems where the body is subordinated. Burke (1966) distinguishes between action and motion, with action comprising the neurological, symbolic realm and motion comprising the biological, animalistic realm, the realm of the body. The bodily realm of motion consists of the basic impulses necessary to sustain life such as eating and seeking shelter, reproduction, and sleep; it is devoid of conscious intent. Burke (1966) is concerned with the symbolic realm in which we transcend bodily impulses and become human. For Burke, humans are "being bodies that learn language/thereby becoming wordlings" (Burke, 1989, p. 263). The implication is that, in becoming "wordlings," we are somehow no longer, or at least minimally, "being bodies." In other words, human language use somehow subverts or transcends lived bodily experience.

Burke acknowledges the lived human body, but for him, bodily experience is inherently alienating. In articulating his concept of identification, Burke sees human beings as inevitably alienated from each other as a result of their separate physical bodies. Burke (1950/1969) describes what he calls "the individual centrality of the nervous system" that is responsible
for "the divisiveness of the individual human organism, from birth to death" (p. 130). He contends that the human central nervous system functions in such a way that it makes bodily experience singularly private and personal and describes how human experience constitutes "private property," where "the body's pleasures and pains are exclusively its own pleasures and pains" (1969, p. 130). He suggests that the experience of isolation inherent in human embodiment necessitates a foundational motivation for communication: We attempt to connect as a result of our separateness.

In terms of symbolic action, Burke (1966) is interested in ways in which the functions of bodily processes "attain expression (sometimes direct, more often indirect) in works of the imagination" (p. 308). He describes "the bodily or biological level" as one level at which to look when analyzing poetry as enactment, for example (1941/1973, p. 36). Burke suggests that the kinaesthetic and sensory imagery surrounding the body may "symbolize" some overall quality of experience" (1941/1973, p. 36). Ethnographer Geertz (1973) makes use of this technique, among others, when interpreting a Balinese cockfight.
Upon observing spectators' mimicry of the cock's maneuvers, Geertz describes how "much of the individual's experience of the fight is kinesthetic rather than visual" (Geertz, 1973, p. 451). The movement experience symbolizes the embodiment of a cultural attitude.

In further explicating the notion of symbolic action, Burke (1966) describes a "demonic trinity" in which three bodily principles--the erotic, urinary, and excremental--are crucial. Burke contends that all bodily processes have an effect upon human imagery. In other words, bodily functions manifest in art forms and represent underlying mental states. He describes a subliminal fecal motive that plays out in imagery because our bodily functions--especially sex and defecation--are thoroughly infused with taboos that suppress direct expression. Thus, we have a desire to purge ourselves of such pollution, to rid ourselves of the associated guilt, to attempt to attain redemption.

In a chapter entitled "The Thinking of the Body," Burke (1966) closely interprets certain popular texts and describes the symbolic purgation taking place in them, especially in terms of connotations of physical
excretion. For example, he suggests that the grin of
the Cheshire cat in *Alice in Wonderland* represents
flatulence because the cat disappears rear end first,
and the name *Cheshire* alludes to the potently
odoriferous Cheshire cheese.

In detailing the body as one level of symbolic
action, Burke advocates textual interpretation for the
purposes of ascribing the motives of the author and
ascertaining the underlying qualities of authors that
are revealed through their literary works. Presumably,
this awareness may lead to greater understanding.
Burke's conceptualization of the body as one level of
symbolic action is part of his greater approach to
studying motivation in general in an effort to
understand the human condition better.

In contrast to scholars concerned with the body as
a vehicle to manifest communication effect, the
literature discussed in this section represents
scholars who acknowledge the body as the means by which
meaningful human experiencing is possible. Their
primary method of evaluating communicative phenomena is
through textual analysis. In general, communication
scholars who conceptualize the body as lived experience
strive to validate their conclusions through philosophical understanding of the essence of the human condition.

The Body as Culturally Inscribed

Many contemporary communication theorists conceptualize the body as inscribed and constructed by culture. In significant ways, these scholars disregard the tendency to derive a metaphysical essence of humanness. Instead, humans are considered to be primarily culturally and socially constructed, having little or no essential nature. Scholars in this area seek to expose and describe the ways in which culture has shaped, determined, and distorted the human experience.

For theorist McLuhan, our bodies are constructed through the use of technology. In his work, The Gutenberg Galaxy, McLuhan (1962) traces the ways in which forms of human experience have been modified, first by the phonetic alphabet and then by print technology. He argues that throughout history, humans have been extending their sense organs--by use of technology--in ways that disturb their other sense organs. He suggests that isolating one sense from the
other senses by separate intensities brings about a kind of hypnosis, a numbing effect, perhaps akin to a type of irrationality. The stripping of the senses and the interruption of their interplay in tactile synesthesia has been one of the effects of technology that carries with it extreme consequences for our species. In his theory of cultural development, McLuhan explores the transmuting sense ratios effected by the externalization of our senses through technology.

In his description of bodily inscription by technology, McLuhan (1962) suggests print technology represents an extension of our visual sense and has caused the establishment of new ratios or proportions among all our other senses. With the experience of mass-produced repeatable type, the visual dimension broke away from the other senses. Thus, with the advent of print technology, we have undergone a shift from experiencing life within the perspective of the internal realm (ear/heart) to the external (eye/head) realm.

McLuhan (1962) describes how the external focus of the eye culture has resulted in altered time and space
orientations. In non-literate ear cultures, temporal and spacial orientations are understood as whole, with no measurable divisions; they are understood as simultaneous complex relations that are more fully sensed when there is full interplay of all the senses at once. Auditory primacy allows for this full interplay of the senses, in contrast to eye cultures, which organize time into chronology, a product of the interiorization of the alphabet. Time becomes linear and one directional, just like the words on the printed page; time and space become containers to be filled with objects and activities.

The privileging of the eye, along with its altered time/space orientations, have intensely profound consequences, according to McLuhan (1962). Included among these are that the internal imagination became solely visual, a fixed point of view became possible, and the homogenization of people through fixed points of view became possible. Price systems, commodities, and an increase in numbers and exact measurement also became possible through the print mode, along with a phonetic alphabet that was an adaptable code, easy for anybody to learn and to use. The phonetic alphabet
created the fiction of flat, straight and uniform space which, in turn, was a streamlined code for commerce.

Finally, nationalism, individualism, normalization, structuralism, and the self-alienation that results from these all can be traced back to typography (McLuhan, 1962). Print technology as a mass-media form created the uniform and centralizing forces of modern nationalism. Books, in their portable ease, separated people from each other, increasing individualism, and the emerging "typographic logic" reduced humans to uniformity and repeatability. In addition, because the many complex facets of any given situation were reduced to two-dimensional space on the printed page, print technology encouraged structuralism. Conscious life became a single level (external/visual), and the complex of other senses emerged into the unknown unconscious, making us strangers unto ourselves. For McLuhan, the media serve as extensions of our bodily capabilities that, in turn, effect vast changes on our bodily capabilities and alter the form of human consciousness.

Similarly, French philosopher Foucault describes how bodies have been inscribed culturally; his focus,
however, is not so much on the direct effects of technology itself but on the discursive formations that supersede technology. Foucault (1982) is concerned with "the different modes by which, in our society, human beings are made subjects" (p. 208). Throughout his prolific career, Foucault was "consistently interested in the shifting ways that the body and the social institutions related to it have entered into political relations" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 10). Through the "dividing practices" of culture, "the subject is objectified by a process of division either within [her]himself or from others" (Foucault, 1982, p. 208).

Using a method called genealogy, Foucault describes two processes by which the human is inscribed by cultural dividing practices: the objectification of the subject and the subjectification of the subject.

Foucault's myriad contributions to exposing the cultural inscription of the body—and the vast number of scholars inspired by his work—are too numerous to describe in detail here. In the following discussion, I will summarize briefly his major works as they pertain to bodily concerns—The Birth of the Clinic, The History of Sexuality, and Discipline and Punish.
In a compelling critique of modern society, Foucault details the emergence of a new and unprecedented system of control directed against the body. In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault (1973) describes how, through scientific classification, the body is increasingly treated as a thing, an object. He goes on to describe a concept called bio-power wherein the human body is manipulated and controlled by the cultural forces of knowledge and power (1978/1976). In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978/1976) describes how, through continual regulatory and corrective measures, governments and their institutions are in the business of controlling populations for their own use. The body is useful to a government only if it is productive and obedient and only if it can be used and corrected.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1979/1975) analyzes in detail how the body is used and corrected by social institutions. He articulates the various forms that "disciplinary technology" takes as it functions to objectify the body. Through the modern institutions of the school, the hospital, the prison, the army, and the factory, for example, the goal of
disciplinary technology is to increase the utility of the body:

What was then being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behaviour. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it. A "political anatomy," which was also a "mechanics of power," was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus, the discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, "docile" bodies. (Foucault, 1979/1975, p. 138)

Through his analysis, Foucault exposes how the human body is totally imprinted by history. The goal of disciplinary technology is to create a "docile body that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault, 1979/1975, p. 198). Thus, Foucault believes that history traces the destruction of the human body.

In addition to describing the external forces of culture that contribute to the objectification of the subject, Foucault (1979/1975) describes in detail an additional oppressive force—the subjectification of the subject. This refers to the process of internalized oppression whereby humans turn themselves into subjects. Foucault suggests that people actively
engage in the process of "self-formation," in which they monitor and shape themselves to fit a cultural mold. He uses the panopticon, a model for a French prison, to demonstrate how people have internalized the external gaze. The panopticon is an architectural design for a prison that enables the constant and anonymous observation of isolated prisoners. Because the prisoners never know when or if they are being watched, they behave properly all the time of their own volition.

Foucault (1979/1975) uses the panopticon model as a metaphor to illustrate the "normalizing" effect of culture. Normalization refers to "a system of finely gradated and measurable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 20). We behave in certain socially approved, "normative" ways nearly all the time because we have internalized the notion that we are being watched; we are constantly aware of being observed. Modern culture is particularly dangerous because it simultaneously normalizes people while giving them the illusion that they are acting as individuals, says Foucault (1978/1976). Normative order is "opposed to a system
of . . . personal power" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 20); it is vital to the reign of bio-power, "a power whose task it is to take charge of life" in subtle and insidious ways (Foucault, 1978/1976, p. 144).

Foucault's work significantly contributes to a growing area of literature in which scholars critically examine the politicization of the human body. Scholarly investigations into the ways in which culture constructs the body constitute a substantial area of cultural studies research. The Frankfurt School paved the way for a practice of "reading" cultural bodily inscriptions. Later, British cultural studies, inspired by Hall's critical work in Birmingham, made the politics of bodily inscription of general importance to cultural studies (Hall, 1992). Cultural studies researchers currently seek to explore how modern systems of power constitute and reconstitute the body.

Within a cultural studies framework, the body is more than a site for political allegiance or labor production: the new discipline of power "invades the body and seeks to regulate its very forces and operations, the economy and efficiency of its
movements" (Bartky, 1988, p. 61). From this perspective, the body is understood not as an object to be studied in relation to culture "but is to be considered as the subject of culture, or in other words, as the existential ground of culture" (Csordas, 1990, p. 5). This is so because we are born into a world of institutions that "operate through discursive codes that inscribe the body's organs, senses, labor, and reproduction" (O'Neill, 1989, p. 3). Indeed, the human body furnishes "the bio-text upon which the principle social institutions inscribe themselves" (1989, p. 3).

Representative of this perspective are scholars who describe the dehumanizing effects of cultural inscription. Fanon (1990), for example, describes how his ontological "corporeal schema crumbled, its place taken by a racial epidermal schema" as a result of living as a black man in white racist culture (p. 110). The latest anti-drug hysteria similarly reconstructs the body according to Kroker and Kroker (1987); they describe an emerging "urinal politics" and "immunological politics" with their "rhetoric of clean bodily fluids," where there occurs "a hyper-deflation
of the body to the quality of its internal fluids" (p. 11). They go on to detail how, in technological society, "the body has achieved a purely rhetorical existence: its reality is that of refuse expelled as surplus matter no longer necessary for the autonomous functioning of the technoscape" (p. 21). Similarly, in his work on how culture and AIDS interact on human bodies, Crimp (1988) suggests there is no underlying "reality" of AIDS--"AIDS exists only in and through these constructions" of culture, representation, and politics (p. 3).

Feminist theorists also examine the ways in which culture inscribes the body and focus, in particular, on "the daily inscriptions of gender, color, ethnicity, age, ability, and sexuality on the bodies we live as and live with" (Langellier, Carter & Hantzis, 1993, p. 109). Indicative of the predominant viewpoint in cultural studies is the work of French feminist Irigaray (1980, 1985), who conceptualizes the body as a regulated cultural construct that constitutes the primary site of difference. Epstein and Straub (1991) claim that sex/gender systems are culturally constructed in order "to delimit and contain the
threatening absence of boundaries between human bodies and among bodily acts that would otherwise explode the organizational and institutional structures of social ideologies" (p. 2). They interpret the body as a

**tabula rosa**: "The body is just such a blank page, ready to be written on or rewritten by the text-production apparatus of culturally fluid sex/gender systems" (p. 21).

Feminist explorations into cultural inscriptions of the body abound. For example, Castelli (1991) explores how Christian women in late antiquity were "made male" as a reflection of the cultural ideology of the time (p. 29). In analyzing the ideological shift concerning abortion, Stabile (1992) identifies the cultural conditions that transformed "the female body from a benevolent, maternal environment into an inhospitable waste land" (p. 179). Finger (1985) describes the oppression of culturally imposed asexuality on women with disabilities.

Other feminists suggest the cultural inscription of the body in specific realms. Balsamo (1992) explains how new biomedical technologies transform the body into a visual medium. She articulates the
reciprocal nature of the cosmetic surgery process in which "the body is fractured and fragmented so that isolated parts can be visually examined . . . . At the same time, the material body comes to embody the characteristics of technological images" (1992, p. 207). Through a complex decoding of advertising images, Bordo (1990) describes how cultural resonances "have overdetermined slenderness as the current ideal for women" that contribute to the flourishing of eating disorders (p. 88). Perimenis (1991) details how the anorexic body is a physical manifestation of the culturally enforced feelings of denigration that are common to women of the United States in general.

Not all critical theorists conceptualize the body as docile and easily reconstructed, however. Recently, "gender ambiguity has become the focus of some of the most serious political debates in recent critical history" (Epstein & Straub, 1991, p. 9). Within these frameworks, the body is conceptualized as sometimes accommodating the dominant ideology and as sometimes subverting or refusing it. In the latter case, the body remains uncategorizable and grotesque (Russo,
but still under the tyrannizing power of cultural constructs by virtue of its opposition to them.

Taking the notion of cultural inscription to its logical extreme renders the human body a postmodern wasteland. Eluding empirical classification and resulting in the theoretic ambiguity of slippery cultural constructs, we seem to have entered the realm of "panic bodies":

Panic bodies living on (their own) borrowed power; violent, and alternating, scenes of surplus energy and perfect inertness; existing psychologically on the edge of fantasy and psychosis; floating sign-systems of the body reexperienced in the form of its own second-order simulacra; a combinatorial of hyper-exteriorization (of body organs) hyper-interiorization (of designer subjectivities)

. . . . (Kroker & Kroker, 1987, p. 22)

Such a state of affairs, in which the body is transgressed and reconfigured until it seemingly has dematerialized, seems to cry out for a new conceptualization of the body—for a somatic perspective.

The scholarly studies concerned with the body as culturally inscribed share several features that run counter to a somatic perspective. First, these critical researchers tend to agree that "bodies are also and always culturally constituted" (Rapp, 1990, p.
28). In other words, the body is conceptualized as constructed by cultural influences, having little or no essence of its own. Second, humans are conceptualized as subjects, at the mercy of the powerful forces of cultural inscription; there is no escaping them. Further, we internalize these forces and are sensitized to any departure from the cultural standard in a process of normalization. Habituated to serve cultural norms, we self-monitor and self-regulate, contorting ourselves, in essence, to become the "docile bodies" that the mechanisms of modern power mandate.

Scholars in the area of cultural studies seek to expose and describe the ways in which the body is constructed by culture. By identifying social forces and helping others to recognize and name the oppressive effects of culture, cultural studies scholars and teachers participate in advocating that individuals become "self-reflexive" and thus move toward empowerment. The critical approach that characterizes cultural studies is grounded in the assumption that a rational critique of culture will lead to awareness and minimize the detrimental effects of cultural inscription. Yet, privileging rational critiques
results in situations of exclusion and oppression that are counter-productive to emancipation or empowerment (Ellsworth, 1989). Further, from a somatic perspective, the reduction of the living soma to a vulnerable body that is relatively defenseless against an onslaught of cultural inscription violates the multidimensionality and holistic orientation of a somatic perspective. A view of human beings as reduced to "docile bodies," "panic bodies," or "blank pages" corrupted by relentless cultural inscription does not seem humanizing, empowering, or emancipatory.

Seemingly anticipating the possible consensus of cultural studies, in his later investigations into the dynamics of power, Foucault appeared interested in the creation of an authentic self. His concern was with new forms of subjectivity that are not a product of the tyrannizing power of the state. Just before his death, Foucault (1984) was working on a "technology of the self" and recommended self-work and an aesthetics of existence where "we have to create ourselves as a work of art" (Foucault, 1984, p. 351). In their newly emerging form, his "techniques of the self" constitute "taking care of one's self" or "working on or being
concerned with" one's self (Foucault, 1984, pp. 359-360).

I believe that a somatic perspective answers the call for a more positive conception of the body in a postmodern era and potentially fulfills Foucault's mission. With its focus on inner awareness and wholeness, a somatic perspective carries the potential for self-discovery and personal empowerment, an inherently humanizing project. In this sense, the area of scholarship concerned with the body as culturally inscribed, by legitimatizing and describing the detrimental effects of culturally oppressive forces, can provide an impetus for the purposeful development of a somatic perspective on communication.

Writing the Body

In the wake of cultural studies, with its conceptualization of the relentlessly inscribed body, some theorists—French feminists in particular—advocate a practice of l'écriture féminine or "writing the body" as a means by which women may reclaim their culturally appropriated experiences. The practice of writing the body derives from the belief that conventional language and culture are constructed by
men, not women: "Symbolic discourse . . . is another
means through which man objectifies the world, reduces
it to his terms, speaks in place of everything and
everyone else--including women" (Jones, 1985, p. 87).
The result is that women's expressions and experiences
have been silenced throughout history and, as such,
women may find a source of resistance to patriarchal
cultural forces by expressing themselves (writing) from
their bodies.

According to the French feminists, women are
understood to experience a greater spontaneity and
profusion in language and bodily expression. As
subordinates in a male-dominated ideology, women live
in the margins of mainstream culture and remain more
able to access and authentically express their primary,
culturally uncorrupted, bodily impulses. Further,
women's biological form facilitates inner awareness and
physical sensation. The structure of their sexual
anatomy, monthly menstrual cycles, and the capacity to
give birth allow women to be attuned to their bodies to
a greater extent than are men.

The French feminists agree that the body provides
an avenue to the unconscious, to the basic female
nature that resides in women's bodily instincts. These bodily impulses are understood to be repressed by patriarchal culture but are not completely inaccessible. Among the most vital bodily impulses is that of pleasure. Writing the body derives from the notion that women experience pleasure--particularly sexual pleasure--differently from men because of their physiological differences. French feminists often refer to an essential experience called **jouissance**, which roughly translates as sexual pleasure:

This pleasure, when attributed to a woman, is considered to be of a different order from the pleasure that is represented within the male libidinal economy often described in terms of the capitalistic gain and profit motive. Women's **jouissance** carries with it the notion of fluidity, diffusion, duration. It is a kind of potlatch in the world of orgasms, a giving, expending, dispensing of pleasure without concern about ends or closure. (Marks & Courtivron, 1980, pp. 36-37)

Resistance to patriarchy lies in women re-experiencing and giving their own language to these bodily pleasures. Women are called to "recognize and assert their **jouissance** if they are to subvert phallocentric oppression at its deepest levels" (Jones, 1985, p. 89).

The differentiated "pleasure-ability" of women contributes to women's capacity to write from their
bodies. Women's expansive sexual experience is understood as inherently linked with their language. Says Cixous (1980): "Her libido is cosmic, just as her unconscious is worldwide. Her writing can only keep going.... It does not hold back, it makes possible" (pp. 259-260). Irigaray (1980) echoes similar sentiments: "In her statements--at least when she dares to speak out--woman retouches herself constantly" (p. 103). The female body is seen as a direct source of female writing because "the immediacy with which the body, the id, the jouissance, are supposedly experienced promises a clarity of perception and a vitality that can bring down mountains of phallocentric delusion" (Jones, 1985, p. 91).

For the French feminists who advocate writing the body, female sexuality is thought to exist prior to or in spite of cultural influences. The body is understood as a source of self-knowledge:

All we have to do is let the body flow, from the inside; all we have to do is erase, as we did on the slate, whatever may hinder or harm the new forms of writing; we retain whatever fits, whatever suits us. (Gagnon, 1980, p. 180)

Within this area of theorizing, women are believed to be capable of experiencing their bodies in a primary
way, relatively uncontaminated by social forces. Thus, women are called to access their bodily voices in an effort to invoke new representations of women's consciousnesses.

In its conceptualization of the body as the source of authentic expression, the area of scholarship concerned with writing the body is most congruous with a somatic perspective on communication. Like writing the body, a somatic perspective recognizes the integrity of the body, a wellspring of life energy in the body, a safe refuge from cultural corruption, and an inherently spiritual essence. Somatic scholars would not disagree with Irigaray (1987):

Approached in this light, where the edges of the body join in an embrace that transcends all limits and which nevertheless does not risk falling into the abyss thanks to the fertility of this porous space, in the most extreme moments of sensation... each self-discovery takes place in that area which cannot be spoken of, but that forms the fluid basis of life and language... For this we need "God," or a love so scrupulous that it is divine. (p. 128)

Despite these similarities, a somatic perspective diverges from writing the body in two significant ways. First, a somatic perspective does not privilege writing or any verbal code as the basic mode of accessing the wisdom of the body or of expressing the self. In fact,
a somatic perspective advocates myriad expressive forms in all of their diversity and complexity. If any expressive modality is privileged over another, bodily awareness is understood as relatively primary within a somatic perspective.

Second, a somatic perspective recognizes that every being, regardless of sexual anatomy or life experience, has access to somatic consciousness. The French feminists who advocate writing the body view the body—the unconscious, the jouissance—as primarily a woman's domain. Although Kristeva (1980) recognizes that certain men may be familiar with the phenomenon of that which "cannot be represented, something that is not said, something above and beyond nomenclatures and ideologies" (pp. 137-138), Kristeva's work has received exposure only in feminist contexts with little or no application for the general population that includes men. A somatic perspective advocates that all humans possess the capacity to access and express somatic awareness.

Conclusion

As demonstrated by this survey of the literature on attempts to integrate the body into communication,
nearly all of the works reviewed are based on assumptions that differ from those of a somatic perspective. Sometimes the body—observed and examined from an external perspective—is seen as a vehicle that may enhance or inhibit communication effect. In this area, the intended communication effect is assumed to emanate from cognitive processes located in the head. The body is understood as secondary to verbal exchange, and manipulation of the body is often advocated in order to effect the desired communicative outcome. In other areas of the literature, the body is addressed in passing but remains undertheorized. In still other areas, the body is conceptualized as a blank page that is vulnerable to cultural inscription. In response to this cultural oppression, the body is conceptualized as an enigmatic mystery whose essential nature may be uncovered, especially by women, through writing. In contrast, a somatic perspective regards the living body as the theoretic starting point and, as such, suggests a potential transformation of our understanding of communication.
Method of the Study

This is a theoretic project. Articulating a somatic perspective on communication constitutes a study in which I develop a coherent communication theory and explore its application in two areas—method and pedagogy. I develop a somatic theory of communication by way of the following process. First, I discover and identify the major tenets of somatics by drawing from the primary sources available on somatic philosophy and theory such as the work of Thomas Hanna, Moshe Feldenkrais, Deepak Chopra, and others. Then, I identify the somatics notions that are most relevant to communication and utilize those premises to develop new theoretic communication constructs. Finally, I apply the new somatic communication theory to two areas: methodology and pedagogy.

The areas of theory, method, and teaching represent the primary ways in which the discipline of communication is enacted. Communication scholars often draw on relevant theory to derive innovative research methods. In turn, theoretic tenets and research findings inform communication teaching methods and practices. Thus, by contributing to the areas of
theory, method, and teaching, I directly address those areas on which the discipline of communication focuses. Further, because somatics, by definition, mandates praxis, an investigation into the realm of somatics without regard for translating theory directly into practice would contradict the fundamental principles of somatics. In this project, I translate the newly devised somatic communication theory into research and pedagogical practice by describing a somatic research method and a unit on somatic communication for inclusion in the basic communication course.

Because the emphasis of this project is on theory development and the cultivation of an accompanying research method and pedagogical approach, the assumptions that comprise somatic theory and the subsequent communication theory, research method, and pedagogical approach are accepted and developed rather than defended or evaluated. There are both advantages and disadvantages to this method of theory development. The lack of critique is a disadvantage. The relative absence of situating and defending the new somatic theory within the context of existing perspectives also is a disadvantage. This lack of critique and
nonevaluation with regard to existing perspectives may leave the reader with unanswered questions.

The choice to limit this project exclusively to theory development was made based on the advantages of this approach. This project introduces into the field of communication an alternative perspective from which to view communication. Because the perspective described contains a vast array of new theoretic assumptions and concepts, adequate critique of each assumption and concept is not only organizationally unwieldy but is far beyond the scope of a dissertation project. Further, since somatic communication is in the embryonic stages of development, I believe that the most significant contribution to the field of communication can be made by further developing and exploring this perspective without the limitations of defense, critique, and evaluation in comparison with existing perspectives.

Limitations

As with any specific, delineated project, development of a somatic perspective on communication includes several limitations. First, somatics is an emerging and multi-faceted academic field with diverse
theoretical orientations, levels of explanation, and vocabularies. Thus, the perspective is described here as I interpret and construct it and as I believe it applies to communication. The theories, methods, and pedagogical tools I have developed may not be those that other communication scholars interested in somatics would develop.

Second, by including in my project the three major areas of theory, method, and pedagogy, I engage in a broad exploration of the relevant applications of somatics to communication phenomena. I show generally how a somatic perspective changes communication; thus, I do not address any one area in considerable depth. As a theoretic study, this project explores the major contributions of a somatic perspective on communication and necessarily sacrifices depth for breadth.

Third, because the focus of this project is on the development of theory and its application, this study does not incorporate a significant critique of existing constructs and perspectives on communication or somatics. I have chosen to go beyond critique and to focus on reconceptualization. Although the critique aspect may be underdeveloped, it is addressed to a
certain extent in the survey of the literature and again in the concluding chapter in which I articulate the heuristic value of the new somatic perspective on communication.

Structure of the Dissertation

This project consists of six chapters. In Chapter One, I introduce my topic; describe the purpose, significance, and limitations of the study; survey the existing literature on attempts to integrate the body into communication; and explain my method. In Chapter Two, I describe the purpose and history of somatics, lay out the assumptions of a general somatic theory and describe somatic practices and somatic concepts. Utilizing the somatic theory designed in Chapter Two, in Chapter Three, I devise a somatic theory of communication that includes the assumptions of a somatic perspective; the definition, purpose, and scope of communication; communication ethics within this perspective; and the modes of communication that are fundamental in this theory.

In Chapter Four, I focus on praxis and construct a somatic communication research method that includes research tools and procedures, research questions,
criteria for judging the adequacy of somatic communication research, and examples of somatic communication research. In Chapter Five, I create a unit on somatic communication for inclusion in the basic communication course. The proposed unit includes a discussion of educational philosophy, role of the instructor, unit objectives, suggestions for general content, and methods of evaluation. Finally, I address the heuristic value of this project in Chapter Six, identifying some of the implications of a somatic perspective for the field of communication.
CHAPTER II
SOMATIC THEORY

In this project, an investigation of a somatic perspective on communication, I identify and describe the basic tenets of somatic theory and practice as the foundation from which to explore the applications of somatics to communication. My task in this chapter is to describe the basic principles of somatic theory and bring in the evidence that supports somatic theory, but not to assess or critique the evidence. In this chapter, I delineate the basic principles of somatic theory, beginning with the purposes of somatics. Next is a brief history of somatics with a discussion of the exigencies to which somatics is responding. Third, the foundational assumptions of somatics are addressed, followed by a description of a variety of fundamental somatic practices. Finally, I list and describe basic somatic concepts.

Purpose of Somatics

Within a somatic perspective, each being is recognized as an individuated process of synergistic
potentiality. The perspective advocates a perceptual shift that privileges the internally focused, subjective stance of experiencing oneself from the inside. When we focus awareness on our internal functioning and increase proprioceptive awareness, the power of our awareness has the capacity to invoke internal changes. As we transform internally, we move toward authentic freedom and are able to experience the interconnectedness of all life forms.

Somatics is directed toward enhancing self-awareness, which results in transformation. The perspective is concerned with promoting freedom of behavior for each soma. Through expansion of inner awareness, we may find what has to happen within ourselves to come closer to our optimal, free-flowing functioning. By increasing somatic awareness, every aspect of living is enhanced. We reconnect with our intuition which, in turn, engenders a sense of control and accomplishment in life. The wisdom of the body "speaks not only to issues of the physical world, but to other aspects of [our] lives as well--[our] work, [our] relationships" (Saltonstall, 1988, p. 65).
Somatics is specifically change oriented. It is concerned with "how one can live with the greatest amount of growth and expansion and the least amount of entropy . . ." (Hanna, 1991a, p. 90). The human is a "living, functioning body" that adapts and changes (Hanna, 1980, p. 57). The individual soma is conceptualized as a "system-in-process" that can be changed by introducing new information into the system (1980, p. 58). Thus, somas embody change:

Living organisms defy being described as "bodies." They have a moving order and lawfulness of their own which violates the stable concept of "body." Living organisms are somas: that is, they are an integral and ordered process of embodied elements which cannot be separated either from their evolved past or their adaptive future. (Hanna, 1976, pp. 30-31)

The transformations facilitated through somatic practices ultimately are designed to promote authentic freedom, which results from humans' actualization of their varied somatic potentials: "The fundamental and inescapable task of all things and beings is to navigate their respective ways toward freedom with the least loss of energy and momentum" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 101). Authentic freedom is not externally determined or dependent upon outside conditions. Authentic freedom is an internal, somatic way of being: "Freedom
is not merely a negative state of 'no restrictions outside.' It is a positive state of using oneself fully--it is an inner state requiring skill and discipline" (Hanna, 1991b, p.130). Freedom is "efficient, prescient, and adaptively fluid behavior. But, looked at somatically, it is pleasurable, filled with awareness and, thus, smoothly exacting in functioning" (1991a, p. 6).

The inner transformation and sense of freedom facilitated through somatic awareness ultimately allow for the felt sensing of unity consciousness, a mode of being in which we somatically experience the interconnectedness of all. A soma "is a process of awareness" and each time we bring any aspect of the environment into our awareness, that aspect ceases to be separate from us and becomes incorporated into us (Hanna, 1991b, p. 142). Our awareness is unlimited: "The ultimate limits of the human brain and human reality are larger than the cosmos itself" (1991b, p. 142). By expanding our awareness and transforming limitations, we move toward the actualization of unity. At those moments when we experience integration of awareness, feeling, senses, movement, and thought, we
may "make discoveries, invent, create, innovate, and 'know.' . . . that [our] small world and the world around are but one" (Feldenkrais, 1972/1977, p. 54).

History of Somatics

Philosopher Thomas Hanna is recognized as the founder of the field of somatics in the United States. His definition of the term somatics was "the art and science of the inter-relational process between awareness, biological function and environment, all three factors being understood as a synergistic whole" (1983, p. 1). Hanna delineated the field in 1970 with the publication of his book, Bodies in Revolt: A Primer in Somatic Thinking, in which he named the precursors to somatics—scientists and philosophers whose work informed the movement—and described the cultural conditions from which somatics was emerging.

Somatics has been a concept of importance in various academic disciplines, in which it is generally understood to refer to an integration of body and mind. A concern for body/mind integration developed in the fields of health, education, psychology, science, and the arts during the 20th century in Europe and America in response to the dualistic ideological orientation
that dominated the Western intellectual tradition during the 19th century and still is evident today. **Dualism** refers to the conceptual separation of body and mind, a conception in which the body is devalued and the mind is privileged.

The metaphysical precept of dualism can be traced to the writings of Plato (1956 version). In *Phaedo*, for example, Socrates articulates the nature of the distinction between body and mind. Socrates/Plato describes the correspondence of the mind to the soul and depicts the mind as analogous to the divine, nonphysical realm, with the physical domain of the body characterized by illusion and profanity. The realm of Reality or Ultimate Truth is achieved through transcendence of the physical realm.

To support his argument for the superiority of the mind over the body, Socrates/Plato (1956 version) relies largely on his epistemology of opposites. The theory of opposites holds that humans come to know reality only through their ability to comprehend opposites. For example, pleasure cannot be ascertained without having known pain. Further, pleasure and pain, as opposites, cannot simultaneously co-exist. The
logic of opposites stipulates an absolute reality: something either exists, or it does not. Because the body experiences pleasure and pain in a seemingly chaotic and unreliable fashion, the body is understood to be capricious. In contrast, the mind represents True Knowing and is able to transcend the deception of the illusory physical realm. Thus, the mind and the body are opposites—the mind is soul (Truth), and the body is non-soul (falsity).

Because the body is illusion, the realm of the physical is devalued. In a dialogue with his students at the time of his death, Socrates (1956 version) states that a true philosopher should pursue death, the liberation of the soul from the confines of the body. Humans are born with absolute knowledge, according to Socrates, but our decrepit bodies prevent us from perceiving this knowledge. Accordingly, the act of thinking frees us from the confines of the body and facilitates the pursuit of Truth. For Socrates/Plato, ultimate Truth exists in the mind, which is capable of knowing the essence of things; in contrast, our bodies inhibit such knowledge and cause us to be flawed by the lowly experiences of the flesh.
The dualistic ideology represented by Plato's separation of mind from body has dominated Western philosophical orientations (Grof, 1989; Hanna, 1970/1985; Rorty, 1979). The writings of 17th-century philosopher Descartes are most representative of modern dualistic metaphysics, sometimes referred to as Cartesian dualism. In Meditations, Descartes (1846/1960) attempts to prove the existence of God by doubting and denying all aspects of existence. He detaches from his senses and uses his mind to judge clearly and distinctly. Existence, according to Descartes, lies in a type of knowing and understanding that is independent of the body. For example, thinking—the activity of the mind—allows Descartes to know that candle wax is, indeed, wax regardless of whether it is in solid or liquid form. Were he to rely on his bodily senses for this information, says Descartes, he would be deceived and confused. He concludes that the thinking mind is the only reliable source for determining the true nature of existence; the body is a hindrance. The mind is distinct from the body, according to Descartes, and could exist without the body. The irrelevance of the body is obvious in
Descartes' well-known axiom: "I think, therefore, I am" (1846/1960, p. 156).

Body/mind dualism continued to dominate Western metaphysics and is evident in the philosophies of Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. These philosophers are united by their belief in the superiority of the human mind and its ability to transcend the illusory physical realm. Common to these philosophies is the understanding that the world is apprehended through the sensory realm and is external to the human. The world is somehow "out there," and the human is a mindful observer, capable of judgment and evaluation in order to discern the truth value of the external reality. This conceptualization began to change at the turn of the 18th-century, however. In Bodies In Revolt, Hanna (1970/1985) identifies particular scientists and philosophers, described below, as the precursors to somatics.

The conceptualization of the mindful human observer and an external "knowable" reality changed with the contributions of German philosopher Kant at the turn of the century. Kant introduced the notion that what we experience in our environing world is not
so much given to us through our senses as it is constructed by the way in which we individually perceive. After the introduction of Kant's perspective, no longer could the world be conceptualized unquestioningly as external and separate from the human observer. Instead, the world was relocated inside to the inner realm of human perception that is full, living, and teeming with infinite processes and possibilities. As Hanna (1970/1985) asserts, "Immanuel Kant had discovered the human soma" (p. 152).

French phenomenological philosopher Merleau-Ponty extended Kant's exploration by describing how consciousness is perception, and perception is consciousness. The mind and body are united by the function of constantly relating the human to its environment: the function of perception, which constitutes consciousness. This notion later was supported empirically by Swiss developmental psychologist Piaget. Through studying the cognitive development of children, Piaget demonstrated that what we perceive as "reality" depends on the stage of perception and cognition that we have attained in
relation to our world. For example, by manipulating
the shapes of objects and asking children of varied
ages to judge the volume and weight of the objects,
Piaget generalized that our orientation to the world
around us is not given but develops gradually over
time.

Further paving the way for somatics was Danish
philosopher Kirkegaard, who offered a rich exploration
and description of the human inner realm (Hanna,
1970/1985). Kirkegaard was interested in the
historical dialectic between the human and the
environment and suggested that humans are not passive
or empty pawns in the historical drama as they had been
depicted by his contemporary, German philosopher Hegel.
Instead, he suggested, humans possess untold
possibilities for growth and change within themselves
and have the potential to realize these possibilities
to the extent that they learn to free themselves from
the limitations of their environment. Kirkegaard
advocated movement toward self-discovery, which
entailed detachment from an external, social focus;
this kind of "biological introspection" is a
foundational principle of somatics (Hanna, 1970/1985,
Through movement away from the world and into the self, we are able to derive a sense of oneness with the power in which all of being is grounded.

Similarly, German philosopher Nietzsche, Austrian psychoanalyst Freud, and Austrian psychiatrist Reich echoed Kirkegaard's assertion and further contributed to the development of somatics (Hanna, 1970/1985). These philosophers and scientists share the notion that humans are largely dependent on and controlled by the pressures of the external, environmental culture for their most obvious sensory needs and thus are imbalanced. Nietzsche described this situation as one of the under[wo]man, Freud called it repression, and Reich referred to it as character/muscular armoring. Our hyper-focus on the external environment--and the subsequent experience of chronic anxiety over what others may do or say--has caused us to repress the central core of our somatic being (Hanna, 1970/1985).

Other thinkers contributed further to the foundational principles of somatics. By linking humans with the animal kingdom, Darwin was instrumental in demonstrating that the evolutionary process has produced not only various interrelated species of
bodily forms but also various species of bodily behaviors. Any animal species is clearly identifiable not only by its bodily structure but also by its bodily behavior as it responds and adapts to its environment. Humans, as well, are in a process of responding and adapting behaviorally to their environment; because the technologically advanced environment is so radically new to them, humans are rapidly evolving in extraordinary ways. Marx had early insight into this "soma-environment, dialectical process" in his articulation of the conflict—and inevitable adjustment necessary—between a profit-producing actual environment and a scarcity-oriented human economic structure (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 178).

The scientists and philosophers described above were revolutionary in that their concerns and directions of approach radically departed from the dominant intellectual trends of their time. These scientific and philosophical thinkers shared a consistent pattern that emerges from their common voice: that of attempting to foresee, interpret, and describe, from a particular perspective, the human
condition as situated within a contemporary environment (Hanna, 1970/1985).

Due to environmental manipulations, human beings, as a species, are at an unprecedented stage of evolutionary development. Extraordinary technological advances have brought us to a time in species development that is "so explosively novel that it could not be judged with any clarity at all beforehand" (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 8). Through "an enormous expenditure of aggressive energy," the species has succeeded in developing the industry, machinery, and technology to transform the earth into an environment that no longer ignores human existence and needs but that supports them (1970/1985, p. 7). Consequentially, in the technological societies--all of Europe and particularly in the United States--"human bodies are in a state of cultural rebellion," resulting from the necessary process of adaptation to their new environment (1970/1985, p. 7).

As the economic, sociopolitical, and ecological aspects of the environment adjust to the changes, "individuals seem to be giving up the strategy of one-sided manipulation and control of the material world
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and turning within themselves," seeking an evolution of consciousness for the answers (Grof, 1985, p. 27). The unprecedented circumstances of the transformed environment in which we now live are causing the emergence of a novel kind of human being: a "cultural mutant" (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 7). The designation of a somatic perspective is characterized by conceptualizing the human being "as a biological organism which has been a product of evolutionary selection and which is continuing to change, develop and adapt to its environment" (1970/1985, p. 109).

Further advancement toward wholly conceptualizing the human as soma was achieved with the meeting of F. Matthias Alexander, a somatic practitioner and creator of the Alexander Technique, and John Dewey, an American philosopher. By working with Alexander, Dewey was able to change his posture and personally experience the self-control afforded by a somatic technique. Alexander's approach taught Dewey that "not all problems are solved by intellect but some are solved by direct experience of oneself" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 117). Inspired by his experience with the Alexander Technique, Dewey incorporated somatic notions into his
philosophy—specifically, he extolled the benefits of bringing into awareness by means of new sensory information what previously was habitually unconscious.

Somatics is closely aligned with the philosophy of Dewey and his contemporary, William James (Hanna, 1991a)—two American philosophers who considered human adaptability as primary in the development of their pragmatic philosophies (Roth, 1990). Pragmatism is a psychology-based philosophy concerned with how humans process reality, how to solve problems and adapt, "how to clarify and understand one's own somatic functions and, more, how to control and improve them" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 5). Pragmatism constitutes a philosophy of action that does not seek truth; rather, it addresses what works, what functions practically:

To attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what conceivable effects of a practical kind the object may involve, what sensations we are to expect from it, and what reactions we must prepare. (James, 1907/1975, pp. 23-24)

Pragmatic philosophers articulated the philosophical foundations for conceptualizing the human as a system of adaptive and responsive movement. Pragmatism is not just a descriptive philosophy but is also prescriptive; in this sense, pragmatism represents
praxis—the uniting of theory and practice—and is both personally practical and theoretically elegant. Thus, it provided the impetus for a comprehensive somatic philosophy and paved the way for theoretic legitimization of somatic practices (Hanna, 1991a).

The pioneers of somatic practices identified by Mangione (1993) in her exploration of the history of somatics include various body workers and movement educators who began their work around the turn of the 20th century in Europe and the United States. Among such educators were Mensendieck and Kallmeyer, the main proponents of German Gymnastik in Europe, a physical education system designed by several women to foster development of natural movement, coordination, rhythm, and emotional expression. Others who contributed to the development of somatic techniques were European Gymnastik educator Gindler, who cured herself of tuberculosis and developed what was later called Sensory Awareness, and Austrian actor Alexander, who self-treated a chronic voice-loss condition and, in the process, invented the Alexander Technique for spinal alignment.
During the decades of the 1950s and 1960s in the United States, cultural factors and Eastern influences combined to further the evolution of somatics. Many pioneers in the field of somatics were influenced by Eastern philosophies and practices that, in general, derive from a long history of holistic ideologies, rich in beliefs and practices that encourage body-mind unity (Kleinman, 1990). For example, Ayurvedic (life science) practices in Hindu culture conceptualize the human as a unified whole through which pranic (life force) energy flows (Chopra, 1991). Any movements in the body—speaking, thinking, or actual physical movements—are undifferentiated and considered to be the result of pranic energy. Similarly, in Chinese culture, chi energy is understood to align the unified bodymind through energy meridians identified in Chinese medicinal practices such as acupressure and acupuncture. Connections with the East were somewhat readily assimilated in Europe during the early 1900s, but the United States was not so receptive to the Eastern influence until the 1960s. Today, Eastern movement forms such as T'ai Chi Chuan, Aikido, and Yoga are considered to be somatic practices (Hanna, 1976).
The 1960s represented a time of cultural transformation in the United States that "has reoriented the lives of American citizens along very different pathways, and the effects of this reorientation are gradually radiating outward into the rest of the world" (Hanna, 1984, p. 4). The decade of the 1960s was characterized by an increased interest in Eastern philosophies and practices; the development of the "Human Potential Movement," with its encounter groups, psychological therapies and emphasis on personal growth; and the social (hippie) revolution. These influences combined to create continuing favorable conditions for the development of somatics (Mangione, 1993). In 1962, the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, was founded by Murphy and Price as an experimental educational center "to explore work in the humanities and sciences that promotes human values and potentials" ("Esalen Catalog," 1994, p. 1). Many somaticists, such as Bainbridge-Cohen, Criswell, Grof, Hanna, Hunt, Johnson, Reich, Roth, and Rolf, have shared and developed their techniques through seminars, conferences, and research at the Esalen Institute.
The somatic reorientation of the 1960s extended through the following decades and continues to gain momentum. Somatics emerged as an academic field in its own right during the 1970s. In 1975, Hanna and Criswell-Hanna established the Novato Institute for Somatic Research and Training in Novato, California. In 1976, the Novato Institute published the first issue of *Somatics: Magazine-Journal of the Bodily Arts and Sciences*, which today has more than 2000 subscribers. In 1989, French psychiatrist Meyer founded the French journal, *Somatotherapie*, to review the theoretical and practical work contributing to this rapidly growing area of study in Europe. Currently, somatics is a recognized program of study at two graduate-degree-granting institutions in the United States: Ohio State University in Columbus and the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco (Kleinman, 1994). In the autumn of 1995, the sixth International Somatics Congress, with a theme of "The Living Body," will be held in the United States.

In addition to the growing field of somatics with its holistic worldview, the dominant Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm is the subject of significant
challenges in several established fields such as psychology, anthropology, physics, and medicine. The field of psychology, for example, has met with "an avalanche of [contesting] data" from the practice of Jungian analysis and the new experimental psychotherapies, the study of death and near-death phenomena (thanatology), psychedelic research, and modern parapsychology studies (Grof, 1985, p. 25). Within the field of anthropology are recorded observations of mystic experiences of alternate realities, including first-hand experiences of "visionary anthropologists" (Grof, 1985, p. 25).

Further, with the advent of quantum mechanics, the field of physics suggests a scientific model of the universe in sharp contrast with that of the accepted mechanistic, materialistic worldview characteristic of classical Newtonian physics in which the predominant paradigm and its accompanying ideology find their roots (Grof, 1985; Chopra, 1990). In addition, the field of medicine is undergoing revolutionary changes as a result of mounting research that demands a holistic conceptualization of the body and that no longer denies the interconnection of mind and body (Chopra, 1990).
In response, some medical schools, such as those at Columbia University, Michigan State University, and Ohio State University, are turning to a bio-psycho-social framework for understanding disease and treatment.

In summary, somatics—a vastly multi-disciplinary field—has its origins in varied areas. The roots of somatics can be traced to turn-of-the-century philosophers and scientists as well as to influences of the cultural revolution in the United States during the 1960s. These influences included modern dance, Eastern practices, humanistic psychology, movement education, and the human potentials movement. Somatics developed in response to dualism, the conceptual separation of body and mind, which represents the dominant ideology of the United States. The field of somatics was formally established in 1970 by philosopher Hanna. Since then, the field has grown to become an established area of university study and an increasingly recognized influence in various fields such as medicine, psychology, physical education, and communication.
Assumptions of Somatics

Hanna describes somatics as "not a new intellectual understanding but a new view, a new attitude, a new Gestalt" (1970/1985, p. 33). The perceptual shift that constitutes the new worldview of somatics is characterized by wholeness, sensual authority, interdependence, and present-moment awareness. This contrasts sharply with the individualistic ideology derived from Cartesian body/mind dualism, over-reliance on the intellect, and the linear time orientations of mechanistic Newtonian physics.

A somatic perspective is grounded in philosophical and conceptual assumptions that provide a framework that can be said to constitute a new paradigm. Like other paradigms (Kuhn, 1962), somatics represents a constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques that are shared by members of a community. Because somatics is a relatively new and emerging community with varied vocabularies, methods, and approaches, there exists no single documented source categorizing specific somatic principles. The following are interconnected assumptions that I have identified and organized into
thematic categories. I believe the following assumptions accurately characterize somatics and are shared generally by members of the somatic community.

Described below are twenty assumptions that comprise a general theory of somatics. They include: the human being is a soma; the human being is individuated, adaptive process; first-person perception is privileged; phylogenetic knowing is privileged; sarcal consciousness provides powerful guidance; perseverance prevents sarcality; interstice counters perseveration; awareness is unique to somas; to be actively aware is to function with intent; perception determines reality; perception shows us not reality but ourselves; reality is changed by changing self; with each thought, a new reality is created; existence is holistic; we are simultaneously individual and interconnected; space and time are simultaneous; mind is a function; energy creates matter; all life forms are interconnected; and we are multidimensional beings of subtle energy.

The Human Being is a Soma

The human is understood in its wholeness as an embodied living organism—a soma rather than a body:
"'Soma' does not mean 'body,' it means 'Me, the bodily being'" (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 35). Whereas the body is a thing, a noun and object, soma is process:

Soma is living; it is expanding and contracting, accommodating and assimilating, drawing in energy and expelling energy. Soma is pulsing, flowing, squeezing and relaxing--flowing and alternating with fear and anger, hunger and sensuality. . . . Somas are unique things which are yearning, hoping, suffering, tensing, paling, cringing, doubting, despairing. . . . Somas are the kind of living, organic being which you are at this moment, in this place where you are. (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 35)

The soma is "a body perceived from within" and refers to "the rich and constantly flowing array of sensings and actions that are occurring within the experience of each of us" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 131). Says Hanna (1991a), "when I use the word soma, I mean my ongoing experience (including all physiological activities), which is the experience of doing and noticing just as much as it is of feeling and recognizing" (p. 105).

Soma means there is no distinction between body and mind. Instead, body and mind are understood as an inseparable continuum of matter and consciousness. The term bodymind refers to this undifferentiated state in which the human is understood "not just to know, but to
do" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 113). Therefore, "any and all experiences affect the entire soma. To each bite of experience the soma responds in toto sensorily and motorically . . . " (Hanna, 1991a, p. 29). Knowledge and action constitute an inseparable, circular mode of being deriving from the "sensory-motor loop" that characterizes human embodied existence (1991a, p. 6). Thus, within the holistic framework of somatics, to improve function of the body means to improve function of the mind (Feldenkrais, 1972/1977).

A somatic perspective identifies the soma, the living embodied self, as the starting point for theoretic inquiry and applied methods. In doing so, a vast array of previously unrecognized phenomena become evident because "the somatic viewpoint offers insights and possibilities that are categorically not possible from the bodily viewpoint that is the established perspective . . . " (Hanna, 1991a, p. 131).

The Human Being is Individuated, Adaptive Process

The human being, as soma, is the "systemic unity of a process" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 29). In such an individuated process, "all parts move and function in synergy with all other parts" (1991a, p. 85). We are
not hard-wired like a computer; rather, every thought and experience in life virtually change our anatomy. Recent technological developments, such as positron-emission tomography (PET), make possible the photographing of the molecular tracks of sensations and observation of the fluid, syntropic, and integrated nature of the bodymind (Chopra, 1990). Regardless of situation or circumstance, the soma is constantly in motion. In all of its conscious and unconscious functions—including thought and speech—"the human is an entire and unified system of movements" in concert with all other moving patterns (Hanna, 1991a, p. 13).

Further, human existence is characterized by a process of adaptation. As humans, we experience our full physiological process and are constantly regulating it: "the entire organism is in constant adaptation, functioning as a single system" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 85). Although little of the regulatory process is subject to our awareness or deliberation, this ongoing adaptational process "is the very nature of somatic individuation—its principle of operation" (1991a, p. 85).
First-Person Perception is Privileged

Somatics is "a field which studies the *soma*: namely, the body as perceived from within by first-person perception" (Hanna, 1986, p. 4). First-person perception refers to the subjective stance of perceiving oneself from the "inside out," focusing awareness on inner feelings, sensations, intentions, and internal functioning. By focusing inside, we increase our ability for proprioception--awareness of the myriad stimuli produced within an organism. When this kind of internal awareness is honed, a multiplex of constant impulses, sensations, and adaptive functioning is available to us. Some proprioceptively attuned somaticists, for example, are able to sense the internal functioning of each organ as well as to discern subtle shifts in energy patterns.

A third-person perspective, in contrast, refers to looking objectively from the outside in (Hanna, 1988). Data acquired from first-person perception are very different from data derived from a third-person point of view, and although both first-person and third-person perspectives are useful and legitimate, within a
When a human being is observed from the outside--i.e., from a third-person viewpoint--the phenomenon of a human body is perceived. But, when the same human being is observed from the first-person viewpoint of [her] his own proprioceptive senses, a categorically different phenomenon is perceived; the human soma. . . . The proprioceptive centers communicate and continually feedback a rich display of somatic information which is immediately self-observed as a process that is both unified and ongoing. (Hanna, 1988, pp. 4-5)

From a third-person viewpoint, the human body is an objective entity that may be observed, measured, and analyzed similar to any other object. First-person perception, however, "tends to synthesize the soma, uniting it into an experience of its vulnerability and potentiality. This perception is the correct version in that it reflects the living dynamism of the soma" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 106). The inner workings of somatic dynamism are invisible from the third-person perspective of viewing an objectified body.

Chopra's (1994) descriptions of present-moment awareness and time-bound awareness are reminiscent of Hanna's categories of first-person and third-person perception. Chopra (1994) describes time-bound awareness as fear-based awareness characterized by the
protective demeanor of the intellect in which we choose expressions in anticipation of other people's responses. Present-moment awareness, in contrast, is characterized by trust, spontaneity of feeling, and freedom to be one's self—suggestive of first-person perception. In order to facilitate present-moment awareness, Chopra (1994) advocates an internally focused perceptual approach called silent witnessing that entails "an alert appreciation" of what goes on inside oneself (side 2).

Phylogenetic Knowing is Privileged

By focusing inside the self, we are able to recover our sensual authority, the realm of phylogenetic knowing. Phylogenetic knowing refers to knowledge that accompanies us at birth—knowledge at an organismic level that is the source of profound intelligence (Hanna, 1970/1985) and that is acquired in the course of species development. It includes "the myriad sensory-motor programs that have evolved throughout the mammalian, vertebrate lineage back to the earliest life forms" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 131). Reflexive, autonomic, and involuntary in nature, they are the ancient biological "processes upon which
somatic life depends" (1991a, p. 131). For example, babies are born already knowing how to perform the complex task of nourishing themselves. They do not have to be taught how to form their mouths, how to suck, and how to swallow while breathing without choking. Nor do they have to learn the infinitely complex processes of digestion, assimilation, and elimination. In many ways, then, evidence of phylogenetic intelligence is constantly demonstrated.

Ontogenetic knowing--knowledge that is acquired after birth, learned adaptation, or voluntary action--is also important. Ontogenetic knowing, however, is grounded in phylogenetic knowing. Thus, phylogenetic knowing is more foundational because our "conscious, voluntary experience arises out of and totally depends upon our unconscious, involuntary layer of experience" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 132). Over-reliance on ontogenetic knowing has led to the formation of a culture of alienation that denies the innate wisdom of the body and strips humans of their sensual authority (Johnson, 1983). Somatic practices are designed to facilitate each soma's inner ability to re-access phylogenetic knowing--to reconnect with sensuous knowledge and bring
it into the ontogenetic realm of consciousness so that we also may use that knowledge as our guide.

**Sarcal Consciousness Provides Powerful Guidance**

Within the phylogenetic domain lies the realm of sarcality, "a desire for a certain ease and comfort" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 55). Sarcality constitutes a form of consciousness, a way of knowing, that is our primary orientation to the world. Sarcality, the "fleshy" sphere of consciousness, "is a feeling," a soothing sensation evocative of peace, abundance and contentment that is remembered from the womb time of cellular communion when all needs were freely met (Hanna, 1991a, p. 56). Our first experiences after birth, then, were "feelings and emotions that we have while in a totally sarcal consciousness" (1991a, p. 55). Because we gradually wean ourselves away from sarcal consciousness, "whether sought directly or indirectly, the original sarcal peace is the constant goal of human striving" (1991a, p. 55). Sarcal consciousness "is like a genetically ordained resting state of experiential inwardness--as fundamental a cyclical touchstone as sleep"--a state whose experiential domain is immense (1991a, p. 25).
Because of its somatic primacy, sarcal consciousness provides an omnipresent indicator for successful adaptation in our daily lives. Every perception and experience is evaluated in terms of comfort or discomfort; these are the two primary sensations that the body registers. When we are aware of these two sensations, they provide a profound source of guidance and direction in daily life (Chopra, 1994); they constitute, in effect, "a basal sarcal weighing" of experience (Hanna, 1991a, p. 56).

**Perseveration Prevents Sarcality**

What sometimes prevents our experience of the free-flowing state of expansion and effortlessness is perseveration, an imbalanced condition of stuckness or rigidity that results from the repetition of certain behaviors or thought patterns that become involuntary, habitual, and unconscious. The soma is meant to live in constant adaptive flux; perseveration prevents such adaptation. "The evil to human life--and all living creatures--is the pollution of their normal process of growth and regeneration," suggests Hanna; "In humans, this means whatever reduces or aberates our experience of movement toward freedom" (1991a, p. 89).
Whenever we meet with restriction, whether internally or externally imposed, we suffer dis-ease. This may manifest as fatigue, mood change, muscle tension, or debilitating illness:

I contend that rigidity, whether physical or mental, i.e. the adherence to a principle to the utter exclusion of its opposite, is contrary to the laws of life. For rigidity in [wo]man cannot be obtained without suppressing some activity for which [s]he has the capacity. Thus, continuous and unreserved adherence to any principle, good or bad, means suppressing some function continuously. This suppression cannot be practiced with impunity for any length of time. (Feldenkrais, 1973, p. 13)

The soma may become imbalanced and engage in patterned holding, contraction, and inhibition due to certain experiences, such as birth trauma, unhealthy diet, emotional distress, spiritual crises, or physical ailments. The process of acculturation is also recognized as having significant detrimental effects on the soma (Hanna, 1970/1985; Feldenkrais, 1949/1970; Reich, 1970). Johnson (1983), for example, articulates the need for experiential, bodily authority that emerges from inner awareness to facilitate freedom from culturally dictated body models and socially habitualized movement patterns.
Interstice Counters Perseveration

Founded on the premise that human somas embody freedom of movement in thought and action, somatic techniques and practices are designed to counter the patterned rigidity of perseveration and to facilitate optimal openness to adaptive change. They are concerned with "how one can live with the greatest amount of growth and expansion and the least amount of entropy in one's activities in one's somatic function, one's material world and one's personal/social world" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 90).

An organizing principle of somatic practices is that of interstice: by experientially interrupting a habitual pattern, what was habitually unconscious, patterned, and rigid may be made conscious by means of the new sensory information gained by the interruption (Hanna, 1991a). For example, some somatic techniques are designed to purposefully slow our enactment of a particular function so we may develop the ability to sense from the inside the various nuances of a habitual movement and enrich awareness of what we are doing. Other somatic techniques are directed toward expanding our movement repertoire by moving in unfamiliar ways in
order to interrupt habitual patterns and introduce new movement forms. Through integrative methods and practices, somaticists interrupt patterns and introduce change:

Through our awareness and conscious attention to sensory information from local and global aspects of our body we can start appropriating and reorganizing the organismic processes that make up our body-mind states. Having specific points of attention helps activate and create sensory-motor connections that bring more satisfactory interactions with ourselves, others and the physical environment. (Gomez, 1988, p. 25)

By releasing patterned behaviors, we may experience full somatic aliveness, which means having free access to human multidimensionality. In a balanced state, the soma "is in full possession of and [has] access to its whole being" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 25).

Awareness is Unique to Somas

The soma is "a ceaselessly moving system of awareness," and only a system of awareness has the capacity to experience (Hanna, 1991b, p. 114). The ability to be aware—to bring sensation, thought, or raw stimuli into consciousness—demonstrates a unity of knowing and doing (Kleinman, 1986) that is unique to somas. Awareness, in this sense, refers to the capacity for simultaneous sensing and acting: "a
system that simultaneously receives the world into itself and moves itself into the world" (Hanna, 1991b, p. 136). Even plants, as somas, have the capacity to sense water, for example, and to move their roots toward it.

Human somas have the sensory-motor apparatus to focus on anything; our awareness is mobile. In particular, "the human soma has a voluntary control that is so extensive that it can learn from its experience. It can learn to control its own sensory-motor apparatus in any manner whatsoever" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 43). Yet, the human soma's awareness is "limited to the point of view of that pattern to which it has darted" (1991a, p. 45). Awareness is intrinsically selective and nondiffused.

**To be Actively Aware is to Function With Intent**

Because of our unique sensory-motor capacities, human awareness is subject to the voluntary control of intent. Humans have the capacity to inhibit specific motor areas, which leaves other selected areas free to focus on areas of uninhibited sensory input (Hanna, 1991a). Humans purposefully can focus awareness on the muscles of the lower back, for example, or isolate
attention to the process of breathing or to the words printed on a page. Further, humans have the capacity to focus awareness on themselves and to learn, grow, and change. To function with focused, active awareness is to function with intent.

The human capacity for focused awareness or intention constitutes enormous untapped potential. Intention refers to the human capacity to will—to form a desire or goal consciously and to pursue it steadfastly (Hanna, 1991a). The human constitutes an ongoing process of intentions: thoughts, actions, ideas, desires, feelings, goals, and beliefs constantly emanate from the soma. The soma propels itself forward in the world by the energy of its own intent (1991a). Because the dominant paradigm privileges third-person consciousness with its external focus, most of us are unaware of the potency of our own intent. First-person consciousness is the domain of intent. In affirming the priority of first-person experience, we can actualize the immense power of our own volition.

Through first-person consciousness, we may develop awareness of our own process of awareness, in a way becoming intentional about intent. By honing awareness
of internal processes, what once was passive becomes active; we may expand our capacity for awareness and bring into consciousness what was previously "unknown" by us about ourselves. Hanna (1991a) calls this "the function of self-appraisal of our somatic process" (p. 77). Reclaiming this function is important because "the attitude of self-appraisal constitutes the reality of the human soma" (1991a, p. 77); an individual's "awareness creates, controls, and turns into their body" and constitutes reality (Chopra, 1990, p. 238). Thus, reality is situated within the human; the world is located in the inner realm of human perception that is full, alive, and abounding with infinite possibilities (Hanna, 1970/1985).

Perception Determines Reality

Somatics consists of a particular ontology and epistemology of wholeness that evades the common perception and runs counter to traditionally accepted conceptualizations of human and reality: "Most of us accept reality as a given, as a collection of impersonal forces out there, when in fact reality is highly personal" (Chopra, 1994). Within a somatic perspective, the human is no longer the introspective
observer of an externally given reality; reality is internal. Stated simply, the human is no longer the actor on the stage of life; rather, the stage is moved to the inner realm of human awareness. Reality is constituted by the inner workings of each individual soma.

Philosopher Bode (1940) utilizes physics-based field theory to illustrate how reality consists of individual perception. Field theory describes how each atom is located within a field and how each atom's field overlaps with other fields. Thus, the field—not the individual atom—is regarded as the unit of action. Bode draws a parallel between the conceptualization of atoms in field theory and an understanding of human behavior. He describes how, as humans, we act within an interconnected matrix, a field. We don't perceive things and then respond to them; we perceive things in terms of our responses to them. Within this perspective, there is no external environment that the mindful human observer perceives and cognitively interprets. Perception is determined by individual observers; whatever we perceive constitutes reality, and that reality changes. Thus, "truth" is a set of
multiple perspectives dependent upon where each person is positioned.

The human soma is the biological body of function by which and through which awareness and environment are mediated. In other words, what is experienced in the environment is mediated by awareness, and awareness is dependent upon the way we perceive. The function of the soma lies in constantly relating the soma to its environment through perception. Within this worldview, consciousness is perception, and perception is consciousness: "No two people perceive the world in exactly the same way. No two people elicit the same situations from the teeming infinity of energy that shapes reality"; we all construct our own unique versions of what is real (Chopra, 1994).

What we perceive as "reality" depends upon our individual perceptual constitution of the world. Perceptual "awareness not only creates reality, it is free to experience any reality it chooses. That is why anything is possible" (Hanna, 1991b, p. 158). Because humans possess the capacity for awareness, we have the potential to manifest infinite possibility: "If [y]ou have absolute faith in what [y]ou intend and expect, it
really becomes the case--it becomes absolutely and predictably real" (1991b, p. 142).

**Perception Shows Us Not Reality but Ourselves**

Reality is located within the realm of perceptual experience. Perception is our only contact with the world—the only means whereby we may apprehend reality. Reality is constituted by what we perceptually take "inside" from the world, and what remains "outside" in the world is also not reality but ourselves. Our sensory-motor perceptual configuration determines our reality. In essence, reality is defined by our participation in it because "nothing in the relative world exists outside experience" (Chopra, 1990, p. 247). Therefore, when something in the world appears to have changed, the experiencer is the one who has changed.

For example, I enjoyed eating Powerbars until I found a worm in one, and now I dislike the taste of Powerbars. The bars themselves have not changed—they obviously consist of the same ingredients—but my perceptual orientation has been reconfigured. Thus, to change my perceptual configuration is to change my reality: "What humans really are--and what the world
really is--has never been anything other than a belief that has its roots solely in individual experience" (Hanna, 1991b, p. 142). As humans, we limit ourselves by our tendency to "create scenarios and then become convinced by them, down to our very cells" (Chopra, 1990, p. 203).

Reality is Changed by Changing Self

We possess untold possibilities for growth and change. The potential to realize these possibilities exists to the extent that we learn to free ourselves from our limitations. This entails movement toward self-discovery and detachment from an external, social focus. Only by focusing inside are we able to ascertain what is real or to affect meaningful change. This kind of "biological introspection" is a foundational principle of somatics (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 162).

Within an ontological framework where reality is constituted by the inner workings of each individual soma, the act of purposefully changing reality is accomplished by changing the self. The human is the arranger, the experiencer, the overseer, the constant factor in every experience; humans give every minute
particle of sense data its meaning (Chopra, 1994). How we make meaning of ourselves, our self-awareness, is especially powerful because "the attitude of self-appraisal constitutes the reality of the human soma" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 77). Thus, to affect a change within the self—the experiencer, the meaning-giver—is to change reality. In fact, when an internal situation is not brought into consciousness, it inevitably plays out in our external world: "when the individual . . . does not become conscious of [her] his inner contradictions, the world must perforce act out the conflict and be torn into opposite halves" (Jung, 1969, pp. 70-71).

Experience is the vehicle for change. We "metabolize" every detail of experience and transform it into our body and into our reality in an ongoing, continual process to the extent that we literally, physically recreate ourselves—our brains and our bodies—with every single thought and minute sensation (Chopra, 1990). We "turn our distress into ourselves just as we turn our food into ourselves" (Chopra, 1994, side 6).
With Each Thought, a New Reality is Created

Changing the self not only causes a reconfiguration of personal reality, but it results in a changed reality in the environment in general due to the holistic interconnectedness of all of existence. Thus, the environing world evolves along with and in response to the soma. Anything is possible in a somatic future where somas are guided by the axiom of "mutational perception and mutational behavior" (1970/1985, p. 214). Which future potentiality will actualize is determined by us. In short: "We are actualizing the universe" (Zukav, 1979, p. 79).

Grounded in our own experience, we come to realize that "we are the center of all things"; we are the center of the world from which all significant change emanates (Hanna, 1991a). Our experience is the means whereby reality becomes real: "It is a subjective status that causes objective reality to present a different face" (Chopra, 1994, side 3). Humans grow and change through experience. The process of change functions from the inside out; it "begins inside and is then mirrored outside" (1994, side 3).
Every time we think a thought, experience a feeling, allow a sensation to come into our realm of awareness, or call something to our attention, we are mobilizing energy. In short, "energy follows thought" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 150). The human is like a light that radiates thought forms throughout a unified energy field:

As you sit in your chair, every thought you are thinking creates a wave in the unified field. It ripples through all the layers of ego, intellect, mind, senses, and matter, spreading out in wider and wider circles. . . . As they radiate, your thoughts have an effect on everything in nature. (Chopra, 1990, p. 217)

When they come into being, our thoughts and emotions have no solid existence in the material world; we initiate thoughts and emotions that then are translated into matter. Thus, humans are responsible for creating matter out of nonmatter: "A thought of fear and the neuro-chemical that it turns into are somehow connected in a hidden process, a transformation of nonmatter into matter" (Chopra, 1990, p. 95).

Ultimately, "our transient thoughts and emotions have 'lasting' effects on our physical bodies" and beyond (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 45). In fact, our memories and psychological tendencies "are more permanent than the
cells" they affect (Chopra, 1990, p. 125) because they are the determining factor; "whatsoever you think, you are" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 35).

Once initiated, there is no turning back this process; a thought cannot be changed after it has been brought into existence, nor can a thought (nonmaterial) be extracted from the molecular neuro-chemical (material) process that it initiates. The process of transforming nonmatter to matter is irreversible: "The thought is the molecule; the molecule is the thought" (Chopra, 1990, p. 81). Our thoughts, words, and actions "go and function on their own and evoke various responses; creative, destructive, beneficial or harmful" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 704). Our inability to control the consequences of our thoughts and emotions demands responsibility for what we think and feel.

Within the interconnected web of existence, every time we make a decision, initiate an action, or experience a sensation, reality is reconfigured and a new world emerges. Categorically different somatic experiences cause a reorganization of the senses and thereby alter the total ordering of the universe:

specifically different aspects and areas of somatic expression into the environment are at the
same time different realities, different "states of consciousness." As the specific energies of different drives toward or away from environmental situations take place, specifically different real relationships with the world take place. (Hanna, 1992, p. 7)

This notion of multiple realities is reminiscent of the many worlds interpretation in quantum mechanics. Within this interpretation, multiple universes are created by our awareness. The universe exists as potential where nothing is determined until we actualize a possibility. At that moment, one possibility actualizes and the other possibilities continue in different but inaccessible versions: "whenever a choice is made in the universe between one possible event and another, the universe splits into different branches" (Zukav, 1979, p. 301). Each branch "contains different editions of the same actors performing different acts at the same time on different stages" located in the same place (1979, p. 303). Thus, "when something is no longer present to awareness, its distinctive pattern of process continues within the interlocking patterns in which it originated" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 46).
Existence is Holistic

The perspective of somatics is holistic—not isolationist—in that it recognizes varied human processes and functions and conceptualizes them as inseparable and interconnected. The perspective legitimizes the simultaneity of our capacity for awareness, our functioning as biological entities, and our relationship with our environment. Further, what are typically understood as "internal" processes—human awareness and biological function—are conceptualized as synergistically merged with what is typically understood as an "external" environment. Internal and external constitute one singular whole process; the embodied human is the site and location of this synergistic merger.

As the site of the synergistic inter-relational process of awareness, biological function, and environment, the human is conceptualized as potentiality. The concept of synergy refers to the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. In the instance of human synergy, the parts consist of our physical, emotional, and mental capacities. For instance, each of us has a body, and we are more than a
physical body; each of has an emotional life, and we are more than our emotions; each of us has an intellect, and we are more than our intellect (Assagioli, 1976, p. 116-117). The "more," the potential, refers to a "center of pure self-consciousness" in each of us that permeates our multidimensions and is "a permanent factor in the ever-varying flow" of our life experiences (Yeomans, 1991, p. 16). This center of self-consciousness gives us "a sense of being, of permanence, of inner balance" and serves as the Energy^1-essence of the self (1991, p. 16). This larger transpersonal dimension of human experience relates to the synergistic nature of human existence.

The transpersonal realm delineates the arena of experience in which "consciousness has expanded beyond the ego boundaries" (Grof, 1985, p. 41). Similarly, Chopra (1990) refers to an "unbounded state" of cosmic

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^1 The term Energy, with a capital E, will be used to refer to the meta-agent dimension of human existence, the synergistic overseer aspect that regulates and gives continuity to our divergent life experiences. This Energy dimension is referred to by various names, including animating principle, life force, creative intelligence, unity consciousness, mystical union, cosmic void, energy source, spirit, or soul.
consciousness that houses the "flow of intelligence" (pp. 218-19). The "flow" is such that Energy is simultaneously immanent in the body and transcendent (Dewey, 1886/1969, p. 114). Energy "is simultaneously monitoring the sum state of its own somatic process as it monitors the traffic of the world. It instantly knows what it can and cannot do, somatically" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 95).

In our daily lives, for example, we are constantly in a process of attending to particular impulses while ignoring others. We "know" what to attend to and what to let pass outside our realm of awareness because we are engaged in a "self-developing activity . . . dependent upon an occasioning impulse beyond it" (Dewey, 1886/1969, p. 106). The "impulse beyond" is Energy that is immanent in the body adjusting its various activities to an end, a process that proceeds with or without our volition and can be enhanced with awareness. Somatics is concerned with "the bodying forth" of Energy in which the human is understood as the site and location of Energy convergence (Dewey, 1886/1969, p. 114). The result is an alternative
somatic ontology that conceptualizes human existence as wholly integrated.

The soma is the site and location of the synergistic confluence of awareness, biological function, and environment; thus, somatic reality constitutes the merger of internal and external realms into a single processual unity. Within first-person consciousness, reality is located in the human inner realm while remaining simultaneously connected with the external realm to the extent that the internal/external realms collapse into one: "It is not that the soma, as a sensory-motor process, is in constant inter-relation with its world--the soma is its world" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 91).

The fact that "there is no clear dividing line between ourselves and the reality we observe to exist outside ourselves" is evident in the quantum mechanics uncertainty principle, sometimes called the Heisenberg principle (Grof, 1985, p. 58). It states simply that "we cannot observe reality without changing it" (Zukav, 1979, p. 112). The internal realm is not separate or distinct from the external realm. Internal and external are understood as merged and inseparable;
their point of confluence is the human soma. Put simply, "the external universe is our extended body" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 49). Thus, for example, the war in Bosnia is actually a reflection of what is going on inside each of us. Reality is a single, fundamental unity constituted by the internal/external simultaneity of its somatic occurrence.

We are Simultaneously Individual and Interconnected

The dual nature of physical matter, the capacity to be at once discrete and interconnected, is illustrated in the findings from research on the nature of physical matter. We now know that solid matter is an illusion; instead, atoms and subatomic particles are shown to consist of vast empty space (Zukav, 1979). Einstein demonstrated that mass is not related to substance but is a form of energy in that energy and matter are transferable to each other: Energy is matter, and matter is energy.

Research on subatomic particles also shows that, depending on the arrangement of the experimental situation, phenomena appear sometimes as particles and sometimes as waves, even though particles and waves are determined to be mutually exclusive. Particles are
self-contained and isolated, confined to a small or finite volume of space, whereas waves are diffuse, interconnected, and spread over vast regions of space. Light, gravity waves, and matter in general show these same dualistic tendencies.

The capacity of "the same phenomenon to manifest itself as particles or as waves obviously involves a violation of Aristotelian logic" (Grof, 1985, p. 54). Reconciling this seeming contradiction between particle and wave manifestations in quantum physics resulted in two significant findings. First was the realization that matter does not exist with certainty at definite places but rather shows "tendencies to exist," and atomic events do not occur with certainty but rather show "tendencies to occur" (Grof, 1985, p. 55). Second was the formulation of Bohr's complementarity principle, which states the tendencies mentioned above are the result of the interaction between object and observer (Zukav, 1979). In other words, the discrepancy between particle and wave--two aspects of reality that are understood as mutually exclusive--results from an uncontrollable interaction between the
object of observation and the observer. Observer and object are inseparable.

From the perspective of these principles of quantum mechanics, humans, comprised of matter, can be understood to behave like matter. Although seemingly discrete individual "particle" units, we are simultaneously interconnected "wave" potentialities united by an influential field of energy.

Space and Time are Simultaneous

Time always involves movement and is inseparable from space, which is always moving (Hanna, 1991b). In other words, "space is not three-dimensional and time is not linear; neither of them is a separate entity" (Grof, 1985, p. 53). Einstein's relativity theory describes time and space as intrinsically interwoven into a four-dimensional continuum called space-time (Zukav, 1979). Within this framework, time does not flow or move at all; "everything that now seems to unfold before us with the passing of time, already exists in toto. . . " (1979, p. 150). Perception of time depends upon the position of the observers and the speed at which they are moving with regard to an observed event. In fact, "not only are all
measurements involving space and time relative, but the entire structure of space-time depends on the distribution of matter . . . " (Grof, 1985, p. 53).

As living embodied selves, we are always already immersed in an interconnected environment, and we are always ready for action. Expectancy "is part and parcel of the soma's constant momentum" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 41). Thus, whenever we act, we are never merely responding to a stimulus. Rather, we are constantly, impulsively attending and selecting to what we respond while inhibiting other responses. There is no stimulus-response separation; they are simultaneous. Stimulus and response are collapsed into one, and living beings maintain themselves by coordinations of "moving equilibrium which is constantly being reshaped with reference to an end" (Bode, 1940, p.228). We move in the world from the inside out as part of a continuous flux. Everything is together at once, and everything is connected with everything else in full somatic immediacy.

**Mind is a Function**

The mind is not a thing or a location; mind is understood as function that "does not live 'in the"
body. It lives in sensory experience of a world in which and through which it makes its way" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 95). Thus, the mind is not located in the head--mind is adaptation, intention, and effort toward the future and no longer is considered to be the cerebral cortex that receives a stimulus and elicits a response. For example, if my attention is focused on experiencing a pain in my little toe, somatically speaking, my "mind" is in my little toe: "Billions of life experiences enter us every day and those immaterial impulses called thoughts freely mix with molecules of air, food, flesh, and blood to result in the body" (Chopra, 1994, side 6). This "amalgam" does not hold still but is "constantly shifting to become something new, transformed by yet another thought, yet another molecule" (1994, side 6).

In European-American culture, the human brain--the site of the intellect--is typically believed to operate as the center of human functioning. The privileging of the cerebral cortex has vast cultural implications and is indicated in the structure of the English language. If we want to bestow an honor, for example, we appoint someone to be the head of an organization because
symbolically, the brain signifies the control center. Within this view, neurons fire in the cerebral cortex, an impulse originates in the brain and travels down the spinal cord via the central nervous system, "rather like a complicated telephone system connecting the brain to all the organs" (Chopra, 1990, p. 67). In contrast, within a somatic perspective, "the mind is in every cell; no part has superiority, not brain, nor penis, nor vagina, nor heart. Power is dispersed" (Johnson, 1983, p. 167).

The notion of the intelligent cell was given empirical credence with the discovery of monocytes, receptors for neuro-transmitters and neuro-peptides that exist on cells of the immune system. The discovery of monocytes and their functions changed the brain-body hierarchy to a more accurate, holistic understanding of "the intelligent cell" in which intelligence is freely circulated "throughout the body's entire inner space" (Chopra, 1990, p. 67). In this new conceptualization, every cell has feelings, aptitude, and desires; "every cell in the body has a wide latitude for action--it is a conscious being who understands the world around it" (1990, p. 74).
Energy Creates Matter

The activities of intelligent cells are directed by omnipresent Energy. The brain does not create Energy, as is often assumed. Instead, Energy creates matter, and human intent has the capacity to transform Energy into physical manifestation (Chopra, 1990; Grof, 1985). However, "[Energy] is immanent in the body only because, and in so far as, it has realized itself in the body" (1886/1969, p. 112). Thus, focused awareness facilitates the manifestation of Energy.

Further, not only do we embody Energy but, in turn, the body is the stimulus to Energy; Energy uses the body as a material out of which to build its own structure (Dewey, 1886/1969). As such, "humans are not so much sprouts of [Energy] as they are '[Energy] sprouting'" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 50). Classical theology proclaims that we are physical beings who, by utilizing free will, may choose to realign with God-consciousness. Within a somatic perspective, we are Energy beings who create physical matter (Chopra, 1990): "God-consciousness has evolved to a par with self-consciousness" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 47).
All Life Forms are Interconnected

Human beings cannot be reduced to isolated entities but must be understood as part of a mutually interrelated web, a unified Energy field. None of the constituents of this network is discrete or fundamental in that each component reflects the properties of the other parts. In essence, embodied selves have no meaning as isolated entities and must be understood as interconnections and potential interconnections. All life forms are interconnected in a symbiotic relationship:

the actual human somas and the actual environment [are] in constant adaptive interchange—[wo]man adapting to the exigencies of [her] his environment and [wo]man forcing the environment to adapt to the exigencies of [her] his own somatic being. (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 212)

The potentiality of interconnectedness is situated within the embodied self. By shifting awareness away from the external world and into the self, we are able to derive a sense of oneness with the power in which all of life is grounded: "a simultaneous recognition of [wo]man, [her] his body and the ultimate reality of all existence as, essentially, one" (Hanna, 1970/1985, p. 162). Each of us is a strand in an interconnected web; touch one strand, and the entire web reverberates.
Thus, a "social" concern—an interest in the interrelationship among self and others—is implicit.

The quantum mechanics principle called Bell's Theorem further substantiates the somatics notion of interconnectedness. Bell's theorem—named after physicist John Bell, who devised it in 1964—states that the reality of the universe is nonlocal; all objects and events in the cosmos are interconnected with one another and respond to one another's changes. Thus, there are no such things as discrete entities. Rather, "the 'separate parts' of the universe are connected in an intimate and immediate way" that suggests an instantaneous quantum connectedness similar to the enlightened experience of unity (Zukav, 1979, p. 282). Bell's theorem and related research in quantum mechanics, such as the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen thought experiment, suggest the necessity of "superliminal [faster than the speed of light] communication" that constitutes the immediate transfer of information among separated events, such as in instances of telepathy and other psychic phenomena (Zukav, 1979, p. 294).
We are Multidimensional Beings of Subtle Energy

Recent research in the field of vibrational medicine applies the quantum-physics principles of the Einsteinian paradigm to medicine. Within this perspective, somas are multidimensional beings of subtle energies that vibrate at varying frequencies beyond light velocity. In his work on vibrational medicine, Gerber (1988) describes four differing vibratory frequencies, called subtle bodies: the physical/etheric body, the astral body, the mental body, and the causal body. The physical/etheric body refers to the physical dimension of the body including the bio-chemical-electrical functioning of organs, tissues, bones and muscles. Surrounding the physical/etheric body is an invisible energy field, called the etheric body, that acts as an energy blueprint for physical body manifestations. The astral body refers to the energy/matter frequency band just beyond the physical/etheric and is strongly affected by emotions. The mental body is the energy band just beyond the astral and is followed by the causal body. The causal body is "the level in which human consciousness stores all experiences gained during its
many incarnations on the physical plane" (Gerber, 1988, p. 533).

Gerber (1988) describes several subtle energy systems, such as the meridian system and the chakra-nadis system, that interface between the physical body and the higher energetic bodies and are detectable in the auric field. The **meridian system** is a system of energy channels that carry a subtle nutritive energy (chi) to the various organs, nerves, and blood vessels of the physical body. The **chakra-nadis system** includes the chakras—energy centers that serve to transform higher frequency subtle energies and convert them into chemical, hormonal, and cellular changes in the physical body. Energy from the chakras is transmitted via the nadis, the capillary-like pathways of energy flow. The **auric field** is the energy bubble that surrounds and interpenetrates the physical body. It is comprised of all the various energy frequencies of the human system.

In summary, the basic tenets of somatic theory derive from varied sources including the movement arts, biochemistry, medicine, philosophy, physiology, physics, psychology, and the human potentials movement.
Together, these tenets comprise the basic assumptions of a general theory of somatics.

Somatic Practices

Somatic practices, in general, are designed to help individuals cultivate awareness of and identify habitual, patterned behaviors that impede their full adaptive potential. By creating opportunities for awareness, somaticists hope to encourage "knowledge of the structures by which we receive, process and respond to internal and external information" (Gomez, 1988, p. 25). Rubenfeld (1990-91) suggests that "change cannot happen without awareness. By bringing unconsciously held habitual patterns to awareness, clients have the opportunity to explore alternate choices and develop possibilities for psycho-physical change" (p. 60).

Through somatic practices, individuals are encouraged to become responsible for their own growth and change. Somatic practitioners do not mandate behavior or outcome; rather, individuals are encouraged to find in themselves, inside their own bodies, what is best. Trust is put in the individual's ability to become aware as a result of focusing inside and
accessing the sensual authority of first-person consciousness:

Expressed in simple language, somatic science is a science of self-awareness—a self-knowledge that surprisingly leads directly to self-control. And this is a very different kind of knowledge from visual knowledge or auditory knowledge. To recognize a visual or auditory pattern outside ourselves does not, in itself, lead to control of what is seen and heard. But self-knowledge through internal proprioceptive sense leads directly to internal control of ourselves. (Hanna, 1984, p. 7)

Thus, somaticists do not seek to impose external modes of learning but strive to provide environments for individual self-exploration and self-discovery. Somatic practices are characterized by creating an atmosphere where "individuals are encouraged to explore their own inner landscapes for a multitude of choices that may be appropriate for a specific problem. This creative approach offers choices and an affirmation of individual knowledge and power" (Green, 1991, p. 6).

Since its inception as a field in the 1970s, somatics has become an umbrella term that includes under it a variety of somatic techniques, theories, and practices that generally are recognized to facilitate and draw on the integration of body and mind, sometimes referred to as integral practices. Two principles
distinguish somatic practices from other therapeutic approaches. First, its varied methods "share a common focus on the relationships between the body and cognition, emotion, volition, and other dimensions of the self"; second, somaticists share the assumption that transformations of bodily experience can increase self-healing potential (Johnson as cited in Murphy, 1992, p. 386).

The number and variety of current somatic techniques defy easy description, but in his book, *The Future of the Body*, Murphy (1992) identifies seven prominent somatic approaches and the individuals responsible for devising them. The seven approaches identified by Murphy and discussed below represent those that have been central to the development of somatics or have had a great influence on the field for several decades. They include Alexander, the founder of the Alexander Technique; Feldenkrais, who developed the Feldenkrais Method; Schultz, creator of Autogenic Training; Jacobson, who devised the techniques of Progressive Relaxation; Gindler and Selver, the originators of Sensory Awareness; Rolf, the inventor of
Structural Integration or Rolfing; and Reich, who developed Reichian Therapy techniques.

The Alexander Technique was derived from the self-curing practices of Alexander, an Australian actor born in 1869. During his acting career, Alexander struggled with loss of voice, which occurred only when he performed. When the medical profession failed to provide relief, he began to treat himself. Using mirrors and other self observations, Alexander found that his disability was caused by muscular tension evident in his tendency to pull his head backwards and downwards while performing. Through sensory awareness, he alleviated his condition and developed an understanding of the integration of body and mind. Alexander used the term psycho-physical to indicate his belief that all human movements involve the entire person. The Alexander Technique consists of educational methods, primarily focusing on the head and spine, designed to promote kinesthetic awareness and eliminate habitual responses that prevent optimal functioning.

Like Alexander, Feldenkrais was inspired to develop his somatic technique due to his own
disability—a knee injury. Feldenkrais, born in 1904 and trained as a physicist, studied anatomy, physiology, and psychology in order to rehabilitate himself without surgery. His success in doing so led him to develop the Feldenkrais Method, which is a philosophy of life as well as an educational method. According to Feldenkrais (1972/1977), "an intricate process of limiting ability accustoms [us] to make do with [a limited amount of our] potential without realizing that [our] ability has been stunted" (p. 15). His integrative method is designed to restore atrophied abilities and stimulate growth by simultaneously cultivating sensation, emotion, thinking, and motor activity through a two-step process.

In the first step, a procedure called functional integration, hands-on body work is used to introduce physically unfamiliar kinds of movement specific to an individual. In the second step, group exercises—again designed to promote unfamiliar movements—are conducted in a process called awareness through movement. By introducing new patterns of physical movement, according to Feldenkrais, we can transform the other dimensions of our lives, opening up for new thoughts,
actions, and feelings. By the time he died in 1984, Feldenkrais had developed over a thousand exercises to expand his clients' movement repertoires and thereby facilitate awareness (Feldenkrais, 1972/1977).

Whereas the Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais Method emerged from the personal experiences of their founders, Autogenic Training was developed by German neurologist Schultz who studied hypnosis in a clinical setting. From his research, Schultz found that just before subjects entered an hypnotic state, they inevitably would experience heaviness in their extremities and sensations of warmth. Schultz concluded that these two indicators could be induced by six basic autosuggestions and instantly could produce a state of profound relaxation for the reduction of stress. In 1932, Schultz published his results in Das Autogene Training, which was revised and translated into English in 1959 as Autogenic Training. By the 1980s, Autogenetic Training had contributed to the development of various psycho-therapies, including biofeedback training, imagery-based approaches, and meditation research (Murphy, 1992). Advanced techniques have been shown to promote organ-specific
healing and relieve particular disorders. The success of Autogenetic Training has been documented through a wide range of experimental research.

Another somatic discipline that has enjoyed verification through experimentation is Progressive Relaxation. This technique was developed in the early 1900s through a series of experiments by American physician Jacobson and is based on the notion that human stress is largely self-activated. Progressive Relaxation is designed to enhance individuals' self-regulation and conscious volition by teaching them to distinguish muscular sensation through contracting, then relaxing, specific muscle groups. The result is freedom from reactionary movements and the distracting thoughts or feelings that accompany them. Jacobson believed that humans are uniquely suited for self-regulation because the human nervous system is intricate and broadly deployed throughout the body and because humans have a basic capacity to alter the body's functioning through self-awareness and conscious choice. Jacobson (1974) described the body/mind relationship as "a trifold correspondence" akin to "identity" that exists "between the muscular states,
the proprioceptive sensory impulses, and the conscious processes of the individual" (p. 471).

Sensory Awareness is another somatic technique that utilizes suggestive verbal cues to encourage proprioceptive awareness. Like so many other somatic disciplines, this technique emerged out of the self-curtative experiences of its creator. During the early 1900s, Gindler, a physical educator in Berlin, developed tuberculosis and successfully treated her disease by resting the parts of her lungs affected by the disease through honing awareness of her throat, ribs, diaphragm, and stomach. In developing her techniques of sensitive attention to breathing, posture, and movement, Gindler concluded that calm in the physical realm is equivalent to trust in the psychic realm. Gindler's approach was developed in the United States by Selver, who conducted seminars at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, and introduced the approach to psychologist Perls, who incorporated some of it into his Gestalt therapy. The Sensory Awareness approach, adapted to particular individuals and circumstances, proceeds informally with a series of
guided activities designed to encourage the free exploration of kinesthetic sensitivity.

Unlike the suggestive verbal coaching that characterizes Progressive Relaxation and Sensory Awareness, Structural Integration involves hands-on deep tissue bodywork. Devised by Rolf in the 1940s, the technique, often called Rolfing, is designed to manipulate the myofascia, the connective tissue enveloping the muscles. By using her hands, forearms, and elbows to manipulate tissues, Rolf found evidence that manually changing the structure of the body simultaneously demands a change in function. Through EEG testing and blood chemistry analysis, Rolfing is shown to facilitate openness and receptivity to external stimuli, among other things. Due to the body's tendency to store information at tissue and cellular levels, powerful emotions or memories may surface during Rolfing sessions caused by the reactivation of body-memory through intense manual manipulation.

Viennese psychiatrist Reich was concerned with the relationship between emotion and physical structure and developed Reichian Therapy based on his theory of how
emotions are manifest physically. According to Reich, humans form a rigid character structure as a result of habitual responses and attitudes that are constituted through life experiences. Any conflict that is experienced leaves its trace in the character as a rigidity called character armor. By directly confronting a client's habitual responses and attitudes, Reichian character analysis strives to eliminate such armoring and free blocked instinctual energy.

Reich also believed that personality rigidities manifest physically in the form of chronic muscular contractions called body armor. Emotions are much more than events of the mind; they are manifest in posture, gesture, facial expressions, and other behaviors that express and maintain character structure. Thus, we physically embody our psychic issues. Through a series of probing questions based on detailed observations of a client's movement affinities, Reich sought to integrate the cognitive, emotional, and physical realms to eliminate blockages and facilitate a full range of adaptable emotional expression. Reich called this technique vegetotherapy because it deals directly with
the body's vegetative or peripheral nervous systems. Together, character analysis and vegetotherapy are designed to promote orgasmic potency and healthy self-regulation.

The domain of somatics is vast and includes the pioneering body-centered techniques of those described above as well as energy techniques that have been developed and refined. Energy practices are grounded in the assumption that humans exist as multidimensional beings of energy that can be affected by other energy forms. Practitioners of a Japanese technique called Reiki, for example, transmit the "universal life energy" after which the technique is named (LeGro, 1989, p. 132). Aura balancing and chakra balancing are two other energy techniques in which practitioners mobilize and utilize subtle energies for therapeutic purposes. In addition, acupuncture, acupressure, and the muscle-monitoring techniques that are characteristic of kinesiology practices utilize the body's subtle energy meridian system to clear energy blockages and restore balance.

Somatic techniques such as those described here are used extensively to relieve various kinds of
disabilities and to facilitate sensory awareness and kinesthetic, emotional, and cognitive functioning. These approaches are united by their conceptual integration of body and mind.

Somatic Concepts

Somatics, as an area of study, is comprised of various key concepts that constitute a particular vocabulary. Such somatic concepts are best understood by utilizing a specific meaning. The following is a list of somatic concepts along with a brief description of each concept.

Awareness: the sensory-motor perceptual ability to receive and integrate sensation, thought, or other stimuli; the capacity for simultaneous sensing and acting; the ability—unique to somas—simultaneously to receive the world into ourselves and move ourselves into the world; two types of awareness are recognized: (1) active, focused awareness and (2) passive, unfocused awareness; active, focused awareness functions with intent

Bell's Theorem: provides support for the interconnectedness of the world; states that the reality of the universe is nonlocal and that all
objects and events in the world are intimately interconnected with one another and respond immediately to one another's changes.

**Bodymind**: another term for *soma* that illustrates the undifferentiated wholeness of human beings; body and mind are understood as an inseparable continuum of matter and consciousness.

**Complementarity principle**: the inseparability of observer and observed; the method of our observation causes different aspects of reality to manifest; what we experience as external reality is not external reality but is our interaction with it.

**Consciousness**: used interchangeably with *awareness*; the sensory-motor perceptual ability to receive and integrate sensation, thought, or other stimuli; the capacity for simultaneous sensing and acting.

**Duality principle**: the dual nature of matter; the ability of subatomic particles to manifest as discrete particles or interconnected waves, depending upon how they are observed.

**Embodied self**: another word for *soma*.

**Energy**: the invisible but potentially felt presence of movement; the general animating principle of life; the
meta-agent dimension of human existence; the overseer aspect that gives continuity to our divergent life experiences; omnipresent unifying life force

**First-person perception:** the internally focused, subjective stance of perceiving oneself from the "inside out," focusing awareness on inner sensations, feelings, intentions, and internal functioning; a mode of being in the world in which life is experienced and interpreted from a standpoint of being centered within the self

**Holistic:** a conceptualization of phenomena in their multi-dimensional entirety, not isolating or segmenting into discrete parts what comprises a continuous whole

**Intent:** focused awareness; directed attention; volition; the human capacity to inhibit specific motor areas, leaving other selected areas free to focus on regions of uninhibited sensory input

**Interstice:** a premise of somatic techniques: the experiential interruption of patterned, habitual, unconscious behaviors

**Many worlds interpretation:** an interpretation of reality in which multiple universes are created by human awareness; the universe exists as pure potential
in which nothing is determined until we actualize a possibility; we actualize reality

**Ontogenetic knowing**: learned knowledge; information acquired after birth

**Perseveration**: an imbalanced condition of stuckness or rigidity that results from the repetition of behaviors or thought patterns that become involuntary, habitual, and unconscious; a patterned holding, contraction, or inhibition

**Phylogenetic knowing**: knowledge accumulated during the course of species evolution that is not learned by individuals but that accompanies us at birth; pre-personal knowing; knowing on an organismic level

**Proprioception**: the process of perceiving the myriad stimuli going on inside the soma; awareness of internal sensations

**Sarcality**: the foundational "fleshy" sphere of consciousness originally experienced during infancy; the para-sympathetic state of ease and comfort, repair, pleasure, and well-being; a state of experiential inwardness evocative of peace, abundance, and contentment that provides ongoing regulatory guidance specific to each individual
Second-person perception: experience characterized by language and bodily touch; the realm of intimate others; the midpoint of familiarity and tactile connection on a continuum ranging from internal/subjective/self to external/objective/others

Self: another word for soma

Soma: the biological body of functioning by which and through which awareness and environment are mediated; the synergistic, systemic unity of a process; me, the bodily being; bodymind; the functional unity of the human being; human conceptualized as integrated wholeness

Somatics: the art and science of the inter-relational process among awareness, biological functioning, and environment, with these three realms understood as a synergistic whole; an umbrella term that refers to various techniques, approaches, and practices that are concerned with the integration of body and mind

Space/time: motion; the conceptualization of time and space as inseparable; time necessarily involves movement because time is inseparable from space, which is always moving; space is not three dimensional and time is not linear and neither of them is a separate
entity; they form a fourth dimension called space/time

**Synergy**: the cooperative action of independent agencies such that the total effect is greater than the sum of their effects taken independently; the whole is greater than the sum of its parts

**Third-person perception**: an externally focused viewpoint characterized by objective perception and external authority; a mode of being in the world in which life is experienced and interpreted from a standpoint of external determinants; the prevalent perspective and mode of consciousness of European-American culture

**Transpersonal realm**: the dimension of human existence in which awareness has expanded beyond the ego boundaries and has transcended the limitations of time and space; the unbounded state of consciousness that houses the flow of Energy

**Uncertainty principle**: a quantum mechanics principle sometimes called the Heisenberg principle; the notion that we cannot observe reality without changing it

**Summary**

When uninhibited by patterned rigidities, somas have the capacity to focus their awareness freely on
whatever they choose. Historically, European-American human awareness collectively has been focused on developing the intellect—the mental dimension of human potentiality—in order to create the technology necessary to transform the external, physical environment into an accommodating space. In doing so, actual physical transformations in the environment resulted, demonstrating the undeniable power of human intent and volition.

While acknowledging the usefulness of developing the rational aspect of bodily being—along with the intellectual contributions and technological advances this has brought—somaticists recognize this as only one aspect of multitudinous human possibilities. They also acknowledge the detrimental effects of this imbalanced living, such as physical and emotional ill health, lack of personal power or life purpose, and alienation and dehumanization (Hanna, 1970/1985; Johnson, 1983). Focusing human potential solely on cerebral functioning was a necessary adaptation to a hostile environment; however, the time has come for the "aggressive functions of the intellect" to diminish in favor of "a more balanced display of human functions in

In the current stage of species evolution, the environment has been transformed, and the human soma is free to turn awareness, intent, and volition to new realms. The dominant ideology, however, does not reflect the new adaptational reality and is still imbued with the forces of external authority, separation, and physical limitation. Through somatics, we begin to focus on sensual authority, interconnection, and expansion, which also are within the realm of human potential if we choose to bring these potentialities into conscious awareness, thereby actualizing them.
CHAPTER III
A SOMATIC THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

The basic tenets of somatic theory, described in the previous chapter, constitute a new theoretic framework from which to explore communicative phenomena. In this chapter, I outline a theory of communication constructed on the basis of the somatic tenets described in the previous chapter. What follows, then, is a general description of a somatic theory of communication. It includes the assumptions of a somatic perspective; the definition, purpose, and scope of communication; communication ethics within this perspective; and the communicative modes that are fundamental in this theory. The theory builds on a foundation of established communication theories and seeks not to discount or negate currently defined constructs but instead to elaborate on existing frameworks and to extend the conceptual boundaries that have been erected around communication study. Because somatics is an internally focused perspective that relies upon each individual's unique somatic
experiences, much of the following description constitutes a general theoretic framework for a somatic communication theory and is dependent upon the ability of individual somas/readers to embellish the description drawing from their own unique internal experiencing.

Assumptions of a Somatic Perspective

The assumptions of a somatic perspective are explicated in detail in chapter three; they are summarized here as a reminder of the foundation on which a somatic theory of communication is based. The concept of the soma is basic to a somatic theory of communication. Somas, as living, embodied organisms, represent the synergistic merger of awareness, biological function, and environment. Somatics is a holistic perspective that recognizes the interconnectedness of all life forms. The human soma has the capacity to actualize this interconnectedness through a process of developing inner awareness; honing proprioception; and engaging in first-person perception, the subjective stance of perceiving the body from the inside out.
Within the realm of first-person perception, an entire universe of inner space awaits our exploration. By honing awareness of inner realms, we have access to phylogenetic knowing, the intelligence that has developed over the course of our species evolution and accompanies us at birth. Within the internal realm, we also have access to sarcal consciousness, the "fleshy" sphere of consciousness that is evocative of peace, abundance, and contentment and is reflective of each soma's uniqueness. By attuning proprioceptively, in addition, we are able to become aware of and bring the transformative energy of consciousness to patterned behaviors, limiting belief systems, and points of rigidity that interrupt our balanced somatic fluidity.

Within a somatic perspective, our perception determines reality, and the potential of reality is inhibited only by the limitations of our perception; thus, somatics is concerned with each soma's refinement of perceptual processes from the inside out and expansion of consciousness in order to actualize more fully human potential. The perspective is specifically change oriented and advocates that we transform reality by changing ourselves. When somas engage in a process
of internal transformation, all of reality is simultaneously altered due to the holistic interconnectedness of somatic totality.

Definition of Communication

Somatics is concerned with the study of the soma as embodying the synergistic interrelation among awareness, biological function, and environment. From within this framework, communication is the somatic process of giving form to energy through awareness. The soma is the form giver. Communication is dependent upon the soma—the being within whom all of reality, including communication, is manifest. Reality exists as omnipresent infinite possibility that is dependent upon the soma to actualize in a particular way. Like all of reality, communication exists as energy potential. The human soma gives form to energy through awareness by initiating movement, feeling emotions, thinking thoughts, and speaking words, for example. The somatic process of giving form to energy through awareness is possible because the soma simultaneously utilizes, generates, and transforms energy.

The soma utilizes energy for existence because the soma is comprised of and sustained by energy. The soma
"is a series of interacting multidimensional energy fields" in which subtle energies move through and manifest in an ongoing and intricately complex process (Gerber, 1988, p. 91). Human energy systems that have been identified and are gaining widespread recognition include the auric field; the etheric, astral, mental, and causal energetic bodies; the chakra-nadis system; and the meridian system (1988). The realm of subtle energy is an undeniable aspect of somatic existence:

All organisms are dependent upon a subtle vital force which creates synergism via a unique structural organization of molecular components. . . . The vital force creates order in living systems and constantly rebuilds and renews its cellular vehicle of expression. . . . This animating life-force is an energy . . . . (Gerber, 1988, p. 41)

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2 The auric field is the energy bubble that surrounds and interpenetrates the physical body and is comprised of the following energy frequencies: The physical/etheric body, the physical dimension of the body and the invisible energy field surrounding the physical body, called the etheric body; the astral body, the energy/matter frequency band just beyond the physical/etheric that is connected with emotions; the mental body, the energy band just beyond the astral that refers to the intellect; and the causal body, sometimes called the higher mental or spiritual body, which refers to the energy level in which consciousness stores our experiences. The meridian system is a system of energy channels that carry a subtle nutritive energy to various parts of the body. The chakra-nadis system includes the chakras, which are energy centers that serve to transform higher frequency subtle energies. Energy from the chakras is transmitted via the nadis, which are capillary-like energy pathways (Gerber, 1988).
Recent scientific research empirically validates the existence of such energies (Gerber, 1988; Hunt, 1995), and through honing proprioceptive awareness, each of us experientially confirms their existence.

Various cultures throughout the world have recognized the importance of energy for human existence. In Hindu culture, for example, the sophisticated study of life energy, prana, through Ayurvedic (life science) practices, has resulted in the identification of five different types of prana. Any movement in the body--speaking, thinking, or actual physical movement--is considered to be the result of pranic energy (Chopra, 1991). Prana "flows directly from spirit, or pure awareness, to bring intelligence and consciousness to every aspect of life" (Chopra, 1993, p. 261). In Chinese culture, as well, there exists a full history of the study of life energy, chi. Within martial arts realms, for example, subtle differentiations between chi types have been identified, such as levels of sticky energy, intrinsic energy, oxygen energy, and the energy of mind-intent (Liang, 1986).
In addition to utilizing energies already in existence, the soma generates energy synergistically by initiating thought, movement, and feeling. As somas, we have the capacity for creative thought, expression, and action. We have the ability to construct our thoughts freely and to shape our thinking processes in ways that are virtually limitless. In so doing, we generate energy that creates matter out of nonmatter. Each time we experience a feeling, for example, "a chemical messenger translates [our] emotion, which has no solid existence whatever in the material world, into a bit of matter . . . perfectly attuned to [our] desire" (Chopra, 1990, p. 127). Each time we think a thought, feel a feeling, or initiate a movement, we generate the energy necessary for molecules such as hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen to reconfigure into chemicals called neuro-peptides, a synergistic process that constitutes the transformation of nonmatter into matter (1990). Our emotions and thoughts generate energies that take shape in particular forms to the extent that "all that goes through and out from our mind has a form" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 629). According to Chopra (1990):
As you sit in your chair, every thought you are thinking creates a wave in a unified field. It ripples through all the layers of ego, intellect, mind, senses, and matter, spreading out in wider and wider circles. You are like a light radiating not photons but consciousness. As they radiate, your thoughts have an effect on everything in nature. (p. 217)

What we typically consider to be passing thoughts and emotions are now understood to be manifestations of energy forms that strongly affect us. We are affected because "thoughts are forces. Feelings are forces" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 239), and these "transient thoughts and emotions have 'lasting' effects on our physical bodies" and on others (1981, p. 45). Many somatically attuned people are able to sense--to physically register--the effects of their own thought forms as well as those of others. Further, some clairvoyant individuals are able to see actual visual manifestations of thoughts and emotions (1981).

When we interface with the world, we act as a catalyst that initiates a process of differentiation and transformation of energy. Each movement, thought, or word "channels a different kind of energy and a different voltage of energy" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 629). Our thoughts and emotions represent energy forms that actually communicate and have lasting
consequences. Words, as well, are manifestations of energy that have lasting effects on our bodies, on others, and ultimately on life in general. As somas, we are responsible for generating and utilizing the subtle energy forms that we actively create.

In addition to utilizing and generating energy, the soma simultaneously transforms energy. The soma transforms energies that are already in existence by bringing them into the realm of awareness. We are immersed in a universe of existing energies in forms, for example, of words, thoughts, emotions, sounds, scents, images, sensations, flavors, other life forms, objects, and structures. We are prevented from actively perceiving on an ongoing basis our process of subtle energy transformation and the forms it produces only because of self-imposed limitations on our awareness. Through honing proprioception, however, we become aware of the vibratory frequencies—the energy variations and intensities—of our thoughts and words as well as those of others.

The human capacities for awareness, consciousness, and intent constitute particular kinds of transformative energies. Awareness and consciousness
are used interchangeably to refer to the ability to bring sensation, thought, or raw stimuli into the wakefulness of realization. Intent refers to the capacity to will, to actively pursue a desire. Awareness, consciousness, and intent are human capacities that, when engaged, act as energy transformers. These abilities actively mobilize energies and increase their potential voltage and power. Human "consciousness itself is a kind of energy" that actively "participates in the continuous creation" of other energy forms intrinsic to humans and all of life (Gerber, 1988, p. 44). As such, consciousness is a potent somatic process as well as a transformative force affecting other energy forms.

Whenever we bring stimuli into our energy fields of awareness, they are simultaneously transformed by the powerful energies of our awareness. Just as the electricity available in an outlet may be used to power a sewing machine, a chain saw, or a light bulb, so, too, the energy potential of our consciousness may be manifest in various ways.

By utilizing the energies of awareness and intent to refine internal somatic processes and expand
proprioception, we become aware of and intentionally choose how we utilize these energies to transmute other energy forms. When we actively initiate and transform energies to resonate with unity consciousness, we manifest quality communication. Quality communication is the generation and transformation of energy forms that resonate with interconnectedness and synthesize internal and external, Self and other. The highest quality communication is made manifest by exceptionally aware, internally attuned, externally sensitive somas.

Whether addressing the realm of cellular exchange or interaction among human somas, quality communication constitutes the actualization of interconnection. When such connection manifests, energy flows freely. Whenever a glitch, distortion, interruption, rigidity, or separation occurs, we experience an energetic dissonance or discommunication. Human disease is an

\[\text{\begin{quote}I am using the term discommunication to differentiate this concept from miscommunication. Miscommunication typically refers to an instance when a sender's intended communication is misunderstood by a receiver. Discommunication includes the vast array of first-person somatic communication overlooked by the original concept. Discommunication refers to any inhibition of interconnection. Put simply, discommunication is separatism. So, for example, within the realm of first-person perception, denial--as an intrapsychic construct--is an example of discommunication because it serves to hinder}\end{quote}\]
example of discommunication on a cellular level. In this instance, cells are not resonating—not communicating. A vital connection is not made among the cells, and they behave in discontinuous ways. When discommunication occurs among human somas, then, the inherent energy flow and continuity of life are interrupted. Thus, quality communication is intrinsically, somatically connective.

Purpose of Communication

The purpose of communication is to expand awareness of Self as an integrated, embodied, synergistic soma. Such awareness facilitates Self-transformation which, in turn, enables us to actualize unity consciousness, the felt sensing of life's interconnectedness. The process of Self-awareness is inherently transformational and promotes unity consciousness because, when we become internally aware, the energy forms that are mobilized and charged by the power of our intent invoke internal changes. Through

awareness and psychologically separates a person from a behavior.

'The term Self, with a capitol S, is used to distinguish the integrated, embodied, synergistic Self from the segmented, often disembodied, ego-centered self.
proprioceptive awareness, we eliminate blocked energy forms, dissolve patterned limitations, and allow for the manifestation of higher quality energy forms—higher quality communication, which consists of energy forms that resonate with unity consciousness. In essence, by expanding awareness of Self, we are channeling potent energies into the Self so that we refine and transform our communicative abilities and direct energy toward the actualization of unity consciousness. This process is simultaneous and interconnected; however, for the purposes of description, I address each component below—awareness of Self, proprioception, transformation, unity consciousness, and high-quality communication.

The capacity for awareness of Self is vital to somatic communication. The soma exists as a fluid system of awareness that can focus on anything. Just as a stereo tuner picks up a variety of radio waves, some more clearly than others, the soma has the capacity to tune in to a multitude of communicative frequencies and give form to those frequencies with varying degrees of clarity. The clarity of our communication is determined by the condition and power
of the tuner—in this case, the human soma. Unlike a stereo tuner, however, the frequencies in which we choose to attune are determined by our free will and intent. The more refined our awareness, the better we attune. By intentionally switching to the first-person perceptual mode and attuning to ourselves, we use the power of our awareness to increase the frequency range and voltage of our communication capacities.

By focusing awareness on Self, we are able to draw on our vast store of sensory intelligence. Self-awareness, the epistemology that results from having shifted consciousness to first-person perception, involves attending to our internal somatic processes. When we function within a first-person perceptual mode, we are perceiving our bodies from the inside out. Attuning to first-person perception, the realm of subjectivity, allows us access to the multiplicity of communicative processes going on inside our bodies.

When focused internally, we sense ourselves from the interior and engage in proprioception, the reception of stimuli from within. Just as each of us perceives the world in a unique way, each of us proprioceives in a specialized manner that has
developed over the course of our lives. Just as some people have better eyesight or hearing than others, so, too, our abilities for proprioception are equally varied. By focusing our awareness on first-person perception, we can use the energies of consciousness and intent to improve our proprioceptive abilities.

When communicating in such a way that we focus awareness on proprioception, we expand awareness of Self by bringing into consciousness what previously was inaccessible and potentially limiting. The powerful energies of awareness have the capacity to transform inner restrictions. Greater proprioception allows us to "be increasingly freed from unconscious restraints of the brain" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 120). As we become aware of our perceptions—to know what we are knowing—we bring into consciousness and transform what previously was unavailable and potentially limiting to us. As the soma transforms, consciousness expands, and the soma's ability to communicate, to give form to energy, simultaneously expands. The soma determines the purpose and quality of communication by choosing the focus of awareness. Each of us communicates—actively gives form to energies—differently, according
to our own internal processing; each of us "bodies forth" energy forms in our own unique way. The quality of communication, then, is dependent on the quality of the soma as determined by awareness of somatic processes.

As we enhance proprioception and expand consciousness, we, in turn, transform reality because reality is determined by our awareness of Self: "If You believe You are fixed and unchangeable, then Your reality will be that way. You will get what you expect" (Hanna, 1991b, p. 163). If we want to change reality, we must change the Self because a direct reciprocal relationship exists between our Self-awareness and our experience of reality. If we are unaware of Einstein's theory of relativity, for example, our ignorance of it will not affect that theory at all. However, "if you are ignorant of your own Self, your Self will shrink to fit your conception" (Chopra, 1994, side 11). Thus, awareness of Self is privileged in order to assist the transformation of limiting energy patterns and to facilitate our movement toward more refined attunement.
The process of developing our capacities for proprioception with the intent to expand awareness of Self facilitates the ability to proprioceive unity consciousness and the ability to manifest higher quality energy forms. High-quality communication reflects the felt experiencing of life's interconnectedness. High-quality communication cannot be separated from quality living and is characterized by energy forms that synthesize, unify, and commune—commune-cation—that bring together and enhance connection within Self, with others, and with all of life. Awareness of Self allows for the potential of unity consciousness to be actualized, a state of somatic being in which high-quality communication necessarily is manifest.

Although all of life is already inherently interconnected, the reality of interconnectedness is dependent upon the human soma to actualize. Actualization of unity consciousness is determined by the free will and intent of each soma, and such unity must be proprioceptively experienced by the soma in order to be real. Unity consciousness is more than an intellectual understanding of interconnectedness; it
refers to somatically experiencing the felt sensation of holistic interconnectedness. The energy of unity consciousness enhances all life experiences, from the mundane to the profound. When we function in the world from an inner experiencing of unity consciousness, all aspects of our being--relationships with others, ability to do our work, attitudes toward life--are reflective of this creative somatic state of fulfillment. As we refine our somatic awareness, we move toward actualizing unity consciousness. The eventual sense of fulfillment that comes with prolonged actualization of unity consciousness often manifests as unconditional service to others with no sense of obligation, no energy depletion, and no expectations for return.

Within the realm of somatic communication, all life forms are interconnected and immediately respond to one another's changes--even subtle variations in movement, thought forms, or emotion--because these changes significantly alter the energy field that connects us all. Therefore, each time we eliminate a blockage, release a habitual pattern, or transform a limiting belief system within ourselves, we are
facilitating, in fact, the growth and positive transformation of untold numbers of other life forms due to the energetic interconnectedness of all. When we choose to manifest energy forms that resonate with unity consciousness, we are nurturing the potential of countless others because each time we communicate, each time we actualize a possibility, a new universe is created.

Scope of Communication

A somatic theory of communication affirms communication as the process of giving form to energy through awareness and allows for the systematic study of energy forms. Because matter consists of energy forms and, in fact, everything is energy, the scope of communication is limitless. The only limitations on the scope of communication are the self-imposed limitations on the soma. What counts as communication is determined by the soma and, just as the soma is infinite possibility, so, too, communicative potential is infinite.

Giving form to energy is manifest in an endless number of ways determined only by the soma's ability for awareness. By honing awareness, we can sense
energy forms from people, animals, plants, stones, oils, herbs, foods, furnishings, buildings, colors, sounds, and objects, to name but a few. In addition, the full array of somatic processes—visual, sensual, auditory, olfactory, intuitive, and kinesthetic—constitute energy or communicative forms.

The legitimization of the proprioceptive realm further extends the scope of somatic communication. This includes but is not limited to myriad physical sensations, subtle energies, breathing, inner feelings, spiritual experiences, conations, intuition, meditative states, the dream world, visceral sensations, empathy, enlightenment, internal sounds, felt sensations, inner dialogue, fulfillment, impulses, kinesthetics, phylogenetic knowing, emotional releases, altered states, ecstasy, sarcality, mental imagery, channelled information, bliss, gut reactions, temperature sensitivities, visualizations, energy flows, contemplative states, self-talk, unity consciousness, and similar experiential phenomena. The basic organismic regulatory functions of digestion, assimilation, and elimination also constitute communication. Each of us consists of 50 trillion
intelligent cells that form the continuity of our somatic being, and all have the ability to communicate. The consciousness that is brought to body cells further expands the sphere of communication. In all of our somatic functions, then, we are entire and unified systems of communication. By honing our awareness of these and other communicative processes, we bring into consciousness what previously was inaccessible to us.

Sarcal Ethics

The ability of the soma to attune within makes available to us the realm of sarcal ethics—moral guidance that is rooted in embodiment. Our bodies provide us with "standards which are not learned but are in-built into the sense of taste or touch. They are the ultimate court of decision as to what is 'right and proper'" for any individual (Hanna, 1991a, p. 56). Sarcal ethics constitutes an ethics of the flesh that is unique to each soma. Because of its somatic primacy, proprioception maintains an omnipresent biofeedback system, constantly monitoring, indicating, and guiding us through the varying processes of ongoing adaptation in our daily lives. Such "primal sensory discretions of pleasant and unpleasant smells,
textures, and tastes are the undergirding stability of our conscious life" and guide us in our adaptation so that we maintain balance (1991a, p. 56).

Our ability to access the realm of sarcal ethics is key to enriching communicative potential and vital to the enhancement of life. Sarcal ethics constitutes "our primal, opening relationship to Being as a whole" in which we can "retrieve the implicate, pre-ontological understanding of Being that the body has always silently borne" (Levin, 1989, p. 219). Privileging the human capacity to access the sphere of sarcal consciousness carries vast implications for personal growth and for social transformation:

The cultivation of this capacity can contribute to, and is in turn affected by, the forming of moral character, encouraging communicative relationships, awakening a compassionate sensibility and the understanding it bears within it, motivating a concern for reciprocity and respect for differences, enabling the recognition of authentic needs, reversing processes of alienation that disintegrate the Self, and transforming the patriarchal ego . . . . (Levin, 1989, p. 3)

The understanding that comes from active proprioceiving and attuning to our sarcal consciousness holds potential for positive transformation.
Modes of Communication

The modes of communication recognized within a somatic perspective on communication are derived from the primary communicative mode of awareness. They include first-person perception which involves perceiving the body from within; its processes are creating interstice and verbal economy; proprioception which involves the reception of stimuli within an organism; and Self-sensing which involves proprioceiving with awareness and intent to transform; its processes are indrawal, accessing phylogenetic knowing, accessing sarcal ethics, Self-regulation, the mirror concept of communication, inner-communication, and quantum communication.

First-Person Perception

First-person perception is a primary mode of communication in a somatic theory of communication. It refers to focusing awareness internally and constitutes a perceptual shift in which the body is sensed from the inside out. Awareness is drawn to the highest concentration of energy, which for most of us is in the external realm. A primary step in the process of shifting from the culturally privileged stance of
third-person perception to the internal realm of first-person perception entails creating an interstice in which such a perceptual alteration may take place.

**Interstice.** Interstice is the process of creating an opening or space that intervenes among things, especially things at close intervals. The accelerated pace of mainstream lifestyles in the United States, for example—congested with habitual movements, automatic emotions, and programmed thoughts—provides rich opportunities for interstice. Creating interstice in order to facilitate first-person perception can take the form of purposefully slowing down the pace of our lives in general or of interrupting experiential processes in a given moment. The act of brushing one's teeth, for example, is an opportunity for interstice when this typically mindless activity is interrupted, slowed down, and infused with the energies of awareness. By consciously decelerating our internal pace and attending to our behavior patterns, thought processes, or feeling states, we can create openings in which new possibilities may emerge, cultivating expanded awareness.
Verbal Economy. First-person perception also is facilitated by practicing economy of speech, the cessation of unnecessary externally focused verbal expressions, so that we consciously focus awareness on our internal first-person realm. We cannot become aware of the vast array and subtle nuances of our internally expressive processes if we are continually engaged in verbal expression or focused on responding behaviorally to external stimuli. By quieting externally focused expression and practicing economy of speech, we create the conditions in which we attune to the first-person realm.

Proprioception

Proprioception is the reception of stimuli within an organism and is a primary somatic communication mode. When attuning to our proprioceptive realm, we become aware of a rich display of inner sensations. Awareness is typically drawn to the highest concentration of energy, as it is in the external realm. If we have a painful area—a physical injury or emotional distress, for example—our proprioception will tend to focus there. On a day-to-day basis, many of us have a high concentration of energy focused on
our mental processes, the place within us from which our thoughts emanate. When we begin proprioceiving, our everyday perceptual regularities and repetitive thoughts are often what we first encounter. Some of us are more visually oriented, and our thoughts manifest primarily as visual displays of images. Others are more auditory in orientation and encounter ongoing self-talk. Still others orient kinesthetically and experience a matrix of felt sensations. Such vigorous mental dialogue, incessant visual displays, or persistent sensations often overpower more subtle internal sensing. When met with such proprioceptions, we can engage in an internal clearing in which we evacuate the clutter of habitual internal processes so that proprioception may be developed further.

When attuning to the first-person perceptual realm, we sometimes find that proprioception is difficult, unsatisfying, or limited. At times, awareness stays concentrated on the mental plane, and we cannot create interstice in our endless stream of thoughts; perhaps we even feel numb. In her work on somatic psychology, Stromsted (1994-95) describes eight broad categories of experiences that may cause us to
experience difficulty with proprioception. These include physical, emotional, and/or psychological abuse; early childhood illness or birth trauma; accidents or invasive surgery; poor early familial relations; inadequate or disturbed interpersonal boundaries among family members; a sense of shame or criticism projected onto a child by a parent who did not feel comfortable in her or his own body; early abandonment or neglect; and survival of a disaster.

Our proprioceptive abilities are reflected in our behaviors. We are at varying levels of development of our proprioception, but some of us experience severely limited proprioception, sometimes called disassociation or disembodiment. Stromsted (1994-95) identifies numerous behavioral responses that are indicative of disembodiment. These include the use of cerebral-centered defenses such as rationalization or intellectualization to distance us from a situation and the feelings associated with it. This often leads to a second disembodied response, projection, whereby our own unrecognized internal needs, desires, or distresses are attributed to another person or situation. Politicizing, intensely focusing awareness on
transforming social structures, is a third response that can hamper proprioception when it functions to externalize our own internal experiences. An unbalanced approach to spirituality in which we bypass the body's experience in order to access spiritual realms also can constitute disembodiment.

The somatic patterns that characterize restricted proprioception include withdrawing energy from bodily extremities; numbing particular body areas; armoring or muscular holding; constricted breathing; denial of the aging process; rejecting the body's genetic heritage; and addictions to, for example, alcohol, work, money, sex, food, drugs, or material goods (Stromsted, 1994-95). In these instances, the revitalizing energy of awareness is focused externally and not on the proprioceptive realm where the soma receives sustenance.

**Self-Sensing**

When we begin to experience our bodies proprioceptively, from the inside out, we are better able to Self-sense, to bring the energies of awareness and intent to our internal processes. **Self-sensing** is active proprioceiving. The vital intent that governs
Self-sensing exploration is the desire to deepen awareness of Self—to learn about Self from our somatic responses to any situation. When engaged in Self-sensing, we are actively organizing and interpreting what we proprioceive. Self-sensing enables us to "read" our bodies and to sense somatically the subtle differences among varied physical states. From a state of comfort and relaxation, for example, we can sense where the subtle onset of anxiety is located, become more aware of what specifically invokes it, and make choices about our responses to it.

Self-sensing is governed by a specialized mindset that consists of consciously focusing attention on the inner realm with the intent to further Self-transformation. This intention is grounded in the purpose of communication, to expand awareness of Self so that we manifest high-quality communication and

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5The term somatic response is obviously ambiguous since, within a somatic perspective, every human response is understood to be somatic. When I use the term somatic response, I am referring to what commonly are considered bodily sensations. This seemingly contradicts somatic theory—which fuses the body/mind dichotomy and recognizes no distinction between body and mind. However, because European-American culture privileges the mind and devalues the body, I am privileging the body as an interim phase in an effort toward balance and equal integration of body and mind.
actualize unity consciousness. While engaged in Self-sensing, we transform the energy forms that we receive much as we metabolize food, air, or water. We take in food, for example, and transform it into the energy necessary to sustain our vital processes and integrate it into our already-existing embodiment of nutrition. Similarly, through our capacity for awareness, we take inside raw proprioceptive stimuli, transform them into useable energy forms, and integrate them into our pre-existing embodiment of awareness. Self-sensing includes the communicative processes of indrawal, accessing phylogenetic knowing and sarcal ethics, Self-regulation, the mirror concept of communication, inner-communication, and quantum communication.

The process of indrawal facilitates our full accessing of the sensory-rich realm of Self-sensing. Indrawal is the drawing in of our energy in which we proprioceive as a purposeful practice. It involves bringing the conscious presence of the whole Self to

\[\text{Indrawal is different than withdrawal. A somatic perspective is not isolationist or separatist, and does not advocate prolonged withdrawal from contact with others. Instead, through somatic practices, we may experience profound intimacy with others without losing our identity; the more we transform ourselves from the inside out, the more we move toward unity of consciousness.}\]
any experience. This process sometimes entails finding distraction-free solitude, freeing ourselves of negative attitudes or fears of exploring inner space, and breaking out of our "trances of action" (Bruneau, 1994, p. 3). When we let go of an external focus and purposefully attune to our inner realm, draw our energy inward, clear away distraction, and engage in Self-sensing, an entire inner universe becomes available to us. The more we attune to this realm, the more easily accessible and readily available are its resources for us. Indrawal includes a multitude of communicative modes and somatic practices such as meditation, visualization, guided imagery, concentration, sounding or intoning, reflective thought, breathwork, and contemplation.

The practice of Self-sensing allows us to draw on our vast store of sensory intelligence, phylogenetic knowing, to aid in our adaptive functioning. By refining our capacity for Self-sensing, we are able to recover phylogenetic knowing, the wisdom of the body that has accumulated over the course of species development and that accompanies each of us at birth.
Phylogenetic knowing becomes available to us when we clear away internal clutter.

Self-sensing also enables us to access sarcal ethics and to receive ongoing guidance that facilitates our adaptive functioning from moment-to-moment. By Self-sensing and "listening to the messages in the flesh" on an ongoing basis, we become aware of how our bodies are "continually orienting us within the fields of matter, energy, and information swirling around us, so that we can distill a sense of direction and purpose" from particular experiences and in our lives in general (de Quincey, 1994-95, p. 5).

Through refined Self-sensing, we learn to negotiate the world more effectively and to read the symbolism of life. Because somatic reality constitutes the merger of internal and external realms into a single processual unity, the exterior world mirrors the internal world in ways that are useful for Self-transformation if we are attuned to them. If we are struggling with unresolved issues concerning our parents, for example, parental issues may become figural in our lives. Suddenly, we notice everyone's relationship with their parents, we perceive all of our
interactions in terms of parental dynamics, or we may even receive a phone call from our parents. Similarly, the exterior world provides clues to our inner states. Losing your favorite pen, encountering an injured animal on the way home, and burning your finger on the stove, for example, may be symbolic of an inner sense of victimage. Within the somatic realm, there are no coincidences. Internal and external realms are merged into a synergistic whole and reciprocally respond to one another.

As we attune to our somatic processes, we learn about ourselves and can use our Self-sensing capacity, the energies of awareness and intent, to Self-regulate. Self-regulation involves conscious somatic adjustment so that we maintain a state of balance and equilibrium. By expanding awareness of Self, we bring the energy of consciousness and transformation to body cells, thoughts, emotions, and other somatic processes, thereby restoring our ability to function as infinite possibility. We become conscious of obstructed energy forms such as patterned thoughts, feelings, or behaviors and can Self-regulate to revitalize our energy flow. By mobilizing the energies of awareness
and intent, we can be "in charge" of our energies and use them to transform limitations.

As we learn to focus the energies of our awareness and intent better, we expand our repertoire of responses and are able to Self-regulate flexibly and to engage in creative responses. We can direct the energies of our communication back into our Selves and adapt in innovative ways. Often, internally focused awareness and the power of intent are enough to eliminate blocked energy, free us from habits, dissolve patterned limitations, and restore balance. We also can use the energy of our intent to alter purposefully our somatic responses. We may initiate, for example, creative behaviors, think imaginative thoughts, experience new feelings, or draw on a vast array of innovative energy forms such as meditation, guided imagery, or energy work to facilitate our adaptive functioning.

Self-regulation can include counteracting patterned responses through creative use of awareness.

'I am using the term in charge as an alternative to the term control because the latter has a restrictive connotation to it. Instead, the term in charge conjures up images of electrical current and is suggestive of being in the charge of energy flow.
and intent. If, for example, through refined Self-sensing, we become aware of a patterned response within romantic relationships that involves repetitive fear-invoking mental images in which we imagine our partner with someone else, we can use the energy of intent purposefully to shrink the size of the mental picture, isolate it within a small frame, cause it to dissolve, melt it with white light, or send it off into outer space. Similarly, if we become aware of patterned internal voices that repeat fear-invoking messages, we can use the powerful energy of intent to alter the messages in a variety of creative ways. For example, we can play the messages backwards, repeat them at high speed, turn them into a rap verse, or replace them with supportive, loving messages.8

Self-regulation through somatic awareness can involve initiating simple, concrete changes in our lives. If, for example, we are experiencing ongoing feelings of weakness or disempowerment, taking up a movement form that involves strong, vigorous movements, such as karate or judo, can facilitate feelings of

8For more information about this type of Self-regulation, see Bandler (1985) and Bandler and Grinder (1979) on neuro-linguistic programming (NLP).
power and strength. If we are unable to let go of a past relationship, for example, we can facilitate closure in our lives by focusing our energies on the completion of tasks that are immediately present. We often find that, for example, finishing our letter writing, sorting through stored stacks of papers, making intended phone calls, or bringing the energy of completion to any tasks that we have put off for some time facilitates closure in general, restoring balance and bringing renewed balance to our lives. When our internal realm ceases to be a mystery, and we are not merely reacting to life situations but responding from choice, we experience a sense of empowerment. The transformative energies of increased Self-awareness and Self-regulation cause the boundaries between Self and other to dissolve and allow for the experiencing of unity consciousness.

The Self is a boundless entity. Through our limitless capacity for awareness, we are able to expand infinitely. Our senses—smell, taste, touch, sight, hearing, and intuition—constitute the unique means through which each of us extends into our environment, bringing the environing world inside of us. The
"senses are as beams of light radiating out from the Self into substance and matter" (Saraydarian, 1981, p. 51). Through our senses, we extend into the world, bring the world inside ourselves, and transform it. By "interacting with our environment, our organism literally incorporates messages into the substance of its flesh" (de Quincey, 1994-95, p. 5). Thus, when we bring into our energy field anything--including other entities--we are experiencing not other entities but the effects of our own energy field of awareness: our perception shows us not reality but ourselves.

This reciprocal quality between reality and perception holds vast implications for communication. Essentially, whenever we communicate with other somas, we are actually communicating with aspects of our Self. I refer to this as the mirror concept of communication. This concept can be understood best by looking at our inner-communication, the proprioceptive stimuli that we form into a recognizable language or code. Our inner-communication is comprised of the unique ways in which we communicate with ourselves. Inner-communication may include self-talk but is not limited to formal
languages. It may include, as well, visual images, auditory sounds, or felt kinesthetics.

Any verbal or nonverbal expression emerges from our ongoing inner-communication; thus, expression is understood to reflect the inner-communication of the person who utters it. Whatever we express says infinitely more about us than about anything or anyone else. For example, if I say that you are critical, this statement says nothing about you. Instead, it indicates that I am looking at the world through a perceptual framework of criticism. My inner-communication apparently includes the judgment of criticism because inner-communication constitutes the repertoire from which we select our verbal utterances. In order to be expressed, the construct of criticism must exist already within the speaker's inner-communication. Thus, inner-communication determines external expression: As within, so without. The guiding premise of the mirror concept of communication is that external attributions and internal qualities are reflections of each other and only can be transformed from within.
According to the mirror concept of communication, the experience of an intensified somatic response is an opportunity for increased awareness through Self-sensing. Upon hearing a comment such as, "you are critical," we may sense significant changes inside our bodies, such as substantial alterations in the rate, depth, or rhythm of our breathing or other internal sensations that are characteristic of our somatic-response indicators of intensified anger, fear, joy, sadness, or love. Or we may sense other meaningful internal indicators of fight, freeze, or flight responses. In these instances, we know that we are somatically activated. Thus, our responsibility is to look inside ourselves and find the discommunication inside of us that generated the activation.

Upon experiencing such a somatic reaction, we would want to attune more closely to our Self-sensing to discover with what that particular comment is resonating. Perhaps somewhere inside of us exists the diminutive belief that we are critical. Maybe we continue to carry with us some insecurity from our past, or maybe we feel less confident of our capacities for compassion in certain situations. By bringing into
the light of awareness such limiting beliefs, we expose patterned hindrances and help eliminate them from the inside out. Often, internally focused awareness and the power of our intent are enough to dissolve patterned limitations and allow for greater manifestation of communicative potential.

Another indication of an intensified somatic response is if we find our proprioception severely limited, an indication that we have disassociated from our bodies. This means that our proprioceptive centers are shut down, we are unable to feel, or we are experiencing a general inner sensory numbness. By attuning to our Self-sensing, we become aware of situations that evoke this intensified somatic response. We may discover that we respond to certain situations or to life in general in a way that constitutes a disassociation from our bodies. If we find this to be the case, we would want to engage in indrawal, Self-regulation, or other somatic practices in order to facilitate re-inhabiting our bodies and reconnection with our proprioceptive abilities so that we have access to the full range of phylogenetic knowing, sarcal guidance, and unity consciousness.
In everyday life, we may find that we experience activated somatic responses to particular situations. By attuning to our bodies in a Self-sensing communication mode, we rely on the rich feedback of our somatic processes for guidance. The degree of intensity of our somatic response indicates the magnitude of awareness that we may gain from the situation. By attuning to our inner-communication, we become aware of patterned responses, various degrees of disembodiment, and our bodies' somatic responses to the situations that activate us. Such situations are rich opportunities for expanded awareness of Self.

In effect, then, the mirror concept of communication represents a two-way mirror. The mirror reflects one way in that any expression is a reflection of the inner-communication of the expressor. In addition, the mirror works the other way in that any perceived communication difficulty reflects a difficulty within. In other words, when we experience what are typically called communication problems, the place for us to work on those difficulties is not with others but within ourselves. Put simply, if it shows up out there, it already exists in here. Within the
realm of somatic communication, external and internal are collapsed into one. We are not living in the world; the world is living in us. We can transform the world only by transforming ourselves (Chopra, 1994).

When compared with conventional approaches to communication, Self-sensing with the intent to transform and the mirror concept of communication may seem to take away agency from others and put excessive responsibility on the Self. A somatic perspective on communication does not exclude dialogue with others; it does, however, privilege Self-sensing, along with Self-regulation and inner-communication. Since the bulk of existing communication theory, research, and practice focuses on social interaction, familiarity with conventional perspectives is assumed, and those perspectives are not addressed here.

Interaction with others within a somatic communication mode of Self-sensing is characterized by several advantages. Most important, Self-sensing allows for the rapid enhancement of Self-awareness. When interacting with others from our orientation of Self-awareness, we can easily discern our somatic states and express them to others. Somatic disclosures
have the potential to facilitate intimacy and enhance the quality of relationships. The advantages of Self-awareness and Self-disclosure are well documented in the communication literature and range from increased affection with others to less individual vulnerability to illness (i.e., Pennebacker, 1991; Sprecher, 1987).

Further, Self-sensing allows us to be clear about personal ownership of somatic states and Self as agent. Somas are understood to be responsible for their own individual growth and behavior. Through Self-sensing, we come to know ourselves in intimate ways and to transform the barriers between Self and other from the inside out. Others are our co-workers as we engage in a process of inner transformation toward unity consciousness. For example, through the practice of Self-sensing, we can easily discern instances when we are projecting onto others and we can equally discern when we are the recipient of projections from others. Such discernment enhances interaction with others, facilitates connection, and alleviates misunderstanding.

Finally, the increased awareness of Self through Self-sensing allows us to be clear about our innermost
aspirations and intentions and to express them directly. From within this perspective, economy of speech is privileged, and intentions are expressed simply and honestly without the externally focused concerns for saving face, gaining compliance, or rhetorical strategizing.

The cultivation of Self-sensing reveals new ways of communicating and offers validation of communicative modes currently unrecognized by mainstream communication scholars. I call these modes quantum communication because they consist of practices involving subtle energy attunement and include modes such as psychometry, channeling, telepathy, teleportation, precognition, aura reading, astral travel, and similar communication forms. Psychometry is use of the developed sense of touch to detect energy forms associated with objects and people. We may hold an object in our hand, for example, and through refined Self-sensing, we discern information about the history of the object, those who have come in contact with it, and their moods or behavior patterns. Similarly, we may sense such information by touching or shaking hands with someone. Channeling is a form of energy sensing
as well. It involves allowing a higher level of consciousness to flow through us and to manifest verbally or in writing. Usually, the channeled information is in the form of prophesies from entities who are not currently incarnated.

Telepathy, sometimes called thought-reading, refers to communication among incarnated individuals that does not involve the senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste, or smell. Teleportation consists of the mobilization of energy in order to move objects without physically touching them. Precognition, sometimes also called prophesy, refers to knowing of an event before it happens in real time. Aura reading is the seeing or sensing of the energies of the human aura, "the energy envelope that surrounds and interpenetrates the physical body" (Gerber, 1988, p. 532). Astral travel is the leaving of one's body and projecting one's consciousness to the astral level while remaining aware of the body. The astral level is "the energy/matter octave or frequency band just beyond the etheric" and is often emotionally linked (Gerber, 1988, p. 532).

As we refine our Self-sensing abilities, we become more aware of the proprioceptive abilities of others
whom we bring into our energy fields. Somatically learning to sense, interpret, and understand our own bodies allows us to resonate with and understand others with more sensitivity. By transforming our internal blockages, we can attune better to and "read" shifts in the subtle energies of others, such as changes in thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and other energy movements. We can use the powerful energy of our intentional awareness to dissolve and transform internal boundaries between Self and other. As we transform ourselves through awareness, thereby expanding awareness, we are better able to experience unity consciousness, the felt sensing of oneness, and honor the interconnectedness of all.

Summary

From a somatic perspective, communication is the somatic process of giving form to energy through awareness. The soma embodies the capacity for awareness, which is a powerful energy that has the capacity to mobilize and transform other energies. By focusing awareness on the proprioceptive realm, the soma becomes aware of internal hindrances and seeks to transform them. Self-transformation allows for the
simultaneous manifestation of high-quality communication and unity consciousness. The scope of communication within this perspective is virtually limitless and is determined by the soma, the being within whom form is given to energy through awareness. Communication can be whatever the soma decides it to be because form can be given to any energy. Awareness is privileged within this perspective, and because the purpose of communication is to further unity consciousness, first-person modes of communication are privileged. These include first-person perception and its processes of creating interstice and verbal economy; proprioception; and Self-sensing, including the communicative processes of indrawal, accessing phylogenetic knowing, accessing sarcal ethics, Self-regulation, the mirror concept, inner-communication, and quantum communication.
CHAPTER IV

THEORY INTO PRACTICE:

SOMATIC COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

The basic tenets of a somatic theory of communication constitute a new theoretic framework from which to view communication and therefore call for new approaches to communication research. In this chapter, I explore the implications of a somatic theory of communication for research methodology and practice. I begin by devising a primary somatic research method that includes research tools and procedures; research questions for the contexts of intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, and rhetorical criticism; and criteria for judging the adequacy of somatic communication research. I then describe somatic communication research exemplars for the contexts of intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication.

Somatic communication theory is grounded in the fundamental premise that humans embody the dynamic interrelation of awareness, biological function, and
environment. Because of this holistic grounding, which constitutes a unity of knowing and doing, somatic communication theory inherently incorporates praxis, the unification of theory and practice. Considerable overlap exists among the interrelated components of theory, research, and pedagogy because within a somatic framework, such traditional delineations do not exist. The commonly defined areas of communication study, such as interpersonal communication, small group communication, and presentational speaking, also cease to exist from the perspective of somatic communication. I use these conventional categories in this chapter, however, in order to describe the contributions of somatic communication theory to the existing paradigm of communication study.

Within a somatic theory of communication, the soma embodies the process in which form is given to energy through the soma's capacity for awareness. The purpose of communication is to increase awareness of Self so that we consciously are able to transform energies within the Self and expand awareness toward actualizing unity consciousness. By developing proprioception and engaging in Self-sensing, we eliminate energy
blockages, dissolve patterned limitations, and allow for higher quality communication, which is communicative energy that resonates with unity consciousness.

Somatic Communication Research Method

Somatic communication theory legitimizes the inner realm of the Self, which constitutes the site of the dynamic merger of awareness, biological function, and environment. In somatic communication research, the scholar adopts a first-person perceptual stance and conducts an inquiry of the Self that is initiated by and focused on the Self. Put simply, the legitimate research domain of somatic communication constitutes Self-research in which each soma is empowered to be simultaneously researcher and subject.

As somatic communication researchers, our concern is with the internal domain, and our intent is to utilize communicative energies to develop, understand more fully, and transform the workings of our inner realm. We use an epistemology of subjectivity, the most reliable way of knowing (Chopra, 1990), and engage in a process of heightened sensory awareness that enables us to identify relationships and patterns that
guide us or hinder us in actualizing unity consciousness.

Somatic communication research is conducted by gaining knowledge through Self-observation, learning from our observations, and describing the knowledge that was gained. More specifically, the somatic communication research method consists of three steps: 1) expanding awareness of Self; 2) theorizing about somatic processes; and 3) validating somatic communication.

The first step in conducting somatic communication research is reflective of the general purpose of somatic communication: to expand awareness of Self in order to facilitate Self-transformation which, in turn, enables us to actualize unity consciousness. By mobilizing the powerful energies of awareness through first-person perception, we are able to give form to those energies in ways that allow our awareness to grow—we increase our capacities for observation through expanded proprioception and Self-sensing. This expansion of awareness, coupled with our intent to discover limiting patterns so that we may dissolve the patterns and remove limitations from the inside out,
invokes inner transformation that facilitates unity consciousness.

In addition to expanding awareness of Self, the process of somatic communication research involves a second step of forming theories of the Self. As we focus our intent on the first-person realm and expand awareness through proprioception and Self-sensing, we refine our abilities to Self-sense and Self-regulate. We begin to discern the patterns, relationships, and proclivities of our inner workings and form theories about our somatic processes. Such theories of the Self are generated by making comparisons and asking questions of the Self. As we expand awareness and extend our ability to recognize tendencies toward perseveration, we can employ various methods of Self-regulation to dissolve blockages and restore balance. Thus, theories of the Self also may include the testing and confirmation of various Self-regulatory practices. Formulating theories of the Self allows us to learn from our Self-observations, to identify limiting patterns, and to transform limitations through various methods of Self-regulation.
The final purpose of somatic communication research is to validate somatic communication by describing the knowledge gained through Self-observation and theorizing. **Validation** refers to the legitimization or mainstreaming of somatic communication through description. Such description may take the form of publication in scholarly journals, periodicals, or publications in the popular press. Validation also may take the form of pedagogy in various settings such as formal classroom environments, professional counseling sessions, workshops, seminars, support groups, or informal gatherings. Within the framework of somatic communication, pedagogy also is understood to take place frequently within the context of interpersonal interactions. Although validation of somatic communication research may take the form of simple awareness with or without the physical presence of others--since the generation of thoughts, feelings, or words immediately and significantly alters the face of reality--more interactive methods of validation, such as those mentioned above, are encouraged.
Research Tools and Procedures

The major tools for embarking on research of the Self are organized into the categories of first-person perception, Self-sensing, intent, and first-person expression. The perceptual stance for engaging in Self-research is first-person perception, the ability to shift focus to the inner realm, which allows for sensing the body from within. Self-sensing as a research tool refers to focusing consciousness actively on proprioception, the ability to receive stimuli in the inner realm. The intent of Self-research is to further awareness of Self by bringing into consciousness and transforming any internal hindrances to facilitate unity consciousness. Finally, first-person expression consists of manifesting communicative energy forms that emanate from within the first-person perceptual realm and are governed by the mirror concept of communication. I address each tool separately for the purposes of explanation; however, the categories are constructs only and do not accurately represent the dynamic flux that characterizes the internal realm.
First-Person Perception

First-person perception refers to letting go of an external focus and shifting instead to the inner realm in which the body is perceived from the inside out. Adopting a first-person perspective may be a new experience for the researcher, and difficulty may arise in discerning this perceptual mode. Switching to first-person perception is facilitated by any number of professional somatic techniques such as bodywork or movement exercises. Bodywork approaches include hands-on techniques such as Rolfing, Feldenkrais, Trager, Reflexology, and the Alexander Technique, in which trained practitioners physically manipulate the body. Movement exercises include practices such as Sensory Awareness, Progressive Relaxation, Kinetic Awareness, and Hanna Somatics. Also included are some approaches to yoga and martial arts such as Aikido and T'ai Chi, in which a trained practitioner guides the researcher through movement exercises with the expressed purpose of allowing us to increase awareness inside the body.

The process of shifting to first-person perception also is facilitated by using simple techniques we can do alone and almost anywhere, such as self-touch,
educational kinesiology, or focusing awareness on breathing from the inside out. Self-touch refers to palpating the body purposefully through tactile stimulation such as rubbing the feet, arms, legs, or torso. Educational kinesiology, sometimes called educational kinesthetics, consists of numerous simple activities designed for movement repatterning. Cross crawls—walking in place while touching each raised knee with the opposing hand—or massaging particular energy meridian points are examples of educational kinesiology techniques. When we use our breathing process as a focal point for our awareness, first-person perception also is facilitated. By focusing on actively feeling the sensations of the air moving through the nostrils, down the throat, through the trachea, expanding the lungs, then contracting and releasing before cycling into the next inhalation, we facilitate the development of a first-person perspective and an ability to feel our bodies from the inside.

When switching to the inner perceptual realm, particularly when this shift constitutes a relatively new experience, we may notice some resistance in the form of over-active thought processes that function as
barriers to first-person perception. Preliminary inhibition of first-person perception is common because the ideology of European-American culture reinforces externally focused third-person perception, privileging the intellect; conventional research modes, in particular, focus on external observation and analytical interpretation. Various forms of meditation are helpful in clearing the thinking mind and promoting the ability to focus attention and increase powers of concentration. Sustained inhibition of first-person perception may be indicative of a chronic state of disembodiment. In such cases, employing professional somatic practices is beneficial.

One confirmation of a successful shift into the first-person perceptual realm is a sense of feeling grounded in the body and able to experience the center of our being—a concentration of energy—in the middle section of the body near the solar plexus or abdominal area. In Chinese martial arts, this sensation is referred to as the sinking of the tan-tien and is strived for because it is an empowered mode of being (Liang, 1984). Focused awareness guided by the power of our intent facilitates the process of shifting to
the inner realm. The human soma has the capacity to focus on anything; we can shift our awareness freely back and forth between third- and first-person perceptual realms, for example. The more awareness we bring to this process, the more we expand the relevant research domain.

**Self-Sensing**

When grounded in the body, as a result of achievement of a shift to first-person perception, the researcher has the opportunity to develop another set of Self-research tools collectively referred to as **Self-sensing**. Self-sensing includes bringing into awareness the vast array of inner feelings; intentions; mental images; internal sounds; odors; tastes; physical sensations; and biological functioning of organs, muscles, tissues, and bones available to us through the proprioceptive realm. Honing Self-sensing means attuning inside to our varied somatic responses to ourselves, our internal responses to others, and our environment.

Because the soma is the site of the convergence of awareness, biological function, and environment, Self-sensing often comprises an interconnected matrix of
thoughts, physical sensations, and feelings in relation with an ongoing environmental flux. As I sit here at the keyboard in front of my computer, for example, I am aware of a multiplicity of incredibly varied and complex sensations that I am experiencing on diverse levels. (I'm biting my lips; why this anxiety? I hear the neighbors; they are home late. Should I include Levin's ideas in here? I'm savoring my tea, I'm appreciating my cat purring nearby, I sense a tightness in my chest--my nervous anticipation of a phone call from a loved one, I feel an energized excitement about sharing these concepts, my upper back aches, it's getting late, and on and on it goes.)

Within the proprioceptive realm, physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, Self, other, internal, and external processes all constantly flow simultaneously. Each of these seeming details consists of how we interact with the world; how we interact with the world consists of such details; and this entire ongoing, undifferentiated process comprises how we communicate. As Self-researchers of somatic communication, we expand our research database by expanding the range of our proprioceptive awareness.
In conventional communication terms, we increase the range and variety of our communication channels each time we bring a new stimulus into awareness through refined Self-sensing. We may be unaware, for example, of the actual physical sensations of particular feelings that we experience—the accelerated heart rate of anxiety, the dull ache of sadness, the increased warmth of frustration. By expanding our Self-sensing abilities, we learn to "read" and understand our bodies, our Selves, in a more sophisticated way. We also expand our research resources by honing our perceptive senses—hearing, touch, taste, sight, smell, and intuition—since these senses constitute channels through which we bring the world into our proprioceptive range. Through our senses, we somatically extend into the world and bring the world inside of us. By honing sensory awareness, we increase the capacity of our potential to bring more of the world inside, expanding toward unity consciousness, enhancing the quality of our communication, and extending further our relevant research data.
Intent

The process of Self-sensing is guided by the intent of the soma, which constitutes an additional Self-research tool. Intent—to function with focused awareness in the form of will and desire—is a potent research tool because human intent mobilizes energies, increases their voltage, and alters reality. When engaged in Self-research, our intention has the capacity to determine the outcome of our investigation. Therefore, the accompanying motivation of our will and desire—our intent—that governs the research process is important. Within a somatic theory of communication, the purpose of communication is to further awareness of Self by bringing into consciousness any internal hindrances in order to facilitate unity consciousness. The intent of the researcher must be in alignment with this purpose in order to engage successfully in Self-research.

The intent to further awareness of Self is governed by an attitude of acceptance. We approach our inner sanctum and notice what is there with a sense of respect, wonderment, and gentle curiosity. We are engaged in Self-observation, a "silent witnessing" that
is characterized by a spirit of "alert appreciation" (Chopra, 1994, side 2). Such an attitude may be difficult for the Self-researcher to adopt because it contradicts the ideological mindset of scientific research in particular and of European-American culture in general, which tend to value and train the analytical mind to be quick to critique and then hold fast to strong, clear conclusions. Within the holistic perspective of somatic communication, internal and external are reflections of each other. When the critical thinking mind is turned inward, often the result is an internal attitude of criticism, judgment, shame, or blame toward ourselves. In this sense, engaging in Self-research requires a transformation of attitude in which we enact a gentle inventory of inner space in order to expand awareness of Self and enhance unity consciousness.

Because the intent governing Self-sensing is that of acceptance, honesty is basic to this research mode. It is an assumption intrinsic to the intention to further awareness of Self and facilitate unity consciousness. Honesty is characterized by truthfulness, sincerity, integrity, and lack of
repression within oneself. Any deception, dishonesty, deceit, falsehood, or artifice serves only to obstruct awareness of Self and thus violates the explicit purpose of somatic communication research. Similar to the attitude of acceptance addressed above, Self-honesty is particularly contradictory to conventional research practices that tend to advocate the ignoring or bracketing of researchers' desires, intentions, feelings, and similar qualities that are typically understood to confound results through researcher bias. Self-honesty also may be seen as somewhat contradictory to conventional communication research that often includes externally-focused content areas such as face saving practices, methods of manipulating to gain compliance, ego protection strategies, and persuasive tactics for rationalizing, justifying, or denying one's behaviors.

With the focused intent to expand awareness, governed by an attitude of acceptance and honesty, we may become the silent observers of our inner realm and learn to recognize patterns or instances of blocked energies that inhibit our potential for unity consciousness. As we become attuned to the internal
realm in all of its complexity, we learn to identify, to respond to, or to transform the habitual patterns and relationships of which we become aware within ourselves. The communicative energy of human consciousness by itself is often powerful enough to dissolve or transfigure patterned energy blockages.

When guided by our intent to expand awareness of Self, new awarenesses continue to unfold, and multiple methods of adaptation emerge. Theories of the Self are formulated, refined, and confirmed or revised. As we move away from singularity or rigidity, releasing blocked energies, we move toward enhanced consciousness by enlarging our capacity for awareness on varied levels. The tool box of the somatic communication Self-researcher is virtually unlimited as we discover an ever-expanding multiplicity of theories of the Self—relationships, patterns, influences, and choices on varied dimensions that constitute our ongoing responsive, adaptive existence. Our intent engenders conscious adaptation to constant change. We expand our capacity for adaptation by enhancing our somatic awareness and by becoming more conscious of our dynamic interconnectedness.
First-Person Expression

First-person expression, the final category of Self-research tools, reflects the components that necessitate its manifestation. These include first-person perception, Self-sensing, the intent to further awareness of Self, an attitude of acceptance, and honesty. When we are somatically attuned in these ways, first-person expressions--verbal utterances reflective of these somatic states--are manifest. In addition, first-person expression is characterized by adhering to the mirror concept of communication, the axiom that external attributions and inner-communication reflect each other. Thus, first-person expression is characterized by Self-reference, disclosures of varied Self-sensings, and descriptions of theories of the Self.

The validation of somatic communication through description, publication, or pedagogy may call for devising additional innovative research tools such as a new or modified language system that is more congruent with the somatic realm and with unity consciousness. Current American-English vocabulary and grammatical structures are often unable to accommodate the
processual nature of somatic awareness and the sensory-rich realm that is revealed through Self-sensing. When engaged in first-person expression, we may find the language confining due to the absence of established words to express fully our inner realm. The American-English language, reflective of a cultural ideology of third-person perception, is lacking in descriptive words that adequately reflect the sensory richness and subtlety of many somatic experiences.

In addition, the structure of American-English acts to undermine somatic principles. The language that we use shapes our reality and influences the way we think by functioning to privilege third-person perception. Because the United States is a verbocentric culture, a culture that privileges verbal expression and thus third-person communication, the structure of our consciousness necessarily is influenced heavily by our limited language system. American-English also is unable to capture the processual nature of first-person perception. The effort to separate out and put into the containers of static words what is dynamic process tends to rob the process of its life: "It is language whose fixed
vocabulary and grammar persuades us that the world and the self are fixed and substantial. Because it describes others as objects, language persuades us to a third-person viewpoint" (Hanna, 1991a, p. 65).

Finally, the validation and mainstreaming of somatic communication calls for publication outlets, in addition to the Somatics journal, in which Self-research would be documented and distributed. Each individual has the capacity for Self-research. By publishing their findings, individuals at varying stages of the Self-research process make valuable contributions to those who are newly embarking on this type of research enterprise. We could benefit, for example, from the published Self-research modes of those who have devised innovative ways to re-inhabit their bodies; expand Self-sensing; dissolve discommunication on various levels; refine Self-sensing; expand choices for Self-regulation; overcome limiting belief systems; and transform internal barriers to unity consciousness.

Research Questions

The research domain of somatic communication Self-research is virtually unlimited. The tools and
procedures described above may be applied to any number of established communicative situations, ranging from intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, and presentational speaking to rhetorical criticism or cultural studies. The research questions characteristic of Self-research will change from situation to situation and, depending upon how each question is answered, new and unforseen questions will be generated in the research process. In this section, I outline basic research questions that characterize somatic communication research in the established areas of interpersonal communication and rhetorical criticism in order to give a sample of the kinds of research questions addressed by this method.

Somatic communication research is concerned with the source of discommunication, the Self, and the Self-researcher's inner exploration is guided by questions that seek to uncover the roots of discommunication. Relevant research questions within the context of interpersonal communication, when we are in the presence of one other person, include but are not limited to the following kinds of questions:
Am I engaging in first-person perception? To what degree am I able to Self-sense? If Self-sensing is restricted, what is getting in the way of this? Am I inhabiting my body? To what extent am I inhabiting my body? Where is my center? What physical sensations am I experiencing? To what extent do I resonate with the energy of this person? What am I feeling while in another's presence? What am I thinking? To what extent do these proprioceptions align with unity consciousness? Do I want to talk? Why am I talking? From where is this impulse to talk emanating? Am I talking or is, for example, my fear talking? Am I really talking or am I imitating someone else? Am I expressing patterned responses? What are they? Am I conforming my communication to fit this person's expectations? How would I communicate if I were truly expressing my Self? What can I learn about my Self from my somatic responses to this situation? Are these new insights? What do these insights tell me about myself in relation to this person?

Relevant research questions within the context of rhetorical criticism, when we are in the presence of a rhetorical artifact such as a public speech, a work of
art, a media display, or a text, for example, include but are not limited to the following kinds of questions:

Am I engaging in first-person perception? To what degree am I able to Self-sense? If Self-sensing is restricted, what is getting in the way of this? Am I inhabiting my body? To what extent am I inhabiting my body? Where is my center? What physical sensations am I experiencing? To what extent do I resonate with the energy of this artifact? What am I feeling while in its presence? What am I thinking? To what extent do these proprioceptions align with unity consciousness? What can I learn about myself from my somatic responses to this situation? Is this a new insight? What does this tell me about my Self in relation to this artifact?

Research Method Exemplars

The research method derived from a somatic theory of communication constitutes an ethnography of the Self. Such an endeavor is governed by first-person perception; Self-sensing; the intent to further awareness of Self guided by an attitude of acceptance and the practice of honesty; Self-regulation; inner-
communication; and the mirror concept of communication. Somatic communication research is practiced for the purpose of expanding awareness of Self, which entails locating and transforming discommunication in order to further unity consciousness.

What follows are two communicative situations exemplifying somatic communication Self-research. The first situation demonstrates Self-research in an interpersonal communication context; the second demonstrates Self-research within the context of intrapersonal communication.

In the first situation, Self-research within an interpersonal communication context, two different data sets—including inner-communication and first-person expression—are described in order to demonstrate the advancement in the process of the Self-research.

Each set exemplifies first-person perception, Self-sensing, and the intent to expand awareness of Self. The second data set, however, demonstrates more reliability because the researcher greatly extended

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9The inner-communication described below appears lengthy and, in written form, does not adequately reflect the high speed at which the process of inner-communication is enacted. Also, the more frequently we engage in somatic inner-communication the more adept at it we become.
awareness of Self and successfully transformed discommunication through refined Self-sensing, commitment to the intent to further awareness of Self, an attitude of acceptance, and the practice of honesty.

**Situation # 1**

Mary and I are close friends who live in separate states and have not seen each other for five months. Mary has come to visit me for five days during the winter holiday. During her visit, I notice that she wakes up in the morning before I do, goes into the kitchen, cooks breakfast for herself and is already eating by the time I get up. She then reads a book while, a few minutes later, I have breakfast alone. When this happens for three days in a row, I become confused and irritated that Mary is not waiting a few extra minutes so that we can eat breakfast together since spending time together was the expressed purpose of her visit.

**Inner-communication:** I'm noticing a lot of irritation here. My breathing is shallow and erratic, my heart rate seems accelerated, and I can feel that familiar tightness in my solar plexus. I recognize these as my somatic indicators of irritation, and their
intensity constitutes anger. Also, my thoughts keep wanting to dwell on the situation of Mary getting up and having breakfast without me in my own house. What is this about? I feel emotionally activated. I'm feeling displaced in my own home, like I don't belong here. I'm feeling powerless and small, kind of invisible. I'm focusing on deepening my breathing so I can expand my lungs and take up more space. I have now created an interstice, a open space between the close interval of my patterned response. Some big, strong stretching movements will help me feel more visible and expanded. Yes. The energy has shifted some. Now I want to share my process with Mary.

First-person expression: "Mary, when I got up this morning, I experienced this tightness in my solar plexus and some indicators of irritation and anger. I did some deep breathing and extended stretching to help restore balance. I realized I'm feeling kind of invisible and displaced. It seems to be connected with our not having breakfast together. I wonder, is there a way we can make that happen?"

The above response represents a significant level of Self-sensing, but as I continue to develop my Self-
research abilities, I am able to refine my process and deepen the level of my inner-communication. In the previous data set, I became aware that I was feeling displaced in my own home. However, the term displaced and the accompanying feelings of displacement and invisibility still contain energies of third-person perception. Displacement and invisibility suggest that Mary has displaced me and that I am invisible in her eyes, an external referent. These are still third-person responses that focus on Mary as the cause of my distress. My true intent is to expand awareness of my Self, so I will continue my research and explore a little deeper. The mirror concept of communication tells me that what I perceive out there, in Mary, is actually already inside of me. I intend to find it within my Self.

Inner-communication: My thoughts keep wanting to dwell on the situation of Mary getting up and having breakfast without me in my own house. I resent feeling displaced in my own home. But displacement indicates that Mary is doing this, displacing me, and I know this is not about her, it's about me. So, what am I doing to myself? I'm feeling powerless and small, kind of
invisible and de-energized. But where is this coming from? I'm feeling . . . inadequate. That's it! I can see it so clearly now. I'm afraid that I'm failing at being a good host who should get up early and make breakfast for her guest. But I don't want to get up early, so I expect Mary just to wait for me, and she's not, so I'm getting irritated at her because I'm feeling like an inadequate host. I want to say that she is rude when really I am feeling like the rude one for not being a good host and making breakfast. I was projecting my internal rudeness onto her.

In fact, I am an adequate host. I've supplied healthy food, and I am pleased my guest feels comfortable enough in my home to prepare breakfast for herself. She perhaps enjoys a bit of time alone in the morning. But wait, now I am rationalizing away my feelings and intellectualizing the situation. I am trying to convince myself that there is nothing to feel bad about when, in fact, my feelings of irritation and inadequacy were very real and valid. I also began to focus on Mary and her alleged desire for alone time. I want to stay with my Self and transform this discommunication at the root, not suppress it with my
intellect. I will return to my breathing, to my body, and shift my energy concentration away from my thinking process.

Feels like my center has moved to my abdomen right now. Slow, deep breaths. Now, where are these feelings of inadequacy coming from? I'm aware of feeling some guilt for not getting up. I'm aware that if I were out running errands, for example, and Mary prepared her meal without me, I would likely not be feeling activated. I feel guilty for staying in bed! Guilt indicates I'm afraid of judgment. I'm afraid Mary is negatively judging me for my not getting up earlier. Memories from childhood now flood to mind, memories of growing up in a household often feeling criticized by my parents for my desire to sleep in. This old baggage I am still carrying around has caused me to project my parents' judgments onto Mary. I feel a rush of warmth and surge of energy moving through me. I'm excited! I feel so relieved with this awareness. I want to do some edu-kinesthetics to help bring me to the present moment so I'm no longer projecting my past parental problems onto Mary. I'll do the brain-
integration technique to help synchronize my brain hemispheres. I want to share my process with Mary.

First-person expression: "Mary, when I got up this morning, I experienced this tightness in my solar plexus and some indicators of irritation and anger. I realized I was feeling inadequate. It got activated by my feeling like a failed host because I'm not getting up before you and making breakfast. Then I got in touch with some childhood memories of growing up in a household where I felt constantly judged for wanting to sleep in. I've always felt a desire to awaken naturally, and so I don't like to disturb my sleep cycles with alarm clocks. Anyway, I did the brain-integration technique to help bring me to the here and now, and I'm feeling so much better.

Situation # 2

The following example depicts somatic communication Self-research in an intrapersonal context. It demonstrates how we can build on previous Self-research findings to recognize patterns—to form theories of the Self—that aid in our transformation. This example also demonstrates innovative Self-sensing
and Self-regulation techniques that can be used to enhance unity consciousness.

I am enjoying a leisurely afternoon at home when I receive a phone call from a friend with whom I have not spoken for several months. I am excited to hear from her, and we exchange fond hellos. She asks me for the telephone number of a mutual friend, which I supply, and then, suddenly, just after our conversation has started, she says she has to go and very abruptly hangs up the phone.

Inner-communication: Wow, what's going on here? My heart beat is slightly accelerated; my breathing is shallow; and I am experiencing a dull, faint tingling in my chest. I am aware of a sinking sensation in my solar plexus area. I feel my energy pulled down, as if suddenly under a stronger force of gravity. I recognize these as the physical sensations of my fear. I am afraid of being rejected by my friend. I am aware that my patterned response to fear of rejection is to fault the other person and to distance myself first so as not to be rejected. By attending to my body, I have created an interstice, an interruption of this
patterned response. Within this opening, I now have creative choices.

Based on my knowledge of my Self, the fear sensation seems disproportionately bigger than the brief telephone situation calls for. When I follow the sensations, I become aware of a connection to this fear within the larger context of my life. I also now recall a powerfully disturbing dream I had in the night in which rejection played a significant role. I consciously deepen and slow down my breathing which, in turn, relaxes me and revitalizes my energy. I consciously visualize the energy vibration as filling me with white light.

A few details of the phone conversation now come to me--the tone of her voice, the noise in the background, the speed of her talking--details that indicate she may have felt rushed. Instead of phoning my friend back immediately, I consciously visualize her image in detail. I visualize her smiling at me, and I send light toward her. I know that my connection with her has not ended with the phone call. When we talk again, I will share with her how my fear of rejection was activated during our telephone conversation. Maybe
I will have even more insights by then from the connection with the dream. My energy is lifted, my bodymind is clear, and I experience dynamic peace as I move into the rest of the day.

**Criterial Adequacy**

When judging the adequacy of Self-research, the traditional criteria for validity and reliability are applicable only in part. The conventional understanding of validity refers to the degree to which researchers measure what they claim to measure. Within a somatic communication perspective, validity means simply that Self-researchers study what they set out to study—the Self. Assurances of Self-study are verifiable by evidence of the researcher's ability to adhere to first-person perception. A fundamental question for discerning validity is: Does the research address the body as perceived from within?

Internal reliability, the internal consistency of measurement, is enhanced by the researcher's ability for expanded awareness of Self as demonstrated by refined Self-sensing; the ability to fully inhabit one's body on an ongoing basis; commitment to the intent to further awareness of Self; an attitude of
acceptance; the practice of honesty; and the successful transformation of energy blocks, discommunication, and other internal hindrances to unity consciousness. Given the unique qualities of each soma's internal process, this research method is not concerned with external reliability in the conventional sense of external consistency of measurement. Self-research results need not be generalizable to others. Somatic communication theory recognizes the impossibility of repeating Self-research and acknowledges the dynamic, synergistic qualities of somatic reality that make the generation of similar Self-research results irrelevant to this area of study. Instead, published findings of Self-research serve to legitimize somatic communication and allow for the expansion of awareness through our exposure to the Self-research methods of others.

Summary

Somatic communication research constitutes an ethnography of the Self in which inner-communication is the main site of participant-observation. The research tools of the Self researcher are perception, Self-sensing, intent, and first-person expression. The procedures of somatic Self-research are to engage in
first-person perception, hone abilities for Self-sensing with the intent to further awareness of Self, and access inner-communication. Somatic Self-research is guided by the desire to use the powerful energy of awareness to transform internal hindrances in order to facilitate unity consciousness. Thus, the goal of somatic communication Self-research, to facilitate unity consciousness, is congruous with the purpose of communication from which this research mode derives.
CHAPTER V

THEORY INTO PRACTICE:

SOMATIC COMMUNICATION IN THE BASIC COURSE

Somatic communication theory and research expand the assumed terrain of communication study and call for legitimation of somatic communication modes. One method of validating somatic communication is through inclusion of a unit in the basic communication course. In this chapter, I describe a unit on somatic communication that is designed to be included in the basic communication course. The unit described below is intended to introduce undergraduate students to the fundamental premises of communication as viewed from a somatic perspective on communication. This chapter includes a discussion of educational philosophy, role of the instructor, unit objectives, and methods of evaluation from the perspective of somatic communication. Suggestions are provided for general content, exercises, and assignments for such a unit. By elaborating on the content and exercises, the
proposed unit could be expanded into a separate course on somatic communication.

The basic course is designed to introduce participants to the field of communication study and to provide them with the communication skills necessary to interact successfully in contemporary European-American culture. Our conventional approach to the basic communication course, however, has not kept pace with what we now know about human functioning and the nature of reality. With its emphasis on social constructivism, linear time constructs, and the segregation of communication areas, for example, the traditional approach to the basic course is reflective of Aristotelian logic, Newtonian physics, and an ideology of separatism. The new physics, quantum mechanics, the legitimization of vibrational medicine, and innovations in social science such as transpersonal psychology, for example, suggest that human consciousness determines reality, that time is nonlinear, and that all of reality is interconnected in an immediate and intimate way.

If communication educators are to respond to such advances in knowledge, we must introduce basic course
participants to the internal realm of consciousness in an effort to validate its potential and to facilitate Self-transformation. Frequently, undergraduate class members experience personal problems and struggle with fears and insecurities that they are ill equipped to handle. Individuals' needs would be served better if the basic course would recognize the full dimensionality of human beingness and facilitate growth on all levels, not just emphasizing intellectual capacities and social advancement.

Conventional approaches to communication continue to reflect Aristotelian assumptions (Shepherd, 1992); as such, they perpetuate an external focus, privilege the intellect, and reinforce third-person perception. Grounded in Aristotle's phainomena, "the energy of [communication] is reversed from an interior journey of the soul toward its center to an exterior movement of the speaker toward the social world" (Frentz, 1993, p. 84). Further, Aristotle's conception of truth in the practical world of human affairs "is revealed through the sensory and rational entailments of what most and/or the most authoritative already know, believe, and say" (1993, p. 84). A somatic approach to
communication, in contrast, emphasizes the integrity of the Self by encouraging us to experience and trust in first-person perception, proprioception, and Self-sensing.

Including a unit on somatic communication in the basic course would provide an enriching perspective on the process of communication. Somatic communication identifies communication as a process, as do currently recognized communication theories. The established paradigm in communication studies, however, highlights a particular segment of the communication process, confining primary theoretic focus to third-person perception and the resulting third-person communication modes. Although a somatic theory of communication recognizes the validity of third-person modes, this perspective highlights a different portion of the communication process. Somatic communication theory emphasizes first-person perception and privileges first-person communication forms. Thus, somatic communication theory enriches existing constructs and extends conceptual boundaries, allowing for a more complete understanding of the communication process.
Educational Philosophy

A somatic perspective is internally focused and honors the integrity of the individual, recognizing that each soma possesses the inner resources necessary for creative, adaptive functioning, and each soma is responsible for its own growth process. In terms of education, then, teachers do not teach individuals; rather, individuals teach themselves. Learning is a somatic process; it is an inside growth process that occurs within the context of a complex constellation of internal events. The experience of learning means to change in a particular way, and, ultimately, each soma chooses how to experience this process.

The soma is the synergistic interrelation of awareness, biological function, and environment. Thus, somatic pedagogy is concerned with educating the whole person, who embodies the convergence of diverse interrelationships, contexts, and systems. As whole Selves, human beings seek meaning, not just information or skills. Growth is a way of being, a somatic process, and is facilitated best by sensitive attention

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10For more information about holistic education, see Gang, Maver, and Lynn (1992).
to the multidimensions of human beingness—physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, Self, and other. Pedagogy grounded in somatic communication theory is concerned with cultivating growth on various levels in order to facilitate harmonious balance and integration.

Role of the Instructor

Because of the inherent holism of a somatic perspective on communication, in which all life forms are unilaterally interconnected in an immediate way, the hierarchy that typically separates teacher from student is collapsed in this unit. The underlying premise of somatic communication is that all somas are equally responsible for what happens in the classroom. The instructor has the role of a facilitator in the unit on somatic communication; her or his task is to co-create conditions in which the growth process is nurtured. By devising creative, experiential learning activities, the facilitator encourages individuals to "live" the concept, mode, approach, or particular theory that is being addressed. Facilitator and participants alike cooperate in Self-discovery in which we are invited to take inside and "try on" a specific
notion or to find and internally explore what may be getting in the way of accepting that notion.

The somatic communication facilitator allows individuals to be responsible for their own growth—response-able, able to respond in ways they freely choose. Growth is facilitated best within a dynamic, open classroom atmosphere where individuals are allowed to learn from the fullness of their own experience in a safe yet stimulating environment that cultivates natural growth processes on all levels. The instructor-as-growth-facilitator invites participants to be Self-centered and to engage in exploration in order to expand awareness of Self as integrated, embodied, synergistic beings.

Since we communicate on multiple dimensions with others constantly, the somatically attuned facilitator strives to be a living example of what is affirmed through course content, somatic practice, and Self-research. Growth is a dynamic, open process that requires a facilitator to participate in the Self-growth experience and to be responsive to the moment. Somatic communication facilitators demonstrate vulnerability; trust in and respect each individual's
process; share their own process; and assist others in finding and developing their own unique expressions, insights, and contributions. Ultimately, only healthy, adaptive human beings will create a healthy, harmonious society in which we more fully manifest our potentials.

Unit Objectives

The objectives of a unit on somatic communication in the basic course are 1) to establish goals for Self-growth; 2) to articulate the process of manifesting the established goals; 3) to recognize experientially first-person and third-person perception; 4) to enhance proprioception; 5) to explore inner dialogue; 6) to increase awareness of the differences between first-person expression and third-person expression; 7) to explore Self-sensing and first-person expression in various contexts; 8) to increase options for Self-regulation; and 9) to reflect on how the experiences in this unit apply to aspects of life in general.

Unit Overview

A unit on somatic communication begins with an introduction and orientation to the perspective, including a general overview of somatics, its history, philosophical tenets, and major assumptions. An
introduction of somatic communication theory, including the definition of communication, scope, and an overview of the modes of communication also would serve to orient participants to the perspective. Finally, by way of introduction, explaining the educational philosophy and pedagogical approach facilitates participants' orientation to the perspective.

Structured activities begin with establishing Self-growth goals for the unit set forth by each individual. Participants are asked to begin to keep journals at the start and to journal consistently throughout the unit at designated intervals, usually at least once a week or as much as every class session. The basic topics then are introduced by way of experiential exercises described below. The basic topics are derived from the major modes of somatic communication. They include: first-person perception, proprioception, inner-communication, first-person expression, and Self-sensing in various contexts. The unit ends with participants' presentations.

Unit Content and Teaching Tools

A unit on somatic communication is organized around the assumption that establishing first-person
perception and exploring the proprioceptive realm leads to greater awareness of Self. The transformative energies of increased Self-awareness, in turn, cause the boundaries between Self and other to dissolve, resulting in unifying communication. The exercises and assignments described below consists of basic somatic communication topics with examples of how each topic could be addressed within the context of a basic communication course. The topics are discussed below so they build upon one another.

**Establishing Goals for Self-Growth**

Participants are asked to clarify what they intend to work on within the context of the unit for the duration of its allotted time. By focusing awareness on establishing our own goals and then centering intent on manifesting these goals, we are mobilizing powerful energies; this approach becomes an additional experiential tool for demonstrating somatic communication concepts.

When articulating goals for the unit, participants are encouraged to choose aspirational goals. Goals that are aspirational in nature represent a challenge to us; they embody ambitions for which we are striving
and that we desire to achieve for ourselves. Aspirational goals are positive and simple, mobilizing and transforming energies in an affirming way. They involve the Self, not others, and are most effective when languaged in present tense, in positive terms, and with no limitations (Fremming and Hausboel, 1994). For example, if my goal is that I want more friends because I no longer want to feel lonely, I would want to change this to a positive, simple, unlimited, Self-focused, present-tense statement, such as, "I experience unity" or "I feel supported."

The establishment of goals for Self-growth within the context of the basic unit is best accomplished by use of a Self-inventory questionnaire. Because somatic communication is focused internally, the questions will be open ended and have a personal tone to them. The questions can be answered within the context of an ongoing journal assignment, addressed as a separate written assignment, or answered within the context of individual appointments. Questions to be answered might include:

My relationship with my physical body is . . .

My relationship with my emotional aspect is . . .
My relationship with my mental capacity is . . .
My relationship with my spiritual dimension is . . .
What I like most about myself is . . .
What I like least is . . .
In my relationships with others, I tend to . . .
My biggest pet peeve is . . .
My worst fear is . . .
My life goal is . . .
My greatest challenge in life is . . .
Other people think I am . . . when I am really . . .
What means more to me than anything else right now is . . .
In my ideal career, I would be working as a . . .
If I could change anything in the world, I would . . .
My biggest worry is . . .
The quality that I appreciate most in others is . . .
If I could do whatever I wanted right now, I would . . .
What makes me sad is . . .
What makes me happy is . . .
My greatest attributes are . . .
Things I would like to improve in myself are . . .
The best way for me to do this is . . .
First-Person Perception

First-person perception, the body as perceived from within, is a foundational premise of somatic communication theory. First-person perception entails letting go of an external, third-person focus and shifting instead to the inner realm, in which the body is perceived from the inside out. Most of us are unaccustomed to assuming a first-person perceptual stance, especially in a classroom setting. Since European-American culture privileges third-person perception, establishing a first-person perceptual stance often is challenging.

The topic of first-person perception can be introduced by way of a discussion in which participants describe the kinds of communication problems we are experiencing in our lives. Difficulties with friends, family members, roommates, partners, and co-workers are likely to be disclosed. We often have analyzed such situations thoroughly from a third-person perspective and have an extensive cognitive understanding of the nature of these problems. Despite our understanding,
however, communication difficulties continue to arise. From where do communication problems come? A somatic perspective on communication suggests that they come from inside of us and that they remain largely invisible to us as long as our perception is focused externally, in a third-person perceptual mode. Adopting a first-person perspective is facilitated by the following exercises.

**Exercise # 1.** A visual aid depicting a figure-ground image helps to illustrate the implications of differing perceptual modes. For example, when looking at a figure-ground image that simultaneously depicts an old woman and young woman, some of us look at the image and see an old woman, some of us see a young woman, and some of us see both images and can shift back and forth between the two. Although we are beholding the same image, depending upon our perception, what we see is completely different. What is an eye in one perceptual mode is an ear in another, a chin is a nose, a mouth is a necklace, and so forth. The entire image is completely reconfigured, depending on our perception, to the extent that we are not, in fact, perceiving the same image after all. Shifting from third-person to
first-person perception is a similar experience in that the reality we behold is completely reconfigured depending upon our perceptual stance.

**Exercise # 2.** The following exercise, suggested by Hanna (1970/1985), allows for further experiential exploration of the differences between third-person and first-person perception. We hold one hand in front of us and use the other hand to feel the top of the outstretched hand. We then describe what we feel. Most respondents describe the smooth, dry, rough, or supple surface of the outstretched hand. As participants continue touching their hands, they are invited to shift the focus of their awareness to the inside of the outstretched hand receiving the touch. In other words, they are asked to shift from external, third-person perception to internal, first-person perception—-from the hand doing the touching to the hand being touched. This simple and effective exercise allows us to experience "first-hand" (sorry, couldn’t help myself!) the differences between first-person and third-person perception.

We continue to explore experientially and articulate the differences between the external focus
of third-person perception, in which the body is our instrument of perception, and the internal focus of first-person perception, in which the body is perceived from within. We may do a brief writing exercise where we consciously shift back and forth between first-person and third-person perception and record the results of our awareness on paper. We discuss, compare, and contrast the experiences and the implications of these two modes of perception, one in which the body is bypassed, the other in which the body is perceived from the inside out. The third-person perspective is reminiscent of the objective, analytical stance and cerebral focus that characterize the model of concise, effective communication in European-American culture. The first-person perspective represents the subjective, sensory-rich stance of the embodied expressor, which typifies the experiential reality of the human soma.

**Proprioception**

Proprioception, the reception of stimuli within an organism, includes bringing into awareness the vast array of inner feelings; intentions; mental images; internal sounds; experiencing of odors, tastes,
physical, and energetic sensations; and the subtle complexities of biological functioning including glands, organs, muscles, tissues, and bones. Honing proprioception means attuning inside to our varied somatic responses to what we bring into our perceptual field.

**Exercise # 1.** Any of a vast number of somatic activities, such as guided imagery, visualization, progressive relaxation, or educational kinesiology, could be used to facilitate increased proprioception. This exercise focuses on the breath because breathing is foundational to communication. Typically, upon hearing the word communication, most of us call to mind verbal expression; however, the act of speaking is a manifestation of breathing. We are able to speak only because we are able to breathe. Focusing on the breath encourages participants to oxygenate their systems fully and to return to their breath as an indicator of somatic functioning. Awareness of alterations in the rate, volume of air, or rhythm of the breath can indicate, for example, whether we are in

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11Two texts that are useful resources for expanding proprioceptive awareness are Davis, Eshelman, and McKay (1988) and Dennison and Dennison (1986).
a first-person or third-person perceptual mode. The breath also can indicate our level of anxiety or somatic activation; shallow breathing shows evidence of stress, while deep breathing is associated with relaxation and sarcality.

Further, by consciously altering our breathing, we may invoke and regulate particular somatic responses. By accelerating the rate of breathing, reducing the volume of air, and interrupting the rhythm of the breath, for example, we invoke a somatically activated state of stress. By purposefully slowing the rate of breathing, increasing the volume of air, and restoring a comfortable rhythm, we are able to induce calm.

Somatic techniques such as focusing on the breath can be used to Self-regulate when facing stressful situations. If we experience anxiety before giving a presentation, while speaking in a group, or in expressing ourselves to a loved one, for example, we consciously can alter our breathing and restore our system to a relaxed state. Similarly, when we experience lethargy or mild depression, we can revitalize our systems by accelerating our breathing or
by energizing our body through other somatic movement forms.

To facilitate participants' focusing on the breath, an energy breath exercise may be helpful and can be read in order to guide participants through the breathing process.

Sit comfortably in your chair, feet on the floor, legs uncrossed, arms unfolded and in a relaxed position. When you feel ready, please close your eyes, let go of your external focus and pay attention instead to what is going on inside of you. What are the first things you notice? Then, when you feel ready, shift your awareness to your breathing. Become aware of the fact that you are breathing, and feel yourself breathing from the inside out. Feel the air moving inside your lungs, feel your lungs gently expanding and contracting. Feel the air moving in through your nose, down your trachea, into your lungs, and back out again. Then, on the next exhalation, gently let your jaw drop and your mouth open, allowing the air to escape through your mouth on the exhalation, and inhaling through your nose.
When you feel ready, shift your awareness to your left foot, and the next time you inhale, breathe in, drawing the breath in through your left foot, breathing up through your left leg, drawing the breath up your left side, and exhaling out through the top of your left-brain hemisphere. As you do this, really sense, see, and feel the air moving through you as a cleansing stream of radiant energy that is removing all tension, toxins, stress, and negativity each time you exhale. Repeat this breathing process three or four times on the left side. Then, the next time you inhale, shift over to your right foot and repeat the process on your right side, beginning with the right foot, breathing up the right leg, the right side, and then out through the top of your right-brain hemisphere.

After you have repeated the breathing process three or four times on the right side, shift awareness back to the left foot. This time, again, draw the breath up through your left foot, left leg, and left side. When the breath has reached your left-brain hemisphere, this time, cross the breath over to your right-brain hemisphere and breathe out, down through your right side, right leg, right foot, and out into
the floor. Then inhale up through the same foot, drawing the breath up through your right leg, right side, right hemisphere, and then cross over to your left-brain hemisphere, breathing out through your left side. Repeat this crossing-over breath three or four times. Upon completion of this exercise, scan your body, noticing the effects of the exercise.

**Inner-Communication**

The mirror concept of communication tells us that our verbal expression emanates from an already ongoing internal dialogue; thus, if we want to improve communication difficulties, the place to work on these is inside ourselves. Because right relationships begin within, we can effect positive change in our relationships with others by transforming ourselves from the inside out. We can hone awareness of our inner dialogue by engaging in first-person perception and consciously focusing on our inner dialogue.

**Exercise # 1.** Participants are asked to set time aside for indrawal. Essentially, we make an appointment with ourselves for at least half an hour, and during this time alone, we record segments of our inner-communication. We may do this by keeping a diary.
or speaking into a tape recorder and transcribing the inner-communication. Participants are encouraged not to alter inner-communication in any way, but to simply notice the communicative process. Following the period of indrawal, we then assess our inner-communication. The following questions can be used to guide the assessment process:

When I allow my awareness to go where it wants to, it tends to focus on? When I focus inside myself, the first thing I notice is? The qualities of my inner-communication are? The sound, taste, texture, color, and scent of my inner-communication is? When I focus inside myself, I tend to see images of (describe the size, shape, color, hue and content)? When I focus inside myself, I tend to feel sensations of (describe the weight, space, time, shape, flow and effort of the sensations)? When I focus inside myself, I tend to hear sounds of (describe the tone, rate, volume, pitch, and content of the sounds)? My primary orientation is through (visual, kinesthetic, auditory, other)? The sound or word that best symbolizes my inner-communication is? A picture that best symbolizes my inner-communication is? A gesture or movement that
best symbolizes my inner-communication is? How does the inner-communication resonate with unity consciousness? What can be done to improve it?

We analyze the content of our inner-communication looking for habitual tendencies, patterns, affinities for first-person or third-person perception, limiting beliefs, negativity, and similar qualities. This exercise is most beneficial as an ongoing journaling activity, at least once a week, so that we may monitor our improvement over the course of the unit.

Multiple variations on this exercise are possible. For example, we may predetermine a certain time each day in which, no matter what we are doing, we will stop and record in our journals our inner-communication at that particular time. We also could attend consciously to inner-communication throughout the day and, in the evening, set time aside to record what we have noticed.

First-Person Expression

First-person expression is the process of giving form to energies from within a first-person perceptual stance. It refers to expressing with awareness focused on the proprioceptive realm with the intent to further awareness of Self. First-person expression necessarily
reflects the unique qualities and style of each individual soma. It is characterized by the dynamic fluidity of the somatic realm as accessed through proprioceptive awareness. Individuals are encouraged to let go of culturally dictated and habitually ingrained modes of expression and instead to explore freely and give voice to their inner sensations.

**Exercise # 1.** This exercise involves what I call **sounding** and begins with Self-sensing exploration that can be facilitated by any number of activities, including progressive relaxation, focusing on the breath, or a guided somatic scanning in which the body is sensed from within. As participants have established Self-sensing, they are invited to give voice to their inner sensations by emitting any vocalization that comfortably emerges. Words are to be avoided. Expression of inner sensations through sound and experimentation with volume, rate, pitch, tone, and various sound effects is encouraged. This may take the form of myriad sounds ranging from animalistic to guttural to mechanical to human.

**Exercise # 2.** First-person expression in conversational situations is characterized by
proprioceptive awareness and somatic disclosure, whereas third-person expression is typically externally focused and cerebral. We can practice recognizing and expressing third-person expression and first-person expression by use of a handout that describes several varied communication interactions, such as those between family members or friends during conflict situations. For each interaction, we are asked to write two responses, one third-person expression and one first-person expression. Participants also may be asked to differentiate between these two communicative forms as part of an ongoing journaling assignment.

Self-Sensing

Self-sensing refers to our ability to "read" our bodies and sense subtle variations among differing somatic states through active proprioception. We often encounter difficulties staying in first-person perception and Self-sensing while in the presence of another being or in groups. Although we encounter others in our lives constantly, we rarely take the time and opportunity to attend to the somatic effects of being in the physical and energetic presence of others and of speaking with them. The following exercises
allow participants to experience Self-sensing while exposed to the energy fields of other somas and provide rich opportunities for journaling assignments.

**Exercise #1.** Self-sensing with others is best facilitated by starting with the presence of one other soma and moving later to larger groups. The activity described below begins with a short somatic exercise in which we are fully engaged in Self-sensing with minimal external stimuli. While remaining firmly centered in proprioceptive awareness, we each turn to a designated person next to us and, while seated directly across from one another, begin a structured dialogue. The structured dialogue is designed to highlight Self-sensing while in the presence of one other soma. It consists of three phases—sensing, feeling, and intention, which correspond to the three energetic bodies—physical, astral, and mental. Each phase in this exercise lasts approximately three to five minutes.

In the sensing phase, we are seated directly facing our partners, looking at one another while staying proprioceptively attuned, noticing all that happens internally on the physical level while in the
presence of another soma. When one partner feels ready, we begin first-person expression guided by the following phrase: "As I am in your presence, I notice . . . " (filling in whatever physical sensation is being experienced). For example, as I am in the presence of my partner, I may notice a tingling in my chest, a tightness in my stomach, an ache in my leg, or any combination of the myriad physical sensations that comprise the somatic realm. The fluid, dynamic qualities of the inner realm become highlighted in this phase of the exercise. Participants are encouraged to stay within the confines of the structured dialogue, no matter how challenging it may be, and to use the challenges as opportunities for expanded awareness of Self.

The next phase, feeling, is a continuation of the sensing phase. In this phase, we are dealing with the physical and astral bodies and are asked to articulate a physical sensation and to disclose a feeling. The purpose of this phase is to enhance our ability to discern the actual physical sensations of feelings from our more "nonphysical" thinking processes and to express these feeling sensations in words in an effort
to expand emotional literacy. For the purposes of this exercise, feelings are understood to carry with them bodily sensations, whereas cognitive states do not. Cognitive states, however, may invoke feeling sensations. Within this framework then, curious and doubtful, for example, are cognitive states, not feelings, because they primarily involve thought processes. My doubtfulness, however, may invoke a feeling of fear which I then experience as a sinking sensation in my chest.

In order to facilitate remaining proprioceptively focused and not having the concentration of energy flow to the intellect in trying to discern the precise word for our feeling impulse, we are asked to articulate feeling disclosures using five major feelings—fear, anger, sadness, joy, and compassion. According to Roth (1989), each of these five feeling sensations carries with it an identifiable energy movement: "Essentially, fear protects, anger defends, sadness releases, joy uplifts, compassion unites" (p. 66).

Within this framework, most feelings are understood as derivations or combinations of the five major feelings. Anxiety and embarrassment are forms of
fear, for example; irritation is anger; confidence is a mild form of joy; hurt is fear and sadness; and withdrawn, timid, or bashful are forms of fear. This phase of the Self-sensing activity could be preceded by an exercise in which we list the five major feelings on a chalkboard and then brainstorm, coming up with a variety of feelings and categorizing them accordingly.

When we resume the partner work, our first-person expressions are guided by the following phrase: "As I am in your presence, I notice . . . (physical sensation), and I feel . . . "(filling in whatever feeling is being experienced). For example, as I am in the presence of my partner, I may notice a tingling in my chest and feel joy, I may notice a tightness in my stomach and feel fear, or I may notice an ache in my leg and feel fear. The purpose of this portion of the exercise is to increase somatic awareness of physical sensations and the feelings connected with them while in the presence of another soma. Again, participants are encouraged to stay within the confines of the structured dialogue, no matter how challenging it may be, and to use the challenges as opportunities for expanded awareness of Self.
The final phase of the exercise, intention, is again a continuation of the previous phases. In this phase, we are dealing with the physical, astral, and mental bodies. We are asked to articulate a physical sensation, disclose a feeling (again one of five major feelings) and then to disclose an intent. Our first-person expressions are guided by the following phrase: "As I am in your presence, I notice . . . (physical sensation), and I am feel . . . "(filling in whatever feeling is being experienced), and I want (expressing a statement of intent). The statements of intent, like the aspirational goal statements discussed earlier, are best languaged in affirming, simple, unlimited forms. For example, my somatic disclosures to my partner may be as follows: "As I am in your presence, I notice a tingling in my chest and I feel joy; I want to smile with you. As I am in your presence, I notice a tightness in my stomach. I feel fear. I don't want to be judged, I want to be accepted. As I am in your presence, I notice an ache in my leg, and I feel fear. I don't want to be alone, I want to be with you."

The purpose of this portion of the exercise is to increase awareness of somatic sensations on three
dimensions—the physical, astral, and mental—and to practice somatically communicating those awarenesses while in the presence of another soma. Again, participants are encouraged to stay within the confines of the structured dialogue and to use the challenges as opportunities for expanded awareness of Self.

Exercise # 2. This exercise consists of exploring Self-sensing and first-person expression while in the presence of numerous somas. The act of Self-expression in a group context (what is usually called public or presentational speaking) has a reputation as a highly stressful activity. Introducing this experience with a discussion in which participants are asked to express their fears shows that the anxiety often invoked by expressing before a group is essentially a fear of what other people will think of us. This fear is derived solely from a third-person perceptual focus. When grounded in first-person perception, the fear invoked by expressing in a group ceases to exist. Because the fear is a learned behavior derived from third-person perception, we can unlearn the fear response through somatic awareness.
Remaining centered in Self-sensing and manifesting first-person expression is challenging when we are in the presence of many somas. Our awareness tends to be drawn to the highest concentration of energy—the other somas. When the primary focus of our awareness is external, however, our efforts to Self-regulate are derived from the responses of others. The more we attend outside of ourselves, the less we know about how we, our bodies, are communicating. When we focus our awareness externally, we become removed from the source of our expression, our Selves.

The Self is the initiator of communicative expression. By maintaining internal awareness, we have access to a vast storehouse of expressive forms we may want to share. More important, the potential for creative, spontaneous expression resides in the Self. Further, we can use the powerful energy of our awareness to transform patterned responses, energy blockages, and other limitations to our full expression. We are our own best resource. Thus, Self-sensing is especially important when the soma is in the presence of other somas.
Participants are encouraged to design situations that they wish to experience within the context of the unit. Individuals choose how many others they wish to have present while they are expressing in the group. If we are comfortable with fewer people, for example, part of the group may be invited to leave. Participants also may choose what form the expression takes. The Self-sensing experience is highly process—not product—oriented. Unless the expressor requests otherwise, expressor and participants are allowed to interrupt the expression at any time to access proprioceptive awareness, question communicative modes, and request or offer immediate feedback. Although such interruptions may seem to be anxiety provoking, they are not viewed that way by participants after the many other experiences shared by class members prior to this exercise. Authentic connection among individuals—designed to be facilitated through the unit exercises—often minimizes anxiety rather than invoking it.

In this experience, expressors are encouraged to stay connected with and explore their own unique styles of expression. They are advised to let go of the model of the ideal expression and strive instead to discover
their own strengths and limitations and to nurture their own unique styles. They are encouraged to remain "present" in their presentation. The emphasis is not on knowing what to say or doing it right; rather, the emphasis is on being--individuals are encouraged to be(come) themselves.

Methods of Evaluation

Within the context of a unit on somatic communication, participants are given an opportunity to focus on Self-awareness and Self-exploration within diverse communication contexts that they explore over the time allotted for the unit. Participants benefit from the unit to the extent that they are willing to engage with themselves, explore proprioceptive realms, and take responsibility for their learning.

Regarding evaluation methods, learning is measured in terms of Self-growth, exploration of limiting behaviors, and the achievement of goals set forth and defined by each individual at the start of the unit. Journaling is an essential tool for learning about somatic communication because it allows individuals to describe their inner process in their own words in a forum that is conducive to Self-disclosure. Self-
growth and exploration of limiting behaviors can be assessed through journaling assignments and Self-evaluations in which participants are asked to reflect on and describe their experiences. Journaling assignments can be evaluated according to whether or not they include the specified number of entries, the degree to which the content reflects the questions asked, and the quantity or quality of the responses, depending on the exercise.

Instructors would focus on and evaluate the extent to which individuals are willing to challenge themselves to grow and change by setting aspirational goals for themselves. The instructor's concern is with assessing what individuals learn and discover about themselves as somatic communicators over the course of the unit. Participants may be evaluated, then, according to their goal achievement and progress recorded in journals. Participants are not compared with each other. Toward the end of the unit, participants also can be asked to write a paper or design a presentation (visual display, dramatic enactment, movement or music composition, for example) that summarizes what they have learned from the unit
and how they have applied it to any aspect of their lives.

Summary

The foundation of the unit on somatic communication in the basic course is to establish aspirational goals for Self and to manifest those goals through somatic communication practices with the intent to expand awareness of Self. The topics covered include experiencing first-person perception, exploration of the proprioceptive realm and inner-communication, engaging in first-person expression, and Self-sensing in various contexts. Once these foundational tenets have been established, they may be applied to contexts in addition to those described above. As participants experience the somatic activities outlined above, questions are likely to arise that will allow for further explication of the major topics of somatic communication theory. This unit is designed, however, not with the objective of imparting knowledge of the theory but with the intent that participants may verify somatically and experientially comprehend the practice of somatic communication.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

I began this exploration with the intent to develop a somatic communication theory and discover how communicative phenomena would change when viewed from within the framework of somatics. As is evident by my description of a somatic theory of communication, adopting a somatic perspective introduces into the field of communication study a new range of communication forms. As such, this perspective greatly extends the assumed terrain of communication study. In this chapter, I describe some of the changes that are invoked by a somatic theory of communication. These include altering the way communication is defined, reconceptualizing current approaches to the study of communication, and expanding the philosophical frameworks that inform communication study.

Redefining Communication

Conventional definitions of communication, in general, incorporate assumptions about communication that represent significant departures from a somatic
perspective. Conventional definitions of communication adopt a social, third-person focus; often restrict communication to formal language use; devalue the body; and theorize communication as a process but study it as a product.

The social, third-person focus that is typical of communication study in general is evident throughout a range of communication definitions. Contemporary rhetorical theorists, for example, define communication as symbol use intended for the purpose of influencing others, an inherently external focus (e.g., Burke, 1950/1969; Bryant, 1953; Ehninger, 1972; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1958/1969; Vickers, 1988; and Weaver, 1953). Hauser (1986) summarizes the prevailing sentiment in the field when he describes communication as the management of symbols in order to coordinate social action.

Other communication theorists focus on the socially interactive nature of symbol use (e.g., Berlo, 1960; Stewart 1972; Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967). For example, Johannesen (1971) emphasizes the importance of interactants by describing communication as "not a one-way transmission but a two-way dialogue"
After surveying 126 definitions of communication formulated by communication scholars, Dance and Larson (1976) concluded that communication consists of "the production of symbolic content by an individual, according to a code, with anticipated consumption by other(s), according to the same code" (p. 37). The social, third-person focus that characterizes the field is obvious within this definition.

Communication also is commonly conceptualized as a rule-bound activity whose rules are socially determined (e.g., Cushman, 1977; Cushman and Whiting, 1972; Rosenfield, 1969; Toulmin, 1974; and von Wright, 1971). Cushman and Pearce (1977), for example, suggest that groups of people engaged in any task will develop functional rules that govern their interactions. When people understand the rules for a given group, community, or culture, they can communicate effectively with others who share the same understanding.

A somatic theory of communication, in contrast to conventional approaches, adopts a first-person perceptual focus. Communication is not socially focused, it is internally focused, with the social
sphere subsumed within the soma's energy field of awareness. The locus of communication within a somatic perspective on communication is the soma—the being who embodies the synergistic merger of awareness, biological function, and environment. We are not concerned with socially prescribed rules; instead, we are concerned with knowing the flow of unrestricted somatic functioning so that we can Self-sense and Self-regulate in order to maintain our free-flowing functioning.

Some communication scholars explicitly limit the scope of communication to formal language use. Although he later modified it to include nonverbal forms, Burke's (1950/1969) early definition of rhetoric—the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents—is indicative of an understanding of communication that is limited to language use. Cherwitz and Hikins (1986), who refer to rhetoric as "the art of describing reality through language" (p. 60), and Weaver (1953), who conceptualizes rhetoric as persuasive speech in the service of truth, also conceptualize communication as limited to formal language use.
Within a somatic perspective on communication, the domain of communication is expanded to include not just human interaction or formal language use but the virtually infinite vast array of energy forms that take shape through our ongoing process of energy generation, transformation, and utilization. Such energies are formed by our sensations, movements, thoughts, feelings, and other bodily functioning.

Several conventional definitions of communication reflect an explicit privileging of the intellect. Bryant (1953), for example, describes rhetoric as the rationale of informative and suasory discourse (emphasis mine). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958/1969) describe rhetoric as "the study of the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent" (p. 4). More recent communication theories generated from a psychological perspective locate communication in the mental constructs of sender/receivers. A host of theories on attitude change, such as cognitive complexity, cognitive dissonance, cognitive consistency, cognitive congruity, and cognitive equity, are indicative of the privileging
of cognitive functioning that typifies much communication research.

A somatic perspective on communication expands the relevant research domain by privileging whole-body awareness. Because communication is defined as the process of giving form to energy through awareness, within this perspective, the body is not simply a medium through which communication is accomplished but is a significant site and source itself of communicative activity.

Finally, current perspectives on communication contain a discrepancy between theory and practice by theorizing communication as a process but studying it as a product. When examining the varied definitions of communication in the field, Dance and Larson (1976) concluded that most communication researchers agree that communication is a process; however, debate ensues within the field over whether or not conventional research methods and approaches capture the processual nature of communication and the extent to which they are able to do so (Smith, 1972). The process of communication, for example, is conceptualized as involving sender and receiver who exchange messages
that are sent across space over time (e.g., Berlo, 1960; Dance and Larson, 1976; Johannesen, 1971; Stewart, 1972; and Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967). Such message exchanges are studied in terms of static utterances, speech acts, message units, turn-taking, or episodes.

The process of communication is further segmented by the conceptual boundaries erected in the field. The field is delineated according to communication areas that range from interpersonal, small group, and public to cultural and global. Further boundaries are established among textual, verbal, and nonverbal modes.

Because time and space are collapsed into a unified and singular time/space dimension within a somatic perspective, the conceptualization of communication as a process constituted by messages being sent across space over time is dissolved. The conventional problem of identifying message units and the debate over process versus product also are solved within a somatic perspective because the integrity of the communication process is retained intact. The soma embodies the communicative process of giving form to energy, and this process—as a process—is accessible
fully to the soma when proprioception is honed and self-sensing is refined within the realm of first-person perception. A somatic perspective on communication takes the soma as the theoretic entry point; thus, traditionally established boundaries among the communication areas are dissolved.

Reconceptualization of Current Approaches to the Study of Communication

The expanded domain of communication that emerges from a somatic perspective carries implications for how communication as a field of study is conceptualized. Adopting a somatic perspective on communication informs, in particular, two identified areas and one topic of communication study that are understood as conceptually distinct within traditional frameworks—intrapersonal communication, health communication, and self-disclosure.

The area of intrapersonal communication is characterized by a conceptual focus on cognitive processing. Researchers are concerned, for example, with theories of cognitive complexity and with individuals' mental interpretations of external stimuli. The area of health communication typically
includes conceptual focus on the health-care industry, doctor-patient and doctor-nurse interactions, and the abilities of health practitioners to communicate effectively in giving instructions and explaining diagnoses. The area of self-disclosure, conceptualized as part of interpersonal communication, involves the expression of information about the self to another person.

Within a somatic perspective on communication, these three previously distinct areas of communication study are integrated. When awareness is focused within the first-person realm of proprioception, the domain of intrapersonal communication is extended to include a vast array of previously unrecognized somatic processes. The communicative modes currently unrecognized within the field include the first-person realm of proprioception and Self-sensing with its processes of indrawal, accessing phylogenetic knowing and sarcal ethics, Self-regulation, the mirror concept of communication, and inner-communication. Recognition of these modes expands the assumed terrain of intrapersonal communication.
Not only is health communication integrated with other areas from a somatic perspective, but there are other implications for the area of health communication. Our understanding of health would be expanded to include not only physical or physiological aspects but also the emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions of human existence, which are inseparably interwoven from a somatic perspective. In addition, through refined Self-sensing, somas explore new dimensions of Self-awareness and are empowered to Self-regulate, thereby reducing the need for medical attention and psychological therapy.

Through refined Self-sensing, for example, we are able physically to proprioceive the subtle onset of ailments such as sore throats, headaches, and back pain, becoming aware of them in their early stages before medical intervention is necessary. We then can Self-regulate to alleviate the distress by, for example, resting or sleeping more, using herbal or homeopathic remedies, and engaging in somatic practices designed to release stress and facilitate relaxation. Similarly, through refined Self-sensing, we can become aware of distressing thoughts, patterned emotional
responses, or negative inner-communication before chronic depression, neurosis, or severe emotional distress develop. We can Self-regulate by creating interstice and using the energies of awareness and intent to transform limitations, thereby reducing the need for therapeutic intervention.

There is yet another benefit to a somatic perspective on health communication. If we do choose medical or therapeutic intervention, the ability of the soma to Self-sense and engage in first-person expression greatly facilitates the healing process. Rather than passively surrendering our bodies to an allopathic doctor, for example, somas are empowered to participate actively in the medical process by describing in refined detail the internal somatic states accompanying their ailments. Such first-person expressions can aid the doctor in accurate diagnosis by supplying information unavailable except through proprioceptive experience. Similarly, the psychological therapeutic process can be facilitated by Self-sensing and first-person expression in which the soma discloses the subtle nuances of the internal realm
and engages in an exploratory partnership with the therapist.

Finally, the somatic realm of Self-sensing and first-person expression legitimizes disclosures about bodily functioning and the effects of bodily functioning on communication. The research domain of self-disclosure is expanded to include disclosures of bodily functioning. Somatic communication researchers can investigate and experiment, for example, with accurate and appropriate ways to language previously taboo topics regarding bodily processes. Researchers can study the effects of bodily functions on communication. How are interactions affected, for example, when a participant is ill, has to urinate, is experiencing menstrual cramps, is experiencing an erection, or is constipated? How are such somatic states languaged? What happens when they are ignored? What happens when they are languaged in particular ways? Questions such as these and others expand the communication research domain in innovative and important ways that further legitimize somatic communication and reflect the reality of human existence in its full dimensionality.
Expansion of Philosophical Frameworks

The final category in which I will explore the implications of a somatic perspective on communication is communication philosophy. How we approach the study of communication from a larger philosophical framework includes issues of epistemology, how humans acquire knowledge; ontology, the nature of human existence; and axiology, which deals with values.

Although divergence of thought exists among communication scholars, in general, the current trend in communication study reflects an epistemological stance of social constructivism. The social constructivist perspective--the assumption that knowledge is created through symbolic interaction within social realms--is the dominant assumption in the field of communication study. Reality is believed to be a product of group and cultural interaction, and communication is understood as an important tool for the social construction of reality. Thus, the study of how knowledge is created through social interaction comprises the primary theoretic focus of communication scholarship.
Rather than adopting the assumption that humans and their reality are constructed through social interaction, within a somatic perspective, humans are multidimensional beings of subtle energy who determine reality through their individuated capacity for awareness. Somas acquire knowledge through experience that is determined by our perceptual awareness. The communicative energy of human awareness is mobile, powerfully transformative, and limitless. Thus, the primary research domain of the somatic scholar is the realm of awareness and the legitimation of subtle energies.

Issues of ontology include questions regarding the nature of human existence. Most communication scholars assume that humans act as free agents who cannot be understood apart from the social relationships and cultural systems in which they participate. In general, humans are understood to make choices in their lives, but these choices are seen as restricted and shaped by social factors. Human behavior is governed by rules that emerge from social interactions and that may change from situation to situation. The dominant focus of communication research, then, is on the
dynamics of social relationships--interpersonal, group, organizational, cultural, and global.

A somatic perspective on communication assumes that humans are simultaneously individual and interconnected. The focus of influence, however, is not the social realm but the proprioceptive realm. Somas cannot be understood fully from an external, third-person perspective. The primacy of somatic experience suggests that a first-person perceptual stance affords a fuller viewing of human reality. Whenever we bring phenomena into our field of awareness, we are dealing not with those phenomena but with aspects of ourselves. Thus, humans are boundless entities of infinite possibility whose potentials are limited only by Self-imposed limitations on our awareness. The dominant focus of somatic communication research is on the dynamics of the proprioceptive realm and the development of Self as the embodiment of synergistic, limitless potential.

Axiological issues, which deal with values, are openly contested in the communication field, especially with the growing influence of cultural studies and the critical perspective it brings to the communication
discipline. Value considerations are under scrutiny in several areas of the field, including communication practices, research, and pedagogy. In general, questions concerning values in communication practice are strikingly absent in the field. When values are addressed, they are theorized as conceptually distinct from the rest of the communication process. Certain scholars specialize in studying the ethical components of communication as a separate category of communication, and textbooks contain isolated chapters addressing the ethical considerations of a given communication form.

A somatic perspective on communication sheds new light on axiological concerns by collapsing the conventional separation between self and other. Existence is interconnected in an intimate and immediate way to the extent that every time we think a thought, experience a feeling, or initiate a movement, all of reality is simultaneously altered. In this respect, not only is communicative expression value laden, but our innermost thoughts and feelings, as well, carry vast consequences. Whether or not we affect others is an irrelevant question because value
concerns are intrinsic to somatic existence. We are concerned, instead, with how we affect others and, according to the mirror concept, we can contribute most to positive change in the world by engaging in active Self-transformation.

Critical perspectives challenge the nature of the communication research enterprise and pedagogy. Some members of the field, especially those in the social sciences, believe that research is essentially neutral or value free; phenomena are simply observed and explained. Critical scholars, however, suggest that the nature of inquiry is such that research never can be value free. Researchers, for example, choose what to study, when to study it, how to study it, and also determine the dissemination of knowledge, choices that involve value determinations at every step. Critical scholars question the power dynamics embedded within conventional methodologies and pedagogical approaches in which researcher and teacher assume positions of dominance over others.

Through collapsing the separation between researcher and object of study, somatic communication Self-research dissolves the conventional power-over
relationships that characterize mainstream communication research. In somatic Self-research, the soma is simultaneously subject, object, and instrument, an inherently empowering dynamic in which the integrity of each individual is preserved. In somatic communication pedagogy, as well, the traditional separation between teacher and students is collapsed. The somatic communication teacher assumes the role of a facilitator who participates as an equal member in experiential activities designed to promote Self-awareness.

Issues of prescriptive versus descriptive scholarship and pedagogy also are contested within the field of communication. Some communication scholars and educators advocate that research and teaching be oriented toward social change, especially given the potential power of communication to create knowledge, a dominant perspective in the field. Others, however, believe that the proper role of teacher/researcher is only to produce knowledge, not to champion its specific use.

A somatic perspective is specifically change oriented and advocates that we engage in Self-
developing activities directed toward transforming inner barriers to unity consciousness. The legitimation of Self-research, guided by the intent to actualize unity consciousness through identification and transformation of limitations to Self, facilitates "social" transformation, as does the inclusion of a somatic communication unit in the basic course. Due to our somatic interconnectedness, whenever we overcome a limitation to Self, we positively alter all of reality. The transformation of reality occurs only through our inner growth: we are the universe.

The paradigm of communication, as it is currently understood, attends to the social order. We need a paradigm of communication that attends to the cosmic order. I hope this description of a somatic theory of communication, research, and pedagogy provides a beginning point for such a paradigm.
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