

Queer Kinaesthesia

A young man walks nervously across the floor of a dance studio, swallowing heavily and wiping his sweaty hands on his tracksuit. Under the stern eyes of the three judges sitting in the middle of the room, he places his tape into the cassette player and presses the play button. As the opening riff of Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance With Somebody" rings out into the room, he nods his head up and down, rolls his shoulders and his hips, and spins to fling himself back into the centre of the floor. His movements initially lack a sense of power and confidence: he moves his limbs too loosely and too close to his body, and he spins with dropped shoulders and his gaze fixed on the floor. Yet the more he dances, the more he seems to settle into his body, turning the dance into something assertive and joyous. He leaps across the floor, he struts confidently along the tops of the tables the judges sit behind, and he 'vogues', moving his arms in fluid lines around his face. And at Houston's famous key change, he drops to the ground to slide across the floor on his back, his arms stretching above his head, his eyes closed, an expression of pure joy on his face.

The scene I have just described is the triumphant final scene of the first episode of *Pose* (FX 2018–), in which Damon Richards-Evangelista (Ryan Jamaal Swain) successfully auditions for a place at the prestigious New York School for Dance. *Pose* is set within the queer ballroom scene of 1980s New York, and tells the story of Blanca (MJ Rodriguez), a trans woman who leaves the well-regarded House of Abundance to found her own House of Evangelista. The series understands identity as an embodied performance, exploring the ways in which queer, trans, and non-white bodies move through both the public space of New York and the private space of the ballroom. This theme is clearly established in Damon's audition, which draws a firm connection between embodied performance and the construction of a defiant sense of self. While dramatic audition scenes that act as moments of self-expression are not new – the scene obviously references Alex's (Jennifer Beals) audition in *Flashdance* – Damon's audition is specifically framed as an expression of his queer identity. Earlier in the episode Blanca discovers that Damon has missed the application deadline for the academy, and she pleads with the director to offer him a second chance, explaining that he has been kicked out of home for being gay.

“Do you know what the greatest pain a person can feel is? The greatest tragedy a life can experience? It is having a truth inside of you, and you not being able to share it. It is having a great beauty and no one there to see it.”

In this way, Damon’s dance is framed as his ‘truth’, or his ‘great beauty’ – his dance is a declaration of his own queerness. His transformation from awkward, hesitant embodiment to a glorious command of both body and space is thus a joyous moment of queer self-expression. The scene gestures towards the radical potential of the queer body in motion, as something that articulates a defiant queer subjectivity.

Pose has been lauded in the press for its inclusive storytelling and production practices: both *The Rolling Stones*’ Alan Sepinwall and *Variety*’s Caroline Framke refer to the series as ‘revolutionary’,¹ and GLAAD’s 2018 ‘Where We Are on TV Report’, which measures the numbers of LGBTQ characters on television and is largely held up as a diagnostic of diversity on television, refers to the premiere of *Pose* as a ‘history-making television moment’.² The 2018 report shows a record-high percentage of queer characters on broadcast, cable, and streaming television, and highlights both the rise in trans representation on television and the fact that for the first time, LGBTQ characters of colour outnumber their white counterparts. These two achievements can be attributed single-handedly to *Pose*. While this is worth celebrating, the GLAAD report does raise a larger question about whether the evaluation of diversity on screen is merely a quantitative matter – whether the politics of representation are simply about *counting* visible identities. Narratives of visibility are usually linear stories, focused around a politics of progress. Once we see queer people on our screens, in the right numbers and in the right stories, then, so the story goes, some sort of threshold has been passed and some sort of success achieved. Yet this straightforward narrative contradicts many of the principles at the heart of queer theory, which rejects the linear and the teleological in favour of stories of loss, reversal, and multiplication. Such a simplified evaluative framework is somewhat unsatisfying, particularly for queer scholars: as Glyn Davis and Gary Needham suggest, the ‘problem with such a mode of criticism is, of course, that it assumes an agreed-upon “party line” (and my, what a dull party *that* would be to attend).’³ It is always worth throwing that party, I believe, and we should not undermine the value of seeing different kinds of bodies and identities on our screens (particularly for

those of us who, despite our queerness, are white and able-bodied). But we do need to devote more attention to exactly what it is that we are celebrating (and why), and to what it is about queer stories that makes them queer.

I opened my argument with a description of Damon's joyous dance because I believe that it is this connection between queerness and the moving body that holds the most potential for the two key questions of queer screen criticism: the narration and evaluation of queer stories. Queerness is a question of movement more than one of image: as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick states, 'queer is a continuing movement, motive – recurrent, eddying, *troublant*...[k]eenerly, it is relational, and strange.'⁴ The word is both a noun and a verb, and in its verb form, refers to the act of making things strange, shaking them up and twisting them around. Queer bodies and queer desires are mobile, refusing to be fixed within existing structures and stratifications. The mobile power of queer means that talking about the queer body through a paradigm of visibility seems at best counterintuitive and at worst destructive. When bodies are stilled, they can be fixed into clearly defined categories; to quote Erin Manning, 'a sensing body in movement will always circumvent a project that attempts to characterise it' according to our dominant points of reference.⁵ If queer bodies, desires, and identities are to remain politically powerful, we need to find a way to talk about them that preserves their mobility and avoids reducing them to questions of visible form or stable location.

I would like to offer kinaesthesia as a possible solution to this problem. Most simply, kinaesthesia refers to the body's sensations of movement and spatiality. The term also offers a framework for describing the aesthetics of movement, and the meanings and affects involved in both the experience of performing and of watching a moving body. There has been a strong turn within the humanities (and particularly within screen theory) towards sensation, exploring the importance of sensory and affective experience in our politics, our histories, and our experience of cultural texts.⁶ Yet kinaesthesia has been strangely neglected within most scholarly and popular accounts of sensory experience; as Alain Berthoz wonders, 'by what twist did language suppress the sense most important to survival?'⁷ This 'twist' is most likely the neat categorisation of five senses with five clearly defined, externally oriented sensory organs, a correspondence that kinaesthesia, involving undifferentiated sensory inputs and sensations, cannot be neatly slotted into. It is thus unsurprising

that despite a resurgence of scholarly interest in the sensorium, kinaesthesia remains largely forgotten. Instead, it remains relegated to the footnotes of academic scholarship, dismissed as too vague or too historical to be worthy of interest in its own right.⁸ In this sense, there is something satisfying about turning to kinaesthesia for queer thinking, for a mobile, ill-defined, forgotten sensation clearly has something to offer identities that have always been similarly fluid, disparaged, and ignored.

The relationship between kinaesthesia and queerness goes beyond a shared position on the lower rungs of hierarchies of value. Theories of kinaesthesia are highly attuned to the problems of describing movement, capturing an experience that denies fixity and always circumvents our attempt to capture it – a project that clearly holds potential for queer theory. Jonathan Bollen recognises this potential in his work on what he calls ‘queer kinaesthesia’.⁹ He stresses that kinaesthesia cannot be read off the surface of the body, but must be read as movement, in the ongoingness of movement, and in how that movement feels. He suggests that queerness might be experienced kinaesthetically through the way the body feels when disrupting normatively sexed and gendered actions: as he states, the ‘performance of queer kinaesthesia would open a rift...between bodily matter and bodily action, between morphology and kinaesthesia, between what a body is and what a body does.’¹⁰ Bollen is concerned with queer kinaesthesia as a practice, analysing dance floors at queer clubs in Sydney. Queer activism has always revolved around embodied performance: as Clare Croft notes, the term ‘queer’ itself is ‘borne of physical, collective action’, recuperated from its status as a slur through the kinaesthetics of protest in the 1990s.¹¹ There is also a strong theoretical connection between dance and queerness, for both share a sense of mobile potential and performative play. José Esteban Muñoz sees dance as a productive site for theorising queerness, particularly in its ability to bring bodies into new formations with others.¹² As the meeting point between subjectivity, desire, and embodied performance, kinaesthesia thus stands as a key site through which queer identity is articulated and championed.

Yet I have also started my argument with *Pose* because it is significant that this is an example from television. The equivalent GLAAD report for cinema – the *Studio Responsibility Index*, which measures LGBTQ characters in films released by the seven major motion picture studios – reported ‘an overall bleak year for inclusion in major studio film’, with a decrease in queer representation and

no trans characters at all.¹³ Where cinema is falling behind, it seems that television is striding ahead. This may partly be due to the fact that there is simply *more* television and so more space for different kinds of stories, yet I am less interested in the quantitative mechanics of diversity than the qualitative ones – in other words, whether there is something about television that might make it a particularly productive site for queer storytelling. Unlike the cinema, which has been theorised through heterosexual paradigms of psychoanalytic gaze theory, the medium of television can be understood as a queerer sort of medium. The proverbial awkward sibling to the big screen, television is multiple, chaotic, trashy; it is marked by strange temporalities and strange forms of movement; it is overburdened with intimacy and proximity. Amy Villarejo argues that television ‘needs to be seen as an, if not *the*, agent of forms of queer life’, drawing a connection between particular technologies of queerness and the features of the medium: for example, coming out narratives are structured through that same tension between public and private, between eventfulness and seriality, as television itself.¹⁴ Michele Aaron sees television spectatorship as innately queer, for it encourages distraction, channel-surfing, boredom, and partial forms of attention, all of which challenges the more ‘monogamous’ structures of the cinema.¹⁵ The properties of televisual form and spectatorship, then, might offer a particularly productive site for exploring queerness – not just as a question of representation, but as a broader structure of feeling.

Television has also always been understood as an experience of movement: of flowing between programmes, of zapping between channels, of travelling around the global village. It has long been theorised as a medium of the intimate, the ordinary, the performative, and the personal, all qualities that are particularly well-suited to the body. And it is the traditional medium of community, the screen we have always turned to in order to connect to others, fostering what Karen Lury refers to as a ‘common culture of empathy’.¹⁶ In this sense, I believe we can extend Bollen’s work to suggest that queer kinaesthesia also operates as an aesthetic language and an affective structure, one that operates within our television programmes. Like queerness, television abides by a logic of hybridisation, of multiplication, and of mobility. And like queerness, television demands new critical languages that account for its modes of relation: as Amy Villarejo asserts, television is ‘deserving of deeper analyses...beyond the terms of recognition and identification most often used to describe

relationships between spectators and particular programmes.¹⁷ Kinaesthesia, therefore, has huge potential in thinking not just about queer ways of being in the world, but about television itself.

Finding Queerness Through Kinaesthesia

In order to begin to explore the queer choreographies of the televisual body, we must first rehearse some familiar steps: namely, the work of Judith Butler, without whom any discussion of a performative queer identity would be lacking.¹⁸ Appropriating the notion of performative speech from J. L. Austin's linguistic theory, Butler argues that gender is produced always and only through the very acts that constitute it. This action does not simply signify an underlying gender or sexed body, but *produces* that gender and the material form of the body across which it is expressed. Importantly, these actions gain their power and cohesion only through their constant repetition, allowing normative forms of gender and identity to become naturalised. Gender performativity cannot be equated to the performance of gender – it is not a playful form of agential action, and is rarely something a subject is conscious of doing. Rather, performativity is the very precondition through which we come to possess a coherent identity. In order to be recognisable as a subject in the world, both by others and by ourselves, we need to enact normative forms of gendered existence, which tend to be expressed through and across the body. Butler's work has been extensively taken up in the critical literature from a number of different perspectives, yet I believe that few scholars have drawn attention to how her argument is haunted by an unaddressed sense of kinaesthesia. Butler suggests that 'what we appreciate by way of shape and form is the laboured effect of a ritualistic exercise',¹⁹ and while her language is largely figurative, her choice of words – *labour*, *exercise* – betrays the importance of physical action and effort in the performance of gender. Gender performativity is thus ultimately a question of kinaesthesia.

While many theorists have challenged Butler for failing to properly account for material, embodied experience, only Carrie Noland has framed this challenge through the terminology of kinaesthesia.²⁰ She criticises Butler's work for its 'meagre account' of both kinaesthesia and affect, which ignores the fact that it is 'ultimately kinaesthetic experience, the somatic attention accorded to the lived sensation of movement, that allows the subject to become an agent in the making of

herself.’²¹ For Noland, the embodied experiences of performing gender – the way it feels to enact certain conditioned movements – have the potential for offering resistant feedback. She focuses on Butler’s belief that performative repetition is both ‘a re-enactment and a re-experiencing’, arguing that in separating these two degrees of repetitive action, Butler alludes to a qualitative difference between them.²² Noland claims that this is precisely a kinaesthetic difference: re-enactment operates discursively, repeating the same sets of meanings, but the affective qualities of *re-experiencing* gendered action produces sensations that can encourage us to alter the quality and variety of our movements. Noland perhaps overstates our ability to access such kinaesthetic feedback – part of the power of gender performativity is the way it operates below explicit awareness. Rather than placing kinaesthesia simply as a form of resistant embodiment, I would argue that kinaesthesia works as *both* enactment and experience, for it has always existed in the fraught space between the material and the metaphoric, between action and aesthetics (the clue is, of course, in the word itself). This is part of the methodological potential of kinaesthesia, particularly for considering the similarly contradictory space of queer television studies. Kinaesthesia offers a way to approach the meaning and experience of bodies on screen (particularly queer bodies on screen) that does not presume that truth is either found in language or the body, in either aesthetics or in experience, but recognises that the two cannot be thought without one another. Kinaesthesia, therefore, helps us approach both the discursive construction of queer stories, and to evaluate the ways in which we experience them.

Jill Soloway’s series *Transparent* (Amazon, 2014–) presents a very clear portrayal of the kinaesthetics of gender performativity. The series tells the story of the Pfefferman family after their parent Maura (Jeffrey Tambor) comes out as transgender, and is very explicitly invested in exploring and challenging ideas of normative bodies. Throughout the series, Maura’s experiences of navigating her gender identity are repeatedly expressed through particular kinaesthetic moments. In ‘Moppa’ [1:4], Maura’s friend, neighbour, and fellow trans woman Davina (Alexandra Billings) instructs her on how to properly embody femininity.

‘Listen, can we just close up shop here a little bit? [*She closes Maura’s open knees.*]

Your male privilege is leaking all over the place. And you don’t have to slouch. Keep yourself up and owning it. It’s called femininity.’

Davina encourages Maura to perform her gender by changing her kinaesthetic understanding of her own body, through recourse to particular norms of femininity. For Sandra Lee Bartky, normative feminine comportment involves ‘not only constriction, but...a certain eroticism restrained by modesty’;²³ Davina’s correction of Maura’s body both encourages her to take up less space, and to hold herself straight in a way that inevitably tucks in the stomach and thrusts out the breasts. Training the body to properly embody femininity thus also involves teaching it how to occupy and move through normatively gendered space, leaving more room for male bodies and more surface area for the male gaze. Yet importantly, Davina’s use of the phrase ‘keep yourself up’ suggests that normative femininity is hard work, a constant kinaesthetic policing. After she delivers this line, Davina smiles broadly before telling Maura to stop complaining, reflecting the way that the ‘uprightness’ of feminine kinaesthetics also mandates an affective corseting, in which negative affects must be denied and contained (much like the female body itself). What Davina labels femininity is what Judith Butler terms a ‘forcible citation of a norm’ – in this case, norms of action and embodied affect that are linked to the kinaesthetics of the body. In *Transparent*, the performance of gender is explicitly signalled as kinaesthetic experience of moving through and occupying space, one that is both discursively constitutive *and* affectively resonant.

While this is a fairly mundane and ordinary form of kinaesthetically ‘doing gender’, dance is also recurring trope throughout the series, reappearing at many of the key turning points in Maura’s gender journey. As both a highly pleasurable yet often rigorously choreographed form of body movement, dance once again proves vital in considering how gender identity is kinaesthetically understood. In ‘Best New Girl’ (1:8), Maura dances rapturously with fellow trans women at Camp Camelia, the first time she feels surrounded by people who understand and see her real self. In the flashback episode ‘If I Were a Bell’ (3:8), twelve year old Maura dances in the bomb shelter in her front yard, the only space in which she can safely express and explore her gender identity. Most notably, the season two episode ‘Flicky Flicky Thump Thump’ (2:2) ends with Maura reconnecting with her body and her identity through the kinaesthetic experience of dance. Throughout the episode Maura has been struggling to articulate her sexuality, sharing a sexual encounter with her ex-wife Shelley (Judith Light) that leaves her confused and unsettled. At the end of the episode she visits a

club with her friends Davina and Shea (Trace Lysette). While the others are soon invited to dance, Maura sits uncomfortably in her chair, clearly uneasy in the space. She is eventually pulled onto the dance floor and dances alone in front of a mirror, while Sia's 'Chandelier' plays on the soundtrack. She waves her arms and hands in front of her face, bobs up and down with her hand pressed against the glass, and closes her eyes, swaying her head in time with the music.

This moment stands as a key turning point in Maura's character arc, in which she reconciles how it feels to embody her gender with how such embodiment might take visual form, a conflict that has been key to the narrative of the series. Although Maura does connect with her image in the mirror, her ability to recognise herself relies upon recognising herself *in movement*. Her self-affirming gaze, in sharp contrast to her suspicious and uncomfortable glances at the beginning of the scene, only emerges through an attention to her own kinaesthetic sensations. In her work on *Transparent*, Amy Villarejo argues that Soloway 'carefully and deliberately constructs a way of looking at Maura that is expressive of Soloway's own feminist queer politics (for now, call it trans-affirmative and genderqueer)'.²⁴ However, while Villarejo only links such a trans-affirmative structure of engagement with the gaze, I would argue that this 'way of looking at Maura' is not really about *looking at her* at all, but a form of kinaesthetic awareness, engagement, and empathy. While Maura dances, the position of the camera means that the reflection of her face is often obscured behind her arms, frustrating the vision of the audience. Rather, it is the relationship between Maura's swaying movements and the repetitive refrain of the music that is the focal point of the scene, meaning that our access to Maura's emotional state operates more through empathising with the experience of moving in time with music. To return to Bollen's work on queer kinaesthesia, he argues that it is as much about communal exchange and ethical relation as it is about one's own identity: as he says, 'dancing to the beat of the music is dancing to the beat of the other'. While Maura may be dancing to her own beat in this scene – a beat of queer self-actualisation – she is perhaps simultaneously inviting us to dance with her, to empathise with the kinaesthetic rhythms of another body. Here, then, queer kinaesthesia is both an aesthetic structure depicted *on screen*, and something we are invited to experience ourselves.

Queer Desire and Kinaesthetic Intersubjectivity

The suggestion that kinaesthesia might be a means of relating to others is crucial for its relationship to both queerness and to television. Both Clare Croft and José Esteban Muñoz argue that queer identity is first and foremost a question of collaborative, communal existence, rather than an atomised, singular mode of subjectivity. For Croft, queer is a ‘coalitional sensibility’;²⁵ for Muñoz, it is a ‘collectivity’.²⁶ Yet both theorists believe that such a queer collective might be particularly at home on the dance floor, which, Muñoz argues, demands ‘an exchange and alteration of kinaesthetic experience through which we become, in a sense, less like ourselves and more like each other.’²⁷ Echoing Muñoz, Croft suggests that dance ‘enact[s] other ways to relate,’ forms of connection and community that go beyond the structures of the heterosexual couple.²⁸ Queerness can thus be understood as a collective form of embodied action, a set of shared kinaesthetics, one which offers new forms of intersubjectivity and connection. Yet this promise can also and has always been found within television. Beverly Skeggs and Helen Wood argue that television produces ‘a “beside-ness”, a binding to others’;²⁹ something that Misha Kavka echoes in her claim that television is a means of affectively connecting with people, and that this ‘promise of affective charge is why we watch TV in the first place.’³⁰ In this sense, television may be as much a space for queer coalitions as the dance floor – particularly when it employs the affective language of queer kinaesthesia.

This idea that kinaesthesia can be a means of relating (queerly) to others is essentially the central premise of *Sense8* (Netflix, 2015-2018), another recent programme that very obviously presents the moving body as a site for the expression of queer identity and desire. Produced for Netflix by Lana and Lilly Wachowski and J. Michael Straczynski, the series tells the story of eight strangers who discover that they are able to share emotions, experiences, and abilities: Capheus, a matatu driver in Nairobi caring for his mother who is sick with AIDS; Kala, a devoted Hindu scientist in Mumbai struggling with ambivalent feelings towards her upcoming wedding; Lito, a closeted film star in Mexico City; Nomi, a trans activist and hacker in San Francisco; Riley, an Icelandic DJ living in London at the beginning of the series; Sun, a Korean businesswoman and expert martial arts fighter; Will, an idealistic Chicago cop; and Wolfgang, a violent safe-cracker in Berlin. The eight

characters are deliberately diverse in terms of nationality, sexuality, and gender identity, and the series was shot on location across the world.

Sense8 shares many of the themes that can be traced across the Wachowskis' oeuvre: challenging the boundaries of the body, investigating new modes of community, and imagining new futures. Importantly, the series has a pronounced queer sensibility, which emerges in part through representation (two of the eight Sensates have recognisably LGBT identities), but more significantly through its investment in a queer sense of fluidity. For Jack Halberstam, queering spatio-temporal practice and knowledge means that 'the notion of a body-centred identity gives way to a model that locates sexual subjectivities within and between embodiment, place, and practice.'³¹ In *Sense8*, identity and subjectivity are not contained within the boundaries of a single form, but move fluidly between bodies and places. In this sense, it presents a portrayal of subjectivity that is expressed and experienced through the articulation between action and space, between practice and place, which can be understood as (kinaesthetically) queer. Indeed, the Sensates' connection is less a 'psychic' connection than one of what we might call kinaesthetic empathy, in which they understand each other through sharing their body's movement and occupation of space. The emotional bonds they forge derive directly from their ability to understand one another's kinaesthetics – the way their bodies move, and the particular spaces within which they do so. *Sense8* thus gestures towards the kind of coalitional queer identity that Croft and Muñoz place so much faith in, presenting eight people who possess a collective identity based in shared kinaesthesia. To put it more simply, as the tagline for *Sense8* suggests, queer kinaesthesia means that 'you are no longer just you.'

This is nowhere more obvious than in some of the most famous (or infamous) scenes of *Sense8*: the group sex sequences, in which the Sensates share and experience kinaesthetic empathy during sex. Queer sex scenes have always been difficult to evaluate, often criticised for catering to an exploitative straight male gaze (such as *Blue is the Warmest Colour*; Abdellatif Kechiche, 2013), or not being explicit enough in order to capitulate to the delicate sensibilities of the straight audience (such as *Call Me By Your Name*; Luca Guadagnino, 2017). Again, I would argue that this indicates the failures of visibility in accounting for queer representation on screen, and again suggests the need for a new interpretative and evaluative framework that goes beyond the limited and fixed parameters

of the visual. Elspeth Probyn makes a similar suggestion in her work on queer belonging, in which she questions how we might find ways to analyse desire as a ‘specific queer form of movement and mediation between individuals’.³² I would suggest that kinaesthesia fulfils this promise, offering a mobile framework that preserves the power of queer movement and relationality. Queer desire and queer connection, as much as queer identity, might need to be approached from the perspective of kinaesthesia rather than vision.

This is something that *Sense8*’s sex scenes fully embrace. The first group sex scene occurs in ‘Demons’, the sixth episode of the first season, and involves four of the eight Sensates – Nomi, a trans lesbian woman (and her partner Amanita), Lito, a gay man (and his partner Hernando), and Will and Wolfgang, who have thus far been presented as straight. The scene begins with two of the characters – Lito and Will – working out, an experience that relies heavily on kinaesthesia, on the feelings of how the body moves and how it exists in space. Here, a deliberate attention to body movement seems to act as a catalyst for entering into queer forms of desire and attachment. Once the sexual encounter begins, any sense of binaries or existing ideas of sexuality and gender disappear – instead, there is just fluidity, of both desire and bodily form. Aesthetically, the scene is shot to draw our attention to the rhythms of body movement across different experiences, pairing the sexual with the non-sexual – the back and forth motion of Will’s sit-ups resounds with that of Lito’s hips, and the gentle stroking of Nomi’s hands creates the same curved lines as Wolfgang’s languid posture. In this scene, kinaesthesia not only sets the boundaries of the body into motion, but shakes up all notions of how desires are supposed to be attached to particular forms and particular actions.

The first episode of the second season, ‘Happy Fucking New Year’, also includes a group sex scene – although this time, it involves all eight of the Sensates. The scene again foregrounds the rhythms of body movement: it focuses on close-up shots of muscles contracting in backs and bottoms, heads twisting and turning to press against skin, and hands stroking and clutching. Again, the aesthetics of the scene deliberately frustrates the discrete lines of individual bodies and the bounded forms of recognisable desire. The shot composition emphasising limbs and shoulders rather faces, and draws attention to the continuities of movement across form, such as a wide-angle shot that shows all eight of the Sensates arching their backs at the moment of climax. Here, the focus on the kinaesthetic

rhythms of bodily action creates a sense of fluidity, in which individual bodies are less important than the overall sense of rhythm and motion. In a somewhat forgotten article about the kinaesthetic experience of watching sport, Judith Butler suggests that ‘only from a spectatorial point of view does the body appear as a bounded kind of thing, and when that point of view is relinquished in favour of engaged bodily action, we are less likely to know precisely where our bodily boundaries begin and end.’³³ Butler could, I think, be describing the kind of queer kinaesthesia through which the *Sensates* connect to one another. This can be disorienting for the audience, for at times it is difficult to determine which action belongs to which couple, which body part belongs to which person. But this is, of course, entirely the point. The sex scenes use kinaesthesia as a way to *queer sex* on screen, making desire a question of mobile embodiment that continually resists attempts to neatly categorise and catalogue it according to shape and form. In order to access a queer sense of relational identity and relational bodies, the series suggests, we might need to set aside the language of visibility and take up one of bodily movement.

A similar presentation of queer desire can be found within *American Gods* (Starz, 2017–), Bryan Fuller’s adaptation of Neil Gaiman’s novel. The series tells the story of Shadow Moon (Ricky Whittle), an ex-con who falls in with a mysterious man called Mr. Wednesday (Ian McShane) and his fight against the ‘new gods’ of contemporary America. Fuller is known for the queer sensibility that weaves its way throughout his oeuvre more generally, from the pastel parodies of *Pushing Daisies* (ABC, 2007-2009) to the dark and chaotic fluidity of *Hannibal* (NBC, 2013-2015). I would argue that this queer sensibility emerges in large part through Fuller’s repeated use of kinaesthetic affect, something which is particularly evident in *American Gods*. Like *Sense8*, the programme is concerned with pushing against the standard representations of desire on television. And like *Sense8*, it explicitly presents sex as a fluid, mobile, intensely kinaesthetic experience. The third episode of the first season, ‘Head Full of Snow’, contains a secondary story focused around Salim (Omid Abtahi), a young Muslim man from Oman who has recently moved to New York City. After spending a day waiting in an office trying unsuccessfully to launch a business venture, he takes a cab back to his hotel room. During the journey, he bonds with the cab driver (Mousa Kraish) over their shared experience of struggling as immigrants in America. When the cab gets caught in a traffic jam, the driver falls asleep,

and Salim reaches across the seat to wake him. As he places his hand on his shoulder, he catches a glimpse of the man's eyes behind his sunglasses (burning with fire), and realises that he is a Jinn. The two take the elevator up to Salim's hotel room, where they have sex.

There are two significant moments of touch in the lead up to the sex scene: when Salim touches the shoulder of the Jinn in the cab, and when he tentatively takes his hand in the elevator. Both of these moments are shot in close-up, which draws attention to Salim's hesitant, fluttering motions. In the cab, his hand hovers awkwardly above the Jinn's shoulder before eventually settling upon it; in the elevator, he brushes the back of the Jinn's hand, moves away, then returns to grasp his fingers. Importantly, these moments occur in unique kinaesthetic locations. Cabs and elevators are both slightly odd experiences of movement, sticky articulations of movement and stasis, of repetition and circularity. Both are modes of transport, but both involve a (relatively) static body, and both only move within strictly repetitive circuits. Indeed, much of Salim and the Jinn's cab journey is a stationary one, as the cab gets caught in the snarl of New York City traffic. It is important to remember that not all movement is easy: when we talk about mobility, we do not simply mean things that are fluid and flowing and free. Kinaesthesia, and queer kinaesthesia in particular, is also a question of those awkward movements, in which things halt and stutter and become stuck. For Sara Ahmed, affect is a question of stickiness, or of 'what sticks' to bodies, objects, and ideas.³⁴ In *American Gods*, kinaesthetic affect is again an entryway into queer desire, but this time through those sticky moments in which a body catches against another, in which the body's movement through space resists smooth, unfettered motion. The awkward relationship between fixity and fluidity in the spaces of cabs and elevators are just as much a catalyst for the expression of queer desire as the more conventional mobility of dance. In *American Gods*, the troublant kinaesthetics of hesitation and inertia are just as queer as smooth fluidity.

The sex scene that follows these moments of touch is one of the most beautiful sex scenes I have seen on television: it is sensuous, evocative, and all the more noteworthy for the fact that it takes place between two Muslim men. While it is visually explicit, it is also intensely kinaesthetic, again demonstrating that queer desire must be expressed and understood through something beyond the limitations of the visual. The Jinn's eyes are filled with flames, immediately suggesting that vision is

not a penetrative gaze, but a mobile form of desire. At the height of the scene, both body and space transform: the Jinn's body collapses into sand grains that float away in a breeze, leaving behind a dark form filled with flickering fire, and the hotel room melts away into a desert into the night sky. As the Jinn continues to thrust into Salim, the flames move across into Salim's body. Vision in the queer sex scene is thus presented as something that must be expressed through and written across the body. Queer desire transforms and it transports, re-shaping both body and space in this scene, as the fleshy form of bodies become smooth coal-like fuel for fire and the crowded spaces of the city fall away into the expanses of the desert. Again, attempting to fix queer identity and queer desire within a static sense of visual form is entirely futile, for queerness is always a mobile experience.

Yet the thing that remains consistent across the spatial and corporeal transformation is the kinaesthetics of the scene – the movement of the two men's hips, their clasped hands, the rise and fall of their chests as they gasp for breath. In this sense, our access to this scene is again mediated through kinaesthesia: empathising with the movements of the two men offers a stronger and more meaningful connection than trying to latch onto the visual signifiers of the scene, which are only as stable as sand dunes on a windy night. Deidre Sklar suggests that kinaesthesia offers a more ethical system of spectatorship for performative arts such as dance: 'whereas visual perception implies an "object" to be perceived from a distance with the eyes alone, empathetic kinaesthetic perception implies a bridging between subjectivities.'³⁵ This promise of kinaesthetic intersubjectivity is the same promise of queer community that I discussed earlier in this article; it is the promise of *Sense8* and *American Gods*; and it is also, arguably, the promise of television itself. The sticky kinaesthetics of movement and stasis in *American Gods* are queer, yet they are also televisual, a medium which has always been defined by a paradoxical experience of travelling while staying still. Sklar's work thus has significant implications for television spectatorship, which involves structures of intimacy, proximity, and community more than an objectifying, penetrative gaze. The emphasis that *American Gods* and *Sense8* place on the kinaesthetics of sex suggest that it is television that offers a queerer form of desire on screen, a way of both presenting *and* experiencing queer sex on screen that emphasises the intersubjective fluidity of the moving body.

Serial Narrative and Kinaesthetic Futures

While I have repeatedly returned to ideas of the ‘televisual’ throughout this argument, keen readers will have noticed that none of the programmes I am concerned with are traditionally televisual at all: *Transparent* and *Sense8* are original productions of streaming services (Amazon Prime and Netflix respectively), and *American Gods* is a cable drama, and was internationally distributed by Amazon Prime. The unanswered question haunting my work is thus the same question which television studies has been grappling with for the past few years: what, if anything, is *televisual* about streaming television? And what, if anything, might be queer about it? Keen readers will have also noticed that my objects of analysis are all narrative programmes and *serialised* narrative in particular. Serial narration has a distinct rhythm: it unfolds with interruptions, and it moves forward through repetition, whether the repeated iterations of episodes or the repetition of plot elements. Such a synthesis of contradictions is even more marked in what Jason Mittell refers to as the ‘narrative complexity’ that defines contemporary television, which involves a ‘shifting balance’ between episodic and serial forms.

The difference between episodocity and seriality is largely a temporal one; as Milly Buonanno suggests, the two narrational forms revolve around ‘desires that pull readers in two different directions’³⁶ – one that reaches forwards and one that repeats backwards. The affective structure of serial television can thus be understood as one of contradictory movements, or what Robyn Warhol refers to as the ‘ebb and flow of the wave pattern’ of satisfaction and anticipation that is common to all forms of seriality.³⁷ Like queerness, serial narration contains its own set of highly mobile desires and affects. In this sense, it is unsurprising that many of the key features of seriality resonate perfectly with the key principles of queer theory. For Sean O’Sullivan, serial narration is a question of the ‘multiple rather than the single, the broken rather than the whole, that which frustrates rather than that which completes’.³⁸ For Lynn Joyrich, it favours ‘restarts and reversals, iterations and involutions, branching and braidings’.³⁹ Of course, this does not make serial television inherently queer, but this shared investment in multiplication, open-ended forms, and mobile desires suggests that it might be a useful site for thinking about queerness (and about kinaesthesia).

While streaming programmes can be understood as serialised in terms of the way they organise their narratives in episodes and seasons, they are not released in the standard pattern of regular iterations, but in ‘season drops’ in which all episodes of a season are released simultaneously. Rather than the ebb and flow pattern of serial consumption, the affective experience of watching streaming television is more akin to a feast/famine system. This diminishes the queer potential of seriality, for watching these programmes in this format arguably involves an unhindered feeling of progression into the future, something that many queer scholars reject. Lee Edelman decisively claims that future is always a (heteronormative) reproductive future, chaining hope and desire into a sequential narrative of generational progression, one which makes reproductive sex the dominant ideal.⁴⁰ Similarly, Jack Halberstam argues that queer temporality places an emphasis on the ‘here, the present, the now’, particularly as a reaction against the threat of annihilation evoked by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and 1990s.⁴¹ Streaming television, with its constant invitation to cue up the next episode, thus seems to fit squarely within the heteronormative logics of dominant temporality.

Yet Amy Villarejo argues that changes in television narration invite new modes of queer representation, and vice versa.⁴² In this sense, it strikes me that there might be something worth unpacking about the prominence of queer kinaesthesia within contemporary television. I do not necessarily want to make a deterministic claim about the relationship between streaming television and queer representation, for attempting to erect a historical teleology goes against the very principles of queer theory. But I do wonder whether the particular nexus of queer desire, kinaesthesia, and serial television on our screens at present has something to offer our understandings of the televisual as much as it does queer desire, if it has something to say about television narration as much as it does about queer representation. Roger Hagedorn argues that because seriality encourages brand loyalty and sustained consumption patterns, the form always emerges at key moments of transition, and always ‘serve to promote the very medium in which [it] appear[s].’⁴³ In this sense, seriality has much to tell us about how we define media at key moments in history, including the contemporary one. In the final part of this article, I would like to re-connect the future-orientation of streaming services with both queerness *and* the televisual, in order to offer some thoughts on how we might go about theorising contemporary queerness, contemporary television, and the points at which they meet.

Once again, I am indebted to the thoughtful work of José Esteban Muñoz. He makes a compelling case for the value of a queer theory of the future, arguing that queer is always potential and possibility, always on the horizon, never able to be fixed within the present.⁴⁴ Such an orientation towards a future is and has always been crucial to the queer project, he claims, from the question of performativity ('a doing for and toward the future')⁴⁵ to the political value of hope (as 'both a critical affect and a methodology').⁴⁶ 'If queerness is to have any value whatsoever,' he suggests, 'it must be viewed as being visible only in the horizon.'⁴⁷ Muñoz is right, I believe, but I would like to extend his work to suggest that the true value of the queer future lies not in squinting at the horizon, but in the feeling of moving and reaching towards it. Kinaesthesia is an anticipatory sensation, always in the process of unfolding and gesturing onwards. For Dee Reynolds, kinaesthetic affect 'involves an impulse towards or anticipation of movement rather than actual movement'.⁴⁸ By this she means that kinaesthesia is always a feeling oriented towards possibility and potential, for movement never simply *is*, but is always in the process of *doing*. Queer kinaesthesia, then, is as much an open-ended narrative as seriality itself.

All of the programmes I have discussed thus far are concerned with the future. *Transparent* repeatedly evokes the trope of the 'journey' to describe Maura's gender transition, which implies a movement towards a point on the horizon. Yet this journey is by no means linear, and the narrative strongly resists the idea that stories of gender transition necessarily progress towards a surgical outcome. Rather, Maura's journey is one of reversals and restarts, particularly at the end of the third season, in which she learns that her age and heart abnormalities prohibit her from both surgery and from continuing with her hormonal treatment. Maura must learn how to embody her queer identity in ways beyond linear narratives of progress. This complicates the dominant assumption that stories (particularly trans stories) progress logically towards a clear ending, instead emphasising that gender transition is a serial narrative marked by repetition, circular patterns, and no definitive end.

Sense8 employs a pseudo-evolutionary discourse to suggest that the Sensates are an evolutionary branch of the human race. Jonas (an older Sensate belonging to a different cluster) tells Will that 'one small chromosome mutation severed them [non-Sensates] from their connection to each other', presenting ordinary humans as something of an evolutionary error. While at times this can feel

like a straightforward narrative of progress, it is important to remember that evolution only ever operates through the accidental and the contingent, and is never a path towards the ‘best’ species (as much as our popular understanding paints it as such). *Sense8* also deliberately queers reproductive time. Sensates exist in a ‘cluster’ of fellow people with whom they share experience and sensation. They share the same biological birth date and time, but experience a second ‘birth’ in which they become aware of one another – a birth that is activated by a Sensate from a different cluster. Birth in *Sense8* thus exists as a multiplicity, a complex event that is connected to the past, produces a future, and operates as a form of connection between multiple subjectivities. Again, *Sense8* emphasises the branched, braided, multiple imagination key to both seriality and queerness.

American Gods explicitly revolves around a conflict between the old and the new (in this case, Old and New Gods). The main narrative involves two groups of characters on separate road trips across middle America, thus giving it a clear journey structure and a highly anticipatory affective structure. However, each episode begins with a sequence that depicts how the Old Gods (such as Odin, Anansi, Nunnunini, and Jesus) arrived in America. In this sense, the overall rhythm of the programme suggests that the path to the future must always move through the past. In all of these programmes, then, the future lies in its messy relationship with the past – that structure of progression with recursion, of repetition with a difference, which is so central to serial narration. For Richard Dyer, popular entertainment gestures towards utopia, but as a structure of feeling rather than a model: ‘what utopia would feel like rather than how it would be organised.’⁴⁹ Christine Geraghty suggests that Dyer’s work is particularly true for serial narration, which, in its rhythmic movement forward, offers not a vision of the future but the feelings of the future.⁵⁰ *Transparent*, *Sense8*, and *American Gods* all suggest that those feelings are exactly those of queer kinaesthesia: a futurity that is both progressive and recursive, a sense of embodiment that is both reiterative and revolutionary, a mobile desire that is both choreographed according to what came before but retains the potential to change the steps at any moment.

In order to demonstrate the validity of these ideas, I now turn to the exception that proves the rule, so to speak, with a very different programme from the three I have discussed: Netflix’s *Queer Eye* (2018–), a reboot of the Bravo makeover series which ran between 2003 and 2007. In each

episode the 'Fab Five' work with their subject (usually a straight man) to improve their life, offering advice in five different areas: fashion, food, grooming, interior design, and lifestyle and culture. Makeover programmes are not narrative serials, but they do possess something of a serial imagination. Meredith Jones suggests that in makeover television, 'becoming is more desirable than being',⁵¹ by which she means that the finished product is less important than the process and labour of transformation. Heike Steinhoff, drawing from Jones's work, argues that this emphasis on process can be understood as specifically televisual in the way it creates a feeling of seriality.⁵² While individual episodes may set up a before/after paradigm, the repetitiveness of the formula means that overall, the programmes evoke a sense of continual change, process, and interminability. There are always more subjects to be made over; there is always more work to be done; and the process of improving oneself is as much an incomplete, endlessly deferred narrative as seriality itself.

The makeover is explicitly future-oriented, encouraging improvement and promising happiness. Almost all makeovers suggest that the road to this future is through conspicuous consumption, in which being a more authentic version of yourself means consuming the right kinds of products in the right kind of ways. The makeover also tends (whether explicitly or implicitly) to suggest that the end goal is to be more attractive to the opposite sex, something that *Queer Eye* makes fairly obvious in its focus on the long-suffering wives and partners of the makeover subjects. The future that makeover television produces, then, is both reproductive and highly capitalist, neither of which seems to offer much potential for queer theory. *Queer Eye* is no different, of course, even if the reboot is arguably as much concerned with unpacking toxic masculinity as it is with shaping its subjects into a model of male subjectivity. It largely continues to promote the idea that the path to the future is through better consumption and aesthetic practices, whether Bobby Berk's blue-gray colour palettes, Antoni Porowski's love of avocados, or Tan France's infamous French tuck.

However, there is one element of *Queer Eye*'s transformations that strikes me as particularly queer: the strong kinaesthetic trend to the work of Karamo Brown. Brown, as the 'culture' expert, has the least well-defined job description of the five. He tends to act as the de facto therapist of the group, spending most of his time trying to get his subjects to open up emotionally, and to determine the emotional blocks that are standing in the way of their happiness. Yet again and again, Brown works

kinaesthetically with his subjects. In ‘Saving Sasquatch’ (1.2), he takes Neal boxing as a way to help him deal with his anxiety. In ‘Hose Before Bros’ (1.8) he teaches a group of firefighters how to ballroom dance, ostensibly for a fundraiser, but also as a means of community formation. In ‘The Handyman Can’ (2.4), he suggests that Jason is suffering from a form of imposter syndrome in which he is both afraid of success and of failure, and takes him to an aerial arts class to teach him the value of trying new things, regardless of your level of accomplishment. And in ‘Too Gay or Not Too Gay’ (1.4), he recognises that AJ is shy and afraid of trusting others, and suggests that the best way to teach him how to ‘live your life authentically and open to other people’ is to face his fears on a zipline course. In all of these instances, Brown encourages his subjects to access a better version of themselves through a *kinaesthetic* transformation, through moving their bodies in new ways and in new configurations. He instinctively reaches for kinaesthesia as a way to help his subjects, relying upon that sense of self-actualisation through the moving body that is so central to queer kinaesthesia.

Of course, Karamo’s decision to go ziplining and boxing and dancing may simply reflect the fact that such athletic stunts make for good television. But that is entirely the point: queer kinaesthesia is good television. It taps into many of the foundational features of the medium: intimacy, performance, seriality, empathy, and community. In this sense, I wonder if queer kinaesthesia might help bridge the gaps between broadcast and streaming television, for it is a mode of storytelling that is simultaneously traditionally televisual and continually transformative. José Esteban Muñoz writes that ‘queerness is a longing that propels us onward’,⁵³ and it is this connection between desire and motion that is at the heart of both queer kinaesthesia and serial television consumption, regardless of whether it is encountered as broadcast or in its online iterations.

There is something fitting, I think, in defining television through its flexibility and mobility, rather than trying to pin it down into one particular shape and form. Villarejo herself makes a similar suggestion, elegantly stating that television’s essence may ‘be in its potentiality rather than its actuality, what it may enable us, ourselves, to become.’⁵⁴ And this, of course, is also the essence of queer kinaesthesia, in which the moving body gestures beyond itself, inviting us to stop trying to determine what a body is and what a body looks like, but what a body might be able to do. So while the dominant narratives of representational politics revolve around visibility and linear teleologies of

progress, I would rather place my belief in a narrative of mobility. The stories that movement tells are queer stories; they are serial stories; they are embodied stories; they are relational stories; and they are, I believe, stories that find themselves particularly at home on television.

¹ Alan Sepinwall, 'Pose Season Two Review: A Revolutionary World Where Hope Prevails', *Rolling Stone*, June 10 2019 <https://www.rollingstone.com/tv/tv-reviews/pose-season-2-review-845765/>; Caroline Framke, 'TV Review: "Pose" on FX', *Variety*, May 30 2018 <https://variety.com/2018/tv/reviews/pose-fx-review-ryan-murphy-1202824492/>

² GLAAD, *Where We Are on TV Report – 2018*, <https://www.glaad.org/whereweareontv18>

³ Glyn Davis and Gary Needham, 'Introduction: The Pleasures of the Tube', in Glyn Davis and Gary Needham (eds), *Queer TV: Histories, Theories, Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 2.

⁴ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p. xii.

⁵ Erin Manning, *Politics of Touch: Sense, Movement, Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. xvi.

⁶ See Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); and Jennifer Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

⁷ Alain Berthoz, *The Brain's Sense of Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 25.

⁸ Sensory historians David Howes and Constance Classen undertake an excellent critique of historical understandings of the senses, yet only give a cursory mention to kinaesthesia as a passing interest of the nineteenth century. See *Ways of Sensing: Understanding the Senses in Society* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

⁹ Jonathan Bollen, 'Queer Kinaesthesia: Performativity on the Dance Floor', in Jane Desmond (ed), *Dancing Desires: Choreographing Sexualities On and Off the Stage* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), pp. 285-314.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

¹¹ Clare Croft, 'Introduction', in Clare Croft (ed), *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 9.

¹² José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

¹³ GLAAD, *2018 GLAAD Studio Responsibility Index*. <https://www.glaad.org/sri/2018/>

¹⁴ Amy Villarejo, 'Ethereal Queer: Notes on Method', in Glyn Davis and Gary Needham (eds), *Queer TV: Histories, Theories, Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 55.

¹⁵ Michele Aaron, 'Towards Queer Television Theory: Bigger Pictures sans the Sweet Queerafter', in Glyn Davis and Gary Needham (eds), *Queer TV: Histories, Theories, Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 71.

¹⁶ Karen Lury, 'The Loss of the Contingent in Digital Television', in James Bennett and Niki Strange (eds), *Television as Digital Media* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 201.

¹⁷ Amy Villarejo, *Ethereal Queer: Television, Historicity, Desire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), p. 7.

¹⁸ See *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) and *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limitations of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

¹⁹ Butler, 'Athletic Genders: Hyperbolic Instance and/or the Overcoming of Sexual Binarism', *Stanford Humanities Review*, 6 (1995).

²⁰ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures / Producing Culture* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 193.

²³ Sandra Lee Bartky, *Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 68.

²⁴ Amy Villarejo, 'Jewish, Queer-Ish, Trans, and Completely Revolutionary: Jill Soloway's *Transparent* and the New Television', *Film Quarterly*, vol. 69, no. 4 (2016), p. 11.

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- ²⁵ Croft, 'Introduction', p. 2.
- ²⁶ Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. 11.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ²⁸ Croft, 'Introduction', p. 4.
- ²⁹ Beverly Skeggs and Helen Wood, *Reacting to Reality Television: Performance, Audience and Value* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 135.
- ³⁰ Misha Kavka, *Reality Television, Affect and Intimacy: Reality Matters* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 46.
- ³¹ Judith (Jack) Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), p. 5.
- ³² Elspeth Probyn, 'Queer Belongings: The Politics of Departure', in Elizabeth Grosz and Elspeth Probyn (eds), *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 14.
- ³³ Butler, 'Athletic Genders'.
- ³⁴ Sara Ahmed, 'Happy Objects', in Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (eds), *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 29.
- ³⁵ Deidre Sklar, 'Five Premises for a Culturally Sensitive Approach to Dance', in Ann Dils and Ann Cooper Albright (eds), *Moving History / Dancing Cultures: A Dance History Reader* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), p. 32.
- ³⁶ Milly Buonanno, *The Age of Television: Experiences and Theories* (Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2008), p. 124.
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- ³⁸ Sean O'Sullivan, 'Serials and Satisfaction', *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*, vol. 63 (2013).
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- ⁴⁰ Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
- ⁴¹ Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*, p. 2.
- ⁴² Villarejo, *Ethereal Queer*.
- ⁴³ Roger Hagedorn, 'Doubtless to Be Continued: A Brief History of Serial Narrative', in Roger C. Allen (ed), *To Be Continued: Soap Operas Around the World* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 28.
- ⁴⁴ Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ⁴⁸ Dee Reynolds, 'Kinaesthetic Empathy and the Dance's Body: From Emotion to Affect', in Dee Reynolds and Matthew Reason (eds), *Kinaesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices* (Bristol: Intellect, 2012), p. 124.
- ⁴⁹ Richard Dyer, *Only Entertainment* (New York: Routledge, [1992] 2002), p. 20.
- ⁵⁰ Christine Geraghty, *Women and Soap Opera: A Study of Prime Time Soaps* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
- ⁵¹ Meredith Jones, *Skintight: An Anatomy of Cosmetic Surgery* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), p. 12.
- ⁵² Heike Steinhoff, *Transforming Bodies: Makeovers and Monstrosities in American Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
- ⁵³ Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. 1.
- ⁵⁴ Villarejo, *Ethereal Queer*, p. 153.