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Civil Inattention in Public Places: Normalising Unusual Events through Mobile and Embodied Practices

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Abstract: This article builds on GOFFMAN's work to study how pedestrians display their orientation to unusual events in public places. It focuses on the mobile and embodied conduct of those passing a smartmob event in which a performing group "froze" in a busy transit hub for four minutes. The data comprise audio-video recordings of the event. We identify and analyse routinised mobile and embodied practices by which passers-by "normalise" the unusual event. These include different organisations of body behaviour and the ways in which passers-by walk around and between the performers as individuals and groups. The findings are supported with illustrations.

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1. Introduction

Most of us have witnessed extraordinary events, incidents or accidents in such public places as city centres, market places, railway stations, shopping malls, parks, plazas and schools. Although such events have the potential to disrupt the flow of ordinary and uneventful conduct in these places, we might have also witnessed that during such events, people often go about their lives as if nothing has happened. This study provides a qualitative analysis of the ways in which people in a routine manner demonstrate civil inattention in response to an unexpected and out of the ordinary event in which a group of performers suddenly stop moving and "freeze" for four minutes in a public place. [1]

In his paper "Normal Appearances", GOFFMAN (2010 [1971], pp.238-333) discussed how people orient themselves to events and actions that surround

them and also how they make distinctions between normal and unusual scenes in that environment. He noted that

> "whatever range of risk and opportunity an environment contains, the individual exposed to these considerations typically comes to terms with them, making what adjustments are necessary in order to routinely withdraw his main attention from them and get on with other matters (pp.239-240). [2]

Similarly, Harvey SACKS (1992a, p.220) noted in his lectures how remarkable it is to see people's efforts to achieve a "nothing happened" attitude from extraordinary events. He also noted that there seem to be all kinds of routine ways for dealing with such extraordinary events (p.221). Further, Gail JEFFERSON (2004), by building on SACKS's work, analysed in detail a verbal device which she called the "first I thought X, then I realised Y"-structure and which English speakers use for describing their reactions and thoughts about extraordinary events. JEFFERSON argues that the use of the structure demonstrates how people tend to first seek for a "normal" explanation to an unusual event before they come to a realisation that something truly unusual has taken place. [3]

In this article, we build on this prior research and aim to study the mobile and embodied conduct of walkers that encounter an unusual event. We use audio and video data recorded from a performance in which a group of students froze (i.e. stopped moving and remained immobile) for four minutes at a busy university campus transit hub (see Section 2). We focus specifically on the mobile and embodied conduct of those who walked past the performance. We identify and analyse some seemingly routinised mobile and embodied practices, such as what postures the passers-by invoke, their gaze shifts, acts of looking and how they create emergent mobile paths both as individuals and groups. As we will show, the mobile and embodied conduct of the passers-by is indicative of "civil inattention" (GOFFMAN, 1963, pp.83-88) and communicates a "nothing has happened" stance towards the performance. [4]

This study also addresses questions that are currently being asked in the emerging field of mobility studies: how do people "do mobility", how to they practice it, how is embodiment and experience involved in mobility, how is mobility structured and created as a collaborative achievement (see e.g. INGOLD, 2004; CRESSWELL, 2006, pp.3-4; THRIFT, 2007; URRY, 2007, p.11; McILVENNY, BROTH & HADDINGTON, 2009; ADEY, 2010, p.142; HADDINGTON, MONDADA & NEVILE, in press). Less well known, however, is how stopping, immobility and stillness are constructed as social phenomena. As an exception, LAN HING TING, VOILMY, BÜSCHER & HEMMENT (in press) analyse the practical organisation and achievement of stillness in a smartmob or flashmob event, an event that is similar to the one studied here. They argue that "normally, mobility is the default state in public space". They continue that "due to unusual stillness, the expected organised mobility is disturbed as passers-by have to modify their pace unexpectedly to avoid the frozen agents and without giving accountable signs of their actions". The present article complements LAN

HING TING et al.'s research by focusing on and analysing in detail how people concretely and systematically practice, create and recognise or orient and respond to immobility and stillness through talk, gestures or other embodied actions, as active participants in the world. [5]

The study of real-life social and embodied interactions and encounters in public places can benefit greatly from particular kinds of qualitative methods and solutions. GOFFMAN (1963, 1964), for example, highlighted the importance of making observations and studying social behaviour in public places *in situ*. He noted that human behaviour in public places can "tell us a great deal about its most diffuse forms of social organisation" (1963. p.4). Central to GOFFMAN's (1964) thinking was that social situations arise when two or more individuals find themselves in one another's immediate presence. GOFFMAN (p.135) further defined a social situation as an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities, where a participant finds himself/herself accessible to others "present" and also finds the others to be accessible to him/her. GOFFMAN (2010 [1971], p.11) also specifically notes that in public places individuals use their body and gestures to allow others to glean otherwise unavailable facts about their situation. As regards studying mobile practices in particular, BÛSCHER, URRY and WITCHGER (2011) note that one of the challenges is how to rigorously approach and study those fleeting moments of (im)mobility and their place in the social world (see also McILVENNY et al., 2009). Similarly, LATHAM (2003, p.2001) asks that if public spaces are places in which routinised interactions and encounters occur and if they are mostly nonverbal how can they be included within research? [6]

Our aim is to respond and supplement recent developments in mobile methods by drawing on GOFFMAN's (1963) research on the organisation of everyday social life and the findings and empirical methods used in multimodal interaction analysis (GOODWIN, 2000; STIVERS & SIDNELL, 2005; STREECK, GOODWIN & LeBARON, 2011). The data come from four video recordings that were recorded during a "freeze" performance. In the analyses we focus on the systematic and normative organisation of practices by which social participants manifestly and recognisably observe the world around them, respond to (im)mobile events and actions and construct a stance of civil inattention towards the "freeze" performance. This means that we specifically focus on how people adjust, coordinate and negotiate their walking (for example, by constructing new mobile paths and trajectories around the performers), how they encounter the performers and other walkers, how they visibly and through their bodies, and also sometimes audibly, respond to the performers' stillness. Our general argument is that people do not move irrespective of others. Rather, people are in a continuous state of embodied and mobile co-presence and they display their understandings of the "freeze" through their situated actions. In sum, we approach mobility and stillness as a practice that is achieved and made possible through embodied interaction with the environment and other embodied actors (see also HADDINGTON, 2012; HADDINGTON, NEVILE & KEISANEN, 2012; LAURIER et al., 2008; NEVILE, 2012). [7]

In the next sections, we provide some background to the performance and also explain the data used and the data collection procedure. We also explain the methodological principles that underlie this research. In the analysis section, we specify our research questions and analyse in detail several social and mobile patterns that were identified from the data. The final section provides a summary of the analysis and the findings. [8]

2. The Event: Making a Scene!

The data used for this research were collected as part of an unannounced performance called "Making a Scene!". The performance was organised in Finland in March 2010 by a group called "The Stillers". The group consisted of university graduate students taking a course on the use of language, gestures and the body in social interaction. The performance took place in the main lobby of a university campus which connects the south and north sides of the campus (see Figure 1). The university has a community of almost 20,000 student and staff members. As a public space, the main lobby is a busy transit hub that connects different parts of the university. It is also the location of several restaurants, cafés, lecture halls, a bookstore and an information desk. The performance was organised at noon, which is the busiest time of the day. In the performance, the individual performers, at a given secret signal (one of the performers dropping her papers and kneeling down), ceased to move, and they maintained their frozen positions for four minutes. After this they unfroze and continued whatever they had been doing before the freeze. As LAN HING TING et al. (in press) note, these kinds of the "freeze" performances can be described as playful modifications of "expected mobility and behaviour in public places". Such smartmob or flashmob events are quite frequent, the most famous perhaps being the Frozen Grand Central organised by ImprovEverywhere in New York in 2008.

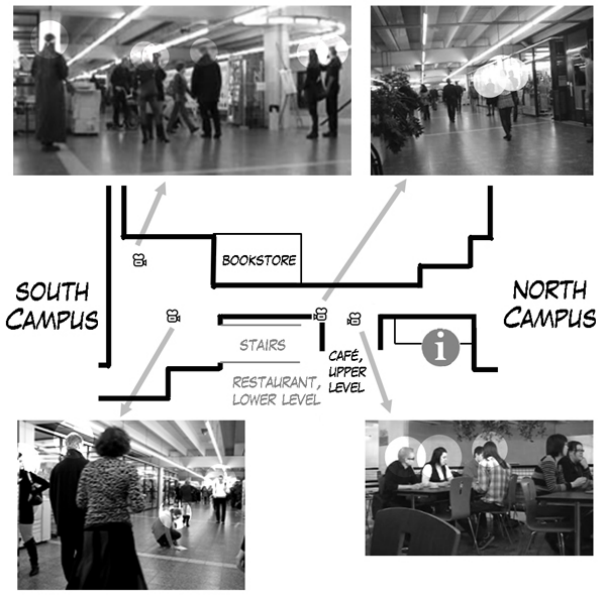

Figure 1: Layout of the main lobby and performance area (in the pictures, the light circles indicate the performers) [9]

3. The Collection and Qualitative Analysis of Video Data

The performance was video recorded by the students on the course and they also analysed the data for their course assignment. The aim of the video recordings was to capture the embodied conduct and responses of passers-by to the performance and to the immobility of the performers. As previous research has shown, the use of video data as a visual method among many others is immensely helpful for studying the organisation of social conduct in diverse everyday and institutional settings. Video recordings are highly beneficial for analysing what people do, and when and how they do it. In addition to this, video recordings are helpful for studying the structural organisation of social actions, i.e. for studying what leads to or follows a particular embodied or verbal action (for more information on the use of video for analysis, see e.g LAURIER, STREBEL & BROWN, 2008; MONDADA, 2008; HEATH, HINDMARSH & LUFF, 2010; STREECK et al., 2011; KÄÄNTÄ & HADDINGTON, 2011). [10]

For the present study, four video cameras were located in different positions in the lobby and they were used for recording the whole 4-minute performance (see Figure 1 for the locations of the cameras). After the performance, the actual analysis comprised four steps. First, each group member wrote an ethnographic account in which they explained and reflected upon their experiences in the performance.[1] Second, the video-recordings were viewed in a so-called data session in which the participants with the experiences fresh in their minds made repeated viewings of the video clips to discuss the event and what had happened in it. In the data session, the analysis revealed phenomena out of which four, because they stood out from the recordings and were recurrent, were deemed to be worthy of further analysis (see Section 4). Third, the class was divided into four groups and each group was assigned to do a more detailed analysis of one of the identified phenomena. The groups kept returning to the video clips and analysed in closer detail the participants' embodied and mobile actions (such as looking and walking) during the performance. Finally, each group member wrote a brief analysis of their phenomenon, which was then handed in as a course assignment. The present article, the questions we ask and the findings we report originate from the first data session and the subsequent analyses. This methodology also explains the unusual number of authors (eighteen), which however is not unusual for this type of analysis (see e.g. LAURIER et al., 2008). [11]

The methodology used builds on Erving GOFFMAN's work on the social order of everyday life (1963) and on Harold GARFINKEL's ethnomethodological research (1984 [1967]). While GOFFMAN (1963) was interested in the ritual properties of

1 The performers' first general reaction was disappointment. They felt that the freeze did not have a big impact on the conduct of passers-by and that people just continued their movement and life almost as if nothing had happened. However, after a while we all understood that this was exactly the main finding of our research project. The high expectations were probably caused by the "Frozen Grand Central" video in which the audience seemed to stop and be visibly perplexed by the freeze. It seems that in some cases in the "Frozen Grand Central" video the responses were elicited by the organisers and were not natural. However, it must also be borne in mind that the "Making the Scene!" performance was organised at a university campus which is frequently the location of different kinds of student events. There can also be cultural differences that impact on the different ways in which people respond to "freeze" performances.

interaction order, GARFINKEL (1972, p.309, see also HERITAGE 1984, p.4) was preoccupied with the ways in which individuals orient to an intersubjectively constructed experience and how they share and jointly construct the cultural and social world. The freeze performance resembles GARFINKEL's famous series of breaching experiments in which the "rules" of social life were deliberately breached (GARFINKEL, 1984 [1967]).[2] As GARFINKEL's experiments revealed, social misbehaviour was treated as situationally improper and was sanctioned by co-participants, thus rendering the "unnoticeable", expected and normative social life visible for analysis. The analysed performance can be seen to disrupt ordinary social order and the social expectation of continuous and unimpeded movement, but at the same time it is not sanctioned, nor does it occasion social breakdown or visibly alarm the passers-by. Rather, a close analysis of embodied behaviour, such as gaze and mobile trajectories, suggests that ordinary participants do not observably respond to the event as something overtly extraordinary, but seem to account for it and maintain civil inattention towards it. Consequently, the analysis reveals that rather than seeing the "freeze" as an alarming event, the passers-by recognised and understood the event as something natural in its own social context (see also HERITAGE, 1984, pp.79-82). [12]

The actual analysis of the participants' actions builds on conversation analytic research that studies the sequential organisation of verbal and embodied social interaction. Although conversation analysis has focused mostly on talk as action, it does not exclude embodiment from analysis and acknowledges that bodily actions are patterned and sequentially organised (see SACKS & SCHEGLOFF, 2002; STREECK et al., 2011). Thus, it provides tools for analysing in detail the ways in which human actors coordinate their actions and interactions, moment-to-moment, in everyday social situations (SACKS, 1992b; SCHEGLOFF, 2007). It can also show when and how participants display their understandings of events and actions, in collaboration with each other, through their situated verbal and embodied actions. As regards mobility, the analysis of the embodied actions and responses of the passers-by to the performance, as well as their mobile practices show how walking people construct and display their situated understandings of corporeal mobility. It also shows how people coordinate their mobility co-presently with others and how it is constituted and achieved in a reflexive relationship with the surrounding environment and through intersubjective understandings of embodied participation in the fleeting and continuously changing social world. [13]

4. Analysis: Mobility as a Social Achievement

In the following sections we focus on phenomena by which mobile passers-by display their orientation and respond to the immobility of the performers through particular embodied and mobile actions. Two broader themes emerge. First, we focus on the use of gestures and gaze and how the ways in which the passers-by use them to reveal that they have constructed the performance as a routine, "normal" event. We focus specifically on the gazing practices of the passers-by during the performance and on their non-responses to a pointing gesture

2 Also GOFFMAN (1963, pp.3-7) addresses the issues of acting inappropriately in a situation and social misconduct.

produced by one of the performers. Second, we focus specifically on mobility as action. We analyse how immobility is oriented to and how it impacts on the mobile actions of the passers-by. There were plenty of different kinds of individual responses. Some of these actions, such as the making of verbal comments or being startled, although they occurred, were rare and exceptional. Others were more subtle and subdued, but systematic and frequent. In this article, we analyse the ways in which passers-by systematically create new paths around and between the performers. We also analyse how the actions of the passers-by are indicative of a preference to keep moving. All in all, the analyses of the embodied actions of the passers-by show how they naturalise the seemingly extraordinary "freeze" event. [14]

4.1 Gazing practices: Looking at performers

Walking is usually a visual activity (ADEY, 2010, pp.150-152). GOFFMAN (1963, p.84) describes the organisation of what he calls a gaze ritual of an encounter between two persons in a corridor: If person A sees person B coming towards him/her then he/she usually glances at the approaching person and that person glances at A. After this both A and B direct their gaze away from each other. If A knows B, at a nearer distance, he/she looks again at B and perhaps greets this person. If A barely knows B, he/she may not want to start a conversation and may want to avoid looking at that person. Consequently, looking is not just a unidirectional act by which individuals gather information about the environment and events in it. As GOFFMAN (p.16) also notes, an individual can see that others experience him/her in a particular way, which then can guide his/her own conduct. Moreover, looking in a particular direction can be perceived as a manifest and recognisable action that indicates an individual's orientation to some referent. Such an act of looking can often be seen to occasion other people's looking in the same direction (TOMASELLO, 1999; LAN HING TING et al., in press). Looking is therefore a socially meaningful action. [15]

The performance provided an opportunity to investigate the gazing practices of the passers-by and especially to study how, when, where and for how long they looked at the performers. The analysis of gaze was grounded in data and was linked to head adjustments and eye movement, when perceivable. 113 people walked past or through the performance. Approximately one third of them took a recognisable look at the performers (i.e. they turned their gaze towards or were seen to look at the performers). It is worth noting that no one tried to make direct eye-contact with the performers. Instead, the gazes were directed at the postures or to the groups of performers. Usually, the gazes were produced quickly and hastily. Typically, a passer-by would navigate through the performance and take a few quick looks at the performers. [16]

Based on the gazing practices of the passers-by visible in the data, it is possible to divide the passers-by into two groups. The walkers' gazing practices in both of these groups display different degrees of recognition of and interest in the event, but most importantly, they also communicate a "nothing has happened" response. The first group consisted of walkers who were not visibly impacted by

the performers' immobility. In the second group, people took quick glances at the performers while walking between them or took an additional look at the performers after having walked past them.[3] It is worth noting that those who direct their attention at the performers indeed *only* gaze at the performers. They do not touch or point at them. [17]

In the first group, the audience members did not produce lengthy gazes at the frozen performers. They just manoeuvred between and around the performers and kept moving after having passed the performance space. Some of these passers-by smiled and made verbal comments about the performance, which displayed their recognition of the event as a performance, but many just passed the performers without breaking their stride. The continued mobility, the smiles and the comments indicate that some passers-by formed an interpretative and "normalising" framework for the immobility of the performers. [18]

However, in the second group, the passers-by took distinct looks at the performers or shifted their gaze between several of them while walking through the performance. Quite strikingly, however, a few passers-by also took an additional look at the performance, a marked, almost 180-degree shift in gaze direction, after having walked past the performers. As an example of this recurrent practice, in Figure 2, we can see from two different camera angles three male walkers approaching and passing the performers. They do not visibly gaze at the performers while they approach and walk beside them, but after they have passed them, all of them turn their heads to look back at the frozen performers.

Figure 2: A group of three men (bleached circles) walking past the performers (white circles) and taking an additional look back at them (marked with white arrows) [19]

In Figure 3, a lone male walks through the performance space and approaches the static performers from their left. As he passes them, he begins to turn his head and continues to look back at the performers as he passes them. In Figure

3 There are also some, albeit only a few, who actually stop to watch the performance. These will be analysed in Section 4.4.

4, a man on a scooter passes the performers quickly and after he has passed them, he turns around to take a quick look at them and then continues his journey.

Figure 3: A man walking past the performers and then gazing back

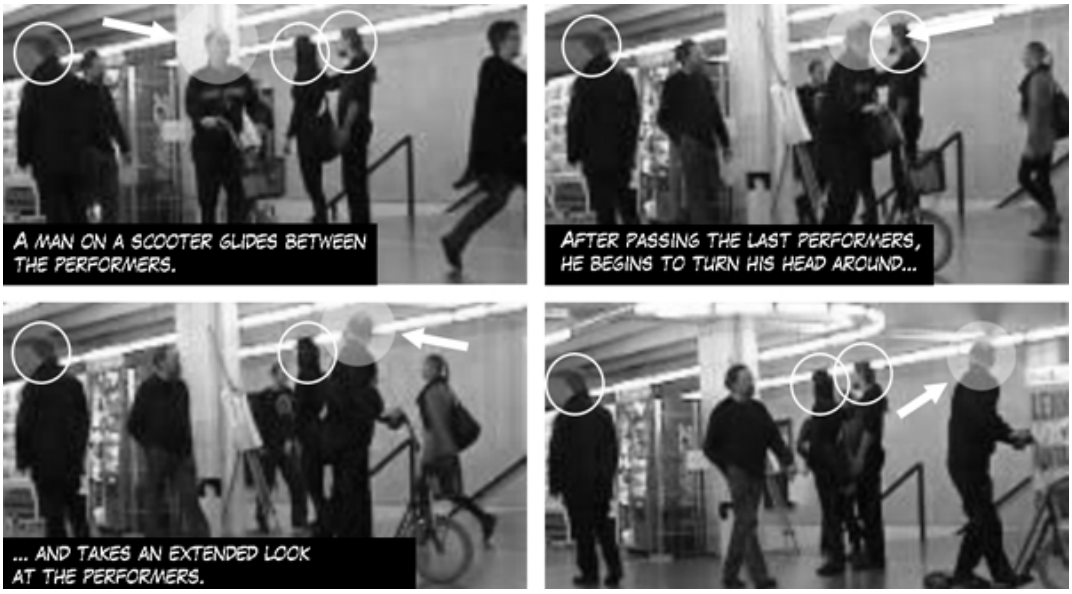

Figure 4: A man on a scooter gazing back at the performers [20]

The additional gaze of the passers-by that shifts back to the performers in Figures 2–4 and the numerous others that were visible in the data are embodied responses to the performance. They can be indicative of the recognition of the passers-by as something extraordinary which they check by turning their head and taking a glance at the still performers. By producing the gaze shifts the

passers-by may also be gathering additional information about the situation, verifying that the performers are indeed immobile. [21]

There was an interesting brief interactional encounter between two passers-by which seems to confirm that the act of turning around to take a look at the event is indeed interpreted as a display of uncertainty or puzzlement. In Figure 5, a group of three men is navigating through the "frozen" performers. The first male looks a bit puzzled and turns around to take an additional look at the performers. The second keeps on walking and also looks around in a puzzled manner. However, the third male who follows on the heels of the first two does not turn his head around, but instead makes a comment by saying *jotain spesiaalitaidetta* ["some special art"]. Just before his comment he has also taken a quick look at the camera, which certainly impacts on his emerging understanding of the situation (see also LAN HING TING et al., in press).

Figure 5: Passers-by's (dark circles) additional gaze and a comment (performers inside white circles) [22]

The third male's utterance is a remark or a comment about something that he has noticed. However, it is not just a noticing, but can also be an explanation occasioned by the first male's gaze shift which can be interpreted as a sign of puzzlement or uncertainty. [23]

What is also noteworthy is that these distinctive head turns seem to display sensitivity to and mark the spatial boundary of an area that has been created by the immobile performers. In other words, the stillness of the performers is treated

as a meaningful activity of something that occurs inside the confines of some space. By producing the gaze shift outside the confines of the performance space, the passers-by can safely and from a neutral angle take a glance at the mobile performers without having to engage with them (see also Section 4.4.). [24]

The recurrent gazing practices of the passers-by described above are markedly different from the ones analysed by LAN HING TING et al. (in press) who note how in their data passers-by openly gaze at the performers, which, when continued, collectively lifts the impropriety of gazing at strangers and thereby suspends momentarily the principle of civil inattention in public places. In our data, we can identify two different gazing practices, clandestine and more visible gaze shifts towards the performers. These two gazing practices seem to reflect different kinds of orientations and sense-making of the performers' immobility. The not-looking at the performers possibly indicates an understanding of the immobility as a performance, but moreover, it displays continued civil inattention. The frequent practice of taking an additional look by turning around to view the performance is evidently a practice for acquiring more information about the event, but at the same time, by producing the gaze shift outside the performance space, the passers-by avoid looking at the performers directly and in that way also maintain their civil inattention to the event. [25]

4.2 Mobility and pointing

In the freeze performance, one of the performers produced a pointing gesture with his right arm and an extended forefinger and maintained that gesture for the duration of the performance (see Figure 6). Another performer, standing next to the first, gazed in the direction of the pointing gesture. The gesture was not pointing at any specific referent.

Figure 6: The frozen pointing gesture (see dark circles) [26]

Pointing gestures are endemic in social interaction. They are deictic and indexical and so identify, often together with language, objects, places, entities, people or features in the physical and visual context or beyond (GOODWIN, 2003; KENDON, 2004, pp.199-200; McNEILL, 2000). Pointing gestures can also be used intersubjectively for attracting the attention of another person and for establishing common ground between people in interaction. People tend to respond to pointing gestures by turning their gaze in the direction which the gesture points at (see e.g. HEATH, 1992; GOODWIN, 2003; NEVILE, 2007). In

public places, pointing gestures can also occasion gaze shifts by people who are not participants in the interactional situation in which the gesture is produced. Consequently, the interactional meanings of pointing gestures are created socially and achieved in situated social interaction through participants' intersubjective collaboration (GOODWIN, 2003). [27]

The pointing gesture in the performance made a deliberate attempt to play with the idea of the intersubjectivity of pointing gestures. On the one hand, having two performers physically close to each other, looking in the direction of the pointing gesture, established what could be called a quasi participation framework that could to the outside be interpreted as displaying the two performers' mutual attention to a referent. On the other hand, since the pointing gesture was also available to the passers-by, it had the potential to attract their attention and to occasion gaze shifts towards the direction of the gesture. [28]

The data reveal that some passers-by looked at the gesture or the person producing it. Although it is impossible to determine where exactly the passers-by directed and focused their gaze, it is safe to argue that the gesture was visible, recognisable and available for them as a potentially meaningful embodied action. Nevertheless, the majority of the passers-by did not stop to look at the pointing gesture or to follow the direction of the point. [29]

Figures 7–9 show some cases of passers-by looking towards the gesture or the person producing it. In Figure 7, a woman is walking through the performance area (7A) and as she passes the performer producing the pointing gesture she turns her gaze towards him (7B), quickly looks to his direction (7C) and then withdraws her gaze and continues her stride (7D).

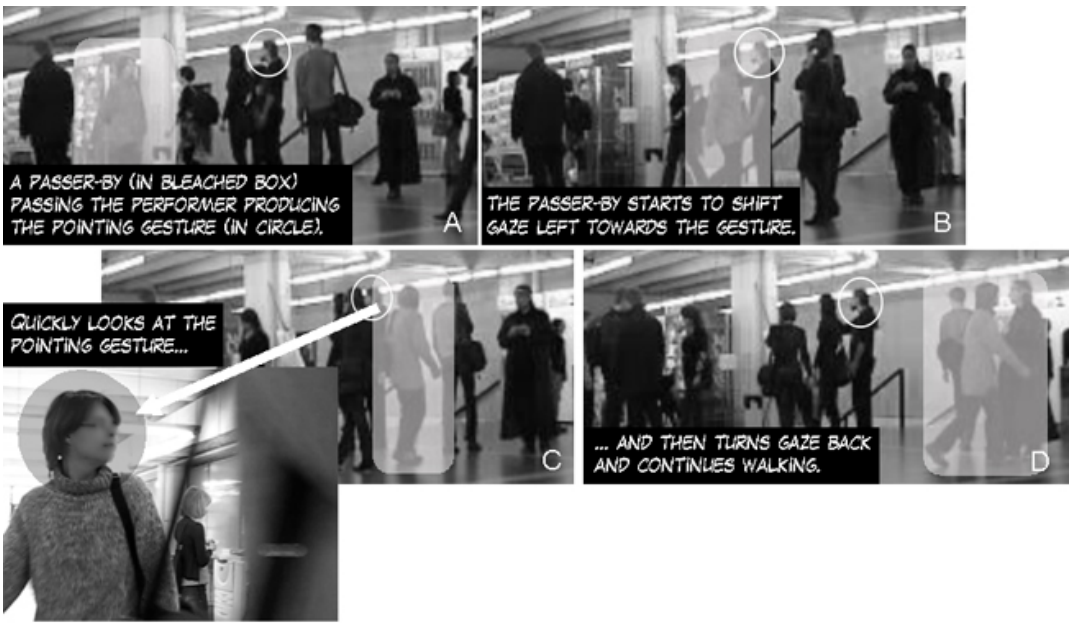

Figure 7: A passer-by (bleached box) looks towards the performer (in white circle) doing the gesture [30]

In Figure 8, a woman walks between the performers (8A). She first looks at the performer kneeling down on her left (8B), then withdraws her gaze (8C) and turns it towards the performer making the pointing gesture (8D). After this she visibly looks at the camera (8E), and then withdraws her gaze from the camera and continues walking (8F).

Figure 8: A passer-by (bleached circle) looking at the gesture [31]

Finally, in Figure 9, a young male is walking through the performance area and while walking he continues to look at the two performers until he exits the performance area.

Figure 9: A passer-by (in the dark box) looking at the gesture [32]

Figures 7–9 show that passers-by sometimes look toward the pointing gesture or the person producing it. In many ways such acts of looking are similar to the acts

of gazing back by the passers-by after they have passed the performance space: they are produced in order to check what is going on or maybe even for appreciating the performance. However, the passers-by who look *towards* the person producing the pointing gesture never, except for one (see analysis below), turn their gaze *in the direction* the gesture is pointing. They also never ask the performers or other passers-by what the performer is pointing at. All this indicates that the passers-by do not treat the pointing gesture as a communicative or intersubjective gesture, but as denoting something else. [33]

One reason for this is that the gesture lacks an element that is integral to gestures: movement. In ordinary social interaction, gestures are composed of trajectories and spates of movement: they depart from some position, sometimes called the "home position" (SACKS & SCHEGLOFF, 2002), reach their apex, before they begin to withdraw and return to their original position (KENDON, 2004, pp.111-113). In the performance, the pointing gesture seems to lose its meaning due to immobility. Its lack of movement is also an important resource for the passers-by: its mere design and immobility show that it is neither socially relevant nor indexing a real referent. And this meaning becomes manifest in the actions of the passers-by: they do not follow the direction that the gesture points at. [34]

The fact that the passers-by do not follow the pointing gesture or ask questions about it, is also indicative of their recognition and interpretation of the gesture in the broader context of the freeze performance and the performers' immobility. Further, the action of "not-turning-one's-gaze-in-the-indicated-direction" is also available for interpretation to other passers-by present in the lobby and thereby also helps create and communicate an interpretative social framework for the event. In other words, the actions of the passers-by form a chain of embodied events that signal and help maintain "normalcy" in a situation that at first glance might appear extraordinary and unusual. [35]

However, towards the end of the four-minute performance one passer-by produced a manifest gaze shift to the direction the gesture pointed at. Although the passer-by's action was marked, the organisation of his actions provides further evidence for how not looking in the indicated direction is indicative of how the passers-by "normalise" the immobility of the performers. In Figure 10, the passer-by (see bleached box) is walking slowly towards the staircase that takes to a restaurant downstairs (10A, see also Figure 1). He then stops on the right side of the performer doing the pointing gesture (10B), possibly to look at the restaurant's lunch menu. He is facing the same direction as the two performers. He walks towards the staircase, but then stops and turns around to look at the performer producing the pointing gesture (10C-D). After this he turns his gaze to his right, in the direction the gesture is pointing.

Figure 10: A passer-by's gaze (bleached box) shift in the direction of the pointing gesture [36]

By turning his gaze towards the direction of the pointing gesture, the passer-by shows that he has recognised the gesture, displays an understanding of its nature and orients himself to seek out what is being pointed at. However, at this point he does not engage in a closer investigation of "what is there", for example, by taking additional steps to obtain a better view. Rather, what happens is that he suddenly looks down and grasps a mobile phone from his pocket and looks at it. At the same time he quickly turns around and walks down the staircase towards the restaurant. It is possible that at this point, he has recognised the other frozen performers or the nearby camera and grabs his phone in an attempt to construct a private space and an alternative activity in it (see GOFFMAN, 1963, pp.38-42). In this way, he can hide his short but visible engagement with the performance (see also the analysis in Section 4.4). By quickly abandoning his gaze from the pointed-at direction and disengaging from the performance, he aligns with the general flow of actions around the performers and thereby helps construct the event as a performance. [37]

In sum, the majority of the actions of the passers-by show that they orient to the pointing gesture as an action that is not socially relevant, but that is to be understood as an element of the freeze performance. Thus, similarly with pointing gestures in general, the pointing gesture in the performance receives its meaning as part of the context in which the performers remain immobile for an extended time period. This provides further support for research that shows how pointing

gestures are not inherently indexical but receive their meaning *in situ* (see also GOODWIN, 2003; MONDADA, 2007; NEVILE, 2007). [38]

4.3 Navigation, paths and mobility between and around the performers

In the performance, the frozen performers were spread out along the passageway, thus forming several obstacles around which the passers-by had to navigate. In this section, we analyse the walking practices of the passers-by that emerged from the frozen performers. We focus on how the passers-by navigated their way and formed paths between and around the performers. We show that the ways in which passers-by manoeuvred in the performance space are indicative of intersubjective understandings of the situation and the emerging constraints and possibilities to move in it. [39]

Walking is a social phenomenon. When people walk in public and crowded places, they can walk alone or in groups, as "vehicular units" (GOFFMAN, 2010 [1971], pp.5-18), and they usually encounter people and walk past others. As research on walking has shown, the practices of walking together and encountering others are governed and regulated by social norms and patterns which display people's sensitivity to and recognition of other pedestrians and the surrounding space when they walk (see e.g. PSATHAS, 1976; RELIEU,1999; HESTER & FRANCIS, 2003; RYAVE & SCHENKEIN, 1974; URRY, 2007, p.76; HINDMARSH, HEATH, VOM LEHN & CLEVERLY, 2005; MONDADA, 2009; BROTH & LUNDSTRÖM, in press; COLLETT & MARSH, 1981; GOFFMAN, 2010 [1971], pp.13-18, VOM LEHN, HEATH & HINDMARSH, 2001, VOM LEHN, in press; DE STEFANI, in press; LAN HING TING et al., in press). These studies show that walking can be characterised as a spatial and collectively organised social action. [40]

As LAN HING TING et al. (in press) show in their analysis of a freeze performance, passers-by have to adjust and adapt their mobility to the obstructions created by the still performers. In the performance analysed here, the passers-by almost uniformly accommodated to the contingencies of the situation and instead of the usual flow through the passage, they moved around the obstacles formed by the performers. We identified two broader phenomena in which this became evident. First, the passers-by adopted various techniques for avoiding colliding with the performers and other passers-by. As RYAVE and SCHENKEIN (1974) have noted, pedestrians take notice of and orient to their co-pedestrians by adjusting and coordinating their gait so that they can be seen to take into account other pedestrians. In the performance, the passers-by negotiated their passages through the performance area by basically relying on the same set of practices that people normally rely on when passing through and encountering other people in narrow spaces. On the one hand, although the passers-by treated the performers as if they were inanimate objects, they still appreciated and were sensitive to the performers' personal spaces. This became evident in how they avoided bumping into the performers. Only twice a passers-by squeezed through a tight spot and touched a performer, because the more spacious routes were blocked or crammed (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: In both strips, a passer-by (bleached box) walks through a small space between the performers [41]

On the other hand, the data reveal how passers-by negotiate their directions with oncoming passers-by. They do this by adapting their pace to those in their vicinity, or by slowing down and even stopping to let them walk first (see also HESTER & FRANCIS, 2003, p.43). Also the body movements and body turns of passers-by communicate to fellow walkers the direction that they are taking and help achieve non-dramatic encounters (see also URRY, 2007, p.75). Passers-by may also quickly glance at a fellow walker and by exchanging glances two meeting passers-by can negotiate who goes first and from where. The data also show that individuals usually give way or change their route in order to yield to an oncoming group.[4] All in all, although the walking of the passers-by is disrupted, they quickly accommodate to the new spatial and mobile demands by negotiating the space that remains available for walking. [42]

The second way in which passers-by accommodate the performers' stillness is that they adopt particular "pedestrian routing practices" (GOFFMAN, 2010 [1971], pp.13-14). The performers' positions especially at the southernmost end of the performance area formed three bottlenecks. These bottlenecks not only forced the passers-by to accommodate their pace and direction to the still performers but also to take one of the three alternative routes that the performance created (see Figure 12).

4 This is also what happened in the situation depicted in Figure 11.

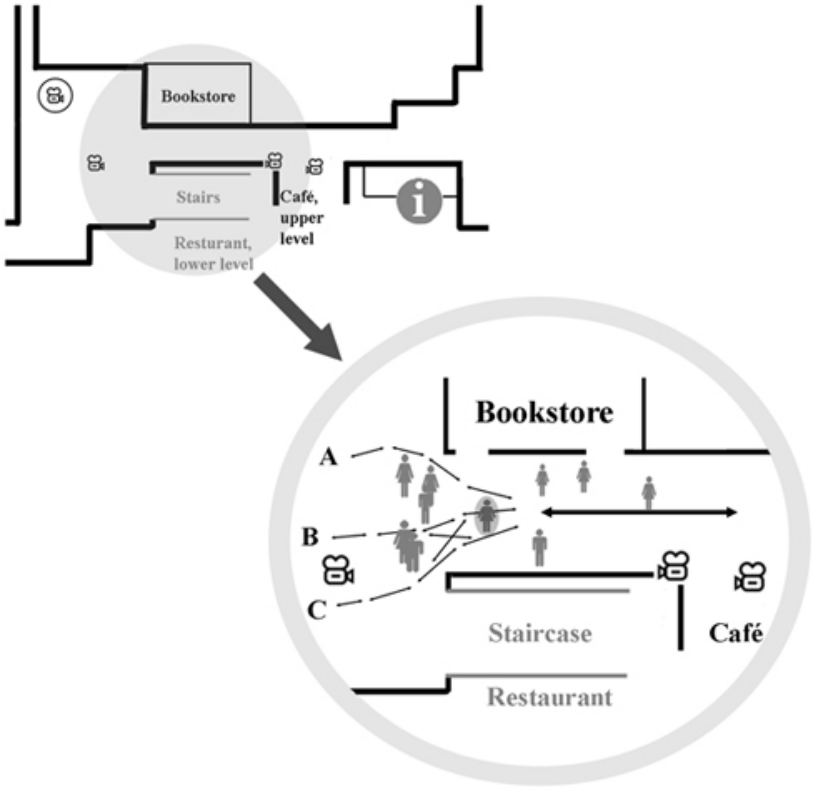

Figure 12: The preferred mobile paths between and around the performers. The performer who knelt down is circled [43]

The first route is between the performers and the bookstore's left-most entrance (Route A). The second route is between the performers (Route B) and the third route is between the performer producing the pointing gesture and the staircase (Route C). These emergent paths demonstrate what URRY (2007, p.63) calls the accumulated imprint of journeys. The data show how these mobile trajectories are not constructed haphazardly, but are a result of an emerging opportunities that provide a possibility for creating a new path that enables a short and possibly quick walk from point A to point B (see also LAN HING TING et al., in press). The mobile actions of passers-by thus resemble the ways in which people navigate around obstacles and also create new pathways or shortcuts through lawns, parks, forests or private areas which city councils or private citizens try to regulate or prevent from emerging by building fences, placing signs or in any other number of ways by trying to obstruct the possibility of walking on them. The construction of emergent pathways shows how pedestrian routing practices are social and orderly, and produced in a reflexive relationship with the environment. They are constructed jointly and on the basis of the opportunities provided by other pedestrians and environmental and spatial features. [44]

What was particularly interesting about the walking practices of the passers-by in the performance was that there was a clear tendency to take particular routes and avoid others. As was said above, as calculated from the southernmost

camera (circled in Figures 12 and 13), 113 people walked through the area during the performance. Of these 51 walked through the entire passageway and walked south and 36 walked through the entire passageway towards north. The remaining walkers crossed the area or walked behind the performers (see Figure 13).

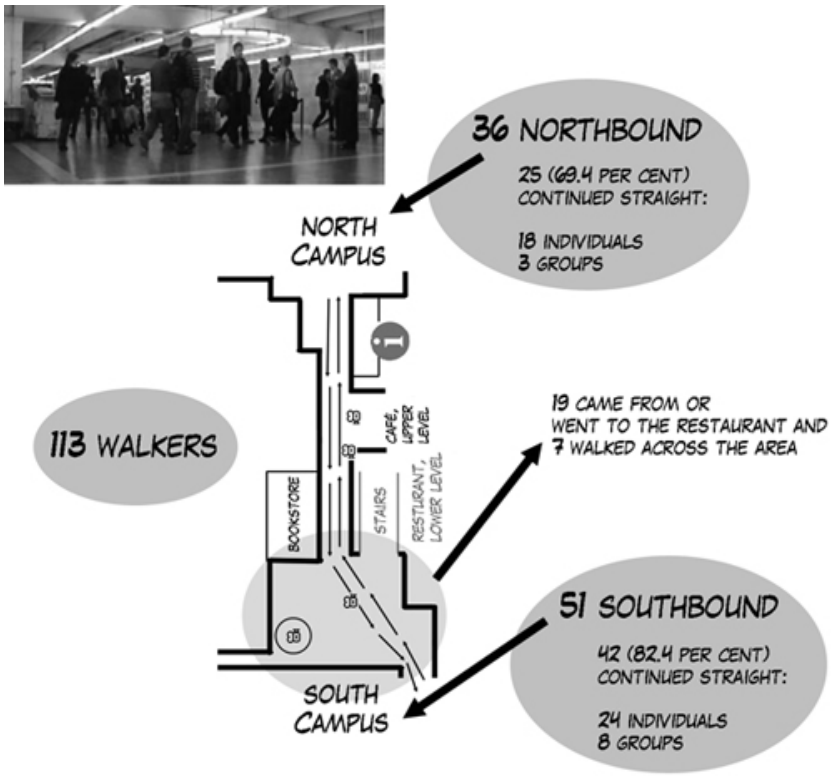

Figure 13: The number of passers-by who passed or walked through the performance [45]

Of all the passers-by that walked through the area during the performance, we took into account only those who entered the performance area either from the south or north side of the campus and walked through the entire passageway. This was important in order to rule out those passers-by whose route choice (either route A, B or C) may have been influenced by their destination (e.g. taking Route C to the downstairs restaurant or Route A to continue to the east side of the campus. Then we checked which of the three alternative routes (see Figure 12) they chose. Of those individuals who were southbound 58.3% chose Route B and of those who were walking to the northern parts of the campus, 61.1% took Route B (see Table 1). This is suggestive of a tendency for the passers-by to take the central route (Route B) which is the most spacious and also the most direct route available. Route B could thus be characterised as the main route between the performers.

Sum and percentage	Route a, north	Route b, north	Route c, north	Route a, south	Route b, south	Route c, south
Individuals	1 (5.5%)	11 (61.1%)	6 (33.3%)	7 (29.2%)	14 (58.3%)	3 (12.5%)
Groups	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	7 (87.5%)	0 (0%)

Table 1: Preferences for routes [46]

Taking the most spacious and direct way (Route B) is not surprising. However, what was surprising was that when we compared the routing practices of individual passers-by with the routing practices of groups, an interesting pattern emerged. In the group walking behaviour there is an even clearer preference to take the central and most spacious route (Route B) over taking either of the other routes (Routes A and C) that go around the performers but which are less spacious. With a small sample it is impossible to make generalisations, but this preference for groups (in contrast to individual walkers) to take the central and most spacious route is suggestive of how groups establish joint orientation to their mobility as "vehicular units" or "mobile withs" (ADEY, 2010, p.18; GOFFMAN, 2010 [1971]). In other words, walking groups can create their paths and thus display sensitivity as a group to the possibilities or constraints in space in front of them. It would seem that in taking a particular route walkers construct a shared understanding of how they can avoid collision with fellow walkers and possible obstacles. In a similar way, as Table 1 shows, Routes A and C were much more favourable to individuals than groups. [47]

In sum, the forming of paths and routes is sensitive to the available space between the performers, the performers' own personal space and presence of other walkers. This shows how paths are created in a reflexive relationship with the environment and other people in it. At the same time, the way in which new paths emerge is indicative of how the passers-by accommodate their mobility to the still performers and in that way communicate their interpretation of the event as an "everyday" event that is not in any way alarming or threatening. [48]

4.4 Mobility as norm: Stopping as an accountable mobile action

As has been shown in the previous sections, the passers-by display through their conduct their recognition of the performers' immobility but do this in minor, subdued and embodied (rather than verbal) ways. By continuing their stride between and around the performers, by not talking, touching or engaging with them, they maintain what GOFFMAN called "mutual non-engagement" or "civil inattention" (1963, pp.83-88; see also HESTER & FRANCIS 2003, p.42; URRY, 2007, p.75). They do not ask questions or offer help, although for example the pointing gesture and the female who is kneeling down and whose papers are visibly spread on the floor provide opportunities for attending to and engaging with the performers. Consequently, although the passers-by in many visible ways acknowledge and demonstrate that they have recognised the still performers and that they are present, they do not stop to watch the performance, but rather

remain disengaged from it and thereby display that the performers are not targets of their special attention (see especially GOFFMAN, 1963, p.84). Indeed, there is a clear tendency or preference for maintaining mobility over stopping and watching the performance. Thus, continued mobility is a form of constructing and maintaining "civil attention" and as such, it provides evidence for how the passers-by "normalise" the situation. [49]

However, not all passers-by kept moving. On three separate occasions an individual passer-by lingered on and stopped for a moment to monitor the event. Nevertheless, these passers-by, through their embodied conduct, also display an orientation to "civil inattention" and a preference for maintaining mobility. Each of these three passers-by approached the lobby from the southern passageway. The first, a male carrying a bag on his shoulder (see Figure 14, A), approached the scene a minute and nineteen seconds into the performance. He walked fast towards the performance space and then stopped abruptly just outside it. He watched the performance and moved slowly to the right. After watching the performance for 26 seconds, he took off and walked through the performance area without so much as a glance at the performers. At the north end of the passageway he again stopped and viewed the performance for about 90 seconds. [50]

The second one, a male with a checkered shirt and a backpack (Figure 14, B), stopped to watch the performance one minute and forty seconds into the performance. He stopped and walked slowly behind the performers for twenty seconds before continuing his stride through the performance area. [51]

The third passer-by, the male we met in Section 4.2 (Figure 14, C), stopped to monitor the performance towards the end of the freeze. He looked at the performance for 26 seconds before quickly taking a turn on his heels and retreating to the staircase.

Figure 14: Passers-by stopping to watch the performance [52]

There are some interesting common features in the conduct of these three passers-by. First, through their embodied mobility, i.e. by stopping, by moving back-and-forth behind the performers in a procrastinating manner and by not trespassing the boundaries of the performance, these three passers-by display their sensitivity to the spatial configuration and the boundaries of the performance space. In this way, they orient to the performers as a "with" (GOFFMAN, 1963, p.135). And precisely by acting in this way, they also create a form of spectatorship that could be characterised as "visual" or "embodied"

eavesdropping. They are indeed not secretly "overhearing" a conversation (GOFFMAN, 1981, p.132), but through their spatial positioning and embodied stance they display that they are not ratified participants in the performance, but bystanders who are "overseeing" the events. [53]

Second, each of these three bystanders at some point orient to or use an object that they are holding in their hand. The first passer-by is talking on a phone when he arrives at the boundary of the performance area and stops. He continues talking on the phone and, after the phone call has apparently ended, looks at the phone and presses buttons on it while monitoring the performance (see bleached circles in Figure 15). The second passer-by stops to sip coffee from his coffee mug before again striding on (see white circles in Figure 15). The third passer-by pulls out a mobile phone from his pocket and takes a quick look at it just before he quickly turns around and walks down the stairs (see black circle in Figure 15). His abrupt actions and retreat to the staircase are indicative of his "coming to a realisation of the performance" and maybe also an attempt to hide his momentary involvement in the performance.

Figure 15: Passers-by using objects as "involvement shields" [54]

As GOFFMAN (1963, pp.38-42) noted, people use objects, such as books and newspapers, as "involvement shields" to structure their private spaces within public places (see also VOM LEHN et al., 2001, p.191). By for example reading a newspaper, digging in one's bag, fiddling with one's phone or looking at shop

windows, people provide socially acceptable excuses for lingering on and stopping in public places and thereby attenuate possible suspicions of loitering or eavesdropping. The use of objects as involvement shields also helps form civil inattention and to appreciate other people's territoriality by providing a target to one's attention and gaze. By being visibly engaged and pre-occupied with objects, people avoid staring at other people for too long and can achieve unobtrusiveness (see also GOFFMAN, 1981, p.140). In addition to this, by using involvement shields people also attempt to hide their interest and involvement in situations that are unusual or extraordinary, and thus to construct "civil inattention". [55]

5. Conclusive Remarks

In his influential work on how humans maintain and create social order, GOFFMAN (1963, p.11) noted that "the rule of behavior that seems to be common to all situations and exclusive to them is the rule obliging participants to 'fit in'". In this article we have built on GOFFMAN's work and on the methods used in multimodal interaction analysis (GOODWIN, 2000; STIVERS & SIDNELL, 2005; STREECK et al., 2011) to analyse the embodied conduct of mobile bodies walking through a passageway and encountering a "freeze" performance in a busy transit hub. The analyses of mobile and embodied practices by which passers-by are seen to recognise and respond to immobility seem to suggest that there is a shared "motivation" or preference for adjusting one's conduct and mobility over manifestly reacting to the performance. Such conduct of passers-by works towards a recognisable and manifest goal of "normalising" an unusual event and to "fit in" and continue one's daily routines. Consequently, even in a slightly unusual situation, people find ways to maintain what GOFFMAN (1963, pp.83-88) called "civil inattention". [56]

In general, this article has supported prior research on walking and mobility. It has also revealed how people systematically coordinate their mobility and actions, as individuals and "vehicular units", with respect to other walkers and the features, objects and obstacles in the environment. We identified various orderly patterns in the mobile and embodied conduct of passers-by. [57]

The first analysed phenomenon concerned the gazing practices of passers-by. The video data show that the majority of the passers-by look at the performers with short and clandestine gazes. Moreover, quite a few passers-by take an additional look at the performers by distinctly turning around their heads to look at the performance after they have exited the performance space. The analysis proposed that by turning around and taking an additional look at the performers, the walkers can take an additional look in order to confirm their understanding of the situation. [58]

Second, one of the performers produced and maintained a pointing gesture that another performer visibly attended to. In naturally-occurring interactional encounters, pointing gestures are often indexical and meaningful and can organise participants' joint and focused attention to a referent. However, in the

performance the pointing gesture received little attention. Some passers-by were seen to look at the gesture, but only one passer-by acted in a way that could be interpreted as seeking out the referent of the gesture. We argue that mobility and motion play crucial roles in how the pointing gesture is understood and they do this in two different ways. First, the gesture lacks a trajectory of movement that is natural to gestures and contributes to the way in which gestures are understood. Second, the pointing gesture is recognised as an element of the whole "freeze" performance and thus it "loses" its indexical and referential meaning. [59]

Third, we showed how passers-by form new paths and navigate between and around the performers by finding the most spacious passages and by avoiding colliding with the performers and other walkers. By blocking a public passageway, the still performers force the walkers to adjust their pacing and to even stop momentarily to yield to other pedestrians. Interestingly, the analysis also provided some evidence for how groups of walkers construct shared orientation to themselves as mobile units that require more space around them: Groups showed an even more distinct preference for spacious routes than individuals. [60]

Fourth, it was suggested that the mobile and embodied actions of passers-by were indicative of a preference for movement over stopping and watching the performance. The actions of three passers-by who stopped momentarily to watch the performance further confirmed this finding. The conduct of these passers-by shared similar characteristics in two ways. First, they moved slowly behind the performers and outside the area occupied by the performers, and thereby displayed their orientation to the spatial boundaries of the performance. Second, each of these three passers-by were looking at or using an object, such as a mobile phone, when they stopped to monitor the performance. It was suggested that the passers-by used these objects as "involvement shields" (GOFFMAN, 1963, pp.38-42) in order to structure their private space and to provide them with an excuse for stopping and eavesdropping the event, and to maintain "civil inattention". [61]

We hope that we have been able to illustrate the benefits of analysing video recordings of people coordinating and organising their conduct "in the wild" and in public. By analysing video, it is possible to get a detailed view of those social moments that are often treated as fleeting, changing and beyond analysis. Video data and detailed analysis of embodied conduct can complement existing research on how people "do mobility" and how embodiment features in mobility. Similar studies in the future, interested in human conduct in and responses to unusual events can add to our knowledge on how this occurs and can also explain why people behave in particular ways for example in emergency situations. [62]

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