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Masculine stances and the linguistics of affect: on masculine ease

Scott F. Kiesling

Department of Linguistics, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

ABSTRACT

The connections between sociolinguistic conceptions of stance and the notion of affect are explored. After an explication of sociolinguistic theory, a view of stance based on three dimensions of evaluation, investment, and alignment is articulated. It is argued that low investment stances are connected to masculinity, and through that to a wider affect of 'masculine ease.'

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Verbal swagger

In the 1990s, I spent several years living in Sydney, Australia. It was in some ways a culture shock, but because Australian culture shares so many things with my natal American one, it was a shock that was more like looking at a scene just slightly out of focus and having to refocus, rather than having to buy an entirely new type of lens. My larger shock was actually the first return visit to the US after having been away for over a year. As I struggled through the Los Angeles airport after the 14-hour flight, I was struck by the demeanour of the American men, which, for lack of a better term, I thought of as a *swagger*. I had the impression of these men moving through the airport oozing confidence, seeming to show that they had every right to be where they were, and anywhere they wanted to go. There was also a cumulative effect such that I felt discomfort with their ease, a sense that somehow if I didn't match it, there would be consequences. Ironically, it put me on edge and not at all at ease. The swaggering stances and feelings of ease and dis-ease are themes that have always been in analyses that I have attempted of fraternity men's language, but it has been difficult to articulate these affective dimensions and differentiate or connect them to the stancetaking analyses that I was developing. In this essay, then, I explore ways to explicate and understand this verbal and bodily swagger that I argue is a dominant feature of White cis hetero American men. In doing so, I suggest some ways that stancetaking and affect can be employed more fruitfully in sociolinguistic analyses.

Keeping in mind the hoped-for interdisciplinary readership of this special issue, I also explicate the particular kind of sociolinguistics I practice, and explore some possibilities for incorporating ideas from some affect studies in this sociolinguistics to find the swagger in men's talk. I'm assuming an audience that is composed of few if any sociolinguists, and because of that I'll take some time to get to the main point. But let me summarize: I'm going to argue that many of the forms of language ideologically associated,

CONTACT Scott F. Kiesling kiesling@pitt.edu
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and descriptively correlated, with masculinity and men are connected to an interactional stancetaking practice in which the masculine speaker displays unconcern, comfort, or ease (the latter term is adapted from Ahmed's, 2014 term, which she uses in reference to sexual identity, discussed more fully below). Moreover, this stancetaking practice is dialectically related to affect, which is differentiated from stancetaking in that stancetaking is a practice of talk and text in interaction, while affect is an effect of such stancetaking in speakers, addressees, audiences, conversations, and identities. The development of this thesis has taken several decades and revolutions in the study of gender – especially the study of language and gender – and will make much more sense if that story is at least outlined. So I'll begin with some first principles I work with. I go beyond a variationist sociolinguistic correlational view of language and identity to argue that the linguistic practices I discuss are not 'merely' performance, but that the learning and repeated doing of stancetaking changes the affects of both the speakers and the conversations they engage in, and ultimately the speech communities they are a part of.

Sociolinguistics, gender, and stance

Linguistics is my discipline, and like every discipline there is a central mystery with which it is concerned. The mystery I investigate is why language sounds the way it does – why people choose words they do, in what order, and why they choose the ways of saying those words they do – that is, their accent and prosody. Those individual choices, made over and over by many people, day after day, in a speech community, incrementally change 'a language' so that it eventually sounds like a completely 'different language.' One of the things linguists working in the subfield of variationist sociolinguistics have discovered in the last five decades is that while these linguistic choices are uneven among speakers in a community, they do have a general statistical pattern – not everyone speaks the same way, but the variation is not random (see Kiesling, 2011 for an introduction). Much of this work has been focused on finding out how different ways of speaking can be correlated with identity categories such as generation, socioeconomic class, gender, sexuality, race, etc.

I use the term 'choice' not in its fully deliberative, reflective sense but in the sense that to speak at all is to have made a choice to act, and that each utterance can be made in an infinite number of ways, so that in speaking one is forced to make a choice in how to form that utterance. One of the wondrous feats of human language is the speed and efficiency with which we make these very complex choices, which generally require reflection only when we are learning a new language. Of course, for each utterance there is some motivation in a speaker-mind for choosing one option over others, but my point is that these are overwhelmingly automatic and even autonomic.

Sociolinguistic studies began in earnest in the 1960s from a number of different fields, including anthropology, sociology, and linguistics. In linguistics, until that time, the canon of linguistics stated that language change could not be observed, even though there had been a few studies that demonstrated otherwise (Gauchat, 1905; Gumperz, 1958). In the early 1960s, William Labov hypothesized that by using the new technology of portable tape recorders and comparing speakers of different ages, linguists could discover generational linguistic changes in progress. He began with a demonstration on a relatively small scale on the island of Martha's Vineyard (Labov, 1963), and showed that Vineyarders

with specific identity categories (for example, 'Fisherman') and positive attitudes towards the island – people who thought of themselves more as 'islanders' – were more likely to maintain vowels characteristic of the island and distinct from the mainland, and that there was a generational difference that correlated with age. He found more support for these methods a few years later in a larger scale study of the Lower East Side of New York City, where he showed correlations among pronunciations of multiple vowels and consonants and class, gender, race, and ethnicity (Labov, 1966). Since the New York City study these correlational studies have proliferated and are the main work of 'variationist' sociolinguistics (see Kiesling, 2011 for an overview). One of the most robust findings of variationist sociolinguistics is tied to gender (see Eckert, 1989; Labov, 1990), as I will describe below.

At the same time as Labov was working in New York City in the 1960s, anthropologists were continuing a long line of work on how language and culture are related, focusing especially on norms of interaction. Hymes (1972) pointed out that in order to really speak a language competently, one needs to understand issues such as 'appropriateness,' and initiated a research paradigm known as the ethnography of speaking. The general goal of this kind of sociolinguistics is to understand how people choose ways of speaking based on interactional considerations, especially what speech event they are speaking in, its purpose, and the participants. This research paradigm considers language to be much more integrated in the social world than variationist sociolinguistics; linguistic use and value is understood as a cultural practice that supports, creates, and reflects other cultural practices and ideologies. In a similar vein, Gumperz (1982) focused on ways in which subtle cues in language indicate how to take language, and especially on how those cues vary from culture to culture. Finally, in sociology, conversation analysis (Sacks & Schegloff, 1995; Sidnell, 2011) was beginning to show how verbal interactions were patterned in regular ways even though speakers weren't working from a script, arguing that such interactions are the basic form of sociality for humans.

The final strand of sociolinguistics is a much more sociological view of language, sometimes called the sociology of language, which is concerned more with language policy and how such policies are related to concerns such as language maintenance and nation building. This view has as its central mystery not so much how language changes, but how language is used by individuals and communities for social purposes. For example, most recently there has been work arguing that that the ways that languages are visible in cities, for example in signage, are important for understanding how people think about language as identification and even city building systems. Some current work in this subfield known as 'linguistic landscapes' has focused on how these landscapes fit into the affect of cities (see Milani, 2015; Peck & Stroud, 2015).

While the work in the latter areas of study have been more qualitative and context sensitive, work in variationist linguistics has relied mostly, although not entirely, on the notion that the quantitative correlations between linguistic variants and social identities reflect the 'social meaning' of the variant. This social meaning has canonically been thought of as having a value of 'prestige' that is then adopted or not by different speakers. For example, Labov forms his gender principles around a pattern in which women use more prestigious language than men. In more interactionally-focused studies, gender difference was viewed through the lens of interactional strategies such as 'aggravated' or 'accommodating' (see Tannen, 1990 for a popular articulation of this view).

From my earliest exposure to these these diverse areas of sociolinguistics, I was interested in the gender patterns that had been found, and although I could not articulate it at first, I had the feeling that these gender patterns were 'caused' by much more than the 'standard language' prestige attached to privileged forms, and the often essentialist explanations offered at the time. Most of the work in gender and language through the 1990s was about differences in women's and men's patterns of language use, but the explanations focused almost entirely on why women speak the way they do. Even in overtly feminist and feminist-inspired work, there was little problematization of men's ways of speaking. Because of this lacuna, I decided to focus my work on how men's linguistic choices are related to masculinity, not necessarily in contrast to women, but on their own terms. I found that a college fraternity, to which I had access as a member of the same national fraternity, proved to be the ideal speech community to focus on for this work.

As I looked at how the men in a college fraternity made linguistic choices, it became clear to me that the way they use language was not simply to 'be men,' but rather to take particular *stances* in conversation, with respect to their interlocutors, their talk, and themselves. Just before my fieldwork, Ochs (1992) published a groundbreaking article that provided an articulation of a theoretical viewpoint from which to proceed. In that article – *Indexing Gender* – Ochs argued that gender is only sometimes directly indexed by ways of speaking (including interactional strategies). In other words, when I 'speak like a man,' I'm not usually thinking about doing so because I want to be a man but because I want to do something else that happens to be culturally linked to masculinity. (For more on indexicality, see Silverstein, 1976, 2003). Thus, gender is more often *indirectly* indexed by language: Linguistic forms directly index stances, speech acts, and speech activities, and then it is those stances, acts, and activities that ideologically constitute gender categories. In this way, the stances, acts and activities mediate gender (see Figure 1).

Ochs (1992, p. 343) explains, 'this model puts gender in its place, indicating that it enters into complex constitutive relations with other categories of social meaning.' She describes the example of sentence-final particles in Japanese as an ideal case to explain how indirect indexicality works. The Japanese particles are grammatical morphemes that indicate grammatical status, aspect, and stance. They are generally used (and ideologically expected to be used) differently by men and women, with men more likely to use the particle *-ze,* and women, *-wa*. A common explanation for this gender difference would be

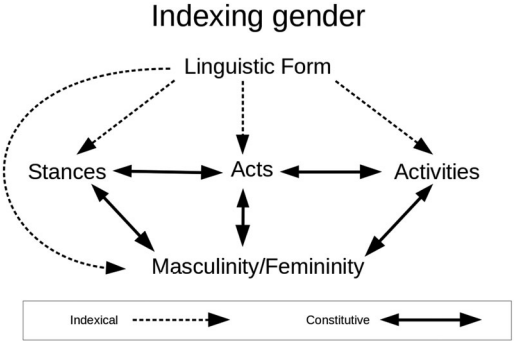


Figure 1. Indexing gender. Adapted from Ochs, 1992. (Creative Commons license Attributions-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. http://sfkiesling.com/figures/creative-commons-figures/21481256).

that there are simply different gender 'languages' and that *-ze* indexes speaker masculinity and *-wa* indexes speaker femininity. However, speakers sometimes use particles that don't 'match' their gender. In fact, Ochs points out that gender patterns in language are rarely categorically different 'languages,' but rather probabilistic correlations. In other words, women and men use the same language and linguistic resources but at different rates and different circumstances. So if *-ze* doesn't 'mean' masculine, and *-wa* doesn't 'mean' feminine, what do they mean and what accounts for the gender differences that are real and observable? These particles index **stances**: *-ze* indexes a 'coarse' stance while *-wa* indexes a 'refined' stance; these stances are in turn ideologically associated with masculinity and femininity, respectively. Ochs thus argues that when people use language they are (usually) making choices based on more immediate concerns than identity, such as the speech *activity* underway (friendly chat vs. formal state dinner), the *acts* being attempted (request, explanation, insult, compliment), and the *stance* being taken (such as friendly, joking, belligerent). In the case of Japanese sentence final particles, the difference between a coarse stance for *-ze* and a refined stance for *-wa*. Ochs then shows that coarse and refined are stances that are constitutive of (ideologically organized and regimented) masculinity and femininity, respectively. She goes on to argue, based on her ethnographic work in Western Samoa and her collaborator Bambi Schieffelin's work with the Kaluli in Papua New Guinea (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984), that these ideological connections begin,but by no means end, as children learn gender in the family.

This view inserts gender ideologies into the sociolinguistic gender pattern, and integrates some of the more robust variationist gender findings. Ochs's work was part of the zeitgeist that was present in gender studies more widely, particularly in Butler's (1990) discussion of performativity. Ochs adds a layer to this view by noting that language indexes some stances, acts, and activities that are recognizably (performatively) gendered. Ochs's work thus injects some of the work on semiotics that anthropological linguists such as Silverstein (1976) had been developing into the performative view of language and gender. These approaches all lead to a view of how language fits into social life through stancetaking and affect.

I will address these central notions more fully below, but some quick definitions are in order. Although stance has many different definitions and typologies (see Jaffe, 2009 for a fairly inclusive list and discussion of definitions), one distinction often made is among affective stance (having to do with the emotion of the speaker), interpersonal stance (having to do with the attitude of the speaker to interlocutors), and epistemic stance (having to do with how the speaker represents their knowledge of their claims). I argue that these should be understood as three different aspects of a general stance, by viewing stancetaking as the creation of relationships in interaction: relationships people indicate with other interactants (similar to interpersonal stance), entities they talk about (similar to affective stance), and with the talk itself (similar to epistemic stance). Stance is usually represented by adjectives such as *friendly, confident, complimentary*, etc. 'Affect' is a term used widely in a various disciplines, including psychology, literature, cultural studies, neurobiology, anthropology, and others; this list gives an idea of its widespread use. (see Wetherell, 2012 for a comprehensive overview). Overall, 'affect' is generally seen as some kind of 'feeling,' although it seems that affect is often also used to describe feelings beyond momentary emotions of an individual to describe a feeling of a group or place or event. The term *affect* has not been used much in sociolinguistics

(although see Besnier, 1990; Ferrada, Bucholtz, & Corella, in press; Goodwin, 2007; Milani, 2015), but stance has been increasingly used as an explanation for social patterns of language use in sociolinguistics. I discuss the literature and theory of stance and affect more fully below, but first an example illustrating the use of stance might help illustrate how it has been used in sociolinguistics.

One of the most common findings in variationist sociolinguistics has to do with the sociolinguistic variable (ing), which is the alternation of *-ing* endings in multisyllabic English words. That is, words like *walking* can be pronounced with the velar ending [ɪŋ] (the 'spelling pronunciation') or with an alveolar ending [ɪn] as in *walkin'*. In almost every study of this variable, men use more of the alveolar variant (*walkin'*) than women. The explanations for this pattern – of which there are many – have tended to focus on women and some essentialized characteristic of them, such as 'women are more linguistically insecure' (see Labov, 1966, 1990).

But there are other cross-cutting social correlations, such as the fact that the alveolar variant is used more by working class speakers and in 'casual' situations and stances. Eckert (2008) argues that variants trigger an 'indexical field' of potential meanings, and the field for *-in* includes stances of *relaxed*, *easygoing*, and *unpretentious*. Showing that these stances are connected ideologically to gender in the speech communities studied would help explain why the patterns obtain as they do.

In my work, I have specifically focused on the relationship between stancetaking and masculinities. Rather than comparing men and women, I focused on the variability within the fraternity. In my analysis of (ing), I found that the fraternity men tended to converge on a high rate of *-in* variants when they were in casual social situations such as parties and just hanging out, but in interviews and especially in meetings when addressing the other members, there was wide individual variability (Kiesling, 1998). To explain this wider variability in the interview and meeting situations, I argued that the men took different stances in these situations in line with their more enduring identities. Some were creating identities that showed their knowledge of the fraternity and status, and they tended to use more of the *-ing* variants. Others argued against rules and were casual, or tried to project a hard working identity, and they all tended to use more of the *-in* variant. This view could be extended to the larger gender pattern by noting that stereotypical stances of femininity tend not to include casual, oppositional, and relaxed.

The larger argument is that these stances ideologically constitute the social construct of 'masculinity' (or at least one type of masculinity). To be absolutely clear, I'm not arguing in some essentialized way that men are more relaxed, easygoing or unpretentious than women (although below I will entertain the idea that repeatedly doing so can have and effect of inscribing these ways of interfacing with the world in the mind/body). Rather, I'm wondering whether at least one recognizable form of masculinity in American culture is constituted through these stances, stances related to an affect of *ease* (more on the relationship between stance and affect below).

Theorizing in gender studies over the past few decades, from Kessler and McKenna (1978), and West and Zimmerman (1987) through Butler (1990), and Halberstam (1998), has increasingly detached masculinity from bodies, showing that masculinity is a construct that is only ideologically connected to 'male bodies' (arguably another ideological construction). So rather than ask, 'what do men do that is different from women?' (linguistically and otherwise), or 'what is it about men and women that produce those differences,'

the question becomes 'how is masculinity ideologically conceived and circulated in communities, and how are the meanings of linguistic forms understood and also circulated, in a way that would produce the linguistic patterns found?' I am exploring the idea that affect, through stancetaking, is one way of understanding how this connection between masculinity and linguistic form gets created and reproduced.

Affect and stance

I have been skeptical of the notion of affect as useful for analysis, for several reasons. First, as is evident from Wetherell's (2012) survey of affect and emotion, there are an uncountable number of ways researchers conceptualize affect, largely depending on discipline or subdiscipline. These range from a view of affect as incipient feelings within a body that pre-exist consciousness to a view of affect as feelings which are incipient or virtual (Damasio, 2004; Massumi, 1996; Thrift, 2000), none of which are immediately obviously helpful for explaining linguistic form, because I have no way of identifying affect based on all of these various definitions (or sometime vague metaphorical descriptions). I understand that this is a positivist complaint and that there a problems with the fetishization of positivism, but in the end the goal of my work is to account for things that have actually happened – language that people have produced in some form. Second and relatedly, analyzing language requires an understanding and analysis of meaning and representation. But as Reeser (2017) explains in his first paragraph (invoking Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Massumi, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2001), affect is often seen 'as beyond subjectivity' and, it seems, representation. Given the goals of my research and these views, then, I am tempted to walk away from affect because it has nothing to offer.

Furthermore, as Wetherell (2012, pp. 19–20, 2013) points out, language (aka 'discourse') is often criticized in affect studies as either too reifying or not sufficiently embodied (Clough, 2007; Massumi, 2002; Sedgwick, 2003; Thrift, 2004). I hope to show that in fact, language is not reifying even as it reifies, because interaction creates a non-predetermined text that is always open to new response and interpretation. In addition, language is primarily embodied rather than disembodied, as it is learned first through speech or sign employing our tongues and lips, or hands and fingers, only later to be disembodied by the modern contemporary educational establishment.

On the other hand, I understand the intuitive analytical and explanatory pull of bringing in the animal/human realities of feeling, both in individuals and in communities of all sizes. In response to a similar tension between the usefulness and uselessness of affect in analysis, Wetherell (2012, 2013) argues for the notion of *affective practice*, which has the benefit of looking closely at how affect might circulate among people – and cultural circulation is something that is central to sociolinguistics in the form of linguistic change, which is after all a form of sociocultural change.

Part of the problem is an understanding of how language works that is based on the myth of the meaning 'conduit metaphor' (Reddy, 1979) rather than the construction of meaning through 'languaging' (Becker, 1991). Similarly, people are often said to *express* their emotions, since affect is often understood to pre-exist both linguistic expression and even conscious thought? There are at least two problematic aspects of the view that affect is expressed and triggered by language. The first problem is the naive understanding of language as purely representational of what is already present in a human mind,

consciously or not. As shown by decades of work in discourse analysis (from speech acts to conversation analysis; for example, see the papers in Duranti & Goodwin, 1992), language as it is actually used is much more emergent and contingent than simply expressing an idea to be decoded. It can even recontextualize what has already come before it. In other words, there is a dialectical mediation whereby semiosis is affectively experienced. Second, in the affect-as-preconscious view (Massumi, 1996), the individual has little or no agency or control over these emotions. The successes of cognitive behaviour therapy suggest otherwise, that even if there are relatively autonomic responses, they are not locked *beyond* consciousness or unchangeable.

My understanding of language – as part of an emergent yet ultimately uncertain interactional intersubjectivity (see Duranti & Goodwin, 1992, among other linguistic anthropologists, and conversation analysts such as Schegloff, 1992; Robinson, 2014) – is more amenable to the understanding of affect as it has come to be seen in 'affect theory' of cultural studies, where affect is much less specific and more elusive, if not ineffable (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; O'Sullivan, 2001). In these works, affect(s) is(are) said to be experienced but not seen. Nevertheless, experiences engender reactions, or are created by actions, and these actions and words feed back into experience. It's this notion that Wetherell (2012, 2013) keys into to discuss affect as 'affective practice.' She shows that the separation of affect and discourse is problematic, and that by thinking about and analyzing them as coupled, feeding back to one another is more likely to represent human experience: language and affect are two inherent and interconnected parts of that experience: 'We see, in other words, an affective–discursive practice emerging along with complex acts of subject positioning rather than, say, an emotion moving to "land on one individual"' (2013, p. 363). One way of operationalizing 'complex acts of subject positioning' is through a rigorous modelling of stancetaking. In fact, Wetherell uses Goodwin's (2006) analysis of stancetaking in a group of elementary school girls as an example of affective practice (Wetherell, 2013, pp. 359–364).

I expand Wetherell's view to suggest that stancetaking is a form of affective practice. An analysis of stancetaking that acknowledges particular kinds of affect can be culturally-ideologically attached to recognizable identities, or identity fragments, and leads to some fruitful questions: How is affect connected to identities like masculinity? Can an affect be ideologically connected to an identity and how would that be? Widely circulating labels and stereotypes about particular identities suggest that certain configurations of practice and activity circulate; for example, literature abounds with discussion of stereotypes such as fearful women and angry black men. This view is similar to Berlant's (2008) 'emotional quotation,' and even more so Ahmed's (2014) argument that affect circulates and is implicated in a 'cultural politics of emotion.' In this view

> emotions circulate through objects: emotions are not a positive form of dwelling, but produce the effect of surfaces and boundaries of bodies. It is not simply that the subject feels hate, or feels fear, and nor is it the case that the object is simply hateful or is fearsome: the emotions of hate and fear are shaped by the 'contact zone' in which others impress upon us, as well as leave their impressions. (2014, p. 194)

Interaction is one such contact zone. This view is similar to the notion of enregisterment and orders of indexicality (Johnstone & Kiesling, 2008; Silverstein, 2003), which I will explore below.

One way to connect such circulating 'identity affects' and their concomitant identities – and how speakers orient to these in actual interaction – is through the notion of stance-taking. While sometimes stance and emotion (and affect) are collapsed (for example in the use of emotional stance or affective stance, see the papers in Peräkylä & Sorjonen, 2012), in my view, stance always has a relational aspect. One doesn't simply take a stance, period. One takes a stance *with respect to* something or someone else, or both. While stance has been used relatively widely in linguistics, most of such work is either particular to specific interactional data sets and conversations, or categorizes different stances without a theoretical background on which to build those categories. My recent work has been focused on building on the important theoretical and empirically-grounded insights of Du Bois (2007) to create an approach that can be applied more consistently without devolving into arguments about what types of stance we can find and how we should name them (as argued in Lempert, 2008).

I define stance formally as the creation of relationships of animator (speaker) to some discursive figure (human or otherwise). This definition crucially relies on Goffman's (1974, 1981) notions of *animator* and *figure*, which locate stance firmly in the 'imaginary' of the conversation. The *animator* is that person uttering the words, and can be separated from the *author*, who is the person creating those words. Both of these can be further separated from the *principal* – the person who is 'responsible' for the words. The notion of figure allows us to see speakers manipulate not their actual selves but multiple representations of themselves (or any entity that can be imagined) in interaction. Goffman (1981, p. 149) provides an example of an utterance that demonstrates this multiplicity of figures: 'To the best of my recollection, I think that I said I once lived that sort of life.' In this utterance, each first person reference is a different figure, with the 'my' and 'I think' figures representing the animator, or person speaking. Other first person pronouns refer to the same person as the animator, but in different imagined worlds. So the 'I' in 'I once lived that sort of life' is a different imagined figure from the 'I' who is the animator. In addition, the 'I' in 'I think' is also distancing the animator from responsibility for the claim, in effect claiming that there is a 'real world' in which their representation of the how they lived their life could be wrong. It is a possible world that is not epistemically certain, and the uncertainty is created by distancing the animator from principalship or the possibility of being held accountable for its truth. Table 1 is an attempt at a representation of these differences.

These relationships are created by speakers not just with selves and other people, but also with the things they talk about, and with the talk they produce as well. On the latter, we can say that every utterance has embedded in it a reflexive metapragmatic (Agha, 2007; Silverstein, 1993) suggestion of 'how to take it' – a representation of the animator's relationship to the talk itself (what Gumperz, 1982 calls contextualization cues).

Table 1. Goffman's (1981) example of figures. Paraphrase: 'In a world that I remember and may not be true, the me in that world suspects that the me in a third world said that a me in a fourth world once lived that sort of life.'

Utterance	First person referent	Event
To the best of **my** recollection	Animator's recollection	Current speech event
I think that	Most likely person	Narrated event 1
I said	Imagined previous animator	Narrated event 2
I once lived that sort of life	Earlier Imagined animator	Narrated event 3

There are three broad types of relationship the animator takes in interaction: with their own talk, with figures represented in their talk, and with other speakers in the speech event. These three relationships are not stances, but rather three dimensions that work together to create the stance of an utterance (or a larger stretch of talk) in a conversation. I refer to these relationships as investment (relationship to the talk itself), evaluation (relationship to entities in talk), and alignment (relationship to others in the interaction). These are general categories that in turn have different facets. For example, one can disalign (or disaffiliate, in Stivers's, 2008 terms) with another interactant by disagreeing about a proposition, while at the same time align with them in furthering a conversation, for example by answering their questions or allowing them to tell their narrative.

What then is the relationship between affect and stance? When I was first invited to contribute to the conference on which this issue is based, I immediately thought that the stancetaking machinery outlined above was simply another way of talking about affect, and that I would be able to explain that stance is merely a disciplinary variant of affect. But as I have read and thought more about the ways that affect is used in neighbouring disciplines, a view of how the two terms might identify different but related realms of the social world emerged and, I think, proved useful.

One notion to think about is the focus in the stancetaking model above on the animator coupled with the conversation and its events. One of the foundational methodological principles of discourse analysis is that one cannot know what is in a speaker's mind – one only has their speech and possibly some gesture and kinesics as observations from which to understand what is happening in the conversation. The focus is on the conversation as an entity itself, since it is a co-produced text in which the meanings and intersubjectivities are not predetermined but negotiated in the interaction. As can be seen in Table 1, the kind of stancetaking analysis discussed above focuses on the speech event and narrated events, but not on the minds of the actual embodied speakers in the conversation.

It seems then that we could make a distinction such that stancetaking is locatable in the 'text,' and affect is locatable in actual individuals. The work of Goffman (and to some extent Austin, 1962; Butler, 1990; Searle, 1969) show that language creates an imaginary in which sociality happens, while work on affect as I understand it has in part been a move to recouple the body and experiencing mind with that imaginary. So perhaps stancetaking and affect are related in the same way as *imagined* and *authentic* are; we might say that stancetaking is an imaginary that stimulates authentic affective responses in all language users. (I use the term *stimulates* because I believe 'creates' is too strong and deterministic; the stancetaking produces some sort of response, but by itself it does not necessarily *create* the affect.) I'll suggest that stancetaking stimulates affective responses in three ways: First, stancetaking stimulates affect in the addressee/overhearer, and second, within the animator. Finally, it stimulates an affective context among all participants, a 'tone' if you will. This view fits with a number of articulations of affect as bodily effects that are not merely responsive to stimulus nor pre-existing of response but rather existing in a dialectical relationship with the talk (and other mediating channels and modes) surrounding the bodies where the affect is arising (see, for example, Blackman & Venn, 2010; Stewart, 2007).

As Ochs suggests for stances, we can suggest that affects can be enregistered with characterological figures. Enregisterment is a term in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics defined as the development of a recognizable style in a speech community that many if

not most speakers can and do discuss – and orient to – in other reflexive metapragmatic ways. The most common enregistered varieties of language are standard languages; see Agha (2007) and Silverstein (2003). A characterological figure is the stereotypical kind of person who speaks with that recognizable way of speaking. For example, speech recognized as that of a New Yorker invokes a characterological figure who is loud, rude, and confrontational (although they are not necessarily experienced this way, as shown by Tannen, 1984) This view coupled with the definition of affect brings back into sociolinguistic identity theory the notion that people feel an affect in order to feel an identity, that there is a psychological *desire* to be that identity and have a bodily hexis that is felt in inhabiting that identity. This desire to be a particular identity is identified by Whitehead (2002) as ontological desire, a notion that the understanding of affect above makes more legible. Work in sociolinguistics at least has not worked with this idea much, but one would connect it to the observations that people do not always desire or feel the identities imposed upon them by society and their outward biological appearance, but rather have a desire to be other, and feel that desire so deeply that it can cause depression and other psychological issues.

I'm therefore tentatively proposing that affects are stimulated via moment-to-moment stancetaking in conversation, within the three dimensional stancetaking model of investment, evaluation, and alignment. These affects are felt as constituting desired and identified-with characterological types of people, and thus there comes to be a 'personal' enregisterment (imprinting?) of affect with identity, such that the affective way of being in the world is imagined to be recognized by the experiencer of that affect. This is a variant, I believe, of Ahmed's notion of the cultural politics of emotion. For example, if I perform stances related to ease and confidence, I am performing a recognizable masculinity. But I further argue that there is more than performativity here, that such performativity feeds back into the affect *felt* by the speakers, such that, as Wetherell suggests, a dialectical pattern of affective practice emerges in which taking stances leads to the possibility of affective changes or reinforcements for the speaker. Doing masculinity through masculine affect therefore creates a masculinity in the subject. As Reeser (2017) notes, this view also entails that performing 'non-masculine' affects in different constellations can challenge the entire enregisterments of masculinity and gender more widely. Such a view opens the possibility that, as Wetherell (2013, p. 364) writes, 'puts both affect and discourse back where they should be within emergent patterns of situated activity, and makes these patterns, as they need to be, the main research focus.' This view also suggests that the interpellation of a subject through hailing has more effect on that resulting subject (and the speaking subject and the speech event itself) than 'merely' creating a subject, but in creating a subject there are felt affective creations at the same time, and these are possibly in line with enregistered, imprinted, or habitual responses to such hails. With this theoretical ground in mind, an example is in order.

That's what it always is, man

As I listened initially to the interactions I had recorded in the fraternity, the following interaction especially caught my attention (further analyzed in Kiesling, 2001). It takes place during a 'happy hour' at a bar just off campus between Pete and Dan. Pete is a senior member of the fraternity, while Dan is a nonmember from another state who is a friend of one of the fraternity members. The men are thus acquaintances and not

close friends. Pete is hosting a party at his house (not the fraternity house) that evening, and it is this party that Dan refers to in line 1.

Transcription and transcription conventions are important in linguistic interactional analysis. I use standardized spellings unless pronunciation is unpredictable by the general phonological rules of English. This transcript shows relatively little detail about prosody and timing in the interest of readability, and some details have been left out because they are unimportant for the analysis. Transcription conventions precede the transcript itself.

Transcription conventions

Transcription	Meaning
(text)	unclear talk
((text))	explanatory comment
over|lapping |talk	overlapping talk
(1.0)	silence in seconds
(.)	silence less that 0.5 s
(?)	unclear utterance not transcribed
CAPS	more loudly spoken that surrounding talk
text	more quietly spoken than surrounding talk
te:xt	segment before colon noticeably extended

Excerpt 1

1	Dan:	(You got) a keg?
2		(?)
3	Dan:	B-Y-O-B? ((Bring Your Own Beverage))
4		IS it really?
5	Pete:	That's what it always is at our place man
6		except for once in a whi:le.
7		An' everybody just comes over there gets wasted.
8		fuckin' sits around,
9		plays caps or whatever. ((caps is a drinking game))
10	Dan:	I love playin' caps.
11		That's what did me in last-| | last week.
12	Pete:	|that's|
13		Everybody plays that damn game, dude.
14	(1.5)	
15	Dan:	Y'know who's good is: Nell?
16		(1.0)
17		*Is good uh*
18		(1.3) ((snapping))
19		What's his name.
20		The marine guy.
21		What's his name?
22	Pete:	Griceman?
23	Dan:	Yea.
24		He's good. (0.8)
25	Pete:	Everyone's: (.) all right.
26		Everyone's pretty good.
27		Just depends on how wasted you are.

In this interaction Pete is projecting the 'masculine stance' that I am arguing for – unflappable, with repose, perhaps even swagger. He uses a number of linguistic devices to suggest this stance. At the start of the excerpt, Dan expresses incredulity that Pete and his housemates don't provide beer or other drinks at their parties (lines 3–4 'B-Y-O-B? IS it really?'). Pete downplays this practice in lines 5–9, mainly by indicating that the 'BYOB' practice is common and everyday with modifiers such as *always* and *everybody*. His address term *man* further lowers the intensity of the utterance, and his description of what is done as nothing special with the downtoner *just* is important as well. In lines 7–9, Pete paints a picture of a group of people regularly coming to his house with few specific activities in mind except drinking and drinking games. The phrase 'fuckin' sits around' is particularly low intensity (even though *fuckin'* is often used as an intensifier, here, if it is intensifying anything it is the casualness of the situation).

Pete makes similarly downgrading reactions to each of Dan's statements (see Pomerantz, 1984, p. 68 on downgraded second assessments). When Dan shows his enthusiasm for caps, Pete downplays it, saying 'everybody plays that damn game, dude.' *Dude* tends to reduce the intensity of any interaction, creating a stance of cool solidarity (see Kiesling, 2004), and *man* has a similar function in line 5 ('That's what it always is at our place man'). When Dan evaluates Griceman as a good caps player, Pete again doesn't really agree, but disarms Dan's enthusiasm with his use of *everyone* and *just*. The repetition of *always, everybody, everyone* creates a general stance through the poetics of Pete's talk (see Lempert, 2008 for more on how stance can be created through poetic form in interaction). It's not just one utterance, therefore, that creates this stance, but the the general repetition of these moves poetically and in response to Dan. Other, possibly more expected moves that Pete could have made include simple agreement ('yeah, Griceman's good') or even enthusiasm ('I know he's the fuckin' best I've ever seen'). The more general affect of ease emerges from repeated stancetakings.

So the moves Pete is making in this rather mundane interaction is one in which Pete is not arguing with Dan, but not quite completely aligning either. One gets the sense that Pete is somehow undermining Dan by expressing less enthusiasm or intensity about the topic than Dan is. Pete creates this stance in other interactions as well, but not always. So this is a masculine stance but not *the* masculine stance by any means. And if Dan is not taking this stance but is still seen as masculine then we have more evidence that there are different masculine stances, or in Ochs's terms, multiple stances that constitute different masculinities.

As noted above, one of the most influential ways to analyzing stance is one proposed by Jack Du Bois (2007), who grounds stance in evaluation (or assessment, Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). In the excerpt above, 'I love playin' caps' is an evaluation of the game caps, which Dan apparently enjoys. Du Bois argues that these evaluative moves are the basis of stance, which position a speaker (in this case, Dan) with respect to a stance object (caps). He further argues that relationships between speakers are created by how other speakers align or disalign with these evaluations. Thus, Pete aligns with Dan because his utterances are in concord with Dan's statement. This alignment can be seen poetically as well, using what Du Bois calls a digram:

I	love	playing	caps
Everybody		plays	that damn game

This digram demonstrates the poetic structure that helps to produce the alignment between the two speakers: Although Pete does not say everyone 'loves' that game, his assertion that everyone plays it suggests that he acknowledges a universal approval for the game. The fact that he calls it 'that damn game' could suggest a bit of criticism of the game, or weariness with its ubiquity, but that's unclear. The main point is that Pete does not contradict Dan, and thus aligns with him. The digram does make clear Pete's lack of overt evaluation, however, in contrast with the strong evaluation by Dan.

There are other ways Pete doesn't align with Dan, in ways that can't be accounted for in Du Bois's stance model. Here, Stivers's (2008) notion of affiliation as separate from alignment is useful, as we can say that Pete is aligning in the sense of participating in the activity of conversation, but not affiliating in that he is not orienting to conversational figures in the same way as Dan. As noted, Pete does not match Dan's enthusiasm for the game, even though he he holds back on direct contradiction, such as 'I hate playing caps.' In other words, there seems to be another dimension in the difference between the two orientations to the game, one I will call investment. In this interaction, then, Pete is not as invested in his evaluation of caps as Dan is invested in his; Dan's use of the verb 'love,' asserts a highly intense positive feeling – it's hard to like anything more than loving it, a word we hold back from saying to intimate partners until much deeper feelings have taken hold. Another way to see this is that if someone made a further arguments about why caps is not a good game, Pete could agree fairly easily, whereas such an argument would force Dan into some defense of his position – hence the term investment. So there is another stance dimension to add to the evaluation expressed towards the game (and the alignment and affiliation between the speakers) a dimension that captures how *invested* the speakers are in their statement and by proxy, their alignment (or disalignment). It is for situations like this that I have added investment as a third stance dimension, and it is this dimension that I am arguing is enregistered in 'masculine ease.'

I've emphasized the textual in the above, but there are certainly situational and embodied aspects to the stancetaking activity going on in this example. The first is Pete's bodily demeanour. The interaction took place at a four person table in a bar, with Pete and Dan sitting next to each other on one side. I sat on the other side across from Dan. As Pete talked, he rarely if ever looked at Dan (or me). Rather, his gaze was on activity in the rest of the bar, with other students talking and interacting, including some women he was acquainted with across the room. Pete is relatively short and solid, a former wrestler who sits still even when talking. His body is thus also not expressive and seemingly at ease, and the direction of his gaze does not put Dan at the centre of his attention. Thus, there is evidence of an *affect* of low investment in Pete's body.

As a participant, I felt and responded in this conversation to match Pete's low investment, and the conversation developed an affect of ease. I also mirrored Pete's ease, even as I fretted about the tape recorder working in the noisy bar. It's here that we find the affect (sic) of stancetaking, as the participants in the conversation sit calmly back in their chairs despite the energy of the bar, as Dan and Pete negotiate not an argument about what drinking game is best but a casual alignment about the joys of the game. In short, I could feel the development of an affect of ease in this conversation, in myself, and see it in the other speaking subjects. But this is one conversation, and arguably it is Pete alone who is setting this tone. Can this affect of ease been seen more widely as enregistered to masculinity, beyond my own admittedly subjective experience with American

masculinity as described at the start of the article? Several points of evidence suggest that it is, and I turn to some of that evidence in the next section.

Bros and *Dude*

Over multiple conversations in which stancetakings stimulate such affective responses in all participants, specific identities and affects will come to be enregistered; that is, experience will connect identity and affect. Here we see the close connection between stance and affect, while keeping them apart, as we can point to the stancetaking effects of the moves in the conversation and then look at the affect it stimulates. But in addition to sedimenting though repeated experience in this way, enregisterment can also emerge when people are shown more forcefully a characterological figure and its properties. This route to enregisterment takes place in situations in which particular aspects of identities are highlighted in performance either in 'high performance' such as broadcast media or with public audiences, or in mundane performance (Coupland, 2007, pp. 146–147) in more intimate interactions (see Coupland, 2007, pp. 146–147 on high and mundane performance; for excellent examples of enregisterment through different kinds of performance, see Johnstone's, 2013, discussions of enregisterment of 'Pittsburghese' and 'Yinzers.') What evidence is there that the low investment stances that Pete is taking is enregistered with masculinity? Is there then an affect that is also enregistered in the sense of inscribed in the bodies of masculine-identifying subjects? Assuming the views of gender from Ochs, Butler and others discussed above in which gender is about practices that are recognized as gendered, one way to look for masculine enregisterment is to notice practices that, when adopted by women, confer a description of 'masculine' on that the woman. In other words, if enregistered categories are separable from bodies, then an enregistered category can be adopted by anyone and projected onto almost anything. Thus, as my son has pointed out to me, we have cars that are more or less masculine or feminine, and as Halberstam (1998) has shown, 'females' can be masculine. McElhinny (1994) provides an example of this transportability of stance with language, but one that takes gender with it. McEhinny's article explains how female police officers use language that is 'emotionless.' She quotes one female officer who describes 'learning a combination of emotional skills – emotionlessness ("I don't smile as much"), toughness and gruffness' (1994, p. 162). While the police officers are clear in insisting that they maintain an essential femininity and that they put on a kind of mask for the job, they nevertheless acknowledge that the 'less emotional' stance is perceived as masculine. If nothing else, there is a clear relationship between a 'masculine' profession (policing) and 'emotionlessness' (with the exception of anger). A further connection between emotionlessness and masculinity can be seen in the notion that emotionlessness femininity is seen as 'bitchy,' as in the recently popularized terms 'resting bitch face' (see Camia, 2016). This connection suggests a wider connection between affect and gender, in which affect of emotionlessless or, in my terms, lack of investment, is enregistered – that is felt – as masculine. Note that this hearkens back to the origination of work on language and gender, in which Lakoff (1975) suggested that women speak in italics (that is, with more emotion), while men don't.

In addition, I have argued elsewhere (Kiesling, in press) that 'low investment' stances are stereotypically enregistered through various linguistic forms (such as *-in* and *dude*) as masculine, and when taken to extremes are portrayed in a hyper-masculine 'Bro'

identity. I have also shown (Kiesling, 2004) that one of the essential indexicalities of the address term *dude* is a cool, laid back stance; moreover, *dude* is an address form that initially was used exclusively by men to other men. Although the term has since widened in use by gender, the stereotypical bro and *dude*-user is still a laid back man, for example a surfer or skater.

It is worth noting here that the stance can also be read from a bodily hexis; Goodwin, Cekaite, and Goodwin (2012) show how linguistic stance and embodiment work together for affective displays. The identities discussed above – the enregistered characterological figures – also have enregistered ways of holding bodies and walking, ways of sitting, and facial expression. This comportment, when performed as the stereotype, all show aspects of ease, being laid back, relaxed. In sum, these circulating characterological figures support the notion that low investment is enregistered with masculinity, one that is hegemonic (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, on hegemonic masculinity).

Back to stance

The model of stance explicated above is a response to criticisms from colleagues who pushed me to be more exacting about the concept of stance and stancetaking; they asked, 'what exactly is it?' and 'how do I recognize a stance?' This model represents a response to those questions, and some sort of definitional bridge from the affective-emotional to specific observable practices is required. I understand that ultimately the three dimensions I've defined are not entirely separable, and certainly not experienced distinctly. It seems that most discussions of affect argue for it as a totalizing and ultimately ineffable feeling that is not always possible to specifically articulate, but rather must be related more indirectly through narrative and wider description. This view is not entirely foreign in linguistics; many approaches to discourse analysis are ones in which talk helps to negotiate as much intersubjectivity as possible, but recreating that specific intersubjectivity as felt by the speakers is always out of reach.

But the dominant view of language use in linguistics is probably still one in which speakers have ideas and emotions and these are encoded and sent to other language users, with a semiotic understanding in which words and grammar have inherent meanings outside those speakers. To the contrary, most of the work in linguistic anthropology and discourse analysis over the last half century has shown that in fact activities like conversation are more like negotiations around some intersubjectivity which is never wholly achieved. In this view, interaction and conversation take up their own lives and meanings beyond the sum of the intentionalities of the speakers. Given this understanding of interaction, it's not an unreasonable leap to argue that conversations have affects, and that these affects go beyond the intentional stances or emotions of the speakers even as they are related to them (after all, speakers are still trying to achieve some sort of agreement about what is being meant). Further, if communities and institutions and other social collectivities can be understood as essentially not collections of people but collections of practices and especially interactional activities, then whole communities and institutions can have affects because of how they arise and circulate in interactions. This is not to say that individuals don't have agency, but it is always contingent on interaction with others – how others frame a conversation, how they ask a question, how they respond to a part.

Conversation Analysis (CA) is an approach to interaction that is very compatible with such a view of interaction, and is a valuable method to show how interactional moves can work to constrain and define other moves both prospectively and retrospectively (see Sidnell, 2011 for a good primer on CA), and interactional sociolinguistics is essentially the study of how interactants use cues in language to come to some intersubjective understanding of 'what is going on' (see Goffman, 1981; Gumperz, 1982). One of the central organizing units that CA has found in conversation is the 'adjacency pair,' which is composed of two adjacent speaking turns that depend on one another. The question-answer pair is the most canonical, as a question prefigures the next turn as an answer, and an answer is often unintelligible unless one knows the question. More importantly, certain first pair parts (such as a question) prefer kinds of second pair parts (questions prefer answers), even if other types of turns are possible (questions can be met with questions and still yield a coherent conversation). In the extract above, Pete's utterances are all in second-pair part positions, either in answer to questions (such as Dan's 'BYOB? Is it really?' in lines 3–4) or after assessments (such as in line 10 'I love playin' caps' and line 24 'He's good'). So Pete doesn't create his low investment out of whole cloth, but as a response to Dan's more high investment moves. One could imagine other moves as noted above, in which Pete aligns more with the intensity, or Dan lowers his intensity in accommodation with Dan. Dan and Pete are thus not accommodating very much to each other in this passage, even though they are not exactly disagreeing. That noted, while Dan's investment is higher than Pete's, his assessments especially are really not that highly invested. His prosody, often a signal of investment, is not significantly variable (although his 'BYOB' is more variable than any other utterance), and 'he's good' (line 24) is unadorned with intensifiers. The point is that the conversation has an affect of its own, which is a collaboration between the two speakers (and the energy of the bar including the music of the band The Who playing in the background), with Dan pushing the conversation towards more intensity and Pete pushing it toward less. A few minutes later Pete and Dan are joined by a woman, Jen, who is an even more high investment speaker and the conversational affect shifts dramatically (further analyzed in Kiesling, 2013).

Stance, affect and masculine ease

One aspect of masculinity ubiquitously commented on is power such that patriarchy entrenches men in power. More specific to stance and interaction, there are interactional moves that men tend to take in specific situations that suggest power (Kiesling, 1997), often a kind of conversational 'manspreading' that allows men's voices more prominence in the conversational floor. This 'verbal swagger' is frustrating to many (including other men who observe it), but it is part and parcel of masculinity in the United States.

Ahmed (2014) discusses a similar, more all-encompassing affect when discussing 'Queer Feelings,' although in this realm she focuses on the 'ease' of being heterosexual:

> Normativity is comfortable for those who can inhabit it. The word 'comfort' suggests well-being and satisfaction, but it also suggests an ease and easiness. To follow the rules of heterosexuality is to be at ease in a world that reflects back the couple form one inhabits as an ideal. (2014, p. 147)

I'd like to borrow Ahmed's term 'ease' to argue that it is the quintessential aspect of a masculine stance, even if all relatively hegemonic masculinities evince slightly different forms.

In other words, low investment stance (=ease) is constitutive of hegemonic masculinities. Masculinities that try hard, that are nervous (again, exhibiting high investment) are less hegemonic.

The one high investment stance associated with masculinity is anger. The creating a stance of anger creates disalignment, negative evaluation, and high investment. As an aspect of hegemonic masculinity in the US, it seems like a counterexample to the notion of masculine ease. Perhaps, but anger is often seen as failed emotional control in men, an aberration in which one 'loses one's cool.' The explanation for anger is often one in which the man is on defense, understood has having few other options in an interaction (whether true or not). So anger is in many ways the exception that proves the rule.

Just as I was asked about stance 'How do I recognize stance?' one could ask, even more problematically, 'How do I recognize affect?' It is tempting once again to argue that one cannot recognize it, but we can argue that, to the extent that we recognize feelings in others (empathy), we can recognize affect. If we follow a definition that affect is something that is not in the conversation but rather a feeling, then the recognition of affect is only by the participants in the conversation and perhaps the empathy that we might feel for them given similar experiences. To follow on the suggestion for how to think about the relationship between stance and affect outlined above, stances of ease stimulate and accumulate to create an affect of ease, in the overhearers, the animator, and more generally in the conversation. This affect is something that younger men desire for themselves – they desire to become a man with that sort of ease. I argue that it's important to realize that they do not desire to become the kind of man who can *perform* this ease, but rather one who *feels* ease. Following the definition of hegemonic masculinity, to have this sort of ease is to be a successful man. While Wetherell (2012, pp. 105–106) discusses this effect in terms of mimesis, Whitehead (2002) goes further and suggests that these models of masculinity create a desire to be that way oneself. This ontological desire provides a way to connect affect to performative notions of identity. The stances of ease are viewed in others by boys who then desire it (motivation being half of learning), then perform it and, through repetition, feel it. I am not at all versed in the psychoanalytic literature which might be able to make this argument more complete and specific, but it seems to me that there is a connection to be made here. It seems that relatively few boys feel this sort of ease to begin with, so as they are socialized linguistically (see Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984), they learn to take low investment stances in different ways.

Linguists generally eschew psychoanalysis; note that in the interactional analyses above I do my best to avoid a psychological, strategic, or intentional motivation for the men's utterances – I analyze the conversation, not the men. But I've opened the door to the idea that a speaker's desire for an affect goes through stancetaking. This relates to an argument articulated by Mahmood (2001), who in her discussion of doing pious practices in the women's mosque movement in Egypt suggests (to simplify considerably) that part of the motivation for these practices is not simply to appear pious, but to create the feeling of piousness that actually leads to being 'authentically' pious:

> Although piety was achievable through practices that were both devotional as well as worldly in character, it required more than the simple performance of acts: piety also entailed the inculcation of entire dispositions through a simultaneous training of the body, emotions, and reason as sites of discipline until the religious virtues acquired the status of embodied habits. (p. 212)

In this way, Mahmood rethinks 'the conceptual relationship between desire and self-making, performance and the constitution of the subject, and moral action and embodiment in feminist debates' (p. 203). While Mahmood is discussing a particular form of well-rehearsed actions in the context of religion, there's no reason why the use of practice to, crudely put, 'fake it 'til you make it' isn't true more widely. I bring this view into the argument because I want to argue that there is a feedback loop in which men desire the ease that they perform until they begin to feel it, which then creates the desire in other men. Taking these low investment stances – for example, using more *-in* than *-ing*, using fewer intensifiers, using *dude* – performs the ease that constitutes at least one form of hegemonic masculinity in the Unites States. Further, in the repetition of the performance, this ease begins to be felt by the men who perform it. Perhaps it is not a surprise that this ease is one part of a masculine stance that is missing in the stereotyped stance of the 'Gay Voice' and other non-hegemonic masculinities (see Kiesling, in press).

One might suppose that what we see in conversation are the traces of the stimuli of affects, the footprints left behind but in a sense of a footprint that gives the feeling of running, such that in seeing those footprints one imagines and feels in oneself what bodily movements are necessary to create them. I hope I have shown that, when used in interaction, language does not necessarily (nor only) *reflect* the individual affects of its users, but *stimulates* affects in conversations and dialectically on their speakers. For observers and analysts, these exegeses of language will always be partial and contingent, and while we cannot overtly observe the feelings of the speakers (if we only had an emoti-graph!), We can see the stancetaking moves that relate to the ineffable affects of others, to analyze the 'contact zone' that Ahmed refers to (2014, p. 194 cited above). I hope that this view of stancetaking, especially incorporating the notion of investment, might contribute a tool that analysts, theorists, and observers can use to discover and show affective stimuli – stancetaking – in action.

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Notes on contributor

Scott F. Kiesling is professor of lingusitics at the University of Pittsburgh. His work has focused on language and gender, especially masculinities, as well as Australian English, and Pittsburgh English. He uses a combination of discourse analytic, variation analytic, and linguistic anthroplogical methods.

ORCID

Scott F. Kiesling http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4954-1038

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