

Visible Thought

The New Psychology of Body Language

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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

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Introduction: *Big Brother* and other experiments **1**

In this book I am going to present a new theory of bodily communication, or at least of an important part of bodily communication, namely the movements of the hands and arms that people make when speaking. I will argue that such movements are not part of some system of communication completely divorced from speech, as many psychologists have assumed, rather they are intimately connected with speaking and with thinking. Indeed these movements of the hands and arms reflect our thinking, like language itself but in a completely different manner. I will argue that such behaviours provide us with a glimpse of our hidden unarticulated thoughts. Movements of the hands and arms act as a window on the human mind; they make thought visible.

This is a new theory in psychology, which owes much to the pioneering work of the American psychologist David McNeill, but as the *Big Brother* psychologist I have taken this theory and applied it to examples of behaviour from the *Big Brother* house for millions to see. Many seemed to like the basic idea and agreed that my interpretations of unarticulated thoughts were at least plausible, but what was the scientific value of this new theory? Where did the theory come from? How had it been tested? Were there other possible explanations for the unconscious movements of the hands and arms as people speak? In a television show you are not afforded opportunities to go into these kinds of issues. In this book I will outline the scientific case for this new theory and explain why movements of the hands and arms are a crucial and integral part of thinking and why

careful scrutiny of these movements might reveal a great deal about the thinking of the individuals concerned and sometimes much more than they ever intended.

As the *Big Brother* psychologist my focus has been on bodily communication but now I want to argue that we may not have understood a major component of it.

It might seem odd, by the way, for a reasonably established academic to have a television programme prefixed to his occupation in this way, as in '*Big Brother* psychologist', it sounds rather like '*Blue Peter* presenter' or '*Match of the Day* pundit', but given the enormous success of *Big Brother*, that's how I am identified outside my university. *The Guardian* calls me exactly that, and sometimes I am referred to in that way inside my university as well. I sometimes find that a little strange but I am getting used to it (and no doubt one day I will simply be known as the ex-*Big Brother* psychologist, but that's a different and perhaps an even sadder story). So I now use the title, currently without the ex, perhaps a little self-consciously. *Big Brother*, after all, has been very useful in interesting the public in the micro-aspects of human behaviour, something that I have been interested in for many years, and it has provided a unique archive of material for psychologists to analyse. This archive has made a significant contribution to our thinking about language and nonverbal communication and how these two systems of communication fit together.

How has this been achieved, you might ask, when all the *Big Brother* series provide us with are highly selected individuals performing in front of the cameras? Let us not kid ourselves here. We all know how highly selected the housemates are. We have all seen the videos that they forward with their applications in their efforts to be selected for the show. The housemates are selected to achieve balance and 'interest' with one thing apparently in common – this desperate craving for fame and maybe even fortune somewhere down the line. To critics they are merely self-publicising extraverts, who know that they are continually being watched, 'acting' in front of a battery of cameras which pick up their every movement night and day. Why should

such footage be of any interest to psychologists? Because, I would argue, it shows behaviour in sufficient detail in a long enough context so that we can begin to understand the individuals and to get some hint as to why they are doing what they are doing. We can then start to interpret function and motive in their communication and thereby attempt to unravel the complexity of their behaviour operating to achieve such functions in a way that no psychology experiment that I know of has ever allowed before.

Nearly all of the psychological research that has studied bodily communication in the past has been based on mere snapshots of behaviour. Small sets of individuals have been invited into a psychological laboratory, complete with one-way mirrors and hidden cameras, for short periods of time (but see the work of Albert Schefflen 1972, 1974, for a possible exception). No psychology experiment, with all of the technology necessary to record the complexity of behaviour, ever had anyone actually living in the laboratory before. But *Big Brother*, of course, did just that. The housemates knew that they were being watched (and sometimes they acted up to the camera, pretending to freeze so that the cameramen and women might think their equipment was faulty) – but so do all participants in research in the psychological laboratory. There are strict ethical guidelines governing what participants must be told. If you are going to record behaviour with hidden cameras you should inform the participants beforehand. *Big Brother* followed these ethical guidelines.

There is another major advantage to this particular show for the psychologist in that through time in each series the audience become interested in the characters on the screen in front of them, interested in their behaviour and in their moods and their relationships, interested in what will happen to them. People are rarely interested in participants in psychological research in quite the same way. This makes the job of the psychologist that much easier. Abstract descriptions of behaviour – ‘minimal eye gaze’, ‘high levels of self-touching in the initial period’, ‘open posture developing into postural echo’ – became relevant to the action

rather than appearing like some irrelevant academic language that misses the point of the whole thing.

Here are some examples from the third series of *Big Brother*. Kate, Spencer, Jonny, Adele, PJ, Jade, Tim, Alex, Alison, Lee, Sophie, Lyn and Sandy, their relationships and their behaviour were being discussed by the nation in the summer of 2002. One day we will probably look back and wonder why, but in that summer they gripped us. People would stop me in the street and ask, 'You're the *Big Brother* psychologist, what do you think is going on between Kate and Spencer?' I would stand there, not wishing to appear rude, rocking slightly with embarrassment, trying to say something that they had not heard before, trying to notice something for them in those layers of behaviour. I would offer up a comment and watch their reaction. 'Nah, you're wrong mate,' they would say. 'Didn't you see that look Kate gave Spencer when he chatted to Adele?' We were all psychologists now, or so it seemed.

Here were lives in miniature, for all the psychologists out there to analyse. There was meaning in the action and narratives unfolding across time to be understood and the behaviour of the characters was a clue to what was going on. It was in fact more than a clue, it was a major part of the story itself. If you missed that look, that gesture or that shrug, you didn't get it at all. Every week I travelled down to Bromley-by-Bow and later to the Elstree studios in Borehamwood to sit in front of the 'quad split', with four streams of image coming at me simultaneously in a room laden with props for the various challenges. The pressure was on for me to make my observations. The fact that the monitors were all quite small made this sometimes a difficult and painstaking task. 'Have you found anything yet?' the producer would ask. 'No pressure really, but the cameraman is set up and ready.'

The first observation I report here is about Kate, popular from the start and, in fact, the eventual winner of *Big Brother* 3, but at one point her position in the house looked decidedly shaky. This was my discussion of why that might be the case. I have prefaced each extract with the short title

used in the programme itself. These were dreamt up by the producers and usually made me smile.

Kiss me Kate

From the start Kate has been a very popular housemate. She has many of the physical attributes that might suggest that she would be a big hit in the *Big Brother* house. Kate has formed very close ties with Spencer. Indeed some of the most apparently intimate moments so far in the *Big Brother* house have been between Spencer and Kate. But what is perhaps most revealing isn't what is present but what is absent. These absences might suggest that this relationship is less about love and emotion and more about protection and power. Notice how she touches his knee, they intertwine their legs and she flirtatiously touches her lips. But also notice what is missing here: although they look in the direction of the other there is actually no eye contact. Eye gaze is used here to monitor the response of the other person rather than to display real affection or any emotion towards the other person. When people are being naturally intimate they often synchronize the timing of small movements, and this is done at a very unconscious level, this is called interactional synchrony. But there is none of this interactional synchrony here.

Kate also displays very similar intimacy behaviours towards Alison. The very close interpersonal distance, sitting on her knee, the arm around her. These are exactly the same kinds of behaviours she displays towards Spencer. This again suggests that Kate might be displaying these intimacy behaviours as a strategic or political tool to build alliances within the house with powerful allies. Or people that she thinks will be powerful allies.

But Kate's got a problem. She might have chosen these allies wrongly. Alison's nomination suggests that she might not be quite as popular as Kate thought. Spencer doesn't seem to be responding to Kate's advances. What's more he refuses to be the protector that Kate wants. Not only is Kate not getting what she needs from her chosen mates, these relationships have been alienating the other housemates. Kate is now realising that her position in the house is not as secure as she'd hoped.

Here we can focus on eye gaze and interactional synchrony, or rather the absence of interactional synchrony, but

these are no longer dry academic descriptions of small aspects of behaviour but an essential part of the story itself, significant clues as to what is going on in the action. The public were interested in this relationship on the screen and now they were focusing on these micro-behaviours that might hold the key to how it might develop. These micro-behaviours were slowed down and paused and isolated for them to see some of the essential elements of human social interaction. It seemed to me sometimes that we were now educating a society of people watchers.

Big Brother, of course, has a number of essential components. One is the nomination process, where each housemate nominates two other housemates for eviction and gives the reasons for their nomination; another is the eviction itself where the public vote for the housemate that they would like to see evicted from the set of housemates with the most nominations. The eviction process is a live show, the culmination of the week. Here is how the housemates reacted to the eviction of Spencer, who at the time was another very popular housemate.

Aftershock

The psychological reaction of the housemates on hearing of Spencer's eviction is one of complete surprise and intense shock. It's not dissimilar to the way that close relatives feel when they hear of someone's sudden death. His closest allies were literally shocked into a state of no response and were unable to console or comfort effectively in this initial period. It was eight seconds before anyone responded to the news and that was Tim's cursory touch. It was 20 seconds before PJ touched Spencer's shoulder and 4 minutes before Kate's first tentative touch. She then waited a full 15 minutes before actually hugging Spencer. Kate is unable to conceal the negative emotions that leak out through her facial expressions. These expressions are blends of fear, surprise and sadness. Her unconscious hand-to-head movements, known as self-adaptors, also reveal her need for some self-comfort. Her humming is an attempt to block out the reality of the current

situation. It takes one and a half hours for her to let herself go completely with a show of tears.

PJ's shock isn't just at the loss of a loved one but also a shock of the housemates' changed situation. By repeatedly congratulating Alex he is ingratiating himself with the new leader in the house. The fact that PJ also announces that he is looking for a new father figure underlies that he is not contending for the alpha-male role. He offers this role tentatively to Jonny, Alex and Tim in turn before explicitly directing this offer to Alex who rejects it. Spencer's shock eviction will lead to a period of rapid realignment in the *Big Brother* house. The housemates are desperate to come to terms with their new feelings of uncertainty. Many of them will now be feeling 'If Spencer can go any of us can'.

Psychologists had commented in the past on the uses of touch for comfort, but this incident shows us something about another dimension of touch – its timing. It shows that touch is not used immediately. There is a delay before it occurs. The incident also illustrates the use of self-touching as a comfort device. These aspects of behaviour become interesting and relevant because they help us interpret what has happened at a broader level in terms of the relationships in the group.

The *Big Brother* viewers, through time, become interested in the fortunes of individual housemates. Some of the psychology pieces reflected this interest. In the extract below I attempted to summarize Jonny's situation halfway through the series.

Joker wanted

At the halfway mark the housemate who's been most affected by the *Big Brother* experience is Jonny. He walked in as the self-proclaimed house joker and entertainer. Through a psychological process called self-verification Jonny invited the other housemates to accept a well-tested image, which formed the basis of his identity. From the beginning Jonny was one of the most visible housemates, but for most of the last four weeks and despite surviving this week's public vote, he's been withdrawn and at times virtually frozen, paralysed by his inability to make an impact on the

group. He's become the invisible housemate. After week one Jonny suffered a series of severe blows. First there was Alison's eviction and then he was nominated himself in week two. In week three Sandy dealt the final blow to Jonny's sense of worth.

■ SANDY: I actually didn't like you.

Six days later Jonny shaved his head, an act of huge symbolic significance as an attempt to shed his old self-image. The result is a man who displays a combination of behaviours sometimes found in depression. He sleeps till after midday, he's up alone at night and obsessively questions his own identity in the house. After being nominated for eviction for the second time Jonny thought he could become someone else.

But Jonny has a problem translating his wish into reality. Jonny's confidential chat with the *Big Brother* counsellor might have helped him realize even further that he must remain true to himself.

Now with the house changing as the second half of *Big Brother* gets underway, there is role for an entertainer.

■ KATE: I can still say that my first week in the house was my best week, because I had such a good one, I'd never ever laughed so much in all my life.

PJ: I just want a bit of fun back into this experience. It's not all doom and gloom, it shouldn't be.

If Jonny can claim back his old identity as house joker he might find himself in a very powerful position. If he fails to see that the role of joker is up for grabs he could condemn himself permanently to the role of invisible man.

Here we have a resumé piece summarizing the position of one character halfway through the experience, alerting the viewer as to what to look out for next, attempting to make sense of his psychological position in the house. The producers of the show encouraged the psychologists to produce psychology pieces that were predictive where possible. The pieces should allow the viewer to anticipate what might happen next if the observations and the interpretation were correct. In the Jonny piece there was a degree of prediction.

Relationships in the *Big Brother* house are always fascinating to the viewer. They may not be the relationships of great literature – in fact they are often quite ordinary, mundane affairs – but I suppose that is their real attraction. They are relationships like our own, relationships that we can identify with. We watch them build, sometimes very slowly, with this almost 360-degree perspective we have on them. Relationships caught from every angle night and day, in the presence of the other and in the absence of the other, and we try to make sense of the conflicting and difficult signals as best we can.

The odd couple

This year *Big Brother* has been strewn with budding relationships. Alex and Adele, Kate and Spencer, PJ and Jade, Lee and Sophie. But all came to nothing as they were mostly about power and protection. But there is one relationship in the house that might be genuine and that's Alex and Kate. Since they entered the *Big Brother* house, Kate and Alex have gone through an intense and at times stormy relationship with a surprising number of twists. The start was really promising, but on week two the situation had turned around completely. Kate and Spencer are playing with oranges. Alex confronts Kate about this.

■ ALEX: We've got to eat those fruit afterwards.

Alex reveals his feelings of jealousy whilst testing how Kate feels about him. The function of this argument is to separate Kate and Spencer and to turn Alex into the focus of Kate's attention. At the peak of the drama, Alex reveals his real thoughts with a striking example of a micro-expression. He smiles displaying a very brief look of real pleasure. The outcome of the argument is very satisfactory for Alex. The game between Kate and Spencer has been interrupted and Spencer now plays with Adele. Kate's anger demonstrates Alex's power to hurt her and therefore her unconscious emotional attachment to him. With Spencer and Adele out of the picture and with the house finally reunited, by the removal of the bars, Kate and Alex have become increasingly close. They display a lot of playful behaviours. The jacuzzi provides a real

opportunity for intimacy to develop. There is a lot of touching as Kate washes Alex's back, but this is functional touching and there is very little bodily contact. There are signs of intimacy between them but these seem to be constrained by the invisible bubble which each of them has created around themselves. Neither of them wants to be the first to burst this bubble. Kate and Alex have been through a lot but now they are finally in a position to explore the depths of their feelings for each other, but they are afraid of each other's rejection. If Kate and Alex do survive in the house until the final week they might let their guard down and their up-and-down relationship would then be able to flourish at last.

Here we can see the significance of the micro-expression, that fleeting facial expression which leaks out very quickly to display the real emotion. Some might have picked up this micro-expression when it was played in real time but it has now been slowed down for all to see, and this micro-expression really holds the key to the previous set of behaviours. Suddenly we were living in a different world, where there is fast, fleeting action underpinning the routine, mundane aspects of everyday life; fast, fleeting action that may hold the key to what is going on.

Of course, there have been popular books in the past on 'body language', many of them extremely well known and popular, but they tended to focus on slow behaviours – posture and sometimes postural mirroring, interpersonal distance, levels of eye gaze. The books would discuss them as if the levels of each of these behaviours were fixed, rather than being the fast, dynamic behaviours that characterize everyday interaction. It is the changes in posture and brief periods of postural mirroring that often seem to be significant in everyday interaction. But how do we capture and describe these behaviours without the use of video-recording and without detailed slowed-down analyses? Body language books seem to be based on real-time observations, usually with drawings to illustrate the 'action', which is usually anything but. Such books sweep many of the important questions to one side. How long, for example,

should two people mirror each other before it becomes significant? How do we know that the mirroring isn't simply due to chance? There are after all only a limited number of ways that people can sit on a settee. What about the temporary leanings to and leanings away that affect interpersonal distance? What about the patterns of eye gaze in which the individuals concerned sometimes make eye contact and sometimes do not? How do we identify the very brief facial expressions, the micro-expressions, which flit across the human face in interaction? What about the very quick movements of the hands and arms that appear to be rather closely linked to the content of the speech itself? These are the very behaviours that constitute everyday interaction and unfortunately most popular body language books do not have a lot to say about them. In these popular books, the behaviours tend to be slow and observable, indeed somewhat ponderous, and they always seem to be congruent with each other – high levels of eye contact and high levels of postural mirroring means 'liking'. But what about low levels of eye contact and high levels of postural mirroring at the same time? The pattern of behaviour is frozen in time and can therefore be portrayed in a still photograph or still drawing (if only people really stayed that still during real interaction) and the speech is almost always totally irrelevant. The speech is never transcribed in the images of the body language and the slow ponderous behaviours themselves are meant to tell us everything that we may ever need to know 'to penetrate the personal secrets of strangers, friends and lovers'. If only it were that easy.

As soon as people start moving, talking and displaying behaviours quite incongruent with each other, such 'penetration' becomes much more difficult and our analyses, unfortunately or fortunately depending on your point of view, have to become that much more sophisticated. It is also important to remind ourselves that these popular body language books are often 30 years out of date with respect to the relevant psychological literature. In this book I will attempt to integrate the latest thinking in psychological research with this new archive of material from *Big Brother*

to offer a new account of certain dynamic aspects of body language (certain aspects only because even here the story starts to get very complicated) and how these work alongside ordinary verbal language in everyday social interaction. I will not be arguing that popular body language books overestimated the importance of the nonverbal aspects of communication, far from it, but their theoretical accounts and interpretations often quite simply missed the point.

To return to the *Big Brother* material, it is important to point out that psychologists have in the past had detailed footage of human behaviour, but this was often of psychology students themselves in the laboratory, most often recorded in experimental situations. None was quite as rich as *Big Brother* and very often it was not even natural; it was merely students carrying out a variety of artificial experimental tasks with little meaning to them. Oxford undergraduates, complete strangers to one another, were asked 'to get to know each other in the laboratory'. 'Why?' 'What are you studying?' 'What are you trying to discover?' I wasn't there, but I can almost certainly hear some of these questions being asked. Sheffield students were simply asked to have a conversation 'as naturally as possible' in front of the one-way mirror. 'How exactly?' 'What sort of conversation?' 'What are we allowed to talk about?' 'For what purpose?' 'When do we know when to stop?' I was there this time and heard some of these questions as participants were guided into a cold, soulless room and instructed to remove their coats (if at all possible) before beginning their 'natural' conversation. The resultant behaviours probably reflected in quite deep and mysterious ways some of these underlying concerns.

As a PhD student at Cambridge interested in the dynamics of social interaction I put great emphasis on natural behaviour in my own research, where natural meant behaviour that would be occurring anyway and not just because I wanted it to happen at the time I wanted it to happen. After some thought, I ended up video-recording the kinds of natural behaviour, indeed the only kinds, that I could think of which occur naturally in psychology departments – I

recorded academic discussions, tutorials, supervisions and seminars on psychology topics. I must confess that I knew little about the students and the academics except what they displayed in their tutorial hour, nervous to the end in front of the hidden cameras (this research is summarized in Beattie 1983).

In *Big Brother*, on the other hand, we do know something about who these people are in front of the camera. They are there for weeks on end and their self-consciousness may never quite disappear but it surely fades, more than in the case of the participants in other psychological research who are never there long enough to allow this to happen. *Big Brother* constitutes a rich source of material of multi-layered social interaction: we have fierce abrupt arguments and long sessions of bonding; we find flirtation and the evasion of the morning after; we see alliances forming and coming apart; and we can see the levels and layers in all of this. We see groups of people living in front of the cameras hour after hour, day after day. In this book I will use examples from *Big Brother* to argue for a new conception as to how to think about human social behaviour and in particular as to how to think about nonverbal communication. The new ideas do not come from the show but some of the best examples of the behaviours that I am interested in do, and these examples are critical to the ideas that I wish to get across here.

As a *Big Brother* psychologist my area of specialization is the bodily communication of the contestants: their body language, their facial expressions including the micro-expressions, the silent signals of the eyes, head nods, postural changes and the mirroring of posture, hand movements, interpersonal distance, winks, fidgeting and eyebrow raising. Some of these we see quite clearly and some seem to pass us by quickly and unnoticed both in real life and on the television screen, except when they are pointed out to us.

In the first *Big Brother* series I described how Mel's behaviour changed when the attractive stranger Claire was introduced to the house, after the eviction of Nasty Nick. I described how Mel's posture changed and how she took up a closed bodily position as an unconscious response to

Claire's introduction to the house. I suggested what that might mean about her underlying attitude to Claire (it was classic popular 'body language' stuff, the relatively enduring postural change easy to identify even by relatively unobservant viewers). I detected early signs of Mel and Andy's mutual attraction through synchrony in the timing of their bodily movements, their interactional synchrony. I described how the degree of interactional synchrony changed through time.

In the second series I described Stuart's very visible winking behaviour and how he used it to build alliances within the house, although the immortal line 'Stuart is the biggest winker in the house' was left to my colleague, the Oxford psychologist Peter Collett. My theme here was how Stuart used winking as a covert strategy for establishing control in the group, but I pointed out the dangers in employing such a strategy because although the wink placed Stuart firmly in control, there was something of a dangerous paradox at play here. I said: 'Whilst Stuart is in control, that wink is accepted and taken at face value. But should any mistrust of his motives creep in, that wink will seem to have a rather different value, and will be seen as him being two-faced. It could easily backfire on him.' Winking was always going to be a dangerous strategy for Stuart, and so it turned out. He was the second housemate to be evicted from the *Big Brother* house in the second series.

In that same series, I analysed the facial expressions of the contestants and searched for the presence of micro-expressions, fully formed expressions of emotion which usually last for less than a quarter of a second and can reveal the contestants' true emotional state. We normally miss these in everyday life, but in the world of *Big Brother* we can see them quite clearly when they are played in slow motion for us. Who can forget Helen's facial expression when she asked Josh which of the female housemates he would choose to sleep with? 'Who would you sleep with?' she asked. A question she then repeated for good measure and when he replied 'Amma' her fleeting micro-expression spoke volumes.

I also searched for squelched emotions, where an emotion starts to form on the face but the individual realizes what is happening and manages to suppress the expression, usually with a smile – the smile being the great cover-up expression, used to hide a whole range of negative emotions. I analysed all of the smiles of the contestants at various stages of the contest and differentiated between genuine and false smiles. Voluntary or deliberate facial movements, like false smiles, are controlled by the cerebral hemispheres and show an asymmetry in their expression on the face as a result of this. Involuntary facial movements that reflect real emotion, such as genuine smiles, are controlled by lower, more primitive areas of the brain and are essentially symmetrical on both sides of the face. I also pointed out the characteristic way in which false smiles leave the face, either leaving much too abruptly or much too slowly, quite unlike real smiles in this regard. Real smiles also involve the muscles around the eyes in ways that false smiles do not. I pointed out that it is much easier to fake a false smile around the mouth region than around the eyes (see Ekman 1985; Lee and Beattie 1998).

My analysis here revealed that during the first 24 hours in the *Big Brother* house, the most common facial expression of the new contestants was the smile. At the time, I said:

Smiles are very effective social signals. By smiling a lot, the housemates are trying to create as favourable an impression as possible, and to form bonds with others but the smile is also one of the most common masks people use in everyday interaction. It can reflect positive emotions, like happiness, but it can also be used to cover more negative ones. When the housemates first met, many of their smiles covered initial responses to each other and their environment. They were false smiles, what we commonly call nervous smiles. We can distinguish real smiles from false smiles on the basis of a number of behavioural cues . . . in the first half an hour in the house, two-thirds of all smiles were false smiles. As the housemates become more familiar with each other, the smile remains the dominant expression, but it doesn't mean that people are entirely comfortable with each other. Some housemates have

quite specific strategies of smiling. These smiling strategies may have an important role to play in the weeks to come.

It was interesting that when I was looking for examples of asymmetric false smiles from the first few days in the house to illustrate the point, given the time pressure involved, the best examples all seemed to come from Elizabeth. I pointed this out to my producer, Rachel Barnes. 'Only one example of a false smile from any one contestant,' she warned, in case it might be thought that I was saying that Elizabeth's smiles were particularly false at the very start of the show. I might have influenced the pattern of voting through the selection of my examples. This after all was a television programme with winners and losers.

I analysed the smiles and facial expressions of the contestants and noted who mirrored whose posture and which members of the house displayed perfect synchrony in movement during their conversations, and which did not. Each week I presented a series of interpretations of what was happening in the *Big Brother* house and a number of hypotheses as to what was going to happen next. The viewers seemed to enjoy these psychological analyses because in the second and third series the 'psychology show' became the most popular show after the live eviction show. We were all psychologists now, interested in the fine detail of human behaviour because it might help us to understand the stories unfolding in front of us.

In the third series I presented for the first time some new ideas about bodily communication. I spent a lot of time analysing the hand movements of the housemates in painstaking detail and offered a number of hypotheses about how these movements reflected the housemates' underlying thinking. But why was I focusing so much on the movements of the hands? What can the hands really tell us? What can any aspect of bodily communication tell us about thinking? Surely it's all about emotion and interpersonal relationships? This is what this book is all about. It outlines a new theory of one aspect of bodily communication, namely the movement of the hands and

arms as people speak. The theory holds that the hands represent the human mind in action. They provide us with a window on the human mind, where we can glimpse some of the unarticulated thinking that goes along with speech. I will explain how the ideas developed and outline some of the philosophical and practical implications of this new theory. Behaviour in the *Big Brother* house will provide many of the examples for analysis. But if you have never seen *Big Brother*, and have absolutely no wish ever to watch it, the examples and the argument should still make considerable sense to you.