

# Kensy Cooperrider

---

Department of Psychology  
University of Chicago  
5848 S. University  
Chicago, IL 60637

web: [www.kensycooperrider.com](http://www.kensycooperrider.com)  
email: [kensy@uchicago.edu](mailto:kensy@uchicago.edu)  
phone: (301) 520-8971

## EMPLOYMENT

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL (2012 – present)  
Postdoctoral Scholar, Department of Psychology  
Supervisor: Susan Goldin-Meadow

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL (2014 – present)  
Postdoctoral Scholar, Department of Psychology  
Supervisor: Dedre Gentner

Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH (2011 – 2012)  
Visiting Assistant Professor/Instructor, Department of Cognitive Science

## EDUCATION

University of California – San Diego, La Jolla, CA (2005 – 2011)  
PhD in Cognitive Science  
Dissertation: “Reference in action: Links between pointing and language”  
Chair: Rafael Núñez

Duke University, Durham, NC (1999 – 2003)  
BA in Linguistics, *Summa cum laude*

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

*general:* communication and cognition

*specific:* gesture, sign, and language; metaphors and analogies; diversity and universals

## PUBLICATIONS

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Natasha Abner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2018, *to appear*). The palm-up puzzle: Meanings and origins of a widespread form in gesture and sign. *Frontiers in Communication*.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, James Slotta, and Rafael Núñez (2018). The preference for pointing with the hand is not universal. *Cognitive Science*. DOI: 10.1111/cogs.12585

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2017). Foreground gesture, background gesture. *Gesture*, 16(2), 176-202.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017). When gesture becomes analogy. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 9(3), 719-737.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Tyler Marghetis, and Rafael Núñez (2017). Where does the ordered line come from? Evidence from a culture of Papua New Guinea. *Psychological Science*, 28(5), 599-608.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017). Gesture, language, and cognition. In

B. Dancygier (Ed.) *Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 118-134). New York: Cambridge University Press.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, James Slotta, and Rafael Núñez (2017). Uphill and downhill in a flat world: The conceptual topography of the Yupno house. *Cognitive Science*, 41, 768-799.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2016). Spatial analogies pervade complex relational reasoning: Evidence from spontaneous gestures. *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, 1, 28. doi:10.1186/s41235-016-0024-5

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2016). The co-organization of demonstratives and pointing gestures. *Discourse Processes*, 53(8), 632-656.

Walker, Esther, and **Kensy Cooperrider** (2016). The continuity of metaphor: Evidence from temporal gestures. *Cognitive Science*, 40, 481-495.

Abner, Natasha, **Kensy Cooperrider**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2015). Gesture for linguists: A handy primer. *Language & Linguistics Compass*, 9(11), 437-449.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2014). Body-directed gestures: Pointing to the self and beyond. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 71, 1-16.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Rafael Núñez, and Eve Sweetser (2014). The conceptualization of time in gesture. In C. Müller, A. Cienki, E. Fricke, S. Ladewig, D. McNeill, and J. Bressem (Eds.) *Body-Language-Communication (vol. 2)* (pp. 1781-1788). New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Núñez, Rafael, and **Kensy Cooperrider** (2013). The tangle of space and time in human cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 17(5), 220-229.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Rafael Núñez (2012). Nose-pointing: Notes on a facial gesture of Papua New Guinea. *Gesture*, 12(2), 103-129.

Núñez, Rafael, **Kensy Cooperrider**, D Doan, and Jürg Wassmann (2012). Contours of time: Topographic construals of past, present, and future in an indigenous group of Papua New Guinea. *Cognition*, 124(1), 25-35.

Núñez, Rafael, **Kensy Cooperrider**, and Jürg Wassmann (2012). Numbers without number lines in an indigenous group of Papua New Guinea. *PLoS One*, 7(4), e35662.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Rafael Núñez (2009). Across time, across the body: Transversal temporal gestures. *Gesture*, 9(2), 181-206.

### Manuscripts in progress

Fenlon, Jordan, **Kensy Cooperrider**, Jonathan Keane, Diane Brentari, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (*revision submitted*). Comparing sign language and gesture: Insights from pointing.

Marghetis, Tyler\*, Melanie McComsey\*, and **Kensy Cooperrider\*** (*in revision*). Spatial words anchor non-linguistic spatial cognition. [*\*authors contributed equally*]

### Peer-reviewed conference proceedings

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Dedre Gentner (2018, *to appear*). Where do measurement units come from? *Proceedings of the 40th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017). Analogical gestures foster understanding of causal systems. In G. Gunzelmann, A. Howes, T. Tenbrink, & E. Davelaar

(Eds.), *Proceedings of the 39th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 240–245). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2016). Gesture reveals spatial analogies during complex relational reasoning. In A. Papafragou, D. Grodner, D. Mirman, & J. Trueswell (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 692-697). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Elizabeth Wakefield, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2015). More than meets the eye: Gesture changes thought, even without visual feedback. In D. C. Noelle, R. Dale, A. S. Warlaumont, J. Yoshimi, T. Matlock, C. Jennings, & P. P. Maglio (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 37th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 441-446). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Rafael Núñez, and James Slotta (2014). The protean pointing gesture: Variation in a building block of human communication. In P. Bello, M. Guarini, M. McShane, & B. Scassellati (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 355-360). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2014). The role of gesture in analogical problem solving. In P. Bello, M. Guarini, M. McShane, & B. Scassellati (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 2068-2072). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

Marghetis, Tyler\*, Melanie McComsey\*, and **Kensy Cooperrider\*** (2014). Spatial reasoning in bilingual Mexico: Delimiting the influence of language. In P. Bello, M. Guarini, M. McShane, & B. Scassellati (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 940-945). Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

#### Book reviews and commentary

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2017). Making the rounds [Review of *The Book of Circles*, by Manuel Lima]. *Science*, 356(8341), 914.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2011). [Pragmatics and nonverbal communication, by Tim Wharton: An exchange]. *Gesture*, 11(3), 383-394.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2011). [Review of *Pragmatics and nonverbal communication*, by Tim Wharton]. *Gesture*, 11(1), 81-88.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2009). [Review of *Roots of Human Sociality: Culture, cognition, and interaction*, edited by N. J. Enfield and S. C. Levinson]. *Gesture*, 9(3), 373-380.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2009). [Review of *Mind in Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Sciences of the Mind*, by Evan Thompson]. *Philosophical Psychology*, 22(2), 242-246.

#### General audience writing

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2018, May). From pointing to nodding: Is gesture a universal language? *Aeon*.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2018, February). The way humans point isn't as universal as you might think. *The Conversation*.

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Rafael Núñez (2016, November). How we make sense of time. *Scientific American–Mind*, 27(6), 38-43.

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2016, October). Framing the world in terms of “left” and “right” is stranger than you think. *Nautilus Magazine* (Blog).

**Cooperrider, Kensy** (2016, March). Why natural selection became Darwin’s fittest metaphor for evolution. *Nautilus Magazine* (Blog).

## **HONORS, AWARDS, & GRANTS**

2013, Committee for Research and Exploration Grant, National Geographic Society

*Project:* “Topographies of time in the Yupno valley”

*Research team:* Rafael Núñez (Principal Investigator), Kensy Cooperrider (Co-investigator), James Slotta (Co-investigator)

2012, Franklin Grant, American Philosophical Society

*Project:* “Spatial reasoning and bilingualism in Juchitán, Mexico”

2010 & 2011, UCSD, Dean of Social Sciences Travel Award

2009, UCSD, Diane Lin Scholarship, Friends of the International Center (for field research in Papua New Guinea)

2008 – 2009, UCSD, Center for Research in Language (CRL), Predoctoral Training Fellowship in “Language, Communication, and the Brain”

2008, UCSD, Glushko Award for Graduate Excellence, Dept. of Cognitive Science

2008 & 2011, UCSD, Award for Superior Teaching, Dept. of Cognitive Science

2005 – 2011, UCSD, Predoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities

2003, Duke, Graduation with Highest Distinction (for honors thesis)

2002, Duke, Phi Beta Kappa

## **TEACHING**

### *Instructor*

**Northwestern University** (2017)

Fall 2017. **Cultural Psychology** (10 enrolled)

*Description:* elective course in the School of Professional Studies

**Case Western Reserve University** (2011 – 2012)

Spring 2012. **Cognitive Diversity** (16 enrolled)

*Description:* special topics course developed for upper-level Cognitive Science majors

*Evaluations:* overall rating of instructor= 4.4/5, overall rating of course= 4.4/5

Spring 2012. **Cognitive Linguistic Theory II** (3 enrolled)

*Description:* discussion course for students in Cognitive Linguistics masters program

Fall 2011. **Human Cognition in Evolution & Development** (34 enrolled)

*Description:* core course for Cognitive Science majors

*Evaluations:* overall rating of instructor= 4.4/5, overall rating of course= 4.2/5

Fall 2011. **Cognitive Linguistics Workshop** (3 enrolled)

*Description:* methods workshop for students in Cognitive Linguistics masters program

**UCSD (2009 – 2011)**

Summer 2011. **Gesture and Cognition** (27 enrolled)

*Description:* regularly offered course for upper-level Cognitive Science majors

*Evaluations:* 100% recommended instructor; 92% recommended course

Winter 2010. **Gesture and Cognition** (35 enrolled)

*Description:* regularly offered course for upper-level Cognitive Science majors

*Evaluations:* 100% recommended instructor; 100% recommended course

Summer 2009. **Human interaction** (12 enrolled)

*Description:* special topics course developed for upper-level Cognitive Science majors

*Evaluations:* 100% recommended instructor; 100% recommended course

Teaching Assistant

UCSD, **Language**. *Four quarters.*

UCSD, **Design and Analysis of Experiments**. *Three quarters.*

UCSD, **Cognitive Ethnography**. *Two quarters.*

UCSD, **Language Comprehension**. *One quarter.*

**PRESENTATIONS**Conference presentations and posters

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Dedre Gentner (2018, July, *planned*). “Where do measurement units come from?” 40th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Madison, Wisconsin. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, James Slotta, and Kensy Cooperrider (2018, July, *planned*). “A typological sketch of gesture in Yupno (Papua New Guinea).” International Society for Gesture Studies conference, Cape Town, South Africa. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017, July). “Analogical gestures: What are they and why do they matter?” 4th Analogy Conference, Paris, France. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017, July). “Analogical gestures foster understanding of causal systems.” 39th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, London, United Kingdom. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Jordan Fenlon, Jon Keane, Diane Brentari, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2017, June). “Pointing in gesture and sign: Sources of commonality and difference.” D-Comm Conference on ‘Language as a form of action,’ Rome, Italy. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2016, August). “Gesture reveals spatial analogies during complex relational reasoning.” 38th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Philadelphia, PA. [*poster*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Dedre Gentner, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2016, July). “Visible models of invisible relations: Gesture reveals spatial analogies during reasoning about causal systems.” International Society of Gesture Studies conference, Paris, France. [*presentation*]

**Cooperrider, Kensy**, Melanie McComsey, and Tyler Marghetis (2015, September). “Spatial frames of reference in gesture: Evidence from bilingual Mexico.” VI International Conference on Spatial Cognition, Rome, Italy. [*presentation*]

- Cooperrider, Kensy**, Elizabeth Wakefield, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2015, July). “More than meets the eye: Gesture changes thought, even without visual feedback.” 37th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Pasadena, CA. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, Melanie McComsey, and Tyler Marghetis (2014, November). “Gesture and spatial frames of reference in bilingual Mexico.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* 12, Santa Barbara, CA. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, James Slotta, and Rafael Núñez (2014, November). “Topographic construals of indoor space in the Yupno valley of Papua New Guinea.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* 12, Santa Barbara, CA. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, Rafael Núñez, and James Slotta (2014, July). “The protean pointing gesture: Variation in a building block of human communication.” 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Quebec City, Quebec. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2014, July). “The role of gesture in analogical problem solving.” 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Quebec City, Quebec. [*poster*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Susan Goldin-Meadow (2014, July). “A double-edged role for gesture in analogical reasoning?” 6th International Society for Gesture Studies Conference, La Jolla, CA. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy** and Rafael Núñez (2012, May). “Nose-pointing: A facial gesture of the Yupno Valley, Papua New Guinea.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* 11, Vancouver, Canada. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2010, November). “Indicating selves, embodying others.” American Anthropological Association 109th annual meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Barbara Dancygier (2010, September). “Alternativity and stance in co-speech headshakes.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language/ Embodied and Situated Language Processing*, La Jolla, CA. [*presentation*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Rafael Núñez (2010, September). “Mapping macro-space in a micro-world: A study of everyday construal in Papua New Guinea.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language/ Embodied and Situated Language Processing*, La Jolla, CA. [*poster*]
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2010, July). “Pointing to the self: Metonymy and iconicity in body-directed gestures.” 4th International Society for Gesture Studies Conference, Frankfurt/Oder, Germany. [*presentation*]
- Núñez, Rafael\*, **Kensy Cooperrider\***, and Jürg Wassmann (2010, July). “Tomorrow, uphill: Geocentric temporal gestures in the remote mountains of Papua New Guinea.” 4th International Society for Gesture Studies Conference, Frankfurt/Oder, Germany. [*presentation*] \**co-presenters*
- Cooperrider, Kensy**, and Rafael Núñez (2008, October). “The varieties of composite reference.” *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* 9, Cleveland, OH. [*presentation*]

*Invited presentations and workshop participation*

- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2017, October). “Points in gesture and sign.” Conference on ‘The Body’s Role in Thinking, Performing, and Referencing,’ University of Chicago, Chicago, IL.

- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2017, October). “Spatial analogies in communication and cognition.” Developmental Brown Bag, UI-Urbana-Champaign, Urbana-Champaign, IL.
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2017, May). “Research on time concepts: Where we are and where we could go.” Workshop on “Time concepts and their expression: creativity, cognition, and communication,” University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain.
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2016, December). “Ecologies of spatial language.” Workshop on ‘Universals and Variation in Spatial Referencing Across Languages,’ UC-Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2016, August). “What the hands reveal about temporal thinking.” CogSci 2016 Workshop, ‘Interactive Spatiotemporal Inference,’ Philadelphia, PA.
- Núñez, Rafael\*, and **Kensy Cooperrider\*** (2013, November). “The ups and downs of space and time in the Yupno valley.” Reed College, Portland, OR. *\*co-presenters*
- Cooperrider, Kensy** (2013, January). “Pointing and the when puzzle.” Gesture Pragmatics Workshop, UC-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA.

## **SERVICE**

### *Selected ad hoc journal reviewing*

Cognition  
 Cognitive Linguistics  
 Cognitive Psychology  
 Cognitive Science  
 Frontiers in Psychology  
 Gesture  
 Journal of Pragmatics  
 Language and Cognition  
 Language, Cognition and Neuroscience  
 Lingua  
 Philosophical Psychology  
 Psychonomic Bulletin & Review  
 Psychological Review  
 Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology  
 Spatial Cognition & Computation  
 Topics in Cognitive Science  
 Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science

### *Other ad hoc reviewing*

Cognitive Science Society conference  
 Evolang conference  
 International Society for Gesture Studies conference  
 John Benjamins books  
 National Science Foundation

### *Other service*

Editorial Board, *Gesture* (beginning 2018)  
 Treasurer, International Society for Gesture Studies (summer 2016 – present)

Assistant organizer, Joint meeting of Conceptual Structure, Discourse and Language & Embodied and Situated Language Processing workshop (summer 2010)

Co-organizer, Gesture Group San Diego (fall 2008 – spring 2010)

## **FIELDWORK**

Papua New Guinea – Yupno Valley, Madang Province (summer 2013, three weeks)  
conducted in collaboration with Rafael Núñez (UCSD, Cognitive Science) and James Slotta (UCSD, Anthropology)

Mexico – Juchitán, Oaxaca (summer 2012, two weeks)  
conducted in collaboration with Melanie McComsey (UCSD, Anthropology) and Tyler Marghetis (UCSD, Cognitive Science)

Papua New Guinea – Gua village, Madang Province (summer 2009, two weeks)  
conducted in collaboration with Rafael Núñez (UCSD, Cognitive Science) and Jürg Wassmann (Heidelberg, Ethnology)

## **SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE**

Spatial concepts and the Yupno house

*National Geographic* (web), ‘These people have a mind-bending way to navigate’ (2016)

Pointing in Yupno

*National Geographic* (web), ‘The point of pointing’ (2014)

Time concepts in Yupno

*Science* magazine, ‘Where time goes up and down’ (2012)

Number concepts in Yupno

*New Scientist* magazine, ‘Brain may not be hard-wired to link numbers and space’ (2012)